

**Glenbow Archives**

**M-6245-2c, Theodora Paynter McKay's First World War letters, 1919-1920**

Canadian Section

G.H.Q.

1-1-19. [January 1, 1919]

Dear Ted:-

Just a line to wish you a very Happy New Year and to thank you for the Christmas card. I kept putting off writing all the time, there was so much to see, and then got moved so I'm very late with my greetings.

Too bad you didn't get to Germany. I sympathise with you very much for it was a great March and a very triumphal entry. Can't give you full details in a letter but some day shall tell you about it. The Sixth led from Namur to the Rhine so it was doubly interesting for us.

The Belgians of course, gave us a great reception all the way along. They had had a bad time with the huns, poor people. From Namur we went south east to DEHO, on the frontier -- across the Ardennes Mts. Then we turned north east across the Eifel Mts. And landed up in BONN.

The men had a pretty hard march but they arrived in good shape. Each Battalion got a Union Jack the day before they crossed the frontier and it seemed to buck them up very much. At the end of the day's march they would come into the town they were to be billeted in for the night with the back playing "O Canada", "Hail, hail the gang's all here", or something similar, the old flag flying at attention and the huns and hunnesses looking as if they'd like to eat the whole outfit.

The day we crossed the frontier the General took the salute as the Brigade marched past the mile stone marking the boundary. All the photographers were with the First Division.

Had five billets across the Rhine. Our "Shatoo" was right on the bank of the river. It was the best billet I'd ever seen and the old Divisional Commander kept making inspections of it so you may be sure it was alright. It was very near the neutral zone though so he couldn't move into it.

Am still learning down here. Am attached to the movements branch and work at the real G.H.Q. with a bunch of Englishmen who to date have filled me with awe and wonder. Came down on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Don't know yet whether there will be anything in it or not.

Remember me to Miss Johnstone and any of the sisters I know. Hope this finds you well and I'm sure you will all be having a good time. Shall see you when you're getting demobilized potet [?].

Cheerio and again best wishes for the New Year to yourself and Miss Johnstone.

Yours sincerely

Howard C. Green

[postmarked January 20, 1919]  
Champognole, Jura

Dear Miss Paynter

I was pleased indeed to see your name among those receiving honours - I should love it if we old No. 1 girls could all be decorated together -- it would be so much more fun.

Miss Newcombe is putting in for transfer to England so you may see something of her.

Always with kindest regards.

Very sincerely yours

Maud L. Francis

[postmarked February 11, 1919]  
Canadian Red Cross Hospital  
Petrograd Hotel  
North Audley St.  
London

My dear Miss Paynter,

Received your letter a few days ago -- glad that you are managing to have a reasonable time -- I trust that before this that you and Miss Johnson have been able to get your leave for the South through-- I am sure you will enjoy it down there.

I wrote Capt. McCollum a couple of times about my needle holder that I left in the operating room -- I haven't heard from him since and do not know if he sent it on time -- If he hasn't would it be too much trouble for you to mail it to me -- addressing it to Cornwall, Ontario. I am sorry to trouble you but I should like very much to get it.

Was boarded today for Canada -- and will probably be leaving within the next couple of weeks -- maybe sooner. I was very much pleased to see in the paper that among the R.R.C's was your

name and also Miss Johnson's -- I am sure none were more deserved and you have my heartiest congratulations.

My kindest regards to any of the nurses I may know at No. 4.

My wife and I will be on the lookout for you in Canada.

Sincerely yours.

A. Ross Alquire

20.3.19 [March 20, 1919]

Dear Ted:

How goes the war this morning? I'm feeling fit as a fiddle despite beaucoup dancing and tramping on peoples' feet.

Am afraid will have to call this party off today Ted. Smith has a couple of men and much baggage to get loaded onto the B.C. Express and it may take a good part of the evening.

I'm letting Miss Lloyd know also.

Am sorry Ted but the year is young yet isn't it?

The bearer is my batman Hughes -- and he is o.k. Give him one of those doughnuts if you have any will you.

Cheerio,  
Howard

War Office,  
Whitehall, S.W.1  
4<sup>th</sup> April 1919

0137/3071 (C.2.)

Miss E. T. Paynter, A.P.R.C.  
C.C.N.S.

Madam,

I am directed to inform you that Her Majesty Queen Alexandra has expressed a wish that all ladies who attend an Investiture at Buckingham Palace to receive the decoration of the Royal Red Cross should afterwards proceed to Marlborough House to see her Majesty.

