**Preface: This transcript was sourced online from the Canadian Letters & Images Project.**

**-Editor**

Stony Plain, Alberta

Nov. 10, 1915

 Mrs. J Drader,

2132 Belmont Ave.

Victoria, B.C.

 Dear Mother,

 I should have written to you long ago but there did not seem to be very much to tell about and even now I don’t know where the substance for a decent letter is going to come from.

 I suppose you have read my letter to Cecil & Nora and therefore know where I am. I have not been to Stony Plain since I mailed those letters and when I got a chance to send for my mail yesterday, I was rather disappointed not getting any word from either of them.

 It started to snow last Monday morning before I got up and has been at it pretty steady ever since. There is about 10 inches of snow now (5 p.m.) and more coming.

 One of my boys broke his leg a week ago Monday at school but he is doing very well now. It was pretty tough for the little fellow at first, though.

 I suppose you knew some time ago that the 51st Bat. was in Edmonton again for a while and that Eugene was there with it. I was in to the convention last week and saw him & Balfour and numerous other officers whose names I no longer remember. They were still recruiting for the 51st as well as for other units and the urge is always present with me to drop everything else and enlist, but so far I have not done so, as you are doubtless aware.

 I have seen Earl and his family and they are all well the last I heard of them (the 5th). Little Edith seemed to make up with me pretty quick.

 There are 36 in this school now, mostly Germans, so you may imagine I am kept pretty busy. One good thing, there are only the 1st four grades or up to the junior 3rd book and all large classes. I always like large classes so there is no kick in that score. There is a place for a bell on top of the school but no bell in it as yet.

 Nellie and the children were all well last week with the exception that Nellie had various pains occasionally which I hope are not fore runners of anything serious.

 As I have not heard from any of you for so long I am a little anxious to know how you are getting on. Have you any more boarders yet and if so how many and does it pay to keep them? Are the chickens paying now? It seems to me that they ought to soon prove themselves. Has the gathering of the harvest had any visible effect on the economic conditions out there?

 I guess I shall have to close now with the wish that you are all well. I send my love to all at home.

 Yours affectionately,

Bert

Edmonton, Alberta

April 2nd, 1916

 Dear Mother,

 Am going to write at last so look out. I was kind of waiting till I could send you some money as I was all the time kept in anticipation by the school board. But I have got a cent for this year yet and there is still some coming on last year’s pay. However I think I shall be all straightened up this week sometime, probably Saturday. Have stopped teaching yesterday and should have been paid up then but as they promised to get my money for me this week I did not sue for it yet.

 I wish you would send me your account to date right away, then I may be able to get it before I get the money. Don’t forget to put in my board for the time I was out there this summer. About the launch, too, I think I shall be able to pay you all that it has cost up to date. I have also asked Mr. Eik to send you some money he is getting in rent on the Tofino house. I may be able to get out to Victoria this summer some time and fix up the boat and sell but I am not at all sure of it. However $2.00 a month is not so awfully bad for a while.

 I suppose you heard that we had a pretty cold winter here. It was pretty hard for me in that well ventilated house that I was in but I have wintered pretty well and that exzema, although it pestered me a little never got bad enough to make me lose any school. I put in every teaching day from the first of the year to the last of March.

 I have not started to drill yet but think that the work will start in earnest tomorrow. I can go into a military school by staying in the 218th Batt. But I think that I shall try to get in the 66th with Will so that I can get away a little sooner. I would rather go as a private with Will than have to wait so long and get some office.

 I suppose you heard that Eugene’s Batt. left yesterday. I did not get down to see him and it seems pretty lonesome. However I guess it is that way with a great many in Edmonton today.

 I don’t know of much more news to tell now. I shall try to do better in writing than I have done lately. I shall likely have more time when I get in Barracks.

 I hope you are well and that the chickens are paying better than they were.

 Your loving Son,

Bert

218th O. Battallion C.E.F.

No. 2 Coy. Orderly Room

Edmonton, Alta.

