

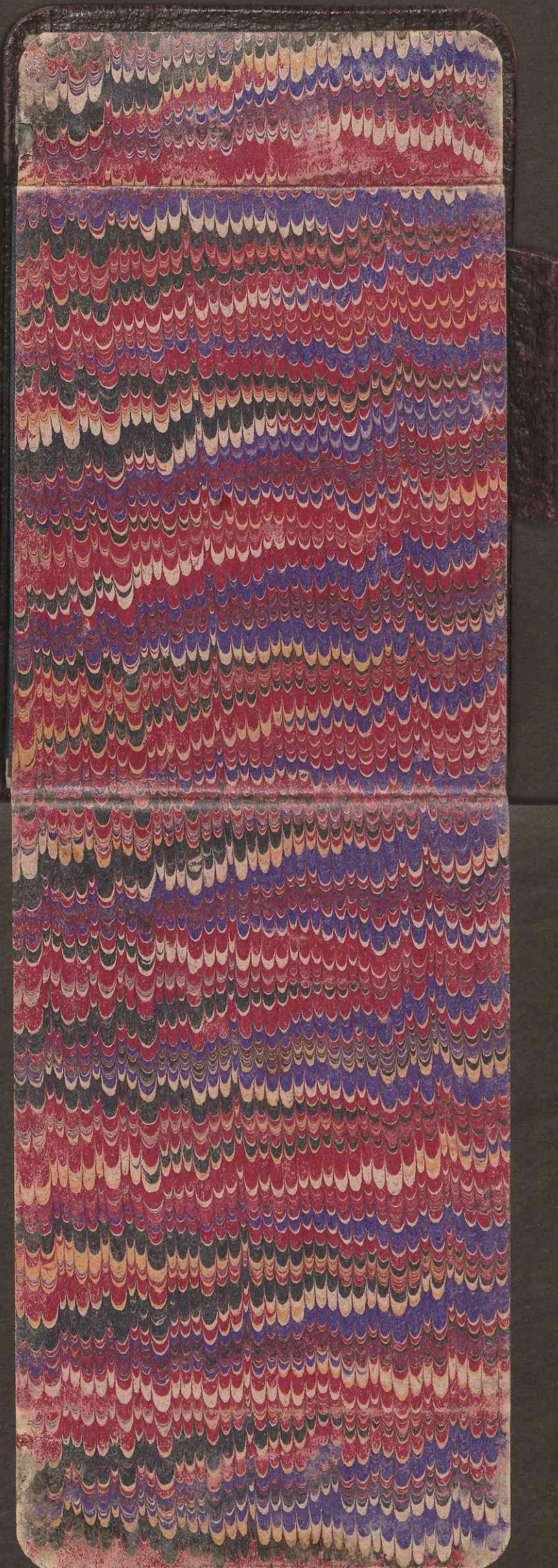
KEAST
Diary

1914 - March
Oct 1915



The LORD is my Strength.

Ps. 28. 7.



1972.0025.0002

W.R. Keast No. 60

1st section

2nd Field Coy. Engineers

1st Aust Div

England

DBDB

Ship routine A.3.

Bells. Time

a.m.

- | | | | |
|----|-------|------------|--|
| 4. | 6.0 | Rerelle. | Turn out & stow hammocks |
| 5. | 6.30 | Ration | Orderlies draw brd. + batr |
| | 7.15 | Brkfst. | Draw + sit down to brkfst |
| | 7.45 | Fatigue | All cleaning fgs. pde. Police |
| 8 | 8.0 | Guard. | |
| 3 | 9.30 | 4 G's | Sweepers pde + sweep up ^r dk. |
| 4 | 10.0 | Assembly | General pde. + inspection |
| 5 | 10.30 | | Orderly room, air bedding |
| 6 | 11.0 | | Troops all'd below. Beer. |
| 8 | Noon | Dinner | |
| | pm. | | |
| 2 | 1.0 | 4 G's | Sweep up ^r dk. Dk. cleared + snpt |
| 4 | 2.0 | - | Troops allowed below |
| 2 | 5.0 | Tea | |
| 3 | 5.30 | 4 G's | Sweep up ^r dk. Dk. cleared. |
| 4 | 6.0 | Warning | Draw hammocks |
| | | parade | |
| 1 | 6.30 | | Troops allowed below |
| 1 | 8.30 | 4 G's | Sweep up ^r par dks |
| 2 | 9.0 | Lights out | Stop smoking G's below |
| | 9.15 | | Rounds All in bed |

VOYAGE NOTES

Wednesday Oct. 21st 1914

Left camp 9 am. + walked to Port. Myella. Embarked 12.30 pm. Pa + Sec down on boat. Great Crowd on pier to see us off. Sailed 3.30 pm. Calm trip down bay. Passed thro' Heads at 6.30 pm. Very calm, lovely sunset. Signals from fort and pilot boats. Mess very good butter milk &c. Working this in 1st Saloon Smoking room while officers at dinner. Great fight for blankets + hammocks. Stale blankets. Bed at 11 pm.

Thursday, 22nd

Good night's sleep. Revere came. Calm sea with a long swell. Lovely sunrise + Cool breeze. Caught sight of land about 9 am. Thangely we are apparently sailing by ourselves, no Convoy being in sight. Passed a boat about 8 am a long way off on port side. Lie had the real thing in hair cuts. Calm day throughout. Looking dark towards evening. Boat ahead on port bow. Had first fire alarm practice 4.30. Singing + Quork. After tea. Did some Sewing. Good loaf all day, no routine wk.

