

DIARY OF DRIVER WILLIAM IRVING PHILLIPS
FIRST FIELD COMPANY ENGINEERS

COMMENCED 17.8.1914

August 17

Accepted as a volunteer for military service abroad. To report at Victoria Barracks as soon as possible.

August 18

Medically examined and passed as fit. Farewell at school. Oral exam by the inspector.

August 19

Sworn in at Engineer Depot. Driver in the Engineers.

August 20

Drill in squads for several days, when horses arrived. Plenty of fun training teams. Several bolts and dozens of spills. Starlight and Gordon spill the cooks. I had my fingers pinched by a horse pulling back when I was fastening the headrope but they soon healed. Appointed Batman to Lieut Biden. Heavy rains set in and flooded the camp, but the boys paddled through it cheerfully.

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September

I have been in camp about five weeks having a good time with plenty of leave.

Sep 17

Went to Manly School, and received a wristlet watch, dressing case, silver mounted pocket book, 5 pairs socks, 3 mufflers, and sundry momentos. Gave some of the things to the boys of our tent. Sen. Inspec. Friend made presentation and was well pleased with my class.

Sep 19

Orders to be ready to march on Monday 21. Camp very busy.

Mon 21

Marching order parade through Cent. Pk. Troops behaved splendidly.

Tues 22

Marching order parade through City, good appearance.

Wed 23

Horses go aboard on Friday, sail on Sat. We sail Sunday per SS Afric.

Thur 24

Busy in camp, packing up.

Fri 25

Carts taken down to boats. Last leave from camp. Rushed round to Gilbecks, Aunt Em's, Aunt Louise's and Mr Holden's to say Goodbye.

Sat 26

Horses went aboard, but orders arrive that embarkation is cancelled. Win came to camp to see me in afternoon and Arthur in evening. We were ready to march at 9 am tomorrow morning.

Sun 27

No leave since Friday. Do not know when we will sail. The boys are very dis-satisfied.

Mon 28

Horses came back from boat today. No leave. Camp getting stale. No news why embarkation stopped. Bully beef, black tea.

Tues 29

Still no news. Went out to give horse exercise. Had a ride to Newtown. Football arrived and cheered things considerably. Auntie Em and Gainford came out at night. Picket for Ryan, concert at night.

Wed 30

In camp all day, no news, no leave. Arthur Holden came out to see me at night. Ryan did my picquet in merry style.

October

Thur 1

News that British Govt cabled "Do not sail". Drivers and Major McCall returned from the boat. No 1 Section has leave tonight. MacPherson and Rose had a fistic encounter and Rose now wears a damaged optic.

Fri 2

Leave for Section 2. Concert at night. Jack Archer, Giovanelli & Wal Dive came out and had a dance and got merry.

Sat 3

Football match in afternoon. Sections 3 and 4 played 1 and 2, and 1 and 2 won by 11 to nil. Got leave for dinner time till 12 pm. Went out to St Peters and played tennis and went to Manly at night with Arthur, Win, Alf Stephens, Miss Hurrell, and Miss Henry.

Sunday 4

Leave from 11 am until 9 pm. Went to Gilbecks for dinner and then went to Newtown for tea. Bettie Clark very ill. Stayed for an hour with Win. Did not go to church as time was too short.

Monday 5

Eight hour day. In morn went into Sports Ground and saw procession also Lang and Starbuck fight. Leave in afternoon. Out to St Peters and played tennis. Saw Aunt Martha. Sapper Cotterill committed suicide – shot himself tonight. Gloom over camp.

Tues 6

Whole NSW force marched through Sydney and made a fine impression. Our boys were among the best. Great crowds and tremendous enthusiasm. I was left in camp on police duty.

Wed 7

Military funeral of Sapper Cotterill. Our boys marched to Waverley Cemetry behind gun-carriage with coffin. A fine procession, and touching ceremony. Went out to Newtown after a long chat with Fred Lee.

Thur 8

Had tooth filled. Address on duty by Major McCall. Packing and straightening a bit. Got invitation to Methodist dinner. Went to dinner and afterwards to Cong. Church Pitt St where pleasant farewell speches were made by Rev F. Colwell, Col Plane, Dr Bromilow & CJ Prescott. Good feeling and kind & cheering words. Capt Buchanan also spoke finely.

Fri 9

Went out to Long Bay range for shooting practice. Shot well, scoring a possible at 300 yds. Down town getting collars, gloves and salt water soap.

Sat 10

In camp all day, wet day. On picquet at night, hence did not go out.

Sun 11

Leave in afternoon. Went out to St Peters. Met Stan at Aunt Louise's. Saw photos at Aunt Em's. Went to Newtown Church at night – SS Anniversary and back to Parsonage for supper. We expect to get away soon.

Mon 12

Went down town on business for Lt Biden. Germans have captured Antwerp. No news of departure. Night parade for sappers, doing field works. Wrote 2 letter cards.

Tues 13

Cleaned saddlery. Hot day. F. Lee came in & took me home to tea at Croydon.

Wed 14

Hot day. Schools' display. Storm in afternoon spoilt a fine programme. Win, Mr Clark & Jackie spent afternoon at camp. Picquet at night. Orders to embark on Sunday next.

Thur 15

Lt. Biden away on leave. Went out to St Peters. Saw Bazaar opened. Played tennis. Called at Newtown.

Fri 16

Packing things ready to go aboard on Sunday. Payday. Went out to say Goodbye.

Sat 17

Down town shopping. Win & Mrs Clark came to camp to see me this afternoon. We had a real picnic in our tent. Raining heavily. Received cake and books from Newtown Parsonage. Farewell.

Sun 18

Reveille 5.30. Packing in a hurry. By cab to Ft. Macquarie with luggage. Our boys came by tram, thence by ferry to SS Afric. Crowds waving farewell, and singing "Auld Lang Syne", "Sister" &c.. Assembled in mess room. Good dinner. Several avalanches of food down gangway, followed by dixie and clumsy mess-orderly. About 5 pm we moved away from anchorage, and received a touching farewell as we steamed down the harbour. Tooting ferries, cheering crowds, "Goodbye" signalled by a row of men from South head. "England expects every man to do his duty" from the pilot steamer Choppy weather outside Heads:- following the Suffolk. Plenty leaving. To bunk straight after tea. Feeling unhappy. Tossed out of bunk.

Mon 19

Awful feeling without the heart to heave. Helpless crowd all around. Sick before dinner, but did not miss any meals. Met E Moore, A. Loomes, L. Dinning. Calm day, boys reviving. Passed cruiser in afternoon. Gave safe feeling. Good night.

Tuesday 20

Passed Wilson's Prom. soon after reveille. Everybody well and happy. Struggle for things from canteen. Very fine weather. Plenty of catch. pennies on board but are being stopped. Skipping, boxing & c. Crook choir on our end. Concert on after deck. Good night fun in bunks.

Wed 21 Nice calm day. Met Will Davis laying quoits, tug-of-war. Did some writing. Reading Pickwick Papers. No news of outside events since leaving Sydney. Settling down to order and getting comfy.

Thurs 22

Calm day again, Working in some rifle drill. War on canteen prices. Nobbled from sleep into squad of mugs. Cock fighting after tea when McNair and Briggs distinguished themselves. A couple of forage caps went overboard in the scramble, but a devil they care.

Friday 23

Physicable. rifle drill. Troopship following us. Fine school of porpoises. Storm in evening but did not last long enough to be rough. Writing letters. Good night.

Sat 24

Calm again. Several ships in sight. Enormous mail ready for Albany. I posted seven letters. Boxing, wrestling &c

Sun 25

Reached Albany early. Very pretty entrance but deserted appearance on shores. Fleet gathering, fourteen vessels in the Sound. Cruiser standing off heads tonight. Heavy wind blowing tonight.

Mon 26

Ten more vessels arrived. Rainy day, no parades. Sea moderate. Clan M. arrived. Received letter from Win, which came as a pleasant surprise.

Tues 27

Fine day. Three of our officers away on shore. Defence story instead of parades. Tried to write, but kept going with photo printing. Raid by hair-cutters, several gallant captures, trouble at sergeants' quarters, Gatty in choko. Managed to escape with my locks still intact.

Wed 28

A little rain. Routine as usual.

Thurs 29

Fine day. Rope and wound up ready to go alongside wharf. Letters tied to board, and thrown on tug in hope of getting them away. Believe correspondence to be stopped. Rec'd letter from Win.

Fri 30

Steamed up harbour to jetty. Albany in sight. Very pretty scenery, good harbour. About 2 pm went on shore. Route march through Albany, round hill and back to ship. Nice little town, very clean, no leave. Some of the chaps "pinched" ashore, even climbing the wharf piles. Many prisoners. Nice day.

Sat 31

Fire broke out in No 6. hold, and we had to tumble out at 5.30 am. Multitudes of dresses. Soon extinguished. Out from jetty to anchorage in the Sound. Four of our drivers went to the Clan Macorquadale last night. Report well on the Clan., lost one horse. Court martial of Driver Rathard A.S.C. for slighting his comrades. Sentenced to shower & blanket.

November

Sun Nov 1

Twenty six vessels formed in three lines. Far vessels started first, and each vessel turned into line and followed the vessel which had just been behind it. A fine sight as the Orvieto led a single line of our 26 ships with 10 N.Z. transports following. Outside the Sound, formed up again in three lines led by Wiltshire, Orvieto and Euripedes. Three cruisers in view Minato in front and Melb. and Syd. on either board. Lights all doused on cruisers and only head and tail lights showing in transports. Showery weather but steady sea. N.Z. following in 2 lines. Good-bye Australia.

Mon 2

Strong wind blowing. Sea rising. Our chaps on guard. Lt Biden unwell. Got harness out of hold. Freezing chamber very frosty for harness. Tickets being sold for sweep in Melb Cup.

Tues 3

Tues. 10

Hot day, weather very calm. Plenty of shower baths. Showers of rain fall nearly every night, but my bunk is under shelter. About midnight a sharp clap of thunder came without warning, and we thought we were shot. "Mary" sleeping above me suddenly fell from above like a bolt from the blue, on my bunk, and then to Phil Ayton below, muttering prayers and imprecations as he went. Those who lost their block were chipped from all hands next day.

Wed 11

Hot in morn. Stepped on an iron plate with bare foot and blistered my foot slightly. Cooler in afternoon. Boxing and wrestling continued. Plenty of claret and a little science. A couple of knockouts. Mulligan & Castles in clown act.

Thur. 12

Still warm with occasional showers. Through belt of calms. Meeting steady North W. winds. Sea very calm. Learning knotting, lashing & signalling and cleaning harness. Deck cricket.

Fri 13

Crossed "The Line" this afternoon. Rained all morning. After dinner the Engrs and A.S.C. had water fight, while Infty ran riot & doused a sergt prior to Neptune's Ceremony. Big canvas bath, flour paste for lather, board razor, hose for syringe, platform overhanging bath, box on edge of platform for seat of victims who have not previously crossed "line". Capt. Swannell & his tribe in hideous dress & war paint from the Neptune gang, and duly lathered, shaved and turned over the victims a back somersault into the bath beneath where they were properly doused. When the officers were baptised, the mob ran riot, ducked Neptune, and all others who chanced to come near. The hose played cheerfully around, and of course we got in the thick of the fun and got thoroughly wet. However it was enjoyed by all hands except the squibs. Bruises galore, but they don't count. Some of our fleet drawing ahead led by the New Zealanders. Got Xmas cards printed to send home.