 April 18th, 1916

 Dear Mother,

 Shall try to answer your very welcome letter which I got last night. I am doing this in duty hours but there is not any thing to do just now so I though that I might as well make the best of the time and write to you.

 I shall send you $100.00 with this. This is considerably less than I thought that I owed you and I would like to send you more now but you know that I owe Earl a lot and he needs the money, so I think it is my duty to be just before I am generous.

 I have been here in the Orderly Room most of the time since I came in for duty. Have been trying to get a transfer to the 66th so that I could go with Will but have not got there yet and they say that the 66th is leaving next Saturday. One of the captains told me last Thursday that I was transferred to the 66th and they took a list of the things I had had issued to me, but that is as far as it has gone. So I am not sure yet that I am going to go with Will’s Batt.

 This Battalion is moving to new quarters today and I expect that we will be pretty busy in a little while. In fact there is a couple of jobs waiting for me now so I guess I must stop and get at them. Shall try to write to father before I leave if I go with the 66th and soon if I don’t.

 I hope that you are all well and that you will have a pleasant Easter with Cecil at home.

 Your Loving Son.

Bert

Lydd, Kent, England

May 31st, 1916

 Mrs. J. Drader,

2132 Belmont Ave.

Victoria, B.C. Can.

 Dear Mother,

 I can’t tell you now glad I was to get your letter of the 9th. It is the third I have received from Canada since we left it a month ago. Am lucky in having time to answer it right away. It will be pretty close to July when you get it, too.

 Don’t know what is wrong today, but our company is getting a rest. We have been going day and night for quite a while now. I think there must be a mistake somewhere.

 We shifted camp on Sunday. Came down here to shoot on the range. Struck our tents on Saturday evening and slept under the stars till midnight. Reveille, and Eugene all came at once. We had about half an hour’s talk with Eugene and then put on our packs and started on our Route march here. We kept it up without a long enough halt to let us take our packs off or eat any of our slim rations till 9.30 that morning. There were whole loads of the men fell out along the road and had to be brought in by the Red Cross. Will and I came in all right but I had an awful pair of feet and when we were lined up to be dismissed to fix up our tents Will fainted. He was all right again in an hour, though, and now is ahead of me in his shooting score. We are both away above average so far. Have to get up at 2.30 a.m. to go on the range which is about 3 miles from camp. We get back to camp about 10 a.m. and then go out marking targets in the afternoon and get in about 10 p.m. Breakfast and supper when we get back if we can rustle any.

 June 4th

Here it is Sunday and this letter not off yet. Our class finished shooting last night and we passed our First Class Shots I think. We are not sure yet though as it is the score kept in the butt that counts and mistakes are sometimes made when we are taking signals.

 We were out on church parade at 9 a.m. and a biplane came right down close to take a look at us—made so much noise we could hear nothing else. We see lots of them every day and sometimes we see big dirigibles. At our last camp we had to line up in the middle of the night on account of the proximity of German Zepplins. The same camping ground was bombed last year and 12 men were killed. The tents are now all painted dark green on the outside so they cannot be seen at night. Also there are no lights at night.

 We got word here of a brilliant German naval victory on Wed. & Thu. but now it seems that the Germans did not get very far from their hole. They did not stay out very long and lost as many or more ships than we did.

 Had to stop here and go and get dinner. It is starting to rain again so I don’t know whether to go over town or not. Two weeks ago today I went to a church—or rather Sunday school near our camp. Soldiers were not invited but another fellow and I went and hung around till they asked us in. Then they asked me to give an address, which I did. Then, the Sup’t. asked us home with him for tea and we went to church afterwards. I was inoculated with some kind of anti typhoid stuff in the morning so was pretty sick all day and my arm was very sore. Could not lift it up to my mouth. I went to bed soon after I got back from church. Everybody else was in bed too in our tent. Will was not in as he was on Guard Duty. Then a guy from another tent came in drunk and started pulling one of our men out of bed and making a big fuss generally and after stamping around on my feet & legs for a while finally fell right across my sore arm, so I got up and threw him out of the tent. He jumped up and hit me with his fist but did not hurt me, but it made me go for him and I finally knocked him across the street and he fell in the tent on the other side. He did not come at me again but had a lot to say. In fact he was still talking when I went to sleep. Next morning he came around and claimed he could not remember a thing that had happened. The beer in this country is certainly doing a few of our boys lots of harm and there are more saloons here than I ever dreamt of before.