Friday 23rd.

Good night's rest. Bkfst., porridge, meat potatoes, marmalade jam. Pde from 9.15 till 11.45 Dinner soup, corn beef, rice. Lighted war boat astern early in morning + Mbone. Came aboard about 12.30 pm Still calm

with a long swell "Bulldies"
had their photos taken. Knitting
during the afternoon. Mounted
guard at 6 pm. First
piqueet from 12 pm to 2 am
The Melbourne went ahead
and disappeared over
horiz. abt. dusk. Sea getting
a bit fresher. Writing this on
guard position mess No 74 to 88 aft
which is the lowest troop deck
aft. You can hear the propellers
plainly and it must be
difficult to get to sleep at
first. Half company guard
providing 5 two hour
reliefs for 10 posts. To date
there has been very few sick
and the meals are very good.
The greatest inconvenience experienced
so far is the unhandiness of
kit bags.

Amended Routine

6 am reveille

6.30 - 7.15 Early morning pde.

7.30 Breakfast

9.15 - 11.45 Morning pde.

12 noon. Dinner

2 pm 4.15 Afternoon parade

5 pm Sea

9 pm Lights out.

Saturday. 24th

Guard till 6 pm. One
prisoner jugged (14 days) for
refusing to work. On Canteen
guard for 1 hr

Sunday. 25th Up at usual
hour. Church parade at
10.30 am on boat deck. No
more parades. Sing song
in the evening. Long walk
for exercise. Bed not.

sight land as expected.

Monday 26th

Orderly. Woke up to find ourselves almost in Albany. High cliffs surround a sheet of deep water serving as a Good harbour. About 20 boats here. "Euripides" arrived since. At inspection at 11 am. Posted letters & brooch for Eric.

Tuesday 27th

Blew hard and rained during the night. At 7 am lifted anchor and went into inner harbour this narrow channel bounded by very rocky heads. Anchored $\frac{1}{4}$ mile off deep water pier at 7.30. am. Saw 2 Norwegian whale boats come in. Small boats with harpoon gun in bows.

The weather in outer harbour is rough and bugs have a bad time passing round the fleet. Taking on water & vegetables.

This morning. Drill from 9 am till 11.30 am. Inner harbour is a fine anchorage, scrubby slopes running down to the sea. Albany township is abt. $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from deep water pier. Town is built on the slopes of two hills from sea up & looks very pretty. Bought a pipe this morning.

Katoomba arrived this morning. She will probably take our mails East.

The sun is out & the harbour &

surrounding hills look very pretty.

Coaling and taking water this afternoon. Lashin & physical drill. Katoomba left at 6.30 pm

Wednesday 28th.

Moved out from inner harbour and saw all New Zealanders arrive. Boats galore and several war ships all N 3's painted grey. Interesting to see officers & men on communication boats recognizing friends on board. Typhoid moulton at 11 am mid morning. Nearly 100 boats in outer Harbour, fine weather and calm sea. Phys drill morning and lecture "Lanching" Royal Salute to Melbourne. Ships boat raised to band playing. Arms stiff during latter part of day. Notice up that no more letters to be posted.

Thursday 29th

Bit of box on with sergeant at reveille getting men out of hammocks. Rain during night and bleak morning N 2. boat passed into coal 5.30. Arms still stiff. Pen running dry. Found out today that all letters written to date to be returned and letters in future to be censored. Reading Semaphore & morse whenever the chance occurs. Still plenty of good food & sleep. Melbourne is guarding entrance to some day & night. Knitting & lectures today.

Friday 30th

Boats passing in and out to inner harbour to coal and take water. ^{China Squadron} N.G. Battleship Minatons is here and it has a flash steam furnace which. buzzes round the fleet.

Phys. drill & rifle inspection in the morning. Lectures in the afternoon. Skipping rope made. Started steer with a 2 hours go. in R.G.K's cabin.

Lat 31st Still in K.G.'s sound
with rumours of moving in the
early dawn. Rained the night
over to the Geelong Pt. Some of
the boys with the 3rd Coy. Make &
mend clothes this afternoon.

Posted last letter for home. Learnt
from Guthrie who got ashore that
a great collection of cameras at
navy office taken from persons along
the shore. Rained this afternoon. War
news of no import. Rumours of
war bet^{we} Am. & Japan. Storm swept.
Slept up on deck till it rained
Sunday 1st Nov.

Just before reveille we weighed
anchor and about 6.15 am
we followed the Minotaur & Melbourne
out. The other boats fell in after
us & we rec^d salute all along the
line. Luckily it is a lovely
morning and a gentle sea. We
are going slowly and allowing
two more lines to be formed.
It is now nearly 9 am and all boats
do not appear to have got out of
the sound. Counted 36 transp^ts
including N.Z. boats. The Sydney is
remaining at rear of Column.

Church p^{er}formed at 10.30 am. Looped all
day. Sing song at night below.

Boats sailing with deck lights
out or doused. Beautiful moonlight
night & line of ships looked well.
Montag 2nd Nov.