Sat. 14

Fatigue parade for all hands. Holystone all over our decks ready for inspection at Colombo. Turned out at 4.30 a.m.. Rifle drill, and letter writing in afternoon. Sent a doz Xmas cards & 5 postcards ready for post at Colombo which we expect to reach tomorrow. Sleeping up on deck when a sudden storm at night drove most of us helter skelter below. Had a group photo taken **on top** of Hospital, five of us in the group scanty dress.

Sunday 15

Ceylon in sight at dawn. Rugged mountains in distance, long beach with dense scrub behind it. An odd date palm shows above other trees. Soon passed scores of catamarans – little fishing smacks, very narrow with square sail and an outrigger. Can travel some too.

Colombo in sight soon after dinner, the Hotel Galleface being very conspicuous. The town is very pretty viewed from the sea, being well shaded – almost hidden by trees, some with light green foliage. Red tiles predominate. Plenty of folk – natives mostly: moving about the breakwater, but we anchored too far out to see much. We are anchored outside in the open, the space within the breakwater being very small, and crowded. The N.Z. ships are there getting supplies, and English, Jap, Russian warships are lying there together. The Sydney is there, and of course was at once admired and hailed by all hands as the Hero of the Day. Russian cruiser guarding us tonight. Two big churches visible, one said to be Mahomedan and the other Cingalese.

Mon 16

Very hot & oppressive. Some of our ships went inside. Some niggers on a raft made of logs bound together came alongside and dived for silver, but reckoned they could not see copper. "All Right, All Right, All Right! Two shillen all right. Little boy dive!" Sang songs also. All money crammed in mouth which showed no effects of the bundle of coin it contained. Girdle round waist. Some had long hair. Some of our ships went inside for goods.

Tues 17

Two lots of rafts came beside, cadging by diving. Others brought bananas and cocoanuts on tug-boat, passing them up on a line. One chap passed down a half-sov and was informed that "Gentleman no want change". About 8 pm we started off, about 5 hours after the first and second divisions of our fleet. News by newspapers from shore that the fittings of Emden are to be mounted at Canberra. The duel between Sydney & Emden was fierce, and but for the shells fired by Emden not bursting, the Sydney would have had a rough time.

Wed 18

Fine day, hot. I have a very sore throat, and am off colour generally. Paraded sick. Our division has not yet caught the other two divisions. Boxing & wrestling tourney continued. Some good scraps, and several knock-outs. Playing bridge at night.

Thur.19

Paraded sick again. Have a very sore throat – fancy it is a touch of influenza. Some of our chaps inoculated against fever, but I was absent for the parade. Took effect at once, and limp arms reminded us of vaccination. Leading half of fleet in sight. We expect to pick them up tomorrow. Some of the boys volunteered to get down and stoke, as the firemen are feeling the strain. Fine and warm since leaving Ceylon. Nightly showers ceasing.

Fri. 20

Did not parade sick as I had work to do for Lt Biden – cleaning saddle. Felt a bit better in morn but am feeling seedy tonight. Passed exam in semaphore and knotting with very fair results. A.19 has rec'd orders to join 2nd div – we think 'tis because she is too slow.

Sat 21

Nice fine day. Everybody busy preparing for the rifle drill competition on board the Afric. Great interest is being displayed in the contest, and we feel sure our chaps will **do well**. Nice concert on No 6 hatch tonight.

Sunday 22

Fine and hot. Our water supply is getting scarce, and orders have been issued to economise as much as possible. Washed out some collars, handkerchieves and sox. Ironed the collars at night, and made them some class. Every eye is on the rifle comp.

Mon 23

Socotra in view. Rugged barren mountain right to shore. No signs of life, but nevertheless beautiful being so rugged. Day taken up in rifle comp. which the Engineers carried off in good style. We secured the two first places with A.S.C. next, and the Infantry **following**. Our chaps very excited tonight.

Tues 24

Still hot and very dry. The Orvieto and our escort have left us and we have our 4" guns ready tonight.

Wed 25

Innoculated against Typhoid fever this morning and arm already sore, **while I feel drowsy**. Finals of boxing tourney today won by Healey (feather), Adair (light), McDonald (middle and welter), McNair (heavy). Next week the athletic events commence. I think I will have a go at a couple of them. Reached Aden this afternoon. Mountains of rock rising at different places around the town. Cannot see much from the harbour. Everything dry and desolate looking.

Thur. 26

Very hot and dry. Not feeling too good on account of the bad effects of inoculation.

Fri. 27

Hot and dry. Some of the Indian transports seen returning bearing numbers up to 103. Hayes being offended because Aiken reminded him of the bath, became pugnacious. Good scrap, win for Aiken. Bad ear and eye for Hayes.

Sat. 28

News has arrived by wireless that we are to proceed to Cairo to complete our training, and then go from there to the front. We are naturally disappointed but are willing to go where we are sent. We may be called to meet Turks. Came up cool at night with strong head wind.

Sun. 29

Cooler today. We expect to reach the Canal in about 3 days where we will disembark & travel thence to Cairo. Mostly disappointed at playing what seems to be second fiddle, but "Lans it doesn't matter". Church parade in khaki. McCracken and Frings fistic encounter. **Frings** walloped.

Mon 30

Washing day, getting things clean ready for packing. Do not yet know where we will land, but are going to pack up tomorrow. Land in sight on both sides tonight. We seem to be dropping behind the other two divisions.

December

Tuesday 1

Reached Suez about dinner time. High bare rocks around, and desert stretching away on either side. Small township, but very compact. Natives came alongside in sailing craft selling dates, oranges, apples, Turkish delight, figs, beads, postcards. Some of the transports have moved off through the canal. They look to be sailing through the desert. Taking water on board tonight.

Wed. 2

A fleet bearing Indian troops came up beside us under convoy of French cruiser. Waiting for pilot. Pilot arrived about 1.30 p.m., and we set off, being loudly cheered as we passed the French Cruiser. Very pretty spot just at entrance to canal. Lads went into raptures at sight of some white girls – first since leaving Albany. Canal guarded by Indian troops on each side. Plenty of dredges in the canal, and stations every few miles. Queer fishing affairs near mouth of canal. Reached lake about dusk. Passed plenty of camps of native troops.

News of great Russian victory. Saw several camps of camels & drivers. Red lights on one side of canal, green on other.

Thur 3

Reached Port Said about 4 am. Small anchorage crowded with shipping. Natives in plenty pulling boats, sailing in skiffs. Musicians came alongside singing and chanting for tin. Saw several patrols of native police go along streets. Milkman driving cow from house to house. Several big hotels just over the way. We got some good oranges, dates &c from natives. British battleship & French cruiser in harbour. Lying about 100 yds from shore all day – so near and yet so far. Sang songs to all the pretty girls on shore. Every time we hear an Australian Cooee it gets a ready response. Sailed out of harbour and anchored off shore with several other boats. The wharf space at Alexandria can only accommodate 8 vessels, causing delay. They can only run 10 trains a day to Cairo, so we will lose about 10 days getting to our camp which we hear is to be about 10 miles out of town. Rec'd 3 letters – home, Aunt Em, Win. Replied to the three. News very welcome.

Friday 4

Sailed from off Port Said about 5 pm. Our skipper went off in morn, & came back about dusk just before sailing. Sea calm, with the waves a bit choppy. Packing officers luggage. Some of the officers ill, and some celebrating the occasion in merry style. Juggling with cabin doors, caps, cheer- bottles.

Sat. 5

Arrived off Alexandria at dawn. Drew into harbour among our other ships, but cannot go alongside yet. Large town. Abundance of sailing ships and seagulls. Very long break-water. Rained heavily last night. Three chaps from Infty. climbed down a rope to a raft (which was alongside cleaning) then hailed a boat and started for shore. They were called on to stop, but made more haste when suddenly an officer grabbed sentry's rifle and fired close to their bows. The nigger in charge of boat wheeled like fury and came back post haste. Our three worthies were arrested and the nigger told to come up the steps. He said "No No", until the sentry aimed the rifle, when he scrambled up in a hurry and threw salutes & bows in rare style. He was cautioned & released and in fun the chaps called to him to come close, but he stoutly shook head and fists saying "Him feller shoot". French cruiser lying in harbour. Have written a couple of letters in hope of posting when we go ashore. We had everything packed & ready this morn., but did not move.

Sunday .6

Church pde in morn. Writing letters in afternoon. Lying out in stream waiting to go alongside Clan Macorquodale came alongside. Lost 5 horses. Everything ok.

Monday 7

Still waiting to go to the wharf. Some chaps pinched ashore but were all caught on return and have to do 7 days in clink & lose 7 days' pay. One chap climbed up rope to top, when he saw an officer above him. Saying "the game is up" he dropped back in water.

Tuesday 8

Went in to wharf about 7 a.m. Plenty of niggers touting for custom. Noisy chaps quarrelling about coins thrown to them, and having noisy arguments with police. Poorly paid 2/- & 3/- a day & poorly fed. Glad to get crusts a& scraps thrown overboard. Queer donkeys & mules working. Niggers dressed in all kinds of different coloured garbs. Expected to go off this afternoon, but did not go. Finished packing up, and carried officers goods down to train. Plenty of chaps pinched off, many got drunk and were put in clink. Raining all day. Glad we did not go tonight.

Wed 9

Kicked up early. Packed our goods in 10 mins. and away to the train. Soon settled in train with niggers all round selling trinkets, oranges, apples, cakes, sugar cane, chocolate. Started off, but go so slowly that niggers sell as we go along. Lovely views as we leave Alexandria. Plenty of canals & irrigation channels, plenty of date palms, mud villages as dirty and dingy looking as a lot of rotten straw stacks. Plenty of donkeys with men riding well back to get a longer ride. Queer cemeteries. Old fashioned cattle & sheep, and bullocks & old wooden plough as in days of Adam. Great plantations of cotton with great stacks at all stations. Camels laden with cotton & corn in plenty. Eucalyptus trees in one place. Donkeys very small & poor. Few women & children seen & those are dirty and all dressed differently. Country level and swampy with patches of bulrushes abounding. Passed one great stretch of one of the mouths of the Nile. Arrived at Cairo about noon. Transferred luggage to tram. Natives in plenty chattering & chanting as they scurry about. Cup of cocoa and roll at station. By tram to Mena at foot of Pyramids. Camp behind Pyramids on edge of desert. Donkeys & camels in plenty with niggers all round trying by all means to catch money. Bustling luggage down to camp. Slept in big shelter tent. Rather cold with plenty of stones in sand.

Thur 10

Straightening up the camp. I was helping cooks get dinner. After dinner had donkey ride up to Pyramid. Had argument with nigger to get change, while he tried every means to catch the whole of a shilling. Donkey's name Moses. Climbed to top of Pyramid. Great climb. Huge stones gradually wearing away by weather. Had a cup of coffee on top. Glorious view of farms of Nile – a wonderful country. Sphinx in one side and buried city on other side of Pyramid. A sea of niggers anxious to guide.