 Will and I got off from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. last night and went to the only movie here. It cost us 11d. each and was not as good as the worst $.05 show in Victoria. We nearly choked with the smoke and there were only two reels of pictures with lots of stops in them when someone would come around with a rig like your plant spray and spray every one with some stinking stuff. I asked one of the fellows sitting in front of us how much he paid to get in and he said “7d.” So there you are. That is a sample of how the wonderfully “honest” Englishmen are stinging the Canadians whenever they can.

 Well, the rain has stopped so I guess I shall close and mail this. Hope you are still all well and that you have had a good time with Uncle Will and Aunt Hattie.

 Your Loving Son,

Bte. 101749 C.W.A. Drader,

3 Coy. 66 Battalion,

British Expeditionary Force,

Canadians,

Army P.O.

Southampton, Eng.,

June 7th, 1916

 Mrs. M. B. Shook,

11440-65th St.

Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

 Dear Sister,

 Just a line while I can write in England as we are expected to sail for France today. It was just a month ago today we landed in England and we have been on the jump all the time. We are all fixed up now though and ready for most anything. I have got out of being vaccinated and have had only the first inoculation so I guess I am lucky there. Also have clothes enough and big enough now. We all have to wear the English boot which is a good one and iron shod—much more so than the ones we had. They have made a mistake in my identification disc. They spelled the name Drayder and only give C.W. for initials, but I don’t think I can get it changed now and hope that there will be no mistake if anything happens to me. Will’s is all right. I was on Picquet duty on some of the streets of Southampton last night and say it was torture. Thousands of girls talking and teasing us and we had to keep in line.

 Neither Will nor I have heard from you or Earl since we left Edmonton. Have you forgotten all about us? Am enclosing a letter to Lyle Bennedict and I wish you would please try and put his address on it and stamp it and send it on. You will find his address on any of those cards I got at Xmas—you remember. I think my Post Cards are in a cigar box in my trunk.

 Hope you are all well and not working too hard. We are in the 49th Battalion now but you had better address us as before.

 Your Loving Brother,

Pte. #101749 C.W.A. Drader

3 Coy. 66 O. Battalion

British Expeditionary Force

Canadians,

Army P.O.

London, Eng.

Somewhere in France

June 18/1916

 Mrs. J. Drader,

2132 Belmont Ave.,

Victoria, B.C.

 Dear Mother,

 I wrote to Nora yesterday, but have a chance to write now. I shall try to send you a few lines. As I write I can hear the cannon with no intermission whatever, but they are not doing any damage here. In fact things are very quiet today except for the noise.

 We have not been in France many days but it seems like as many months to me. Have only got mail once since coming here and it sure enough looks good. There are a lot of fellows I know in our Battalion. Among others are Alf Slater, who sung in the choir at Lacombe when Nora played the organ; Bert Simpson—Dr. Simpson’s boy; Ike Southard who bought Hunter’s place at Spurceville; one of the Parker’s boys, and Everenden from Blindman Valley.

 Have learned to speak a few words in French but it seems as though the French people here learn to speak English faster than we learn to speak French.

 I would like to have time to make a plant & bug collection here. Could have the ones I made last summer snowed under in no time. Shall enclose a couple of flowers but there is no telling what they will be like by the time you get them.

 Hope you are all well and happy. I suppose Cecil will be home by the time you get this. Am getting lots of practice in mathematics. You see we use money from Canada, England, France and Belgium and it takes some practice to count up your change in a mixture of these—not that we have so much but in making the most of our little 15 francs twice a month. A franc goes 20 cents or 10 p. here though I got 21 francs for $4.00 in Folkstone before I left England. Shall enclose a few facsimiles of coin found in my pocket at time of writing but I am afraid they are not very good as I do all this sitting on the ground.