No land in sight on rising
steering approx N.W. Slight roll on
when we got round the headwind it
began to blow a bit & sea got a
bit choppy & boat began to roll and
pitch some. While drilling on
fide wave spray washed over us

we got a good wetting. Phyp
drill in morning & lecture
Bluffer drill in afternoon. Fire
alarm at 4.30. Hour & half swim
and a walk about before turn in
 Dienstag 3rd Nov:

Blowing hard on rising this
morning altho' sea is not very
rough. My two towels have been stolen
The ships are disposed in three
lines with Quarts at the head of
the centre line. There are 10 ships in
starboard line and the Sydney is
off on that side. The line headed
by Euripides. The Port line of 7 ships
is headed by "Wiltshire". It is difficult
to see the number of ships in our
line, the centre. The H. Z. ships
form two lines at the back of our
lines and a little separated from
them. The "Melbore" is off on the
Port horizon & the "Munatonic" is a
few miles direct ahead. News
came this yesterday that Britain
had declared war with Turkey.
Inoculated this morning and
arm a bit stiff now. The H. A.
transport have just been
picked up, 2 Cruisers with
"Medic" & another transport.
Rain squalls are passing over
& wind has been strong all day
with fairly rough sea. Some
of the smaller boats behind
are rolling very badly. The
poor horses on them must be
having a bad time. It's Cup
day and by now 4 o'clock here
all the Cup races are over
and people in Melbourne are
celebrating with dawning
sorrow. I only saw one Cup

sweep on the boat. There is no parade this afternoon on account of the weather. A few of the chaps. have been sick but most are standing the rolling well. Got feverish towards night started reading "Green Curve".

Wednesday 4th Nov.

Feeling better this morning but still a bit weary. Sea much calmer + wind gone down. Rifles on morning parade. Nothing in afternoon + lecture by Elliot Maj. Aired blankets. Hours sweet.

Feeling much better. Sea compar. calm. Alleged to have passed the "Osterley" after dark. I wonder if she has any mail on board for me.

Donnerstag. 5th Nov

Slept on deck last night. It was nice and fresh and I will continue the practice if possible. Sea is quite calm and the sun hot this morning. We are approaching the tropic of Capricorn + heat. Usual drill routine. After tea we passed a large shoal of porpoises. They were rather small fishes themselves I thought. It was not the "Osterley" we passed last night for she has just passed. She seemed to just walk past our boat as we were not doing 10 knots and she must be doing 18. She looks well lit up + everyone on board was up on deck to see her. She passed quite close along the whole length of the starboard line of ships. Today the "Minatom" passed down and up the

whole line & apparently roused
up the back boats for now they're
keeping up closer than before
Friday 6th Nov. —

Calm today with a swell. In
afternoon saw a large school of
flying fish right near the boat.
Small fish who only fly a short
distance. Assembled for parade
this afternoon with life belts on
and inspected by Lt. Col. Our
identification badges were issued
for a few days ago. Coverings put
up on fore and aft decks today.
We passed over the tropic of Capricorn
last night.

Saturday 7th Nov. —

It's been hot today and we drilled
in singlets. Just ordinary
routine work during the morn-
ing during which we saw
many flying fish. They're
becoming quite common now.
This afternoon was a gala day.
We had our first sports day &
the men were allowed on the
top deck. There were two cricket
matches, deck quoits ordinary
quoits &c. The Engineers played
G. Coy & we had one innings
each. They made 1 & we made
5. 11 aside bat & 6 field. Owing
to small field and no of fields
man it's very difficult to score.
I was in some time for 0. It
was a beautiful afternoon, sea
calm & a deep blue. You get a
fine view of the fleet from boat
deck. News of unarmoured battle
off Valparaiso with Monmouth sunk.
This morning the port side got a bath
below. Altho the sea was calm we

shipped a sea this morn. abt. 6 port
holes thoroughly wetting several chaps.
I must have been an especially
large wave all on its own. At 8 pm
there was an alarm (practice) with
all lights on the ship out.

Sunday 8th Nov.

Slept on deck last night. A mon-
soonal shower came on shifting
those not under ^{sailings} ~~hammocks~~. Official
news of naval engagement off
Pohli with disaster to British fleet.
"Minatour" has been displaced from the
front by the "Melbourne" and rumour
has it she has returned to China Squad
church parade at 10.30. It was hot
in drill order. Put in my name
for a job as Elect. Engine on the
"Melbourne". It would be good
experience and interesting but
rather hot in the Engine room. The sea still
remains calm with a following wind
of which we don't get much benefit. We
got about in singlets & trousers and
still feel hot. I am purchasing a
pair of white trousers. They buried
somebody from the "Euripides" this
morning. The boat pulled out from
the line for the service. That is
the only death amongst the
troops so far. Tropical showers
Monday 9th Nov.

When I had my bed settled
on deck last night a tropical
shower came on & we had to
move but I found a spare space
on the deck under cover of prom. dk
whereas many had to go below
where it's very stuffy. No calm
and sultry this morning. There
is a foot parade this morning. The
excitement of the trip occurred
this morning. About 6 am.

the "Sydney" sailing on the Port side of the line cleared out 5000 left and I am told just before this we altered our course from Abt. N.W. to W. Before breakfast the "Melbourne" came back from the head of the line and went thro' a lot of signalling, flag, to us and after a time moved off to our Port side. About 10 am the Jap cruiser on our Starbd moved over smoke pouring from her funnels and she going like smoke. We then suspected something must be up & saw 7000 rounds of ammunition come up for the guard and were told that life belts had been served to the sick in the hospital. We were just an hour or so sail from the Cocos Island and all sorts of rumours were flying. Then a message came thro' that the enemy to save sinking had grounded herself. Later a message that it was the Embden & that she was done for. It appears that our boat was hearing S.O.S messages during the night faintly & could not get anything definite & some say that the Embden was doing this to attract merchantmen & caught the "Sydney" instead. Al Knight told me that a Jap cruiser the "Asaki" had warned the Sydney that the Embden was about & she went out and found her near the Cocos & forced her to ground. Reported 2 killed & 13 wounded on Sydney. The Sydney is now supposed to be chasing the Collier that was feeding the Embden, however she has not come back yet. The Melbourne &

the Jap have come back all right
It was fine to see the Jap passing
across our bows at full speed
with all men at their guns
which could be seen reversing
There was great rejoicing on
board when we knew the Embden
was done for and it came
as a relief to the excitement
of the previous hour or so when
we did not know what was
going on. All lights on board
were extinguished at 7.30 pm
when all had to have hammocks
fixed

