



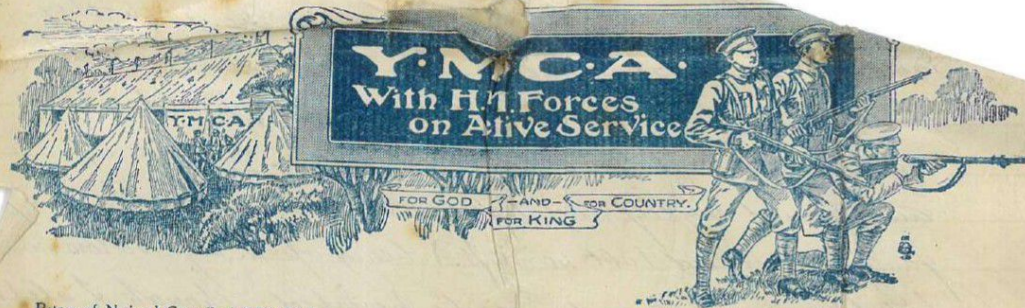
Patron of National Council of Y.M.C.A.'s:
HIS MAJESTY THE KING.
Patron Military Camp Department:
H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT.

HEADQUARTERS:
"GEORGE WILLIAMS HOUSE,"
13, RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.

From _____
Batt. _____ Reg't. _____ Coy. _____
Address reply to _____

to London, Chelsea Barracks, I expect.

From what I have been given to understand, by some of the old soldiers here, we are in for a pretty stiff time. They are very strict, and you have to keep the dust out of your ears, as they say here. I am getting on all right myself, but there are some chaps in our Squad, who are always spoiling it, and we all have to suffer. My boots have been hurting my feet all this week, but I have managed to stick it. The boots are all right, the leather being very soft, but ~~the~~ the heel of my right foot has been giving me fits, the seam rubbing the back of my foot, and causing great annoyance at times. I am giving them a rest to day (Sunday) hoping ~~that~~ it will be better to morrow morning. If not, then I will have to go sick for a day, and I don't want to do that if I can help it, as it may throw me back, we are not allowed to wear anything but our army boots.



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Address reply to _____

Private D. James
1st Squad, Welsh Guards
White City, Ship Street
London

Dear Father.

I received your letter alright. I hope you are all well at home and that you are keeping good. I have not written any letters this last week only a few postcards which I sent to the kids. (I hope they got them all right) I have utilising my evenings looking round London. We will not be here very long again and will be shifted to Caterham shortly. I don't know when that will be yet, but I will let you know when I get particulars and give my new address. Caterham is a good way from London, I think it is somewhere near Ascot. After we have had about 2 months there, we will be sent back

Bush Empire. It beats the Barcliff Empire into a cocked hat. and Sat. (Yesterday) ~~we~~ we got a free pass to stay out until 12 midnight. We finish at 12 on Saturdays and went to Chelsea in the afternoon to see the football match between Chelsea and Blackburn Rovers. There was a huge crowd there ~~and~~ and it was the best game I have seen Black R. won 3-1. After that we rode on top of a bus to Charing Cross and walked about seeing some of the sights ~~until~~ while it was daylight as there is nothing to see here after dark as all lights are turned down. We went to Hyde Park too. There were heaps of chaps sporting there. and some very amusing arguments between some of them and their audience's. We play football at the stadium and you can see some very good matches here. as they have players who have played in first league games. the ^{goal keeper} ~~best~~ back for the Grenadiers is Pennington who used to play for West. Bromwich Albion. The Guards Brigade played the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders here the other day. It was as good as what I used to see at Wembley.

I was playing billiards with a smart young chap the other evening. He was in the Grenadiers and has been transferred to the Welsh. He is a Corporal and his home is Carmarthen. I was talking to him, and asked him when he was going to the front. I was quite amazed when he said he had been all through it. He was wounded at Ypres. He had a bayonet through him under the arm and frost bitten feet. There are a lot here who have been through it from the start. A whole battalion of the Grenadiers have just left for the front.

(4)

I am in very good health ~~as~~ as the grub they give me and a bit more. The weather to day and yesterday is beautiful but it has been very cold. One night I think it was last Wednesday. I woke up and found myself and bed covered with snow, the gaslight overhead (abt 400 ft.) being open. my pillows and bed clothes were wet and I nearly perished, though I slept all night. I have not caught cold after it. We have to shave every morning, and sometimes my hands are so cold that I have cut my face in several places. we are up at 6 a.m. and have breakfast at 7. We get hot coffee for breakfast, and very welcome it is the first thing in the morning. Last Wednesday I was on Fatigue duty. I was one of about 50 orderlies. We were at it from 6.30 in the morning to 6 in the evening. We were each allotted a table. each table seats 22 men and there were 50 tables. going at the time, that makes 1100 to attend to. and then we have to have everything cleared up and cleaned for dinner by 12 and ditto for tea at 5. All the knives and forks and spoons, have to be thoroughly cleaned, and tables washed after each meal. ~~So~~ they pay us 3^d each for it. I would give 1/- to get out of it. but it is all in the game so I don't mind and I am quite enjoying myself. as we are free after 5 o'clock to do as we please. I have post some small presents for Billy and Winnie. I bought them last Thursday night down Hammersmith way. I hope they will get them all right. Last Friday night I went to the Shepherd's

(3)

I have filled in an ~~alot~~ allotment form and have given it to the Paymaster Sergeant. I am arranging to pay Mother 6 a day. that will bring her in 9/2 a week in addition to my 3/6. She must send some of it back to me weekly as 3/6 a week here is not much to spend in London. I am expecting to hear further about it from the Sergeant. I hope Mother is managing all right without me. you must see to that. and if she is short she need not send me on anything but I shall want money to come home and am keeping what I have got now as much as I can for that purpose. I may be home Easter, if not then, probably Whitsun.

If I had my Badge and adornments I would get my photo taken. but don't like having it until I am complete. We are so bare without our badges. We are told that they have been made but there is no sign of them being doled out yet. I am writing under difficulties as there is a band play within a few yards of me. I am in the J. M. C.A. and there is a band playing here every Sunday evening. It is a fine band. and sometimes I stop to listen to it.

We had a fine church parade this morning all the Guards from the White City marched together to Church. If we had a band it would have been all right. It was a big church and we completely filled it. There must have been a couple of thousands of us. We had to march about half a mile, and the streets were ~~over~~ thronged with people ~~and~~ who run out to look at us. It was a short



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service. and when we lined up outside afterwards we looked all right. There are several regiments stationed here now. There are about 20,000 troops at the White City now. I shall be sorry to leave it as it is a lovely place. I could tell you heaps more but as I have several more letters to write I will close. I have written to Letty a week ago. but have not heard from her yet. I am about to write to Jack now. so give my best fond love to my dear Mother and the Kiddies and Tom. I hope I may see them soon. I often think of home and am looking forward to it again. I trust you ^{are} looking well after mother, and I beg of you to get straight by her until I am with her again, after the war ends which I hope will not be many months. I expect we will be out the front before it do. The Welsh Guards are sure to have a look in, and I am in the 1st Batt. which is now complete.

Your Affectionate Son. David



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 (6)