I am accordingly to request that you will attend at Marlborough House on your return from Buckingham Palace, at 12.30 noon on 10<sup>th</sup> next.

A Railway Warrant (1<sup>st</sup> Class Return) is enclosed.

I am,  
Madam  
Your obedient Servant,

J. T. Brown

[Post Office Telegraph]  
O.H.M.S. Buckingham Palace  
4 Apr 19 [April 4, 1919]

Sister Ethel Paynter No. 11 Can. Gen. Hospl. Moore Bks., Schff.

Your attendance is required at Buckingham Palace on Thursday next the tenth at ten thirty o'clock. An Indoor uniform with gloves. Please telegraph acknowledgement.

Lord Chamberlain Ldn.

Canadian Section,  
G. H. Q.  
France  
1.5.19 [May 1, 1919]

Dear Ted;

Your long and interesting letter of the 28<sup>th</sup> arrived last night and I was very glad to hear from you. I thought probably you had sailed for Canada and was not expecting to note from you so the pleasure was greater.

Too bad you have been held up so long in Shorncliffe. It must be particularly annoying when all the old bunch have gone across. I am watching the "Daily Record" for a picture of you coming out of Buckingham Palace gates. You surely earned that decoration Ted.

I felt very badly over the way I treated you. Didn't have you out once. As a matter of fact I phoned through to No. 7 the evening of the day you left to arrange a dinner and they said you had gone. The medical people phoned to the matron-in-chief next morning and she said you had left for England. I wish you had phoned G.H.Q. – despite the weather. I didn't treat you in a very "brotherly" way and it's sporting of you not to get fed up about it Ted. Things were rather complicated though weren't they?

I hope to get over on a few days leave about May 10<sup>th</sup> by which date practically all Canadians will be out of France. So will you drop me a line to say you are still in Shorncliffe – or let me know if you are to be demobilised. Shall come over on the morning boat so I could stay over in Folkestone for a few hours.

I'll be getting demobilised as sub and mine won't be up until June 28<sup>th</sup>. The general is trying to have it altered in my case but if he can't do it I shall stay until July 1<sup>st</sup>. Seems years yet! I'm not in any way connected with the old 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade now. Say Ted, they were OK weren't they? An A1 General and Bde Major (please note) and four A1 Battalions.

Speaking of Bde Majors – the one you abused is helping to get me placed in a law firm in B.C. That was an awful mistake, wasn't it? Hope to get articled in B.C. and study at Osgoode Hall, Toronto but the thing is not yet definitely settled.

You sound as if you liked the "Peg". It must be awful cold there I should think. Let me have your address there will you, for I may have a day or two off sometime en route East or West?

I sure do remember the good times at Pennes. I've had one or two dancing lessons since you left. Got tangled up in a foxtrot with an English girl the other day and we were both wrecks at the end of it – she actually and I mentally.

We are at Wimereux now. Moved down on the 14<sup>th</sup>. It is much nicer than Montreuil although the winds are bad at times and there's been plenty of rain. The Canadian Section has been greatly reduced. We have a house of our own in the town – where we live and hatch plots against the Imperials who are so good-natured and indulgent that they wink an eye and let us slip things over. Really Ted I've become an enthusiastic admirer of the British since coming here. See I'm liaising between the Section and the Quartermaster General's Barracks of G.H.Q.

Had a trip to Brussels escorting Mrs. Ross up to meet the General. She is a charming lady. We went up by car via St. Omer, Bailleul, Armentieres, Lille and Tournai. From Brussels we went to Bde H.Q. near Namur, stopping at Waterloo en route. I thought that was one of the most interesting places I'd ever seen. Next morning the General, Mrs. Ross and I started back via Mons, Valenciennes, Cambrai, Bourlon and Neuville, Vitasse to Camblain L'Abbe. It made me feel very sad to see all the old places but one should feel glad that the slaughter is all over.

The cities are looking up a lot, especially Mons and Valenciennes. Next day we went to Lens, Bethune, Armentieres, Kemmel, Ypres, "Pop" and back to Boulogne. It was a dandy trip. Mrs. Ross and the General had some interesting arguments about shell-cases, helmets etc. as you can imagine. You can also imagine who won out.

Now Ted, it's after office hours and also after tea time. Please let me know when you are likely to go. It seems a shame that the channel isn't land as I could get over in about 45 minutes.

Hope this finds you well and please remember me to any of my friends you meet.

Cheerio big sister.