 Guess that is about all I can think of now so hoping your all well I remain,

Your Loving Son,

Pte. 101749 Drader, C.W.A.

C. Coy. 49th Batt.

British Ex. Force,

Canadians,

Army P.O.

London, England

Somewhere in France

June 19, 1916

Mrs. J. Drader,

2132 Belmont Ave.,

Victoria, B.C.

Dear Mother,

I wrote to you yesterday but just got your very welcome letter of May 19 today so am going to send another in reply to it. Eugene also gave me two letters of yours to read and a letter from Josie. It was so many all at once.

We shall probably be up in the front trenches in the course of a few hours so am writing this now before any rush comes.

From the tone of your letters you seem to be laboring under the impression that I would be in a different squad from Will. I was put in a recruit squad for a few days when in England but it was the work of a Sergeant Major who wanted to make everybody coming into the 66th from other units take a back seat for awhile.

I got as much drill in one day in Victoria as I did in all the time I was in the 66th. I qualified for the rank of Lieutenant in Victoria and I am sure that I could have got my commission in the Irish Guards if I had stayed there. However, I do not want to make a profession of soldiering so am not keen on promotion. Am better here than I would have been sticking around Edmonton and knowing that Will and Eugene were out here in the thick of it. We are all in condition to do our bit now and shall likely be at it in a few hours. Of course I don’t know anything but something tells me that this summer will be the fiercest fighting yet and I am glad we are here to do our share.

I sent you a ribbon like the one Nellie sent you when I was on my way to Halifax. It was one I wore on my cap for a while in the 66th. Did you ever get it? I guess Eugene will have told you about how we are placed in the Battalion. Will and I are together in C. Coy. 12 Platoon. Eugene is in D. Coy. and in command of the 14th Platoon. There are several 51st officers in the Batt. and of the men over (censored) % are 49th. There are also some (censored)th officers.

So the (censored)th has gone at last. I have heard all kinds of things about it leaving. I heard it was to leave 5 days after we left Edmonton. Heard this on the Olympic when we were on the ocean. There were over 8000 men on the boat and among them I met one from Tofino who gave me all kinds of news—of the kind in the song:

The Captain told the Mate,

The Mate told the Crew,

The Crew told me,

So I know it must be true.

I must write another letter tonight so will say bye bye for this time with best wishes.

Your Loving Son,

Bert

Pte. 101749 Drader, C.W.A.

49 Canadian Battalion

 P.S. Forgot to tell you about our harness. What we wore coming over here is not thrown in the scrap heap but sent back to Canada I think for guys to come over in. We wear no leather here except the bayonet scabbard. All the rest is web.

Somewhere in Flanders

June 26/1916

 Miss N. B. Drader,

Victoria, B.C.

 Dear Sister,

 Just a few lines to send along before we take over the front line trenches. Am sending my military will to mother. Have willed everything to you with the idea that you will give it to the boys that come back from the front in case I should snuff out.

 We have been under attack for some days now and it is not too bad at all. The boys have got a good many new dances named here—to wit—“Machine Gun Flop”, “Whiz Bang Glide”, “Sausage dip”, “Shrapnel Wiggle” etc. It is so long since I have slept in a bed that one of the boys are saying he would not know what a bed was for if he saw one.

 Well, have to get on guard again so must close with love from,

Bert,

Pte. 101749 Drader, C.W.A.

C. Coy., 49th Canadians

Somewhere in Flanders,

June 26/1916

 Mrs. J. Drader

Victoria, B.C.

 Dear Mother,

 As Eugene suggested that I send a letter with his am going to try and send you a few lines. We have been under fire now for some days and are going up to take over the front line trenches tonight. This is likely to be the worst place yet in every way, although it may not be. It all depends on circumstances and on what Fritz does. Have made my military will in case I should snuff out and ask you to keep it. It is your name I have as next of kin and therefore you would be the first to be advised of anything happening to me. Also I have stated in my book that the will is sent to you. Of course I do not look forward to getting too many “sausages” or “whiz bangs” or anything like that, but think I am ready if it is to come.