Fri. 11

Fixing up the camp. Put mats in tents. Drivers & horses arrived. All in good order. Seems like old times to have them with us. News of naval victory at Falkland Is. Plenty to amuse us. Food not so plentiful now – field allowance - but quite good enough. Some of the silver spoon chaps grumbling.

Sat 12

Still fixing up camp. Fixed ropes &c around officers' tent. Got things ready to go into Cairo, but deferred leave till later as req. Weames could not get away.

Sun. 13

Marched up to Mena House for swim. Mena House, a grand place formerly a tourist hotel, now a hospital for troops. Beautiful grounds, tennis courts, baths, gardens, kitchens, scullery, &c &c, lifts, hot houses, look-out. Leave in afternoon – went to Cairo with "Warrigal". Had lunch at French cafe - waiters painfully slow – then round to Soldiers' Cafe – good attention clean and good. Went round town to see life. Streets crowded and narrow. Dirt in side streets – awful. Big pipes, gambling, wares in open view of street. A queer variety of humanity, stench, and filth. Vice awful – saw things that will remain fixed in my mind for a lifetime. Met 3 good terriers.

Mon. 14

In camp all day. Tents allotted freshly, and all our gear had to be removed again. Helped Dubbo and Weames make stands for books and gear. Will finish the one for Reg Weames tomorrow. We have not to attend parade now. Tale of Afric being sunk.

Tues. 15

Tale of Medic being sunk. Fixing up stand for Reg. Weames, and attending to camp generally. Picquet.

Wed. 16

Things in camp much more convenient. Mess-room and cooking kitchen much improved. Still working at stands in officers' tents.

(Neglected this part of diary – too busy -)

Thur. 17

Making stand for things in our officers' tents. Officers getting plenty of rubbish from town. Would think they came out for a picnic. Pinching timber – nearly a fight.

Fri. 18

Finished the fourth cupboard for Walke and Frank Atherton. Pinching timber and nails.

Sat. 19

Straightened things up in morning, and in afternoon Reg. Weames and I went in to Cairo. Went to Soldiers' Club for dinner, then around to the stores for different things. Met some enthusiastic Frenchmen, and saw a nice looking French lady behind the silk counter – nice looking girls of decent stamp are scarce in Cairo. Finished shopping and went to Soldiers "Cafe", had tea and read English papers & magazines. Saw conjurer and had a talk with one of the proprietors. Home early.

Sun. 20

Took horses for exercise around Pyramids & Sphinx. Images for sale looking old, but well-manufactured. Dubbo – "Strike me fat here's Jesus!" Wrote three letters.

Mon. 21

Fixing chairs. Horses yoked up in teams. Working well. Posted letters to Home, Auntie and Win. Got letters from Win & Mrs Bard from the Old Country. News like gold and gave me good spirits for the rest of the day. Account of S. School picnic.

Tues. 22

Wondering what Xmas will bring. Geese & turkeys appearing in stray corners. Nigger getting away with jam pulled up by sentry and started to fight, but soon shoved off in anticipation of the bayonet.

Wed 23

Plans of campaign developing. Walke in town got two promising plum puddings. Getting a stock for our tent.

Thur. 24

Weames & I went into Cairo to get our little store. Returned home with cake, milk, preserved pineapple, dates, apples, bananas, nuts &c.. Confusion at tram where interpreter protested against being called a liar as he thought. "Warrigal" flew off and kicked a chocolate kid in the dinner box. Officers merry. Packing things for visit to Memphis.

Fri. 25

Xmas Day. Worked the oracle with Mohammat for cooking. Feast in tent followed by ditto in mess-room. Messroom decorated with flags, palm leaves and humorous writings: (Good Luck to our Commanding Officer), (A Merry Xmas to Everybody) (Good Luck to the Cooks who spent Xmas Eve watching our Duff) (Auld Lang Syne) (Drink to those at Home) (Any Complaints) (Good Luck to our Office from No 6. Hun!) Go Easy with the Champagne) (Bile Beans for Bad Bellies tomorrow) (Look out for the Quid in Cookhouse Table) (Go Easy with the Guards Coffee) (No canoodling in rear of Drill Hall) (Beware the 10%) Go for your Life (Play the Game Boys) (best Wishes to the Cooks).

Menu

Roast de Boeuf, Ham, Chicken.

Cabbage, turnip, potatoes.

Plum Pudding Cake, Preserves.

Oranges, apples, dates, sultanas, figs, nuts.

English Ale, Lemonade.

Good feast followed by rest and discussion in tent at night

Sat. 26

Straightening up after the party. Not much doing. Half holiday for us, but I did not go out.

Sun. 27

Tent orderly. Had my leg pulled as long as a wet week. Thought I was up for orderly room, but 'twas only a joke. In afternoon Warry & I went for bike ride to Gizah gardens. Gardens lovely, niggers pipe band with high class drummer, afternoon tea, pavement with design in pebbles wonderful maze of caves, giraffes, crocodiles &c. Wrote letters Home, Mrs Rand, Win.

Mon 28

Quiet day in camp. Cleaned saddlery. News that it was reported that Afric went down in Indian Ocean. No mail yet, hungering for letters. Spots of rain

Tues 29

Took horses to Gizeh for exercise. Fixing nose-bags &c. Lecture by Major on bad language. Dubbo and Walke had an exciting chase after the French washerwoman who disappeared with their washing a fortnight ago. After much stuttering and jesticulation we managed to get a promise of a speedy return.

Wed. 30

Dubbo & Walke raided the stack of "delanger" and got some of their things and also some like theirs. Yarn of naval victory at Kiel. Dingo's horse stood on end.

Thur. 31

George Reid visited camp and addressed troops. March past by company. English mail arrived. Rumours that we will go from here to France in Feb.

January

Fri.1

Pottering around in camp with the usual routine.

Sat. 2

Weames & I went to Cairo. Got some articles for selves & officers. Interested in silk at Sednaoui's. Dubbo met us, but left again, and nearly got tangled with Alf O'Brien. I lost 1 Pound given for some articles.

Sun. 3

Busy getting officers off on a bike tour practising bridge destruction. In afternoon went with Stan & Sid. Marsden around Sphinx temple. Wonderful structure with enormous blocks of polished granite. Lid of sycophagus made of alabaster. Wrote Mother, Win, George, Miss Gilbeck.

Mon. 4

Took horses for exercise out through grove of palms. Came to Arab Market. Women, children, men & boys in rare confusion all over the road dealing in all kinds of things. Turkeys, geese, fowls, goats, fruit, vegetables, mules, donkeys, camels, horses, meat being cut up on ground with axe.

Medley of kids follow us for "Baksheesh", and we have a job to find our way out. Stones flying, but one chap acted knight-errant for 1 P.T.

At night we were having great argument in our tent when the reservoir just up the hill burst, and flooded one side of our camp. Tore away part of the concrete wall, gouged a hole in the sand, took timber, flags, barrels of tar & c all among the tents, while we had to grab horses off lines & then scramble to save officers kits. Fortunately our tent escaped. Boys take it in good part.

Tues 5

Digging things out of the wreckage. Drivers make good use of loose timber. Camp a picture with blankets, shirts, kits & c drying in the sun. Rice & Walke are now camera fiends, and we are always getting snapped.

At night Bert Currie & I went exploring the pyramids. Picked up guide who took us wrong way & picked up two dusky companions- One went for candle other followed to mind boots. Went into Pyramid of Chuffren. Strange echoes, and hard climb. In one place crawling. Boots off. Then went to third pyramid Nankara. Nine chambers. Lined with Polished Granite but all rooms cut out of solid rock. Had our fortunes told in King's chamber, all four sitting round a candle with the magic circle between us. My fortune is :-

1. Not married
2. Three girls in Australia. One as a sociable friend, one who is a horrible flirt, and one for marriage.
3. The third is always thinking of me and my friends think of me also.
4. She has golden hair and is a good girl.
5. There are two chaps in camp, intimate companions who speak well to me, but slander behind my back. They will do me no harm as I do not take notice of them.
6. I will not get shot in war, but will have a warm welcome home
7. In three years I will be married.
8. I will have a son with yellow hair who will be clever, and become richer than his father or mother. Then i will have a daughter and another son.
9. Am not to stay long here.
10. A long life and a happy one.

Out of Pyramid, had squabble over price and nearly came to blows. Paid 20 PT to guide and 5 PT to fortune teller. Had good meal, and came home.

Wed.

Strong wind rising with clouds of dust. Met Longmore going like fury on a runaway as we were going down to water. The wind fairly cracking in his mane and tail. At night went to YMCA. to hear Col. Green lecture on "With the Australian Bushmen to Mafelicy. Address very interesting, humorous and with good advice. Had nice quiet talk with Mr Green in his tent.

Thur.

Dubbo & I took lunch out to bridge where the sappers are working on the canal. Plenty of wind, sand and sore eyes. Got a letter from Win. last night which I nearly know by heart, the first letter from Australia for over a month. Pay at night. Trip to Suez cancelled. Picnic in our tent at night.

Fri 8

Out in palm grove exercising, and had a fine gallop and practised a little jumping. Still windy and very cold with a shower of rain.

Sat. 9

Out for exercise, and came across a mob of dogs which were promptly chased. One spotted chap put up a good run. Dubbo wheeled him several times, but my horse only got in when he was escaping in the palms. Bill narrowly escaped a tree. Wind dying away.

Sun. 10

Lovely day. Quiet day in camp. Did not go out, but looked after other chaps horses. Wrote home, Manly school, and Win. Got trick purse at Mena.

Mon 11

Frank Atherton and I went out to the works at canal & took lunch for officers. Mather turned a sugar-doodle off Maid Marion. Saw print of photo bareback on horse.

Tues 12

Had to get up very early as Lt Biden was going to Cairo. Went to chase him on W. Rice's horse, but the beggar played up, and bolted, but I managed to get him going alright. Got slightly kicked by Frank's horse. Killed a snake in the horse lines – a small brown one. Bill goes trenching.

Wed. 13

Received 4 letters. One from home, from Aunt Em, from Win, and from "Jim". Glorious to get news, so much so that I got excited. Bill in proper harness and quite happy.

Thur. 14

Read part of book "With Kitchener to Khartoum". At night went to YMCA and heard lecture on the Pyramids. Lecturer - manager of museum in Cairo. Letter from Arthur which went via San Francisco. Dubbo, Bill. & Weames make a glorious resolve, and Dubbo says his prayers.

Fri.15

Windy again with plenty of dust. Letters arriving and everybody in good humour. Some of the letters arriving behind their time and in all kinds of order. Finished book. Order to be careful what we say in letters.

Sat. 16

More letters. Washed horses in disinfectant on account of ring- worms. Went to Cairo with Officers. Glorious motor ride. Shopping all afternoon. Home late at night.

Sun.17

Over near Sphinx to have photos taken with college chaps. They did not arrive, but we had numerous photos taken on horses. Plenty of chatter & leg-pulling among the niggers.

Mon.18

Posted letters to Home & Win, and "Jim", also P.C. to Arthur and Aunt Em. General clean up for route march tomorrow when we expect to have to pad the hoof.

