

Outside the Box

Transcript

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Winchester
Oct^r 15th
1854

My dear Mama,

I hope that by this time
you have arrived safely at
Brussels & that my letter caught
you in Mansfield Street before
you left. As you seemed to
want a rather more detailed
account of my proceedings
I will endeavour to satisfy you.
I will begin my room, it
is a small room about 8 yds

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long by 4 yds in width &
I have arranged to make myself
pretty comfortable in it indeed
it does not seem to be the same
room that I saw when I first
came here. I will just give
you a sort of plan of it

[A plan of his room is included in the
letter at this point]

The shaded part has no carpet
& is the place where I have my
bath in the morning I do not
know whether I told you that
I have taken to do two things
one is always to have my cold

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tub in the morning & I think
it does me all the good in the
world & the other is to go without
any luncheon whatsoever so
when you see me again I shall
be worse than Papa in that
respect. Yesterday I was what
they call supernumerary for the
first time that is to say I went
with the subaltern of the day
to learn what to do & I suppose
I shall be put on duty by myself
in a few days and I hope [to] get
off drill soon the adjutant says
he never saw fellows get on
so quick as 2 or 3 of us have
done who passed together.

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I believe that the General of
the district is coming
here on Wednesday or Thursday
as he is going to inspect the
battalion [sic] at Parkhurst in
the Isle of Wight tomorrow
& he is coming here directly
afterwards & then all who
can, go on leave for what is
called first leave I must
try & make Colonel Raymond
stick to his promise of giving
me leave in January but
you must find some excuse
or other for my staying
the whole month however *

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*that is easily done. I
went up to see Colonel Raymond
this afternoon & he introduced
me to M^{rs} Raymond who
seemed a very nice sort of
person. He has been exceedingly
kind to me scince [sic] I have
been here. I have been doing
nothing else but walk about
the place scince [sic] I have been
here that is to say about the
country round here so I

shall be tired of that sort of
fun by the time I get to
Brussels & shall take to
quadrupedal exercise instead
I do not think that I

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have described <to> you what
a barrack yard is like.
Imagine to yourself a square
shut in on all side[s] but one
by a large dirty looking
brick house a few soldiers
loitering about, discordant
sounds of bugles fifes & drums
which are almost always going
to say nothing of a dozen or two
of the same instruments continually
going without the least cessation
just below the barracks
which last performance

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is made by incipient buglers
drummers & fifers all playing
different tunes & all out of
tune by way of practise
so you can imagine what
a horrible row they make
I have not yet [?rec'ed] that
letter of introduction to M^r
Simonds that Papa sent
me but I shall do so in the
course of a day or two I think
I[f] you want to get rid of Duke
you may make him over
to me because I have nothing
to do except walk about & it

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would be good fun for me
to try & train him anyway
I might get him to a less
savage state than he is in
now. Tell Papa I am getting
quite a dab at keeping accounts
& have got in to a regular habit
of putting every thing down &
I make a sort of balance twice

a month so that I get every
thing very exact. I think I
must now wish you good
bye with best love to all at home
Believe me to remain y[ou]^r ever
affect[ionat]^e Son

G H Waller

PS. tell Papa I had a letter from
Cox & Co this morning sending

[page 9, cross-hatching on page 5]
me a form for the exemption of income
tax on military pay which I signed &
sent back again so it is all right & ask
him when he has an opportunity to
send me over a few cigarettes

G H Waller