Monday 15th Nov. —

Calm and hot with a light
following breeze. Further news
of the sinking of the Embden
has come this! Strange wireless
signals were received by Orizaba

which were apparently the Embden
signalling to her Collier. Then we
got S.O.S. from "Cocos" station saying
that strange cruiser at entrance
"Orizaba" sent this to "Sydney" who
proceeded & discovered Embden
who decamped & was chased
Sydney sent that she was chasing
Enemy North & as we were all to kids
north of Cocos she was coming
towards us. "Melbourne" & Jap cruiser
cleared for action I went to cut her
off but Sydney forced her to
beach on an island some N of
Cocos. She then chased & sank
the attending collier of Embden
Embden had landed a crew on
Cocos & cut one of 3 cables &
destroyed wireless station & cable
instruments save one which
was buried & not in use

The Embden had foresail + 3
 funnels blown off. We do not know
 what Sydney is doing. She has
 not returned. There have been
 several deaths within the
 last few days in the fleet from
 pneumonia supposed, caught
 by men sleeping out with too
 little covering. We continue
 doing a good hours physical
 drill in the morning + another
 hour of rifle drill or knotting
 with lectures in the afternoon.
 By a little oiling, we're getting
 cake with our coffee for supper
 and milk for our porridge
 which previously was just
 sweetened. Today a bottle of
 "Panto" burst in my haversack
 & spoiled my razor case much
 to my disappointment. My word!
 One perspires some at meal
 times down in the hot troop
 deck. Its about the only time I
 go below for meals.

Disposition of Transports

<u>Port.</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Starboard</u>
Wiltshire 1	Orwicks	Euripides
Medic 2	Southern	Argylshire
Ascanius 3	Pera	Shropshire
Geelong 4	Amadale	Aprie
Star of Victoria 5	Saldana	Benalla
Marera 6	Katana	Rangitiri
Ellen Mac Lorquodale 7	Hymettus	Star of England
Port Lincoln 8	Anglo Egyptian	Hororata
Suffolk 9		Quresh
Karoo. 10		Miltades

New Zealand Boats

Manganui	Tahiti	Ruapehu
Hawkes Bay	Arawa	Wairana
Star of India	Athenie	
Limerick	Orara	

Wednesday 11th Nov.

Nearly everybody was sleeping on deck last night till a tropical shower came & drove all those not under the decks below where it was very hot & close. I was lucky enough to be able to stay on deck. This morning we pulled out to ^{all ships} started & stopped and passed us right down the line. It was apparently an inspection. All the boats in our line are apparently horse boats. One boat reported short of water. We noticed one of the N. 3. boats was having rifle practice over the stern. We came back to our position at a grand speed getting a decent breeze this' the boat. I was vaccinated for small pox this morning. Told today that letter

to be written by Friday as we expect to get to Colombo Sunday.
Thursday 12th Nov.

The rain shifted a lot of those sleeping out last night but I was safe. At 5 am the Bosun's mate came & woke us telling us the Captain of "Melbne" was coming on board & we were in the road. We steamed in front of the fleet to the Melbne & stopped by her & the Captain rowed over to us and stayed on for half an hour. He then left & went to the Jap Cruiser. By this time the fleet had caught up. It was a lovely still morning; hardly a ripple & the boats presented a fine sight. At 2 pm the Empress of Asia, a 3 funneled

Steamer of C.P.R. passed us bound for Cocos. She was painted grey & some thought they saw guns on her. She sent "Good luck Australians"

Freitag. 13th Nov.

The hospital was prepared for about 100 wounded German from the Embden & some of the sergeants had to vacate cabins for officers from her but the Empress of Russia has gone to Cocos for them. She passed us last night. The 2nd class Cruiser Hampshire has come up with us & the New Zelos are apparently leaving. They have come up from the rear with a few of our ships that want water & stores. They are apparently hurrying on to

Colombo to prevent congestion with the Hampshire as Escort. She crossed the Equator at abt. 10am this morning & it's quite cold in fact it's been raining hard all day. There has been no celebrations at all.

Saturday 14th Nov.

Today has dawned calm and clouded. The N.Z. boats are out of sight in front on their way to Colombo. Continued calm all day. We finished our cricket match & again dismissed our opponents for 1, a bye. Thus we won ^{by an} ~~on the~~ innings and 3. In the afternoon we were issued with our black kit bags & I got a cotton singlet to my great relief & a packet of raisins. A big rain storm came up in the night

Sunday 15th Nov.