Tues 19

Up bright & early for route march. Moved out of camp at 8.45. Whole company & transport, leaving only cooks in camp. Mr Dyer in hospital, hence Frank escaped. Trudged about 7 mls at a brisk pace, when we halted and put up water troughs for horses. Hard pull home 3 mls through sand but finished fresh.

Wed. 20

In Cairo shopping for Lt Biden. Rec'd letter from Win, two from Else & Telegraph 19 Dec from Win. Had a good day, and amused plenty at the niggers trying to speak their language.

Thur.21

Shooting at range, and finished head of the list with the following scores :-

Grouping – Possible, Application 18/20, Rapid – Possible, Snap – Possible, B Grouping 20/25, Snap Possible.

25 25

18 20

20 20

20 20

20 25

20 20 Total 123 / 130 4 Possibles

Lt Biden asked where I did shooting, and laughed when I said 'twas among the rabbits. Target kept in rapid firing to show to the Colonel. Teaching horse to lie down at will.

Fri.22

Took lunch for officer out to the canal where Section 4 broke all records for trestle bridging and were complimented by the Colonel. We're hot stuff!! Writing letter to Aunt. Em.

Sat.23

Cleaned saddlery. In afternoon Warrigal & I went into Cairo. Had a look at group of old Col. Students taken at Sphinx last Sunday, but did not like them - too small & dark. Went out to Heliopolis to see Luna Park, but it was closed. Saw folk playing tennis and how I longed to join them. Hot bath at Eden Palace Hotel 5 P.T.

Sunday. 24

Went up to Sphinx and got photos which are not too good. Sleep in afternoon. Wrote letters home, Win, Arthur, Aunt Em, R. Turnbull. Lovely weather, chilly nights.

Monday 25

Round banking photos and had chat with old pals. Rumours of stir on the Canal.

Tues 26

Some of the horses suffering from sand cholic. Got letters from Mother, Amy, Muriel, Win, & Jim. News good & greatly refreshing.

Wed 27

Very windy & dusty. Rec'd Sydney Mail from Mrs Clark. Sappers working on the canal close at hand have made fine progress in work, and are putting up records greatly to the pleasure of officers & the General & staff.

Thur 28

Branded horses. Fighting has commenced on the canal, and we are expecting to proceed thither at any time. Reports of Kitchener's cold shoulder to our boys. Never mind - good job he can afford to be so independent.

Fri.

Neglecting diary.

Sat

Not feeling too good. Did not go to town. Writing to Amy & Else.

Sun.

Hot day - tired feeling. Exercising horses, and had an exciting fly on Dubbo's horse. Rode him through a series of plunges. Gave them a swim coming home - wrote Mother & Win

Mon. **Feb**

Swimming horses. Johnstone's horse catches Frank bending, and has a nip. Big & little nigger selling cakes. Big nigger tips over basket of little chap. Ted Hooper rushes up, kicks over big chaps basket & gives him one to go on with. Little nigger soon puts in a good shot with a clod at which they fight again, while the other niggers polish off the cakes.

Tues.

Windy and dusty. News that Suez Canal is blocked and no mail this week. Then a report of mail service being reduced. Orders for whole holiday each week, and only 8 hours each day.

Wed.

Took dinners out to the white house on the sands. After dinner, kids come selling tomatoes, and gets a couple at his head. Then begins a tomato war, niggers taking offensive on account of supplies. Our chaps organise a rush, capture the baskets, niggers flee with "shells" bursting about the upper story – like "Bobo" fleeing from the Old man. Rode Frank's neddy out & back.

Thur. 4

Fighting has commenced on the Suez Canal. Turks repulsed in trying to throw a bridge across. Guess those at home think we're hard at it. Yesterday the second Brigade marched out at short notice – presumably going to Somalia. Gave them a parting cheer. Could see the glint in their eyes. Bought a Bulletin & devoured news. Wrote to Hec. & Jim Duncan.

Fri. 5

Further news of fighting on Canal. Turks got lively time losing 3000 men. Query? Dubbo, Walke & Co. clipping horses. Maid Marion now resembles a good-natured cow. Holiday and kit inspection tomorrow.

Sat.6

Kit inspection over early. Bill & I went into Cairo for the day. When waiting for the tram, our officers went by in motor, picked us up, and we had a fine ride to bridge. Bridge up to allow passage of boats, so we commandeered a skiff, and were skilfully sailed to the other side. Had dinner at Murous Cafe – met Walker who went from our corps to reinforcements in Moore Park. I went for a visit to Museum. Saw wonderful monuments, massive statues, with fine engraving, very delicate work in stone, also fine coloured woodwork. Wooden coffins wonderfully preserved. Mummies of kings and animals with miles of wrapping & stuffing well preserved, but dry of skin. Hard features distinguish kings with crooked noses. Ships of the dead to carry souls. Had on board millers, brewers, bakers, carpenters, brickmakers &c &c. Plenteous jewels, and fine ornaments, showing that these ancient folk were masters at handicraft. Sacred cow adorned with wonderful inlaid work. Statue says she saved a king's life with milk. Images of dogs, goats, cats, ducks, lions show them like present day.

Hot bath at Eden Palace, tea, then home.

Sunday 7

Walke & Norton made things willing this afternoon with two flappers from Cairo.

Wrote letters at night.

Monday 8

Went into Cairo to get things for Lt Biden. Left this in bookshop where it remained for a week. Also dropped pencil out of tram coming home – talk about stiff!

Tues. 9

Working about camp as usual.

Wed. 10

Row with "Clive" about going out to rifle range. Marched out about 4 mls. and did some crook shooting. Could go close, but only close enough to wish for a hit. Field firing targets at unknown dist. some rapid firing. Knocked first target 4th shot, but didn't get a hit in 5 shots rapid & 5 shots disappearing. Lost oil-bottle – luck out.

Thur 11

Field firing again. This time I shot well, especially in section competition – a kind of contest in skittling targets and thus “killing” men on opposite side. Knocked my plate first shot then flopped Sgt. Lambert’s and having finished my ammunition, grabbed Page’s rifle and skittled another plate thus winning for the drivers from Sec 2. We had only a pickup team too.

Fri 12

Up early and away on a route march to Lakara where we bivouacked for night. Toilsome march, rest for few hours then away taking tools for entrenchments. Bivouac for night cold and damp. Slept with head in saddle.

Sat 13

Marched home mending road as we came. Hot & tiresome. Saw an animal called a mongrel. Chook cheerful.

Sun 14

Quiet day in camp. Wrote letters. Reinforcements have arrived also more horses & pontoon waggons. Am going to try luck as driver again, for I want to be among the lads and the fun.

Mon 15

In Cairo getting things for Lt Biden. Did not satisfy with both.

Tues 16

Spoke to Mjr McCall about return to drivers. Engineers practising on pontoons.

Wed 17

Engineer pontooning. Quiet in camp.

Thur 18.

Frank Atherton went into hospital – influenza. Jack Walke in hospital also. Nicholls & Atkins initiated to their places.

Fri 19.

Took lunches to canal. Duntroon dinner in Cairo at night

Sat 20.

Half holiday, but I took things easy in camp.

Sun 21.

Wrote home Jim, Win, Jack Archer & Mrs Bard. Letter from Mrs Bard & from Win greatly appreciated.

Mon 22.

Orders to embark for Europe in five days. Welcome news as there has been much sickness lately. A few cases of smallpox with several deaths. All been vaccinated again & sore arms appearing. Looking for more news of mail.

Tues 23.

To Cairo on business. Mail arrived, but not dished out yet. Bad writing indicates written in tram.

Wed 24.

To Cairo again. Frank and I went with Major & Clive & humped home supplies. Letters from Home, Win, Aunt Em & Ellis. Good news very welcome.

Thur 25.

Letters from home & Win. Hurrah D.C. Hughes. Getting things packed. Wonder where we are going. Dardanelles being bombarded by Allies warships.

Fri 26

Route march for company but we stayed packing &c. Clipped old Jack with "Dubbo" manipulating clippers.

Sat. 27

Orders to move 28th or 1st March. Wonder where? Completing packing arrangements ready to move out. Taking tents. Fresh drivers arrived from A.S.C. and reinforcements. I expected a transfer to drivers but did not get it.

Sun 28.

Move 5.30 p.m. for Cairo. Loading up. Struck camp about 2.00 p.m.. Marched out of camp at 5.30. Long march to Cairo where we arrived about 11 p.m.. Entrained, grabbed a bit of food, and away for Alexandria at 1.45 a.m.. Six batmen in first class carriage. Good sleep, good wash, snack in morning. Moved whole company horses, waggons &c on one train. Didn't even unsaddle horses

March

Mon. 1.

Off train, and at once began embarking on Suffolk. We all have our kits & blankets with us ready for use on voyage. Weames, Rice, Leathby & I nicked off up town & had a good square meal. Successfully dodged pickets. Embarking horses till midnight. Loading waggons &c all night.

Tues. 2.

Sailed at about 9 a.m. under sealed orders. Found that we are bound for Limnos Is. just off Dardanelles. Fleets have about demolished forts. Suffolk rolling in choppy sea. Oh my! Feeling very queer, lost dinner.

Wed. 3

Still feeling queer. Land in sight, bare looking islands. Rose's old Roan snuffed out & went overboard. Game of bridge at night. Heavy wind & choppy sea.

Thur 4.

Nice calm day. Feeling A. 1. Passing through Archipelago. At work among the horses each day feeding, watering, mucking out, exercising &c.

Arrived at Limnos Is. about 4 p.m.. Several French & English warships lying in fine harbour. Bare looking island with scattered hamlets with red tiled roofs. Patches of cultivation showing in valleys. Several villages. Passed fishing boats coming in.

Fri. 5.

Lying in a fine harbour at Limnos Is.. Hills around show plenty of cultivation, but through the glass methods seem crude. Party of sappers went ashore to select suitable place for a camp. We don't know who will occupy the camp. News very scarce. Several warships & destroyers keep coming & going. Weather quiet but very chilly at night. Snow appears on distant Mts of the island. Pinched Cpl. Newson's pillow at night. She was a bonz. Lights out early & noise was high & varied with all animal calls known for some time.

Sat. 6.

Party of sappers went ashore to make arrangements for camp. Working among horses mainly now. Some of them sick – effects of sand. News that H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth is working havoc at Dardanelles.

Sun. 7.

Did not seem at all like Sunday. No church. Party working on shore. A party of 20 men under Lt. Huntley left for the scene of action, and many were disappointed because some rang-tangs were chosen, while they were left. Several marines came on our boat. They were at Antwerp and speak with awe of the "Jack Johnsons". Medical inspection in morning.

Mon. 8.

Working parties on shore & infantry doing route marches.

Tue 9.

Plenty of warships of good big calibre kicking around. Transports arriving each day. Each of the Allies seems to be well represented. Printed active service PC's issued. One per man per week allowed.

Wed 10.

Horses getting little feed and we are not bursting buttons. Windy at night. Life boat broke loose & crew saved it. Dragging anchor & second anchor slipped. Several chaps got heavy sentences for nicking Captain's boat and pinching ashore. Driv. Bevis pinched unfairly for giving information as they returned. Macklin spending time also for helping himself to tins of meat. Wrote home, Win & Amy. Had letters censored.