 There are more rats in this dive than you could shake a stick at and big ones, too—in fact they are old lunkers. I was on guard last night and saw lots of them as they are chiefly nocturnal in their habits. I tried to bayonet one but they are too wise. One of our section said this morning that he saw a big rat plodding along with a chunk of a biscuit it had got in the German lines and he took it away from it and made his breakfast on it therefore we should not try to kill them. It is a caution the way the song birds stick around this place and sing when you can hardly hear yourself think for cannon part of the time—“zip”—there comes some more of Fritz’ “wireless” messengers, right in our corner. You can hear the shells coming for several seconds before they strike or explode. The ones he is sending now are the kind that explode on impact but only about half of those are exploding.

 None of the 49th have been hurt since we joined them unless it was some bombers last night, and I have not heard of any of the artillery getting hurt, though Fritz throws hundreds of shells over here every day & night.

 We had a little rain about noon today but the sun is very bright this morning too and the aircraft were very busy in consequence. I saw one brought down in the air battle this morning about 7 o’clock but do not know whether it was ours or not.

 The Y.M.C.A. is doing great work here. It has a booth right up here in the front in a “dug out” where the boys can buy cakes & fruit etc. but nothing to drink.

 Well, I guess I shall write a few lines to Nora and then have this ready to send & hope it gets through all right & finds everyone well as we are here.

 Your Loving Son,

Bert

Pte. 101749, Drader, C.W.A.

49th Battalion

c/o Army P.O.

13 General Hospital,

Boulogne, France

 July 1st, 1916

 To:

 Pte. W. E. Drader,

12 Platoon,

or

Lieut. E. Drader,

14 Platoon

49th Battalion,

3rd Canadian Division,

France

 Dear Will and Eugene,

 Have tried to write before but could not get any paper till this morning and then only one sheet. I hope you are both all right yet and out of that Hell Hole for a time at least. I am getting on very good here. They are all as good to us as can be though pretty much overworked I think. They say I am to go to England but I do not know when. Oh-my wounds are one in the head and 4 in the back-but they are only flesh wounds. No bones are broken. I can’t tell you for sure where to write but please try the address above and let me know if you are all right and who is not in the Batt.

 Yours With Loads of Love,

Bert

Pte. 101749 Drader, C.W.A.

C. Coy. 49th Canadians

Hope Ward

Edmonton Military Hospital

 July 19th, 1916

 Dear Mother,

 Am going to write you a few lines tonight and tell you about some of the things which go to make up the life of a wounded soldier. I managed to get down to Eastbourne to see Will yesterday. He seemed very cheerful and picking up again physically I think. They say his leg will heal up to be as strong as ever so I guess he is not nearly so badly off as he might have been. He seemed to think he would be all right in a few weeks but I think he will likely not be ready to go back to the front until next spring. It takes a long time for the shrapnel wounds to clean up. I only had small ones in the back and there is one of them not even scabbed over yet. But it doesn’t bother one any and is gradually clearing. There are some chunks of shrapnel still in the wounds

 July 20th Had to stop and get to bed here so now it is the middle of Thursday.

 All the patients in this ward who are allowed to get out of bed were given a park pass yesterday. That is we were allowed out from 1 to 7 p.m. but had to come in for tea at 4.00. I had got a letter from a lady who visited the hospital some time ago, telling me about a Shakespeare revue at a secondary school from 2 to 4 p.m. It was only 20 minutes walk from the hospital so I went there and I am enclosing the program they gave me. It was very well carried out too but the fun of it was I was the only wounded soldier there. A wounded soldier is dressed in light grey clothes with a bright red necktie, so you see he is a very conspicuous spectacle. The name of the part of London is Edmonton so when I went in the head master introduced me in a very flowery way by telling that in Canada there was a place called Ed. And from Ed. in Can. came a school teacher to fight for his etc. and he got wounded at Ypres and was now in their presence etc. etc. There were about 200 of them and they gave me 3 rousing cheers of welcome, so I had to get up and thank them and say how glad I was to be there etc. etc. It was quite a job for me. I was blushing clear down to the soles of my feet. When I got through the applause was deafening and I seemed to be the center of attraction most of the time I was there. Don’t know that I want to go through an ordeal of that kind again. I wish I could get into events of that kind incognito.