I did not sleep on deck last night & when I came up this morning such a beautiful sight met my gaze. Land was in sight, trees and trees of it, interlaced with clouds. There were range upon ranges of hills, stretching away into the distance. The coast of Ceylon could only have been 10 miles away on our Starboard side. The Sydney was ahead of us with the Empress of Russia with the prisoners from the Emboden. The morning is again calm with great rain clouds astern with the sun just above them. I've seen so many novel things today that I'm sure I won't be able to record ^{the} my impressions. The first thing to strike one

After the hills were the fishermen in their Katamarans. These men must have been 20 miles from land in little boats you think one wouldn't trust a dog in. There is a boom lashed on to the side which makes the boat stable and there is a great canvas sail attached to two canvas masts.  I saw one thro' the glasses with a large fish, nearly as large as the man, lashed to the side. There must have been hundreds of these craft all along the coast. When we were approaching Colombo about 12 am a whole fleet of them were flying before us. It looked very novel. There is no natural harbour at Colombo but a fine

concrete breakwater built
with massive concrete blocks
There are about five light houses
two at the ends of the breakwater
There was a great crowd of ship-
ping in the harbour when we
arrived and a lot outside
We dropped anchor outside
about 2 o'clock. The new Zealand
ers were in the Harbour & the
Sydney with her aft Starb^d rigger
shot away. Also there was the
Hamphire & the Empress of Russia
and a few of our boats. The
Harbour looked packed full and
presented a fine sight. The
town of Colombo runs right
down to the wharves but you
don't see much of the town
from the bay owing to a rise
of ground. You do see a
couple of fine hotels & the
military barracks which
are almost on the shore. The
vegetation right along the
shore are palms, immense
things they look. My word! I
have a longing to get on shore
here. Also there is a fascination
in the hills which makes one
want to see them at closer
range. They have been partly
hidden in clouds all day
with just peaks showing away
up in the sky. We had
church parade this morning
& this evening both parades have
gone ashore & we're not having
our usual sing song tonight
It's remarkable how quickly
it gets dark here, its light a
few minutes before six and
dark a short while after

All the launches & tugs are worked by black men with white shining teeth & brownish black oily bodies. There was a big Russian Cruiser with 5 funnels in the harbour when we came. Now she is lying out near us. The Jap Cruiser was in the harbour also. Her steam pinnace came out to us after we had anchored with the Jap Commander. This has surely been a full day & if I could only go ashore!

Monday 16th Nov.

My wish of last night was gratified to my great surprise and two of us engineers went ashore to get supplies for the rest. You could have knocked me over with a feather when I was asked if I wanted to go ashore, you bet I refused it. We left the boat about 9.30 am and once inside the breakwater were confronted with a great quantity of shipping. There were transports, merchantmen, men of war & native scows & sailing ships, barges and pinnaces - native rowing boats, in fact the place was absolutely alive. It was interesting to see the bungalows coaling the ships. A barge full of sacks of coal which must weigh 50 lbs the sack along side & steps are made somehow to a hole in the ship thro' which the coal is taken. The men stand in ~~two~~ facing each other as these

steps. They then throw up these bags of coal from one step to the other in a quick chain, jabbering all the time. All the N.Z. boats & a few of ours were in coaling. There is no wharf to tie up to. You have to go off to a concrete pier, covered in, about 100 yds long. This has two levels, water level & a higher level running onto the pier. You change your money to pipses worth $\frac{1}{4}$ at the head of the pier 15/- ft. Outside the pier are hosts of rickshaw men all wanting to drive you some where. There are also taxis & horse carriage. Just off the pier is the G.O.H. or Grand Oriental Hotel. This is a fine place, an immense dining room, with hundreds of large fans. We had "tiffin" here amongst all the heads naval & military officers. It cost us 3/- or 4/- each. It was a great change to ship fare. We waited on the pier till 11 am for an officer & while waiting fell in talking with a young Englishman who was keen & rubber planting up in the hills. He had come down and volunteered for Active Service and expected to leave tomorrow and go to India. They drill in the early morning & cool evening. We went up with him & had a drink at the G.O.H. Then we went and did some shopping. There are several large European shops like "Foy's" where you

Can get anything but they are a better class than Japs. We went to "Cargillo" about the biggest place there. All other shops but these big European ones are carried on by the Natives where unless you look after yourself you get beaten very badly. After making some of our purchases we went for a rickshaw ride along the promenade by the beach to the Galle Face Hotel.

This is a large European Hotel about a mile along the beach. We stayed here a while & looked at some beautiful silk soap & shirts &c which made your mouth water. Returned to tiffin at G.O.H. & had an enjoyable lunch.

After lunch we had did some more shopping which took us till about 4.30. We then went to the wharf with our purchases & put them on the boat for "Dunedin" & returned to town. Then we looked around & did more shopping and went for another Rickshaw ride to the Native market & round ^{by} the Galle Face & back along the promenade. It was then about dusk & beautifully cool riding. All the population were out driving or walking getting an airing. The better class of Native population were especially noticeable. We got back abt. 6.15 & went to wharf to find boat going back at 8.15. We went back to town & went up on roof of G.O.H. where a

Great view is obtained. All the lights in the harbour looked great. & the whole scene was a picture. We caught the boat back & got to the ship about 9.30. I was as tired as a dog when I got back thro' the unusual amt. of exercise.

However it had been a glorious day, the impressions of which will form a lasting memory.

Thurs. 17th. Nov.