Thur 11.

General routine on boat. Plenty of ships still coming. Harbour very busy. Scraps of news. Games of 500 at night.

Fri. 12.

Our section warned to go ashore for duty on Lemnos Is. All ready to go, but got orders to stand by and still we wait. Longmore's horse pegged out. Good game 500 at night.

Sat 13.

Our section with goods and chattels dangled over side into boats & landed on Lemnos Is. Humped things about ¼ mile to camp. Pitched tents & fixed camp. Plenty of cultivation, windmills, sheep, ancient stone houses & walls. Homely folk like Dutch. Water from wells. Firewood scarce. Selling oranges, nuts, milk rice, smokes &c.

A party of Engrs took over launch. Crowded in tents, but happy though cold as ice. Cook's dixies fly through explosion of stones. On slope of hill, rolling down all night.

Sun. 14.

Walke & I get passes to go through village & get stores. Women spinning at every doorway, carry water in jars from village pump. Plenty of Frenchmen about. Warships left harbour tonight. Searchlights playing. Another party of Engrs. arrived from boat. Lovely sunny day. Frost & ice last night. Men wear goatskin coats, also coats made from sheepskin wool turned inside. Wine plentiful & cheap. Eggs plentiful & dear. Coins of all countries in use here. Bees buzzing around. Our water supply is not too good yet but we are sinking wells. Reading Shakespeare. Slept better at night levelled ground & found a bag for mattress. All things very dear here. Our company has charge of water supplies & building of jetty at shore of harbour.

Mon. 15

Jack Walke & I go into village each day to get provisions. Very hard on offenders who go into village without pass. Field punishment administered for small offences. Tied down several hours each day, sleep with one blanket, & made to work in wells quarries &c for trivial matters. Evidently going to keep order with a firm hand.

Tues. 16.

Works proceeding, some horses coming to island. They go mad & break loose at sight of green grass, & feel of firm ground.

Wed 17.

One lot of our horses came ashore. Party of French soldiers on route march. Beautiful weather with rain at night.

Thur 18.

Horses came off Suffolk. Lizzie snuffed out & was dragged across behind punt & forgotten. "Yank" pinched for helping himself to bread. Lads merry.

Fri. 19.

Grazing horses on island. Cold wind sprung up at night & blew like fury. Several tents went down in the night. Otherwise all well & happy. Sent away postcards.

Sat 20.

Blowing & hurricane at night. Bert Currie kicked on knee & we carried him to hospital.

Sun 21.

Visiting hospital & carrying little necessaries. Gave Bert a rough shave. Walter Blattman & Maouri there too with measles & quinzy. Wind eased down, but rose again at night. Difficult to get provisions from boats. News of disaster to several boats in Dardanelles, also rumours of return to Alexandria. Ian Hamilton taking charge of operations. Many of our chaps bathing today. Will be with them when less busy. Visited French camp.

Mon. 22.

Out exercising horses, when Os. Earl was badly kicked in the tummy by the neddy owned by Francis. Tommo & I carried him on stretcher from hospital & now he is doing well among the boys.

Tues. 23.

Doing work with Lts. Mather & Biden levelling from water supply to camp. Horses still running amok. Macpherson knocked over a telegraph post & fell under a couple of horses. Swore roundly when a chap suggested that he was dead. Over at night to see chaps in hospital. All doing well. News confirmed of loss of "Ocean", "Irresistible" & "Invincible". Ian Hamilton in charge of operations & promises plenty of fight in the near future.

Wed. 24

Easy Going. Exercising horses. Transports coming & going each day. Sappers busy digging wells and building pier. Doing good work. On Imperial rations. Good bacon dried vegetables &c.

Thur. 25

Major Corlette came from Suffolk. Little news of future movements. Dardanelles going to be hard problem. When forts are silenced observation mines and field howitzers play havoc with warships.

Fri. 26

Some transports going out . Talk of many returning to Alexandria.

Sat. 27

Sappers about finished Australian Pier which is a good piece of work. Now finishing wells and leading water supply from the hills.

Sun 28

Some swimming. Dunlop tried to swim across harbour and had to be carried by Foster to warship.

Mon 29.

Exercise horses each day without saddles. Becoming expert at bareback riding. Many of the French troops have now left the island but we do not know their destination. Warships come and go mysteriously.

Tues 30.

Warned against spies of whom several are known to be prowling about this spot. Also warned in case of aeroplane attack. Infantry issued with ammunition.

Wed. 31.

Rumours of a mail coming. Never saw so much excitement over mail. Visit hospital each day to see Bert Currie. His leg is still bad.

April

Thur. 1.

Turned out of bed early to call Bert Wright who was urgently wanted & found myself fooled. Mail arrived with 6 letters for me – glorious. Really amusing to see the chaps as they receive news. Australian people fancy us in action on Suez.

Fri. 2.

Good Friday. Deep thoughts. More mail 10 letters for me, and we are now much more contented. Spies arrested on island. Aeroplanes have been seen on several occasions. Dramatic ceremony in village at night depicting the burial of Christ.

Sat. 3

Work of sappers about complete - water supply led to camp, wells finished pier complete. Rumour of early departure.

Sun 4.

Wet day. Some of our chaps went to church in morning & saw peculiar service. They say the people of this island have a very high opinion of Australians. Went down to church at night but were informed that there would be no service.

Mon 5.

Rough night last night tent came almost down and McLean & Gough got nearly soaked. Great games of 500.

Tues 6.

Rough again last night, tent falls in again & Tully & I paddle out fixing her up. Some of horses going on board today & we move in a day or so. Can see the real business beginning very soon now. Will soon have a chance to prove our metal.

Wed. 7.

Horses go aboard. Packed things ready to go, but are now standing by till tomorrow. Believe we are to form part of a landing party and will see fire & brimstone flying. Went to see Bert Currie. He hopes to be with us. Had a joke with him about a quid. Dancing & holiday in Mudros village.

Thur. 8.

Packing up again. All sappers going today. Warships all left harbour. Sam & Sully moloed. Believe sappers going on SS Ionian & kits, horses, blankets & c on the Nizam. If so, we will sleep cold for a few nights. Believe all the other Australian troops joining us here in a couple of days. Bert Currie came out of hospital & limped down to pier. Came to Ionian in boats. Not too comfortable, but Jack Walks and I are bunking together.

Fri 9.

Taking stores and engineering equipment on board from Suffolk. Lying about in sun produced a bad headache followed by bilious attack. Crook at night, but Jack looked after me well. Numerous transports arriving. Received letter & paper from Mrs Bard. Sleeping on top deck under lifeboat and have to exercise care so as to avoid slipping overboard.

Sat. 10.

More troopships arrive. Building pontoon rafts to make landing stage. Going to be paid soon, chaps lying in a store of tobacco &c. Reinforcements arriving from Egypt. Jack Walke & I good cobblers with steward. Good bed at night with heads against door of orderly room. Jack often mistaken for an officer.

Sun 11.

Rec'd letter from Aub. Loomes who is still at Mena, but should be on their way hence ere now. Some parcels arrived from Australia. Camped on deck among the guard.

Mon. 12.

Sappers building barrel piers ready for landing stage. Conditions on this ship not good for troops, but excellent for officers. Eight letters arrived from "Jim", Aunt Em., Home, Win, Arthur, Mr Cosgrove & Allen Austen & Else. Lovely to get so much news. Jack Walke & I went in pulling boat to "Nizam" where our horses are stationed. Saw the lads and made good(?) attempt with the oar. Gens. Birdwood, Bridges and sundry staff officers came aboard after having made a survey trip up to the Dardanelles. We are now awaiting orders anxiously.

Tues. 13.

Rec'd a letter from Win, written the day we left Mena Camp. Would be writing just when we were busy packing. Chaps gambling heavily, as they see a possibility of not living to appreciate the effects of their cash. Receiving ribbons of distinguishing colour. Nip around to officers deck to sleep now.

Wed 14.

Jack Walke going big licks among the gamblers, but emptying his pockets at every turn. Plenty of gambling sharks ready to scoop up the coin earned by the boys. High gambling, at which it is a common occurrence to see fifty and sixty pounds on one spin. Kit & officers' luggage sent off and rumours of the task awaiting us.

Thur. 15.

They say we have an honourable but dangerous position to fill – that of accompanying assaulting parties. General Birdwood says that we have a hard task before us, but all the lads seem to glory in the prospects rather than otherwise. Volunteers called to go back to base with kits and some were glad to embrace opportunity for which they are roundly despised. Some chaps who have been telling awful lies in letters have discovered them returning on print, and thus pointing a finger of scorn. One chap said that at Mena – broken leg, big dam, sleep in clothes, no bath for fortnight or wash for 4 days, tin of beef & 5 dog biscuits per day. "Lo" went over to "Nizam" to see about horse & saddlery. Like old times to see the lads again. They paid up numerous small debts. Poor old Bert Currie gone back to hospital again, knee swollen, and as sad as possible – hard hard luck.

Fri. 16.

Not feeling too well today heartburn & hangoveritis. Sudden news to pack things ready to transfer to warship. Was a practice transfer & soon came back again. We hear that when we attack Dardanelles 'twill be by a quick transfer from warships in the dark. Have rec'd reg'd letters from home and letters from Ing. And George.

Sat. 17.

Packed up things ready for another transfer, but instead we shifted anchorage to entrance of harbour. Rations & ammunition issued. Three days ration and one day's emergency ration. Chiefly bully beef & biscuits.

Sun. 18.

Lieut Mather and part of No 1 Sect. departed to the "Maida". Lieut Biden & Lieut Dyer both ill with influenza & gone into hospital. Jack & I nicely settled in cabin, Jack in pyjamas of his boss, doing it heavy. Three of us have to remain here for a day or so after others go to take charge of spare gear – would rather be among the boys. Went to church in saloon at night. Old hymns – strong memories of bygone days in church. Rev. McPhee preached on the open life of Daniel

Mon. 19

Web. equipment issued to sappers & officers but so far we do not know our little part in the drama to come. Things are getting busy & anticipations running high.

Tues. 20.

Web- equipment for us. We are busy packing our humps, and wish a camera were handy. Feels very awkward so far.

Wed. 21.

Frank has joined us in the cabin, of which we have taken full possession. News that we are to be with the first party, but when we asked for a bayonet Maj. McCall said he had plenty of work for us on the beach.

Thur. 22.

Destroyers came alongside & rehearsed landing operations. We are to be landed in pulling boats, use only the bayonet until broad daylight and hold on to the last man. The word is "forward" no going back. Jack Walke had a practice & found the pack weighty. Lt Biden better & likely to accompany us.

Fri. 23

Waiting for orders to attack. Aeroplanes flying around and making observations of positions of the enemy. Letters from home, Win, Aunt Louie, Ray Dive & Muriel. Glorious to get a mail just as we are leaving for action.

Sat 24.