 But the best of it was after. When I had had my tea I got out on the street again and had only gone about a block when I met some of the school girls and they stopped me and shook hands and all talked at once for a while and finally the best looking one asked me to go home with her. So off I went and had some strawberries and tea and when I had to get back to the hospital she came with me. She promised to bring some of her friends and come to the hospital so see me sometime. Also have a standing invitation to their place.

 22nd This letter is not finished yet so I guess I had better stop now and mail it. I have not heard from Will or Eugene since I saw Will on Tuesday. Had my back x-rayed this morning and will know tomorrow if I must have an operation. Hope it is not a bad one if I do. Hope you are all well and happy.

 Loads of love to all,

Your loving Son,

Bert

Hope Ward,

Edmonton Military Hospital

London, E.

July 23, 1916

 Dear Brother,

 Just received your very welcome letter of the 18th inst. With enclosed letters from Nora and Mother. You say you sent me several letters but the only one I got before this was the one with the 5 pounds in it. I told you about that before if you ever got the letter. This is your birthday and I wish you many happy returns of the day. I don’t know of anything I can send you better than a letter so shall try to tell all I know and that is not much. Should have written so that you would have got this on your birthday but I didn’t, so there. I don’t know that I altogether understand all of you letter. Do you mean that a bullet touched your head? You want to be careful (as if one could out there). The doctor in Bologne said the piece of shell that hit my bean went through the steel all right but bounced off the wood. Had an x-ray made of my back yesterday and expect to have an operation in a day or two to remove some little pieces of shrapnel. But I don’t expect much bother. If an operation is necessary am going to try to do it with only a local anesthetic. Was down to see Will on Tuesday and he was very cheerful, though he looked a little peeked. This was what I expected as he had an operation the day before. Just got a letter from him this morning and he seemed to be tired of being “babied”. Says he will be crying for a suck next. Am going to Henry’s this P.M. as I got a telegram last night saying Harry would be at home today. Have not met him yet. Was out yesterday P.M. to a “doing” for 500 wounded “heroes” at Woodgreen. Well, just when I had found a jane exactly to my taste some bloke started blowing the fall in horn. Nelson like, I put the telescope to my blind ear and had about two hours more of bliss before I was “found” by the police. I tell you there was some cheering, though when I marched down the lane where the other guys had marched in fours some long-a-da-time before. Guess the crowd was tired waiting for some form of excitement so when I came down all by my lonesome I got nearly drowned by flowers cigarettes etc. Am getting used to that kind of thing now though. I heard about a “Shakespeare” event at a Secondary School near here on Wednesday so went down there. There were about 200 students and the program was very good but the worst of it was I was the only wounded soldier there and cut quite a dash with my flannel suit and huge, bright red neck tie. The Head Master had to introduce me as a “hero” from Canada and they gave me three cheers. It was very disconcerting to an individual of my retiring nature but I had to get up and thank them for their welcome and tell them how good looking they were and all that rot. I think they must be specially instructed in the way of giving applause by how they roared and howled when I got through. Had to go back to the hospital for tea at 4.30 and when I got on the street after I had not gone a block before I met a bunch of girls from the school. They all talked at once for a while and finally the best looking one asked me to go home with her. She can play the piano and sing like a lark and likes rowing in the park etc. So I have won a homestead here I guess. Don’t think from this that we are allowed to come and go as we list. It is only by using my fertile brain to its utmost that I have managed to get out some where every day since I got out of bed a week ago Friday. We are only supposed to have two half days a week. Please excuse neglect to paragraph etc. Making most of paper. I hope you are well and having an easier berth now. Had a taste of your birthday cake and took some to Will. Hope you get it all right and have a chance to enjoy it today.