Yours sincerely  
Little Brother

General Headquarters,  
British Armies in France

7.5.19 [May 7, 1919]

Dear Ted:-

Your letter arrived this morning and put me in quite a flurry. Things have turned up now that make it impossible for me to get away for a week until about the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> and I'm afraid that you may be gone by that time. Anyway, as Saturday here is a half holiday and Sunday is a whole one I think I'll come over on the Saturday morning boat and back on the Sunday morning one. We could have that picnic and dinner and go to a show in the evening. If this is O.K. will you speak for the tickets and if you are not doing anything you might come down to the boat. Of course if it's raining cats and dogs I shan't come but just now it doesn't look that way. Seems funny to be going from France to Blighty for a picnic doesn't it? Here's hoping it's not rough as I am no sailor. I'm not particular about the show part if you can suggest anything better.

It looks as if I shall be here until June 20<sup>th</sup> or thereabouts. My soldier outfits will just hold out that long with luck.

Now Cheerio Ted. I'll be over Saturday unless something turns up in the meantime ~~and~~ or the waves are [hand drawn waves to signify rough seas].

Yours Sincerely  
Speed

Canadian Section  
8.5.19 [May 8, 1919]

Dear Ted; -

Just a line to cancel my letter of last evening as the Colonel has turned me down because he doesn't want to start week-end jaunts to England. However, Ted, he has given me permission to go over next week about the 15<sup>th</sup> so if you are still there I shall look you up. If not "Big Sister" send me your address in the "Peg" and I shall see you there.

Am rather sore today as it is such lovely weather and I'd been planning for a picnic.

Cheers Ted, better luck next time  
Howard.

Canadian Section  
15.5.19 [May 15, 1919]

Dear Ted; -  
We'll be over tomorrow on morning boat – 16.5.19  
Speed

Canadian Section,  
GHQ  
Wimereux  
France  
2.6.19 [2 June 1919]

Dear Ted: -

I have been half expecting a letter from you saying that you were at last homeward bound but I guess your demobilization has been held up again. Why don't you take your discharge in Blighty? Might as well!

Things are going on merily here. They moved me down to the Section itself when I got back and then everybody went on leave so I've had plenty of work to do. Its more fun than loafing though, isnt it? All the hospitals have gone now and there only remain the few strays to round up.

Had a good game of tennis today, for the first time. There are some dandy courts. Also have had the odd joy ride but I'm feeling very quiet and well-behaved on the whole. Have got the "get home" feeling.

We could see the English coast this morning quite plainly. It made me think of you. I mean my row up the river etc. How is Miss Cukenean anyway? Please remember me to her and also to Miss Fletcher. Your matron has been over here for a couple of days and seems quite a good sort. She was up to see us. As a matter of fact I drove down to the boat with her this afternoon.

Expect to leave about June 15<sup>th</sup>. Let me know if you will still be in Folkestone and I might drop of again. That hill though! London might be a better meeting place.

Aren't you proud of your native city? Big bunch of bolshies eh?

Now cheers Ted. Hope this finds you well and that they wont keep you against your will for more than a couple of months anyway. I'm a tease tonight.

Cheers  
Speed

The Royal Club For Officers  
Beyond the Seas,  
At the Royal Automobile Club  
Pall Mall, London, S.W.1.

17.5.19 [May 17, 1919]

Dear Ted: -

Am at this address after all. Shall be down on the train leaving here 12.5.5 Wednesday. Wire if you get more orders in the meantime.

Cheers  
Speed

120 Lenore St., Winnipeg.  
June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1919.

My dear Ted: -

You will be surprised to be getting a letter from me, and especially at that address. If I could have written you all the many times I have wanted to in these past few months - I am afraid it really is months - you would have had lots, but I have been expecting you home every day, you old sinner, and have not had the heart to sit down and write, when I though all the time I could soon talk to you.

We are beginning to lose heart, now, however, and I am going to send this one, partly on my own account, but partly too on Johnnie's account.

She has gone to Boston, as you perhaps knew she hoped to, and is taking a course there in her beloved social service work, and she is anxious to see you if you come home while she is in the



East. You spoke in one of your letters of going to see your brother in Hartford, and she thought if we wrote you there, you would be sure to know she was in Boston, before you left for Winnipeg. I cannot give you her exact address as yet, but if you should go to Boston before you get it from any of us, you could inquire at the Boston General Hospital. I think that is it – or the Massachusetts General - really I am uncertain - and they could tell you how to find her. It is some institute, but I can't remember the name. And she told me too, but I am such a duffer. Anyway you are to move Heaven and Earth, and if you can't find her when you get there you are to wire some of us and we will send the address. But as soon as her sisters get her real address I shall forward it to your brother's address for you, and it will probably be there before you are. The course she is taking is a four months' one, so you are apt to see her before we do.

