Letters from World War II
1941 to 1944

Letter to: Mabel	From: Billy	Page 2
Letter to: Mabel	From: Billy	Page 3
Letter to: Mabel	From: Bert	Page 4
Letter to: Mabel	From: Bert	Page 5
Letter to: Mabel	From: Billy	Page 6
Letter to: Mabel	From: Billy	Page 7
Letter to: Jim	From: Billy	Page 8
Letter to: Betty Ann	From: Billy	Page 9
Letter to: Kathleen	From Billy	Page 10

Mabel – Mabel McPhie (Registered Nurse)
Billy – W.S (Billy) Ballantyne
Bert – L/Sgt. Herbert A. Brown (D6088)
Jim –
Betty Ann –
Kathleen -

Original Document: Cape George School Museum
Transcribed by Sue Smith, Cape George N.S.

Sunday Dec 1st,

Dear Mabel:

Well, we arrived safely in Glasgow, we took just 7 days coming across, the weather was good, we had great meals & cabins so we couldn't complain. This country is not to bad, but not as good as Canada. The first night we were here, a ferry came over and we had to make for the air raid shelters about 2 oclock in the morning. I wrote a letter to ma today, so I hope either one of these reach you, they say you should write about 3 if you want any to get there. There was a lot of mail lost last week in a convoy. The worst trouble I find over here is getting used to the money and the price of things, everything is 6/2 and so forth. The Scotch people seem very friendly, quite a bit more than the English. The weather is not near as cold as at home, the fields are green + all the cattle and sheep are still grazing in them. We come up the Clyde River in the day time, there was some wonderful scenery. Well I think that's about all the news for now, I hope this reaches you before xmas, but I wish you a merry xmas anyway, write and give me all the news,

Love Billy

No713163
M. Battery R.C.A C.A.S.F
No 1 Holding Unit
c/o Base post office
Canada

p.s. I think this will get me
B

Original Document: Cape George School Museum
Transcribed by Sue Smith, Cape George N.S.

Beacon Btn
Feb 25

Dear Mabel:

I got your parcel yesterday evening, I was glad to get the socks and other things, thanks a lot for them. I intended to write when I got your other letter but I lost the address. We are not doing much down here now, there is lectures every day. Freddy is here now, Allen D is coming back here pretty soon, he is in Halifax now. The flu is striking bad here now, they took a bunch of them to the hospital at Hawkenbury (??). James and Gillis are pretty sick with it. James went to the hospital.

I was up to New Glasgow to the game the other night. We didn't have any time to go visiting, we left right after the game. We had an entertainment here last night. There was a bunch down from the college, they put a minstrel show on. I didn't hear any news from home lately. Beunoud (??) Collier is in the hospital with appendixs. I suppose theres lots of election talk up that way. The grub is getting better here now since the election was started. I won't home since new years, I guess I'll have to wait till the woods open to the Cape. Well that's about all the news, so will close.

Love Billy

Excuse the finger marks I'm on the fires today.

Original Document: Cape George School Museum
Transcribed by Sue Smith, Cape George N.S.

D6088 L/Sgt. H.A. Brown
E Battery R.C.A.
No 1, C.A.R.U.
Can: Troops P.O.
England

27 Dec 43

My dear Mabel,

Sincerely hope you are well and having a good time during Christmas, and I do hope the new year will bring to you all happiness, well I am sorry I did not answer your letter right away, but one of my reasons was, I was waiting to get your loving gift which was on the way, and I got it last week and I can say it is very grand of you to send me such nice things, and I can safely say I am going enjoyed it all, because I have nnot touch nothing yet, because January will be my Birth day 24 and I expected to go on leave the ??? day will be my Christmas and I am looking forward to have a swell time, oh girl that shirt was just swell it fits like a wedding ring around my body, so I do not have to pass it on to no one except the owner which his myself, can you send Billy mother address for me because I do not have it he always tell it to me when ever I am writing . I would like to write her, well life was not much for this Christmas every thing seems dead around here no where to go nothing much to drink, all I did was to go to a show in the evening anyway we all have to thank God all the same to preserve our life to see one more Christmas, and we all must pray for peace, and a lasting two, please tell Bill mother how sorry I am to here of her loving husband pass away I know it is shock to her, but I do pray for Billy to come home safely to help her, I have not heard from my home for 3 months now, I about to write my brother today, I don't have much more to say now till I here from you again. God bless you my dear kind girl I do hope I will be able to repayed you in some way some day. I knew that you have done this from your own kind heart, but one cannot help thinking how nice you are, especially myself so I must thanks again for your parcel made me very happy. I will be thinking of you next month while I am having my birth day, please let I know when yours this year I do hope it will be soon, I sent to asked you if can send you a small present you never say yes or no so I will be sending one next month just something from this side of the Big pond. Cherio God Bless good luck

Yours truly
Bert

Letter addressed to:

Original Document: Cape George School Museum
Transcribed by Sue Smith, Cape George N.S.

