



Letters to the mother of Corporal Roy Montague Smith, RM,  
43RM Commando, killed in action 18<sup>th</sup> April 1945 Italy.

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Written by Captain Martin Luther Preston M.C., A' Troop Commander, 43RM Commando,  
and their Padre, Reverend Ross Hook, M.C., R.N.V.R. Provided to the CVA by Roy Smith (nephew).

"A" Troop,  
43. R.M. Cdo,  
L. M. 2,  
6<sup>th</sup> May, 45.

Dear Mrs Smith,

I sincerely hope that you will forgive me taking this liberty of writing to you. But you will readily understand why. Please allow me to introduce myself, Martin Preston is my name, and I am the Troop Commander in which your son Roy served.

Mrs Smith I sincerely hope that you have already received official intimation of Roy's death, and that this letter isn't the bearer of the first information. What it really is intended for, is to give you more intimate details, and also as a token of the Troop and all his comrades deepest sympathy.

On the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup> April our Troop had the task of attacking German positions West of Anversa, and Roy met his death whilst leading his section in the attack. He was killed instantly, and with no pain at all, not even a wound, bomb blast and concussion.

He was buried in the British cemetery here in Ravenna, Italy. Our own Padre buried Roy, in all the traditions of a fallen British soldier, and I can solemnly assure you Mrs Smith, it was as fitting, as you his mother would have wanted it, had you been here.

All Roy's personal things will be sent back home, with the exception of one article, this a friend of his will bring back personally.

In conclusion please accept the deepest and sincere sympathy of all "A" officers, and above all, his comrades and pals in the Troop, your his mother, have every reason to be proud of so gallant and brave a son, goodbye, and god bless you

Yours sincerely  
Capt Martin Preston

P.S.S./B./C.M.F.

The Rev. R. S. Hook R.N.V.R.,  
43 (R.M.) Commando,  
C.M.F.

11.v.45

My dear Mrs. Smith,

You will have heard by this time that your son, PLY/X 106635 Cpl. R.M. Smith has been killed in action. I am writing to you to tell you of the sympathy which is felt for you by both officers and men of his unit. He was popular with all and we all miss him very much. Because we miss him we feel able in part to share in your grief.

There is no much to tell - His troop were advancing along the edge of a road preparatory to attacking a German position, when your son was hit. He was hit in the chest and I could see from the nature of his wounds that he must have died almost immediately. His troop commander has told me he did not suffer. I buried him myself in Ravenna

Military cemetery.

I know it must seem hard to you to have him taken from you so near the end of the war. We must be strengthened in the knowledge that he is in God's care and for his sake face the future bravely. I am sure those who have gone before will tell us when we meet them again, that there was no need for us to have worries, and but only to believe. I pray that God may strengthen you in the knowledge of His love.

If at any time in any way you feel I can help please do not hesitate to write to me.

With much sympathy

Yours sincerely

Rose Hook.

Chaplain R.N.V.R.