

Transcription

Copy of a letter by George Francis Murphy written from the Middle East [probably Gallipoli] on 14th September 1915

Sept 14th 1915

Dear Wifie,

In the interval of waiting until it is dark enough to drop over the side and see what 'Jimmy the Turk' is at with his pick and shovel, I am wondering how all are at home. It has been cold today, and when we left Egypt we were told to take only what we could carry, so most of our fine warm clothes were left behind at Alex. I have two warm singlets and some pants, with my Gtcoat, but my valise is back yonder with my other things. I am trying to get them over here, and am cursing diligently each day because they are not yet to hand. Maybe we shall get a Cardigan Jacket or something like that before it becomes too cold.

Goodsell called in today. Says his lot had a warm time of it. I am making up a small parcel; (4 ozs is the limit here), of relics from the field. If I can only get them back, I shall have a few interesting

Page two

Things to show. But some of them are very weighty, one the gunner off?come weighs about 1700 lbs. Today I have been making a washstand for myself. Six bits of wood, a few nails, a tomahawk and a knife. – I am on my last spool of films. Every day I am tempted to use some on the magnificent sunsets. There are other sights in front of the trench that are not so beautiful by any means.

I am hoping to see Jack's name for a cross any day; he has a Coy of his own now, and Mr Roper will probably go as his 2nd and Capt. Sid knows him; he belongs to Lithgow. He is my senior sub. I have one Ross from the old Scottish; just now I do no Coy work; I have a much bigger job. Sometimes I have to 'go' for 24 or 26 hrs, and frequently go for 3 or 4 days without taking a stitch off; but I am in excellent health. I shave every 3rd day, and have a bath by degrees. We get a gallon of water per day for cooking, washing, drinking &c. The gallon is carried

Page three

Up a hill steeper than the path up to the 'Look Out.' I do not know whether you have our ration list yet. Here it is as far as I can remember:-

1 ½ lbs fresh meat or 1 lb 'bully beef'
1 ¼ bread or 1 lb biscuits or 1 lb flour (scarce)
4 ozs jam. 4 ozs golden syrup
1/20 oz mustard. 1/36 oz pepper, 3 oz sugar
5/8 oz tea. 2 oz peas or beans, or dried potatoes
3 ozs cheese, 4 ozs bacon, ½ oz salt, 1/10 gill lime juice
4 ozs rice tobacco 2 ozs per week Rum

Of course we don't get all that every day, nor yet any of it some days. Candles are made of gold, but being a rather important person, I have a lamp, and no trouble about it either. Sometimes we get enough to eat, but at other times supplies run very low. Firewood is very, very, scarce and wood is treasured beyond almost anything else.

J.Paul has been in growling at me for climbing up over the sandbags with a telescope, trying to find a big gun that has been covering us with dirt &c. It was a trifle warm up there; poor Jack looked awfully worried till he got me down again. But we got the gun, so it was worth it.

Well, Dear, you have my letter ere this, so you

Page four

Will know how worried I am and how much I long for news from you.
It is nearly dark enough now, so I must say goodbye till I get a chance to write again.

With fond love to you and Boy.

Your Loving
George.