Ready to make our debut tonight, when we land in the early hours of the morning almost in the centre of the line of our troops. Have to turn the enemy out with the bayonet before daylight and secure a footing. I guess there is going to be splinters flying. Feeling excited, but ready and steady, and the same appears on every face. We know many of us will fall, but hope to write a page of history for Australia before we finish. Went off troopship

Sun. 25

on to destroyer "Scourge", and by her in a few hours steam arrived off Gallipoli peninsula. Just before dawn we dropped off into boats, and pulled ashore amid a hail of bullets from shore. Some of our chaps killed right on shore, some in boats, but majority reached beach & rushed under protection of cliff. I was in second boatload, and did not receive quite so warm a fire as previous crew. The Third Brigade put the fear of the devil into the Turks, calling them very uncivilized names, and flourishing the bayonet. They cleared the near hills in quick time and soon had the Turks on the run. Jack Walke & I left in charge of stores, where we received continual showers of shrapnel, one bursting right overhead. Busy digging shelter. The navy has been putting in great work and the day generally reminds me of an overgrown thunderstorm. Our boys have done wonderfully today, but have paid costly, especially in the early morn when capturing trenches with bayonet alone. Page, Fairbairn, Reynolds & Moore went down in quick time. Reynolds rescuing machine gun &

wounded men killed, but recommended for V.C. Well done Engineers! Aeroplanes & captive balloon assisting operations. Very heavy bombardment by navy. Serg. Logan badly wounded.

Mon 26.

Our chaps better entrenched are not suffering so many casualties, but still having a very rough time. Jack Walke, Sam, Frank, Sully & I made tea & took up to our men. Our artillery now getting to work, and playing up with "Jim" Turk. Several shells landed very close to our "dugout" while we were away. Alf. O'Brien & A Burgess missing. Sully made our cubby too much undermined & down she came over our heads. Turks bursting shrapnel all over the place, and flying star shells towards warship. We can bob down in fine style now, and are beginning to see the funny side of their shells except when they come too close. Submarine A E 2 went up narrows & sunk cruiser – Well done Australia. Several spies arrested & a couple shot. Plenty of snipers about who receive little quarter from our chaps. Orders not to respect white flag which is being used as a trap. Some of our chaps blown up by navy because they advanced into Turks trenches too soon. One lot blown out of a house.

Tues 27.

Rained a little Sunday night but last night nice & fine. Heavy bombardment by navy & artillery gives us a bit of our own back. Plenty of shrapnel bursting all around, but doing little harm as all our troops are well dug in. Shifted our quarters around the hill a little, and made secure cover again. Still bobbing from shrapnel - We'll be able to act for moving pictures soon. Shrapnel bursting very close to beach at night snipers frequent. Living on bully-beef & biscuits & making tea when able. Indian mountain batteries doing good work, & mules doing well as ammunition carriers. Turks have been using explosive bullets ? Our chaps holding their own now, and in better spirits. Engineers have been making roads cover-trenches, & erecting barbed wire entanglements. Ian Hamilton sent congratulations to third brigade on first day's work, & Well done Australia to all the force. We think we have now atoned for bad names from different quarters. Shrapnel bursting in plenty nearly all night. So far only one or two of our company have fired a shot, working hard and hearing the shells & bullets fly all the same. We still guard stores.

Wed. 28.

Quiet around our part today. Snipers play a big part in operations, and the enemy have a wonderful system of spying – most wonderful! Snipers hidden in places with provisions & carrier pigeons. I am afraid we have spies in our own ranks. Enemy often seen in our uniform, show white flag, give our chaps orders, blow our bugle calls, a most treacherous warfare. The A.M.C. receive bad punishment. Two of our sections have gone out to set barbed-wire near trenches, Jack Walke & Frank with them. Sully & I in cosy dig-out. We are now cooking for headquarters. Our casualties not so heavy today but in Sunday & Monday they must have exceeded 1000 men. Plenty of mules arrive, heaps of stores. Getting a good quantity of artillery now. Turks tried to place guns on hills on right flank, but were blown out by warship. Three thousand of naval brigade arrived at nightfall.

Thur. 29.

Quiet on our part of coast. We now have a cosy dug-out for Sully & I. Rained last night but we were quite right. Not many casualties today, but snipers deadly. We are gradually dropping to their game. Sully & I getting good cooks, but do not know when we may have to move to firing line. More stores arriving, more mules, more Indians. All our battalions & companies have been mixed up, but are gradually straightening out. Losses in officers great. Saw Col. Green who looks worried. Would like to be able to send message home. More troops landing.

Fri 30.

Things going fairly well, plenty of stores ammunition &c arriving. Plenty of shrapnel bursting around the beach, at which Sully dives for his burrow. In fact everybody is doing it. The naval brigade has arrived, and although there is plenty of hot work in the trenches, our boys are holding their own. Expect the Turks about to make attack, hence order to sleep in our equipment. Sully & I cook for headquarters and have fifty rows a day. Bacon, bully, cheese, jam & biscuits also tea & sugar, hence are not doing badly. Some battalions come back for rest while others line the trenches. Trenches good, cover from shrapnel, hence not so many casualties.

May

Sat. 1

Sat. night brings fond memories. News of congratulations from Gov. Gen, also a bit of kid from Ian Hamilton. Rest doing our boys good, better spirits. Shrapnel bursting deadly close today, several pieces coming too close to our boys to be welcome. Near nightfall took periscopes up with Maj. McCall to near firing line. All going well - few casualties & a few dead mules.

Expecting more troops in a few days & also expect an advance.

Sun. 2

Quiet day where we are. Three sections gone out near firing line. Howlett killed by shell. Drane wounded. Sully & I improved our dug-out & did some good cooking. Party landed on point to our right and captured observation station & some prisoners.

Terrific bombardment down where Eng. & French are working. Battle fierce up our quarter now think we are making advance.

Mon. 3.

Last night our force made an advance, but had to fall back again. They report Turkish trenches filled with dead stench awful. Shrapnel raining over us today, one bullet coming through our roof into Maj. McCall's kit. Killed a man & mule just below us. We are getting good rations, and our beach presents a very busy appearance. Mules splendid for transport work. Most of our boys away up the gully on works. Cridland & another wounded. Still several of our boys missing.

More reinforcements arrived today. Report that we have lost two submarines in Dardanelles.

Tues 4.

Lt Huntly, Cpl Burnett, Spr Hamilton wounded last night. Lt Huntly died today & Cpl Johnstone wounded. They have been making roadway, while our section is working on beach water supply, &c. Shrapnel bursting occasionally over us, and nearly skittled Sully knocking three chaps quite near him. Party attacked Kapa Tipi this morning, supported by destroyers, but were forced to draw off, losing some men by machine gun & rifle fire. They let our chaps land, & cut some barbed wire, but when main party came opened a murderous fire. The ships covered their withdrawal. We do not seem to make much progress, but get good rations and are not downhearted.

Wed. 5.

Our artillery has been moved up near firing line. Reports seem to say that our position is pretty secure. N. Zealand moved off tonight we know not where. Think they are going down to assist Englishmen. Enemy brought a battery around on our right & plugged a few shells among our barges at the pier. Mostly smoke resulted. Heavy firing on left wing. Small detachments of Australians arriving daily. Mails on shore for some

units, but not ours. J. Fletcher camped with Sully & I on his way to Nizam to fix Huntley's gear and bring other Batmen.

Thur. 6

Battery on our right troublesome. Playing havoc among mules & horses. Gave us a nasty shock just after dinner dropping shrapnel all around us one piece striking about a foot off my leg. Working in water up to my neck this morning building a landing pier. Did not get out of bed early enough. Heavy firing on left tonight which our chaps say is a ruse to keep our boys in trenches.

Fri 7.

More troops arriving in small lots – reinforcements, but have not found any familiar faces.

A Turkish battery gets round on our right occasionally and sends us all scampering to shelter like rabbits to burrows. Three chaps out on barge had a merry time today when the Turks lobbed shells all among them. They also played havoc along the beach tonight especially among mules. In the firing line things are pretty secure. The other night Turks made an attack & our machine guns cut them up pretty badly. Living a quiet life with plenty of shrapnel – Turkey & Duck.

Sat. 8

Things going on as usual. We do not seem to be trying to gain any ground, but just holding our own. The force acting south of us seems to be coming closer. The battery on our right still causes a scatter among those on the beach. A couple of shells landed quite close to our quarters this afternoon, one burying itself in a dug-out. Aeroplane busy. Wrote card home & to Win, nearly going to cable, but changed my mind.

Sun. 9

Battery on right giving us plenty of iron rations. Capt Beege killed. Our boys from boat came ashore today. Fixed them up for the night. Plenty of mail about & ours coming tomorrow.

Mon. 10

Rec'd five letters – Home, Win, Mr Bard, Bob Turnbull & Hec. Glorious to get news. Heavy shellfire from right flank again. Blew a big hole in the bank just above our dug-out, & Dubbo & Sully scattered like rabbits. Man killed & three wounded just below us. Dubbo (who has now joined Sully & I) & Sully got sniped at coming down from top camp & had a great run. Scared Jack Walke by their tales & he decided to camp with us. Four in one dug-out – result blanket war.

Tues. 11.

Plenty of shrapnel from right flank. We have now deepened our burrow & feel secure except for concussion shells. Posted cards yesterday home & Win.

Several of our chaps have accidentally shot themselves through the foot lately – looks suspicious. Great tales of spies among our own ranks. All kinds of stories of snipers, spies, captures &c going around but cannot believe much of what you hear. Rumour that our chaps advanced, took trenches, but were blown up by mines.

Lusitania sunk off Ireland. Japan & China patch up quarrel. Great charge by English & French reported. News of rejoicing in Australia & N. Zealand.

Wed. 12

Wet last night, and we had to arrange our overhead cover several times, but managed to keep fairly dry. Blanket tug-of-war again between Dubbo Sully & I. Dubbo & Bert Wright have gone up to top camp, & Reg. has joined us. Plenty of shrapnel from right, going very close to magazine, and making us feel uncomfortable. Digging a new dug-out for Lt Biden & Sully busy improving ours. Light Horse detachment arrives from Egypt. Very heavy bombardment down at point tonight.

Thur. 13.

Quiet day here, gun on our right has changed its objective. News that warship lost at Dardanelles last night. Row with Lt. Biden over dug-out. Sappers completed it. I was blamed for what was not my fault. Our dug-out also very cosy. We have had a blanket each issued. Mail leaving tomorrow. Marines leaving here tonight, going elsewhere.

Fri 14.

Another day of shrapnel, but enemy spent most of their time plugging at our boats. Managed to sink a barge, but did little damage. Lt. Dawkins of 2nd Coy killed a couple of days ago. Lt Mather capt. In 3rd Coy. Sgt. Maj. Jones made Lt. No 1 Coy. Trouble to get water today, but supply arrived tonight. Had a bit of a washing day today. Have a splash in the surf almost daily. Feeling fine & getting fat. Rumour that Italy has declared war.

Sat. 15.

Living the easy life still. Plenty of shrapnel from the right. All of our troopships have moved away, on account of submarines being about – so the rumour goes. Sully went up to the trenches & got a bullet through his cap & is now satisfied to remain at home. Reg. & I draw rations tonight or rather assist to carry it. Mules going away tonight. Lt Biden's dug-out up to date & we covered it with bushes. Thoughts of home.