The rufflers provided amusement by diving for coins from these rafts which are made by lashing two or three baulks of timber together. We weighed anchor about 11.15 & resumed our trip at 11.30 am. In the afternoon we had an account of the engagement with between the Sydney & the Emden from Mr Bean a war correspondent on board with us. It was extremely interesting and full. It had been gathered from various officers & men of both ships & must have contained nearly everything of importance. The Emden must have been an inferno most of the time, on fire in several places, no funnels and smoke pouring along the deck. &c. There were 153 killed & about 50 wounded on the Emden. All the survivors of the emden had nothing to eat or drink between 9 one morning to 9 the next. One man was picked up by the Sydney who must have been in the water 8 hours & two more who had been in 6 hrs swimming & floating.

We soon left Colombo behind & formed only two lines with only

one battle ship as convoy. The other boats are to follow & pick us up. We are bound for Aden.

Wednesday 18th Nov.

calm pleasant morning ^{save} for a few showers. 40 of the German prisoners came on board Monday afternoon while I was in Colombo they are fenced off at the stern of the boat. There are about 6 officers who have cabins on the prom. deck. All these are guarded by men with fixed bayonets & 20 rounds of ball cartridge. The men exercise along the main deck twice a day under guard. They say we have only 250 tons of water on board instead of about 1000. There were so many ships wanting it at Colombo that we could not get as much.

There is only one issue of fresh water in the morning for washing. We will be drinking condensed water soon. I feel decently cool now in light trousers & singlet bought in Colombo. Played crib for an hour or so last night.
Thursday 19th Nov.

Another calm cool morning with a glorious sun rise. This morning the sun rose right astern about 6 am it was a grand sight. A sentry was caught asleep over the German prisoners last night. He will probably get 28 days C.B. Another sentry was caught shewing his rifle to a prisoner, in fact the German had his rifle. He will get 28 days also. Something went wrong with the Ascanius & we had to slow down to let her pick up

4.
A concert held at night on the
troop deck. The artists were men
from the deck & a very fair program
resulted for a practically impromptu
concert. At the close Y.M.C.A. distrib-
uted rations to the audience. During
the evening a flying fish flew
aboard. I was playing cards at
the time & did not see it. The fish
are quite common now. My last
vacation did not take & I was
done again today. There was a
most remarkable sunset this
evening. From behind a big
bank of clouds came blue &
pink & light colored rays shoot-
ing right up into the sky giving
a very fine effect.

Quarantag. 20th Nov. Freitag

Another calm cool morning
with a cool breeze & a sea of
deep blue. We are having grand
weather, in fact the trip has been
remarkable for the fine weather.
Physical drill was rendered more
interesting by the introduction
of a couple more of games. The
German prisoners do a fine lot of
exercises. Signalling & lecture in
the afternoon. Started one of Conan
Doyle's novels from Y.M.C.A. The Starb-
line which was left behind at
Colombo came in sight and the
Ascarius left our port line &
went & joined the New Zealanders
who passed us. An hours wait
at night.

Samstag 21st Nov.

I was sleeping on the port side of
the main deck last night and
about 5 am I was aroused by a
red rocket being fired from our

boat. This was followed first by a red rocket from all the boats on our port side. Then I saw three boats coming towards us apparently in line with our port side line. The first & last of the 3 had mast lights but the other was well lit up. It was then dark and they came apparently straight on & the Wiltshire heading our port line lit her sailing light. The 3 boats then got out of the way & soon afterwards we changed our course about 30° S and then the Hampshire or the Curlew attending us dashed thro' our lines to cut them off. They pulled up & the Curlew had her search lights going. It was now becoming light & we could see smoke of more boat ahead which eventually came in sight & turned out to be our starboard line apparently in a tangle & the 3 boats we met turned & came with us being also members of our starboard line. It turns out that there was a slight collision between Ascainus & Phropok. The scattered line eventually reformed and after a time went ahead. We could not see the Ascainus. I don't think we intended to call at Aden but from what I hear we will do so now. There was no parade this afternoon, cricket and boxing matches being indulged in. We discovered a mate of Jack Buckland on board. He was with him on the Buchan survey camp. I went ashore with him at Colombo. Put in an hours swim. Did some washing after tea.

Sontag. 22nd Nov:

cool morning with a choppy sea. Heard yesterday of the action of Ecken & Breslau with Russians. G. B. damaged. Church parade today at 10.30 am. Just before Church parade, which was held on the aft well deck, we swung out of line and stopped and the Hampshire came up & one of her boats came over and took off our ^{Naval Commander} Captain and M. G. Bridges & another staff officer. We then took up our position again. Today I've got the signatures of the members of the section as a memento. They are in the end of this book. After lunch we stopped and took on the officers from the Hampshire & then started steaming full ahead & passed our line. We thought we were going ahead to Aden but after a while we stopped and the Hampshire took some meat from us. Then we resumed our position again. Read all the afternoon. Sing song & in the evening.

Montag 23rd Nov:

Orderly for this week. The Island Socotra came in sight this morning. It is supposed to be inhabited by savages. It is an island about 20 miles long and appears from the N side to rise up precipitantly from the water & the whole appears very hilly with little vegetation. We are passing it on the N side whereas the usual trade route is to the south of it. We were opposite it about midday.

As an Eastern mail will be despatched from Aden I started writing tonight. The lights go down about 8 pm & so I went to Lt Mearns cabin where there is a reading light & wrote by that.