Miss Mabel McPhie
91 Almont Avenue
New Glasgow, Nova Scotia
Canada.

D6088 Sgt. Herbert A. Brown
D. Battery R.C.A.
No 1 C.A.R.U
Cdn Troops P.O.
England.

5 Sept 44

My Dear Mabel

forgive me , for not writing before but I was very busy these few weeks, and I was waiting for this little gift to made up, and I was deturmine not to write till I get it just came today so I am hurrying it on to you + do hop you will accept it. I do not want you to think that I am paying you for what you have done for me, because I would never able to do so because his not the money that you have spent counts, it is your kind heart, did it all and I do not have mouth to thank you for all, so I think it is the best thing to let you have something to remember me always because we may never meet, which I do hope we will some day when this conflict over which we all are praying for, and I know it won't be long now. I have heard that Billy is out of Hospital and he is on leave but I do not see this yet, I did went to one hospital to look for him and some of the other Boys but he was not at that one, and I could not trace him. Anyway he alright now I do hope he will never have to go back again, tell his mother for that she must not worry much because he is alright and give her my sincere regards, and tell her I am still waiting to here from her she must write soon thanking you again dear for all you have done for me and the rest of the Boys God Bless you and I do hope to hear soon that you get a good man and get married, and if you are going to please let me know. I expected to live in Canada after the war and I want you to always write to me I will too willing to answer them . I want us to be distance friends after the way over, because you are very kind to me because both of us is strangers know nothing of each other, so long for now Mable Darling Good luck God Bless you give Billy sister my regards. Cherio,

Yours truly friend
Bert

Addressed to:
Miss Mabel MacPhie
Cape George
Antigonish Co. N.S.

Original Document: Cape George School Museum
Transcribed by Sue Smith, Cape George N.S.

Canada

Oct 4/44

Dear Mabel:

Here I am in the waiting room where I wrote the first letter when I arrived in this country. It seems like a lifetime since then + I didn't think I would land back here again. But here I am + the place hasn't changed any. You have likely guessed by now where it is, no 1 C.A.R.O went on leave from ?????? depot + had a very nice time for nine days. Was up to Aberdeen, have never been there before + the people are quite nice.

Well I can't say how glad I was to receive the cigs you sent. Have been watching the mail list the past week + when one of the fellows told me myname was on it I pretty near let a whoop out of me. Had a letter from El?? Also one from Violet a couple days ago. Eleanor sent along a snapshot of herself + another girl taken after graduation, one of Jean, believe it or not I had to look on back to see who it was. Guess I will need an introduction to everyone when I get back. It must have been a nice trip for you folks up to Kays?? Graduation, bet she was glad to have you there. It's started to turn cold here these days, guess the summer weather is just about over of course there should be a few more fine days before winter sets in.

How are all the folks at the cape, keeping well I hope. Suppose Harold ? is quite busy with the ploughing these days + the rounding up of the cattle. I bet the kids are thinking about having Xmas vacation by now. Met a fellow in here from Antigonish by the name of Mac Donald he is a lieut + used to be in the 86th ????. As for any of the other guys from the cape haven't seen any of them for quite some time now. I notice the paper is just about all used up so will close for now. Love Billy.

Letter addressed from:

F13163
??? WS Ballantyne

Letter addressed to:

Miss Mabel MacPhie R.N.
Cape George

Original Document: Cape George School Museum
Transcribed by Sue Smith, Cape George N.S.

Antigonish, Co
N.S.

March 7

P.S. Ciggarettes are the biggest obstacle here
B

Dear Mabel:

Got your letter yesterday evening and was some glad to hear from your, it was the newsiest one yet. Well you will sure kept busy the past spell, there was an awful lot of sickness at the Cape this winter wasn't there. I hope everybody is better by now, poor ???? had a tough time of it though. We are having lots of rain here now, I don't know if it's ever going to stop, anway I suppose its better than snow (maybe). As for getting to like the country that's out of the question, theres none of the fellows like it here, I guess it's the situation of the place right now. Had a letter from violet the same time I got yours, yours was posted on the 29 and hers on the 31 they made good connections , It was the second I got from here. Aunt B???? wrote a few lines along with it, she doesn't agree with the weather there, the temperature was 45' below pretty cold isn't it, quite a difference than here. Well I think I'll tell you a little about what our daily routine, being theres not much to write about, all the fellows seem to find it hard to think up news to write home about. We get up in the morning at half past six have breakfast at 7, parade at 8:30 dinner at 12, parade at 1:30 and dismissed at 4:30 & supper at 5' oclock. The meals we get are not so hot we usually have mushy porridge and sausages (if you could call them that) for breakfast, stew for dinner sometimes dessert & the remnants of dinner for supper. They say the food is alright but when the cooks get done of it, it's almost uneatable. WE have shows twice a week in camp it breaks up the monotony, they are through the compliments of the Y.M.C.A they are doing an awful lot for the fellows over here. I write to Grandpa when I was up to Glasgow on leave, I also sent him a book with a (real twig of heather) I hope he receives them OK. Theres not much bombing going on right now maybe they are waiting for a bigger push, well let them come they'll get their dose, and is everybody sure keeping their chin up, it's wonderful the way they keep their spirit up. I got quite a laugh when I read about obbie?? getting wounded, I should think it would discourage him from the army. It was too bad about Jimmies wasn't it, if you should see any of them remember me to them, I didn't forget when I stayed at Jimmies when Harold was up there. How are Macphersons I suppose aunt Libby is planning for a trip to the Cape. Well I will sign off for now and hit the hay.