 With loads of love,

Bert

Shorncliffe, Aug. 11, 1916

Dear Mother,

 I was very much tickled to get a budget of mail the night before I left Epsom. It included one from you and Nora and Eugene and two from Earl. Was going to bring them with me down her and send them on to Eugene but in the excitement of changing outfits & all the red tape connected with moving to the base I left them behind. Hope to get some more in a few weeks.

 You asked me about the place at Tofino. I guess Earl should know more about that than I do. I went down to where the 88th is camped last night and tried to find Birdie Farrard but could not. The 88th is all transferred to the 30th and about half of them have gone to France & I could not find any Clayquot boys though I learned of four or five who had gone across. I think that there is a deed for the land that ? ??? there last summer filed in the land office at Alberni but am not sure. If it is that way it is in Earl’s name.

 When a fellow gets around after being wounded he is entitled to 10 days “sick leave” but I cannot get my leave till I get my paybook. This was taken from me in hospital. So I guess my leave will come about like the certificate of the ? for that place.

 Eugene & Will were well the last I heard from them,--Will of course is not well but I mean doing well--.

 I have had the same tunic as I wore when I was hit and have put leather buttons on it now so that I shall not have to polish brass. Am sending one of the brass buttons to you & one to Nora. I hope you get them all right. They are the ones I wore at Ypres. I hope you are still going strong.

 Your Loving Son,

Bert

Sunday, Aug. 25th 1918

 Dear Mother,

 I got a couple of letters from Earl this morning including yours to him of July 16th which I was glad to get. Yesterday was a fine day and the moon almost full and we had the p.m. “off” so I just took a ramble around the country which is hard to beat just here. I went through the nearest large town—about 4 kilometers and up the hills on the far side about 5 kilos. More. Well it got late and I was coming back toward the town by moonlight and there were several flashes and heavy reports down the valley. Of course there were planes to be heard all night but mostly ours. When I got into the town I found a bomb had lit smack on one of the big houses but it did not burn. The house and those around it were wrecked but I did not learn if anyone was hurt as there was a certain amount of excitement and people did not like being bothered by inquisitive individuals. I have a hunch that our military policeman on point duty there was a casualty.

 Guess that is about all the news. Our course started in earnest on Thursday. It should last five weeks from then. So I should not go up the line before then.

 Must get busy and write to Earl, Will, Nellie, Nora, Josie, Cecil, Mrs. Saunders, Blance, Cora, and Freda. Cracky’s I have a bunch this time.

 Best Love to all from Your Loving Son

Bert

E.F.C Officers Rest House and Mess

Dec 12, 1918

 Dear Mother,

 I’m back at Calais on return from leave so will write you a few lines as I should have done before. Was able to visit the following places for a short time; Leeds, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Inverness and Perth. Also got down to Bramshott to see Earl who was sick in hospital but was doing well.

 Was in Leeds on Sunday so am sending you paper I got in a church there—Can’t find it so will send bill from Inverness. I’m sure I don’t know program—thought I had preserved it carefully in my pocket book.

 Well I guess that is about all the news. Am likely to be three or four days getting to the Battalion when there aught to be some mail for me by this time. I hope you are all well and escaped the “Flu”

 Best Love from

Your Loving Son,

Bert

Mount Newton Cross Rd.

Saanichton, B. C., V.I.,

September 2, 1942

 To Whom It May Concern:

 C. Wilbert Drader served in the ranks of the 49th C.E.F. and was recommended for a commission on account of consistent and steady front line service. He received his commission July 1st, 1917. As an officer he was cool under all conditions and quickly gained the confidence of the men under him. He acted as Platoon and Company Commander—also Musketry, Bombing and Education Officer.

 In 1918 he was attached to the Canadian Corps. School and as Company Commander there brought his company to first place for efficiency in all branches.

 As I recommended him originally for a commission, I have no hesitation in doing so again, and I feel confident that he will prove himself a steady and reliable officer and well liked by his men from whom he will get every cooperation.

 Yours truly,

(Signed) R. H. Palmer, Lt. Col.,

Late 49th Bn. C.E.F.