Tuesday. 24th Nov

Another grand sunrise this morning. I get up a bit before six to get my shower early & thus get a decent start. The orderly duties are as follows. First thing in the morning get hotwater & wash the previous night's coffee cups & brush the table down, also brush under the table. Then draw bread and butter. Seventeen special size loaves are drawn & enough butter for breakfast. Then set the table for breakfast at 7.30. There is only one plate each & you wipe your own plate with bread after porridge for the next course. At 7.25 am "Cookhouse" blows & you fall in to go to the galley. We use the same galley as the 1st & 2nd saloon & there are only 19 messes to be served there. Down aft they have the 3rd class galley & about 60 messes have to be served & it takes some time. You wash up after breakfast & scrub down the mess table & seats, clean the knives & sweep the floor under the table. This keeps you occupied almost to inspection about 11 am. Then you have to draw the beer. This is done on the lowest deck aft & there is a que of about 70 waiting

Each man is allowed a pint
a day for which he pays 3.
Our mess draws about 10 pints
per day. When this is drawn
it is nearly time to set the
table for dinner, soup meat
& vegetables & pudding. After
washing up the dinner things
you are free for the afternoon
save for drawing jam &
butter for tea at 2.30 & lime
juice a little later. Each
man is served with a cup
of lime juice a day. Set
the tea for 5 o'clock & wash
up. Draw coffee for supper
at 7.20. We get cake for
supper of a night. Our
section has been on guard
today & meals have been
prolonged. Tea for those on
guard will not be till 6 pm.

This morning at 8 am we
went ahead at nearly full
speed for Aden. The Hampshire
kept with us for some time but
she has fallen back. We had
a fire alarm at 4.30 this afternoon
for practice. While fallen in
we saw an immense shoal
of porpoises. A little white
& grey bird came and alighted
on the rigging this afternoon.
The guard till not come down
to tea till after 6 pm. & we
did not get furnished till after
7 pm. I then went & wrote
a couple of letters.

Wednesday 25th Nov.

On rising this morning
land was visible in a
haze on the starboard side. It
looked hilly and in front

of us could be seen a specially high peak. We apparently steered for this and it turned out to be an immense barren hill outside the harbour of Aden. On approaching the harbour we saw there were a large number of boats in it, some of the New Zealanders & a line our ships were there. The whole place is as barren as can be imagined. There is a large military garrison there. The side of the big hill is covered with military barracks. The hill is bristling with forts even to the very top which seems unassailable. There are signal stations all over the hill too & a wireless plant.

The natives were soon out in their rowing boats, not like the Beiflow boats but just ordinary rowing boats. They were selling cigars, cigarettes, singlets, tinned pineapples &c. I bought some pineapples which were tinned in Singapore. They were sent away by a boat for some reason or other. About 11 am we went into the inner harbour to take in coal and water. You do not see the town till you come into the inner harbour. It lies sheltered under the great hill. There are several big hotels of eastern architecture. Camels could be seen drawing water carts along the street. They say that all their fresh water is distilled. We saw the Ascania in the harbour, she had

a nasty rip in her bows
high up. There was an incident
causing a stir about dinner
time. In order to drive away
some hawkers in their boats the
officer of the guard ordered the
M.P. to throw water over the boat.
This was done & some of the goods
spoilt. This got a bad reception
from the fellows on deck. One
of them told the S.M. of the M.P.
off & he has been wheeled for
it, 21 days detention,

Donnerstag 26th Nov.

I have a bit of a cold so I slept
below last night. Coalging continued
till late at night. This morning
the mess was covered in coal
dust. Yesterday I washed a
singlet & let it hang by a port
hole & it got covered in coal
dust. Several of the chap.

got in a mess leaning over the
rail watching the riggers coalging.
There was some sport watching
them. Someone would drop a
penny on the barge & they would
all stop work & scramble for it.
The head serang in the boat would
rave and strike at the men
and threaten to throw coal
at us for causing the disturb-
ance. He unearthed a big cane
from somewhere & started to
land about with him & he soon
quelled the disturbance. One
half of the men would loaf
while he was watching the
rest. About 13 am we shifted
into the outer harbour and
about 7 am we started again.
We have our three full lines
again and no New Zealanders

are going in front of us this time. About four o'clock we came level with Perim Island. We saw the hull of the P & O boat "China" that was wrecked there. There is only a small settlement and a light house. No fortification apparent. We had our first sight of Africa just previous to this. We have been keeping Arabia in sight most of the time on our Starboard Bow. The land is all barren with sandy deserts & treeless hills and looks very uninviting. There was a cloudless sunset caught with African hills silhouetted against the sun.

W. Freitag 27th Nov

We're in the Red Sea and its pretty hot. There is a following wind so we get no benefit of the breeze.

We are continually passing boats of the Indian Transport returning singly from Europe. There is no land in sight on any left but were passing islands on our right. Interference with M.P.'s is being treated very severely by the O.C.; 28 days given to a man this morning. The detention room is small & at dinner time it was very hot. The orderlies have to get the dishes from the room. The men do 5 hours coal burning each day. In the afternoon we went ahead and with the "Geelong" caught up the "Hampshire". We gave the "Hampshire" meat & the "Geelong" four sailors who missed the boat at Colombo and were brought on by the "Sydney" to Aden.

at Aden they came on the Orvieto
as the Geelong was not in the harbour.
It's a hot close day and I've been
perspiring all day freely.

Saturday 27th Nov.

Will Snowball was transferred
here from Omrah ^{and} is in the
hospital. Last night I was talking
to him for 2 hours. He is to be
operated on this morning at 10
o'clock. It's calm & hot - as
usual. The universal has
happened. Last night at 12.30
a wireless came to tell us
to go to Egypt to finish our
training & the 'head'
assembled & had a conference
nearly all night. As a
result this morning we
went ahead full steam
for Suez. I don't know

yet if we're going to Pt Said
I suppose we're going ahead
to fix things up. It came
as a great surprise. We
are to finish our training
at Said & proceed to Marseille.
It's been very hot today. We
are getting all our things
into our black kit bags
which is all we'll use
now I suppose.