Sun. 16.

Harold White working on beach got shrapnel bullet in wrist. Plenty of shells bursting around the beach. Stan Willis called in to see us in afternoon. He has a bullet splash on his fingers & hence off duty. Went up with Sully to headquarters with boxes & waited there for him to come back, but his men hooked it & he did not put in an appearance, so came home down the Valley of Death on my own.

Mon 17.

Up to firing line with boxes for loopholes - result of Sully's hasty clearing out. Went into front trench, looking through periscope & had a shot at a loophole in Turk's trench. Two six inch howitzers landed last night. Official news of Italy declaring war. Sitting in burrow in afternoon when a big overgrown 4" shell ploughed a trench through the hill a few feet above our dug-out, bringing dirt & rubbish down all over us. Reg & Sully bolted, and I may have done likewise only I was undressed. Went to have a look at the effects when another shell burst and a shrapnel bullet wounded Sully in the back. Got him attended to and was preparing tea when another shell burst and wounded an Indian just behind me – I'm dead lucky. Dubbo Jack Walke, Jack Fletcher down at night and we had a little party in our burrow. Second brigade returned from the point where they nobly assisted the Tommies & improved their record, though losing many men.

Tues 18.

Things about same as usual only Turks seem to have got more big guns, and are raining shells over us. Sully feeling pretty good, but has good excuse to loaf. Got another mail today with two letters from home and two from Win. Letters seem even more precious than ever. Address Melrose Kensington Rd Kensington.

Wed 19.

Fierce attack by Turks last night. They came on in thousands crying "Allah!" but our boys fairly stacked them in heaps. All Engrs. up top stood to arms but were not called upon for support. Today we learn of about 200 casualties on our side, but hear of the ground being thickly strewn with Turks. Several prisoners brought down tell of expected attack tonight – more slaughter. Big shells dropping over today, fairly shaking the ground & nearly deafening us but doing little damage.

Thur 20.

A very quiet day with a few shots of shrapnel. Wrote 2 letters, Home & Win. More light horse arrived this afternoon. Report that Turks waving white flag & burying dead. Their casualties are said to have been 7000 in their recent charges. Wounded Turk brought down today, fierce & repulsive. Indian shows desire to finish him. Several prisoners brought down blindfolded yesterday.

Fri. 21.

Business as usual. Turkish officer came in from Gaba Tepi to arrange armistice for purpose of burying dead. This is urgently needed as the stench is awful. Nearly all warships gone away from here. Rumours of Italy coming on our side still

Sat 22.

Up to firing line with Bert Wright to get things of Lt Badtold who was wounded in face by bullet "Jack Johnsons" warming them up on the hill. Stan Willis comes in nearly every day to see me now as his hand is sore. We got some bread from sailors for the shell that pitched near our dug-out.

Sun 23.

Not so much shrapnel today. HMS Albion ran ashore near Gaba Tipi and was in a rain of shrapnel to which she replied most vigorously. All 1 section now on beach to build pier. Yesterday Sully had his Dixie skittled by a shell which splashed fat all over the place. Fresh meat to eat now. Mail again letter from home & Win dated 8 & 10 April. Swim in surf.

Mon 24.

Armistice to bury dead. All operations & works suspended. A party of men go out from each side with row of white flags & carry dead to either side where they are buried. Very quiet, with scene like Manly Beach – thousands bathing. Rumour of Gen Bridges' death. Issue of tobacco & cigarettes. News of brush between Italy & Austria. Several prisoners marched in this morning.

Tues 25.

Things going nicely in morning & I was just cooking dinner when a torpedo struck HMS Triumph about midships sending a column of water higher than her masts. She immediately heeled over and sank in about 5 minutes – rolled right over. She was guarding our right flank and had her nets out, and also had a destroyer screening her. Other destroyers were cruising around, but all to no avail. It has made quite an impression on our boys, mostly a desire for revenge. Only destroyers in sight tonight.

Wed. 26

Rumour that about 50 lives lost on Triumph. Jack Tars say that we have got two out of three submarines that were at large. Harry Farnham blown to pieces by shell this morning just down the road. Three destroyer loads of troops arriving and receiving their supply of shrapnel.

Our reinforcements arrived, also several of our chaps who went away sick, among them Bert Currie who pinched away from his nurse & is looking for fun. We fixed them up for the night.

Thur. 27.

Our boys are now doing night work, building a long pier. Bert Currie still with us, but his knee is not quite well yet. Rumour of us going on furlough just as Bert has bobbed my hair of quite short. Turks give us 48 hours to clear out, but we have a say in that.

Fri. 28.

Helping A. O'Sullivan cook Bert Wright not well, so I fitted him out in a new shirt & sent him down to doctor. Took "Tich" up to hospital, & Bert Currie went up to trenches to work so now I feel like going too. Letters from home dated 14/4/15 & from Win 17/4/15.

Sat 29.

Last night Turks blew up portion of our trenches and followed with an attack capturing the trenches, but our boys soon hoisted them out again. We lost a fair number of men but Turks many more. Tis sad to see the little funeral party wend its way up to our growing graveyard. Bert Wright gets laughing fits at "Baby" who is troubled by flies & too much trotting about. Close shave for Sully Tubby & I.

Sun. 30.

Our boys made an attack and captured some trenches, but had to leave them on account of enfilade fire. "Chook" Fowler had his leg blown off by a shell, and a gloom hangs on our section as he was popular. Rumours of big things doing – Turks weakening Italians & fleet coming, &c &c.

Mon. 31

Our section busy making hand bombs which are being used pretty freely in attacks. Some trenches being taken & retaken on Quinn's Hill. Wrote card home.

June

Tues 1

Things as usual with very little shrapnel. Bert Wright & Bexley went back to trenches – holiday over in fighting trim again. Rumour that Goeben sunk. News of good work by our submarine Baby & Biden found stock exchange lively. Bert Currie down at night.

Wed 2.

"Saucy Kate" very quiet today. Went in for a swim with Ryan. Rumours of early peace – big odds being laid that way, also of us going to England soon. Flies very troublesome about here now.

Thur 3.

New regulations with regard to traffic. New gun from left flank greets new officers – Moore & Middleton. Went round with Jack Walke to tea & had a good view of right flank. Bad accident when our gun mis-timed a shell & killed two men & wounded about a dozen more. One chap with leg off showed great pluck passing humorous remarks to the doctor.

Fri 4.

Sent letter home & to Win. Now have also Lt Moore to look after. All kinds of rumours about Turks giving up. They give us 8 hours to surrender & if we do not then they will. Very heavy bombardment down South, & rumours of Turks in retreat.

Sat. 5.

This afternoon a shell from "Saucy Kate" came to pay us a visit & caused a disturbance in the dug-out where Weames & Sully dine. Went just over my head & blew the top of their cubby on top of them at which Sully made a hasty exit with the light of terror in his eyes.

Sun. 6.

Things mostly quiet all along the line except at Quinn's Post where things are always busy the trenches being only a few yards apart. Bombs and hand grenades are in constant use and charges are frequent. A party from our section employed making hand grenades out of fuse-tin, charge of explosive, pellets of all kinds, detonator & fuse.

Mon. 7.

Have not been feeling well on account of dysentery & intend to follow the example of Reg. Weames & report sick if not better tomorrow. Newspaper reports now to hand give great credit to our troops. News of a mail coming ashore.

Tues. 8.

Reported sick expecting a dose of castor oil, but was surprised when they sent me to the Field Hospital. After being there all day, fed well, & tormented by flies, they informed me at night that my temperature had risen above 100, and that I was to be sent away to Lemnos. I protested, but all of no avail. Bert Currie came down to see me off on the boat & teased me as I did him of old. Pinnacle pulled us off to trawler which took us to hospital ship where the bad cases were hauled up in a kind of lift – then we went away to Fleetsweeper, had tea & bread & jam, dossed on deck & steamed back to Lemnos, arriving early in the morning. Not feeling too bright, but not bad enough to be sent away.

Wed. 9.

From "fleetsweeper," "Newmarket" to Hospital ship "Grantully Castle" where they are feeding us well and we will have a good chance to enjoy a well-earned rest. Sorry that I will miss my mail. Enjoyed quite a treat for tea – a feed of bread and jams. We have been living on biscuits for six weeks.

Thur. 10

On Grantully Castle, not feeling too well and not likely to while cooped up where there is no room. One begins to realise the horrors of warfare when one sees fine chaps crippled & maimed & hear their stories of the deaths of their mates. One chap who had a bomb burst behind his head has lost his reason & behaves like a little child. One of our chaps acted nurse & put him to sleep besides pretending to write letters for him.

Fri 11.

Bought some things at canteen – chocolate, towel & soap & milk, but someone "pinched" towel & chocolate. Reported myself fit to return to duty. One lot drafted off to Lemnos Is to hospital camp.

Sat 12.

Bought more chocolate & another towel. Washed some things while opportunity offers. Lying about on deck, longing for something to do or something to read.

Sun. 13.

Another lazy day until afternoon when we were mustered on foc'stle deck ready to transfer to island. Pushed ashore, and all put into hospital. Eight of us in a big tent with beds in. Fell very comfortable. German aeroplane over harbour.

Mon 14.

Visit by doctor, and all put on milk diet. Two of us put to bed, but luckily not me. Went for a stroll down the village & got some writing paper & a couple of magazines. Quiet day.

Tues. 15.

Reading nearly all day, and finished up with a headache. Not feeling too well. Wrote letters home & to Win.

Wed. 16.

Had a bad day, with a crook headache. Thought I would be ready to go back by now, but am getting worse instead. No news, and no letters, but cheerful still.

Thur 17.

Feeling better. Played draughts with Teague, but he got the better of me after a good struggle.

Fri. 18.

Feeling well, and passed for discharge tomorrow. Paraded and issued with some clothing ready for the fray again.

Sat. 19.

Got a stock of provisions ready to take back to the "boys", and was all ready to go away when I was again attacked by dysentery and received orders to stay here. Sent provisions by E. Hooper & sent for my mail.

Sun. 20.

On milk diet again. Very quiet day. Several earnest discussions with Alick the religious orderly. Thoughts of home. Ian Hamilton visited us & reported that decisive action would not ensue for a month. Occupy a lot of our time with cards.

Mon. 21.

Quiet times in hospital, playing cards, draughts & reading papers when we can get any. Write letters pretty frequently.

Tues. 22.

John Teague & I have some good games of draughts. He was too game at first, & nearly got a shock, but has had too much experience & practice for me. Can get small things from village if you have plenty of money.

Wed 23.

Took washing down to village & has a splash in a bucket of water. Getting my form back at draughts and making John Teague think. We played four draws today. (Algie works a scheme & I work a dream).

Thur 24.

Got washing from village, and the old friends of our past stay here made a great fuss & gave me two eggs "buksheesh".

Fri. 25.

Teague & I go down for a swim in the briny. I am nearly well again but am longing to get some news from Australia. Have not had a letter for over 6 weeks. My face is beginning to swell & feel fat. Rec'd seven letters this afternoon, three home, three Win, one Dlett.

Sat 26.