Original Document: Cape George School Museum
Transcribed by Sue Smith, Cape George N.S.

Love Billy.

May 18/41

Dear Jim:

Had a letter from Mabel and when she said you had sent the cigarettes which I received OK, I thought i'd drop you al ine, instead of saying thank you in her letter. The cigarettes we get from Canada are a real treat on account of them costing so much here and the quality isn't near as good as Canadian brand. we get some from different firms at times, the last were form Tip Top Tailors. We are having some pretty nice weather here now, the trees are all leafed out, and ddo they ever go for flowers here, every little cottage to mansions has flowers in their front lawn. Was up to London on leave a week ago and had a swell time. They are still going strong despite the air raids, it's rather quite at night but in the day time the streets are crowded and you would never know there was a war on. I correct myself there about it being quite at night, but all the time we were there, there wasn't a raid. Buckingham palace had a piece knocked off it, but there still a lot there yet. While we were standing looking at it, the Queen drove out on one of her tours to the bombed areas and felt quite a thrill at seeing her for the first time. They are looking for Canadians to help on the farms and were around to our regt yesterday they didn't have any trouble getting volunteers, because it would be a nice change from the army routine. Some of the boys are getting rather fed u p waiting so long for action, but I see Hitlers right hand man left him the other night so things don't look so bad.

Well it's half past ten and still lights, so will close for now and do some shining up for the morning.

Sincerely
Billy

Original Document: Cape George School Museum
Transcribed by Sue Smith, Cape George N.S.

Feb 16

Dear Betty Anne:

Was glad to get your letter your getting guest to write. Hows ?????? & Dorothy, I suppose you got lots of lambs by now, I seen two out in a field the other day. I was sorry I couldn't be home for Xmas, but we had a Christmas tree here & a little bit of turkey so it wasn't to bad. We have no snow here, is there any skating on the pond; I suppose D??? wants to go skating. Tell ?? Jimmie that we didn't get any ????? yet but will now, quite a difference than here, we are having swell weather now, it gets kind of cold at night and in the morning but it clears up through the say. They are starting to do some bombing now I imagine it will be getting heavier as the weather gets fine. Well I suppose any mail I'll get for a spell now will be a little old, we moved out to the regiment five days ago, quite a difference than the holding unit, we are considered ready for action at all times, in the holding unit was more of a training center. I received Mabels first letter about 2 weeks ago and wrote to her, she sure had lots get some pretty soon, they come over in airplanes but the weather is to cold for them now. Do you still get up early and put the fire on I suppose you get the breakfast now. We were up to London the other day and were down in the air raid shelters theres a lot of kids still there, there wasn't any ???? to the cope from England yet was there? Well Betty Ann ????? theres not much to write about so will stop for now.

Love Billy

Back of letter

5 Field Battery
5 Field Reg't
R.C.A.
Canadian Army Overseas

Original Document: Cape George School Museum
Transcribed by Sue Smith, Cape George N.S.

I have changed this as they have asked.

Beacon Btry
Friday 7

Dear Kathleen:

I intended to write sooner, but didn't get around to it. I got your candy the other night thanks a lot for it, there was nobody died yet. There's not much doing down here now, we got issued with rifles and bayonets today, we intend to get the new uniform pretty soon, I intended to go home one of these days but when I heard about all the snow I gave it up. Gillis B was up to town a couple days ago, and he said he seen Jennie. It was a great day down here today, we were shoveling snow today, it snowed last night. I had a letter from Mabel the other night she didn't have much news. We got new officers now, Freddy went to Halifax to take a course they are pretty good fellows they made new pass rules, we get a pass every ten days, so we'll be doing a lot of travelling after the roads open. How's everybody down there, I suppose they are all through with the wood. Well that's about all for now.

Billy

Original Document: Cape George School Museum
Transcribed by Sue Smith, Cape George N.S.