I have just been down in St. John's looking up the Anderson family to get your brother's address. Johnnie said they were on Craig St., and when I went to the number it was empty and the people next door said the Anderson had moved back to their own house, so you will find them there when you get home. I did not see your sister, for she was at church. Nor did I see Jack, and don't suppose I should recognize him now anyway.

Grace is a fine big girl; she was just a little baby in arms when I saw her last, I think.

The reunion for the 21<sup>st</sup> is dwindling down; you three not home, and Johnnie away and Newcombe down with her sister, and not knowing when she will be home. So we have postponed it till about the 4<sup>th</sup> of October, and I hope you won't think that too late. But the house can be heated and there will be no one there to know if we raise the roof, and we thought that would be wisest. Some few of us are going down on the 21<sup>st</sup>, Greybird, Wilk, Thea and I, I think and Howie is going down to have charge of the Nanton's cottage where the soldiers go, so she can come over a good deal. Mother and Wallie and their baby are down at our place now, but suppose Wallie and the baby will be coming home in a couple of weeks.

People don't come into the city from the country much with this thing hanging over them; they can get little communication through and that little only lately. For some time there was no telephone or mail communication, and for the city people they are nearly as cut off, unless they have motor cars. However, one must expect these ups and downs and next winter I shall have forgotten all about it, I daresay.

You will come home to find our Mutual Friends still to the fore: he is surely coming along. Now he is a Provincial man, I think, in charge of the new psychopathic work, and so on, and does no private work, I think unless some consulting though of that I am not sure. I am glad you did not marry him though, Teddy, for I don't think his wife is very happy. I imagine his heart is as vagrant as ever, and that would never do for our Paynter, any more than it would have done for Doc. Perhaps Paynter could have kept it from straying, though. It is a pity he has that side to him though, for he was getting a lot of talk about himself last winter, and a young man practicing medicine cannot afford that. That particular woman in the case has left here, now, though and perhaps it will quiet down, unless he finds a new flame.

That much for that gossip.

I thought I would send Johnnie a note to tell her I had located your family, and sent you this message, and then I remembered I didn't know where she was, but I think I shall write it anyway, and then when I get the address it will be ready. You know I have a sort of hunch I ought to telegraph a message to you, about Inga, but if it lay there for weeks before you came wouldn't I feel silly?

I feel sure you will let Mrs. Anderson know when you land, and Mr. Anderson said they would telephone if they had any news, and if they do that it will be time to telegraph you her address.

I do hope that tonight you are on the sea; perhaps you are, and at this time of night, here you would be sound asleep, with no fear of submarines or mines, or any other thing – unless an iceberg, which God forbid.

Anyway, whether this night or another night sometime soon you are going to be sleeping in Winnipeg, and that time, may it be soon!

Love to both our other girls if they are with you when this reaches you. Probably they will be on their way home, if they cross with you. And love to our dear Paynter, from

Doc

#10 Manitoba Military Hospital,  
Winnipeg, Manitoba,  
25 August 1919

Miss E. T. Paynter,  
c/o Mr. W. C. Paynter,  
Tantallon, Sask.

Dear Miss Paynter:-

Please report to duty at #10 Manitoba Military Hospital, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1919.

S. Ferguson  
“for Matron”  
#10 M.M.H.

[undated]  
Manitoba Military Hospital  
Tuxedo Park, Winnipeg  
Canada

With Best Wishes and Compliments Of The Season.

From the Patients of A. Ward. To their Sisters And Nurses

Central Y.M.C.A.  
Toronto, Ont.  
2.1.20 [January 2, 1920]

Dear Ted:

Just a line to wish you a Happy New Year. I'm not sure whether or not this letter will find you but am sending it in care of Miss Johnson.

How are you getting on anyway. Hope you are quite settled and enjoying civvy life. It's quite some change isn't it?

I went out west, then came back here to study law for a year. Entered second year at Osgood Hall, along with a good many other returned men and am trying to take two years in one. We hope to take 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a special summer session. I like law very much but not studying.

Had a very nice Xmas with an aunt at Belleville. She is matron of the hospital there.

If you see any of the sisters of No. 4 remember me to them. Hope this will find you well. Drop a line if you have a spare moment.

Yours sincerely

Howard Green