

Transcription

Copy of letter by George Francis Murphy from France 4 February 1917

4/2/17

Dear Girlie,

Yesterday I received a copy of the Ba. Times [Bathurst Times], in which is letter from Melbourne re rain. – It was very nice indeed for them to write to you, and I'm amply repaid for that night's very strenuous work. Poor Bretherton has since been killed, only one of the six is with me now.

My word, it has been cold here. For 18 days the glass has not risen above 30° and it has fallen below 10° on nearly every night. Eggs freeze right through – crystals of ice form inside – the bread is like a rock and has to be thawed before we can cut it. – Butter! – Acetylene lamps go out because the water freezes in them, and we use 300 ? of glycerine with water in our engines & even then we have trouble. The roads are frozen hard, and one never knows when to expect a fall. The ink in the fountain pen 'la poste plume au reservoir' – freezes

Page two

and the necessary buckets are emptied into sandbags each morning. It's the devil's own job to get water as a liquid. Last night my hut caught fire. I woke up at 12:15 a.m. and flung a mixture of ice & water all over the place. Had a deuce of a job with it, and you can imagine how cold it was when I tell you that the water was turned to ice before it reached the ground.

I have been all over the ground where I was wounded, and looked up the many spots again. – It is quite safe just there now.

I sent you a photo yesterday of 4 of my officers. You will recognise Sam Beddie, the photos are very good.

Well, Girlie, nothing else tonight. It is bitterly cold. I am keeping well, and in great spirits.

Your loving

Geo