Face still swollen – abscess on a sore old spot I fancy. Read letters over and over again. Algy & I good on "Five Hundred". Learned German Whist.

Sun. 27.

John Teague marked for discharge tomorrow, & I would have been going with him except for face. Went up to dentist & made appointment for tomorrow. Church in evening. Impressive ceremony. Minister passed fine tribute to troops re their willingness to help each other.

Mon. 28.

Had tooth drawn and she was a crook stump to take out. Sent letters to Home & Win, also Aunt Em. Teague left us today & we got shifted from our old ward & scattered. Paddy in good humour.

Tues 29.

Up to hospital & had tooth filled ? Face going down somewhat, but I have to hold my face when I laugh. Big attack on Acci Baba & many troops coming down wounded. One chap with big hole in his side exposed to air & flies. Woodhouse & Golding sent to base.

Wed 30

More wounded arriving from Cape Helles, but reports say that they are gradually creeping up in Acci Baba. Ready to go back again, but hear reports of a mail & would like to stay here & get mine as it is sure to be sent back.

July

Thur. 1

Not so well today, but think it is only a passing turn. Taff Keefe, Sgt Woodhouse & Golding went back to base.

Fri. 2

Feeling better now with a bit of appetite & expect to go back in a couple of days. No more mail yet.

Sat. 3

Reported fit & chose to go back to the company rather than to base. Paraded, clothed, and with a farewell to the boys & fun about letters came off wharf after a long wait to mine sweeper. Slept on sweeper, & landed about 2 a.m. at Anzac beach. Found my section had been shelled out of old quarters so slept under bank for a couple of hours.

Sun. 4.

At daylight went up to Sully the cook & got a good welcome. Five letters very welcome & Sydney Mail from Win. Sully made good dinner from rice and raisins that I brought from Lemnos. Lt Biden away sick, and I am to report up at Engr. Hdqtrs tomorrow.

Mon. 5.

Good welcome by boys of company up in sap with Bert Currie. Find I am short winded after milk diet. My pack nearly too much to carry.

Tues. 6.

In morning looking for fascines which luckily we could not find. Tunnel digging with Bert Currie in afternoon. Bert gets hit with clod. Down on beach at night bringing up stores. Rumours of Turks preparing to use gas – our men have respirators handy.

Wed. 7.

In charge of a gang of men making terraces for bivouacs to be used by incoming troops. Shift 8 a.m. to 12 noon. Went round to Sully for dinner and made short work of a piece of plum duff – the first pudding since Xmas. Am now a full blown sapper.

Thur. 8.

Was to continue shift work, but men did not report at proper place. Running about all day in consequence. "Sleep on bags" at night to guard stores. Feeling very well now. Wrote to Win. today while waiting for men.

Fri. 9.

Working on shift 8 – 11 and 2 – 5 but work cancelled in afternoon. Round & had tea with Sully. Pudding & cakes for his birthday party. Jack Gough shot dead near camp & buried at night. Many of our men tunnelling, others sapping, others loop-holing & others terracing.

Sat. 10.

Worked two four-hour shifts then down to beach for a swim. Dubbo to hospital & I was asked to take his place, but would sooner be among the sappers & the works.

Sun. 11.

Worked four hour shift in morning. Very hot day. Small mail, but did not get anything. Long talk with Bert Currie in afternoon when he showed me a letter. Wrote home & to Elsie & sent leaves of shrub.

Mon. 12.

My party of workmen did not put in an appearance this morn. There was somewhat of a demonstration & plenty of bullets & shells flying while I was waiting. Arrived back in camp to find that a big shell had pitched in our camp & scattered things somewhat. Four of our men slightly wounded & two infantrymen killed. Rec'd

eight letters and a P.C. Two home, two Win, two Amy at Bowral, one "Jim" & one Aunt Em, and was very pleased to get the news.

Sapr. Wells killed by bomb this morn.

Tues 13.

Still working, preparing bivouacs for fresh troops. I can notice a big difference in our troops lately. All getting run down & played out. A lot of sickness, running sores &c.

Wed. 14.

Work going slowly. We now work 8 – 12 a.m. and 6 – dark, which makes rather easy shifts. Down for swim & feed with Sully.

Thur. 15.

Indian battery makes terrible jar on ears. Down swimming & got water in my ear which made things very uncomfortable. Washed shirt.

Fri. 16.

Party did not turn up. Have bad earache due to jar of gun & water. Little sleep & great pain. Saw Bert Stokes.

Sat 17.

Reported sick. Sent to 4th Fld. Amb. where ear was dressed. Drops & fomentation. Feeling much better. Work of bivouacs going very slowly. Expecting big move very soon. French Generals knocking around today.

Sun. 18.

Bert Currie took my shift while I again got my ear dressed. Gun sounds pretty rough. Doctor wanted to send me away but I prefer to stay while at all fit. Four more letters today, Home, Amy, Win & "Jim". Four men from each section of our company gone for few days rest.

Mon 19.

Get ear dressed each day, but not making much improvement. Appetite falling off, likewise energy.

Tues 20.

Spend most of my time on the beach these days, as I have to report at hospital twice each day. Take the night shift 6 – dark now. Have dinner with Sully. Paper from Jim today.

Wed. 21.

No shift on account of wanting men. Expecting attack from Turks. We are all supplied with respirators to prevent gas.

Thur 22.

Things mixed up on account of expected attack, and our work has been cancelled for some days. I am now "off duty" to give my ear a chance. Mail 4 letters. Photo of Win & Annie.

Fri. 23.

Go down on beach each day to attend doctor & go up & have dinner & tea with Sully. Turks get a few of our chaps each day on the beach with shells & are also making it warm in the trenches above us – where our chaps work.

Sat. 24.

Wild rumours about big forces coming, about relief, and even about peace, but things go on in the same old way. We are preparing a big water scheme tanks & pipes - watched them drag a big tank into place.

Sun. 25.

Still attending doctor, but came up early to see “Middo” about our work. He told me to take things easy as he had dropped one shift. Went to church on hillside “Nearer my God to Thee”, “Lead Kindly Light”, “Old Hundredth”, “God Be With You”. The conversion of Paul & the use of his energy

Mon. 26.

When at hospital, one chap being carried along on stretcher had his leg blown off while one of the bearers was killed & other wounded. Things dry & weary here, but we have great hopes of a big move soon.

Tues 27.

Two English generals and two Admirals looking around beach, so looks promising. Ear much better but still deaf. Sully turns out some good dishes – puddings, cakes &c.. I managed to burn his rice & soak his pudding, but that was on account of attention being taken up on the doings of Sid Cook & heated arguments.

Wed 28.

Met Jim Pope & Bert Stokes who are in 2nd Batt, D Comp., 13th Platoon.

Had long chat whereby I missed inoculation & ear dressing but it doesn't matter. Bert Currie & I running about with message at night on account of working party. Major McCall & S.M. Pantlin gone away to another new company. Maj. Corlette in charge of ours & rumours of Lt Dyer being captain.

Thur 29.

Posted letters home and to Win. McCracken returns with news of death of “Chook” Fowle. Party of Royal Engrs taking over works on beach. Looks as if we are going farther inland. I now have no pain in my ear, but it is completely deaf.

Fri. 30

Doctor ordered me away on account of cattarrhal deafness. Bert Currie came down & saw me off on boat, also proving a handy man when stretcher-bearers were required on account of a shell landing on beach. A party going to hospital boat had six of their number knocked by a shell this morning. Again left scene of operations – towed to hospital ship where we were very kindly received. Delicious tea, bread & butter & “cockies joy”. Cocoa for supper. Slept on soft mattress – living high. T.S.S. “Rewa”. Bath & change of clothes – wonderful. Just realizing how thin I have got lately.

Sat. 31.

Towed from hospital ship to Fleetsweeper after seeing three corpses taken away silently with Union Jacks around them. Came by sweeper to hospital ship “Neuralia” and paid 6d for a feed of corned beef & pickles on

the way. Hoisted up by crane, names taken, dragged up beds & blankets, had tea & bread & (butter?) and had a good sleep on deck. Rather crowded with walking patients, otherwise doing alright. Ear still the same.

August

Sun. 1.

Quiet day aboard ship. Some of the chaps sent off to Lemnos, while others came aboard. The chaplains do not seem very energetic on board this ship. Seems good to see the business-like working of the nurses. Nearly a scramble for meals today. Man overboard at night, but they soon "hooked" him up again.

Mon. 2.

About 9 a.m. slipped out of Lemnos harbour & commenced voyage back to base – don't know where that is yet. A bit off colour. One of the sisters wanted to lead me down for a dose of medicine, but I slipped round the corner when she wasn't looking. Burial at sea this morning – quiet but rather brusque. Still scrambling for meals, but must be content.

Tues 3.

Quiet day, ship travelling rather slowly, but we have mattress and blankets on deck & are happy. Two more funerals grim & cool. We are bound for Alexandria where we expect to arrive tomorrow morning.

Wed 4.

Reached Alex. about 8 a.m. and were at once transferred to hospital train en route for Cairo. Nurses & Indian staff very attentive giving us bread, cheese, beef-tea, milk, cigarettes & reading matter. We now appreciate the work of the red-cross. Arrived in Cairo about 2 p.m. & train came on to Heliopolis where we were admitted, treated to other luxuries of red-cross and sent to different branches. I am in Luna Park – the "White City" of Cairo. Good sisters, good accommodation; good food and plenty of sympathy from visitors. Joined the pyjama brigade & stowed kit. Still feeling a bit off colour, but getting appetite better. Entertainment at night. Met W. Cridland & F. Healey of our company. Very hot here with flies & mosquitoes hence broken sleep. The grounds are beautiful and the surroundings most cheerful, but one feels useless & chained up.

Thur 5.

Cooler day. Kind visitors bring fruit, cigarettes, & reading matter. Band playing down at rink at night. Absorbed in a book so did not see much today.

Fri. 6.

Had long talk with F. Healey who has been crippled. Wrote letters to Win, Grandma & Aunt. Em. Band playing in front of our ward at night. Informed Sister Tyson of whereabouts of her brother.

Sat 7.

Plenteous rumours but little definite news. Can get chocolate, papers &c from the niggers. Mick Ogilvy & co arrive.

Sun. 8.

Little evidence of a Sabbath. We miss the earnestness of Cp. Mackenzie on the hills of Gallipoli.

Mon 9.

Reported at Palace but sent back without treatment – not very satisfactory.

Tues. 10.

Mick Ogilvy, King, McNair & Brownhill go out & ink up, but bring home two books which I wanted.

Wed. 11.

Reading “Domby & Son”. Reported at Palace with like useless result. Have written plenteous letters lately.

Thur 12.

Persistent reports of big battle & fall of Acci Baba. Shifting many patients out of this place.

Fri. 13.

Many named for Australia to go tomorrow including F. Healey. Some wasters slinking back on pretence.

Sat. 14.

Treated at Palace yesterday and today. Ear much the same, but feeling physically stronger.

Post script

Next day temp. flared up. Whisked away to hosp. where enteric fever came on – nearly proved fatal.

After a couple of months hosp. & conv., invalided home to Aust.

Returned to England in Nov/Dec 1916 on Instructional Staff for 12 months, then last 9 months of war in France.