Sunday 28th Nov.

Kit and uniform inspection
this morning before Church
Parade. We are still going
full steam ahead but are
retarded by a head wind
and sea. We heard today
unofficially that we are going
on to England & Engineers.
Just before dinner we

passed the 'Daedalus' light-house and now 6 o'clock we are approaching 'The Brothers'. The Suez mail closed at 5 pm today. It is very windy on deck for we're rushing along like a railway train. It's been quite cool all day even down below. Have to continue orderly till we disembark. The latest rumour is that we are going on to England to Chatham. The German prisoners are supposed to be going on to Malta.

Monday 30th Nov.

It was hard to keep covered and warm last night on deck. It was very windy & the wind was cold. When

we woke land was close on both sides. We were a good way up the Gulf of Suez. There was a very fine sunrise. When we started to get breakfast we were told the orderlies were to be changed for which we were truly thankful. I then volunteered to go on the prison guard in place of a sick man. I then started to get spruced up & into my uniform for the first time since Colombo. About nine o'clock in the morning we approached Suez & could see the smoke of several steamers there. The town is right at the mouth of the Canal and is on very flat country. Apparently all the houses

are of concrete or stone.

The town is apparently split into two parts, the smaller right at the mouth of the Canal and the other separated from this by a dock or Coaling harbour. There was an Indian troopship No 108 lying there and several other tramp steamers of various nationalities. A big Dutch boat which we passed last night came on after us. "The Prins der Nederlanden" was her name. The ~~Indians~~ ^{Natives} were soon around us wanting to sell rice looking oranges and dates but they were not allowed to do so much to our disappointment.

We took on some water and vegetables. We dropped anchor about 10 am when we went on guard. I was in the second relief from 1 pm till 4 pm. At about 3.30 pm we up anchored and after turning in a circle set off into the Canal. The men cheered the people in the streets which run right down to the water. There were a few white people about mostly soldiers. We got Sunday's paper telling us of reported Russian victory and the attack on Zeppelin works at Friedrichshafen. Also that the Turks had someone appointed to lead them in Egypt where we may meet them.

Apparently things have not
changed in Eastern France.

The Canal is just wide enough
for two steamers to pass, one
boat must tie up while
the other does this. On our
right is a long stretch of
sandy desert with a range
of hills in the distance
It looks very desolate. On
our left is a green stretch
running parallel with the
canal with palm trees
grass growing. It looks very
refreshing after the brown
sand. At posts about every
3 miles along the canal are
embanked native soldiers
which turn out & give us a
cheer. We passed one of

detachment of Royal Engineer
from Mandates. It is

wonderful the colour you
get here & the number of
colours the sand assumes.

This has been an extremely
interesting day and it's
rather a pity we're passing
thru' the Canal at night.

We are now passing thru' a
lake with a dredged channel
thru' it. There are four boats
following us at some distance
All the boats have search lights
in their bows. A company
of our men have been issued
with ammunition in case
of snipers along the bank

They are stationed on Arabian
side & no men are allowed to
sleep on that side.

The Canal looked very fine in the moonlight. My second post was from 10 pm to 1 am over the men below. Some of the men played cards and draught till about 12 pm. They sleep on mattresses and have pillows. It was very cold up on deck when coming off at 1 am. We were passing thro' a part of the Canal which apparently had a stumpy pine growing along the bank.

Wednesday 1st Fleet

altho' we were not relieved till about 1.30 am & did not get to sleep till about 2 am we were up for reveille at 6 am & went on for two hours then. I was down below and missed our entry into Port Said.

We apparently dropped anchor about 7.30 am. We found on coming up at 8 am that we were quite near the town of Port Said and in a widened part of the Canal which acts as a harbour. None of the big boats can get up to the wharf but for have to be rowed ashore. On our right was a large yard holding material for repairing the Canal. There was a particularly large Cantilever crane. On the left was the town. This was right down to the water's edge and contains some fairly large buildings and hotels. There were two French warboats here and two English boats. Of course as soon as we stopped there were the natives

around in their boats selling oranges, date post card, turkish delight, tomatoes. I had some tomatoes for breakfast & enjoyed them. We were dismissed from the guard at 10 am. I bought some post cards and a book of flowers from Jerusalem which I hope to send home. The natives coaling are, in general, a big set of rather villainous fellows. They form a continuous stream carrying a little straw bag of coal on their shoulders. It is supposed to be a very quick method of coaling. At 2 pm we fell in in full marching order with our kits packed for inspection. We went below and had hats, great coats, rifles and bayonets examined & had to stay below till 4 pm.

Slept below and went to bed early to make up for little sleep last night. Lots of men went down a rope over the side to get ashore. Some got ashore and were caught and others were caught before they got ashore but most of them were caught at some time.

Wednesday 2nd Dec

The other boats are arriving this morning. The harbour here is practically jammed full of boats now. They are moored nearly touching each other with just enough room for another boat to pass between the rows. Torpedo boats are running about the harbour. A mail was delivered this morning but only about

half the men got letters. We expect more letters today. The German prisoners were taken on to the Hampshire this afternoon. We saw two hydroplanes being lowered off a French Naval Repair boat today. They are apparently for service in Egypt. The French sailors cheered all our transports as they passed. Got news from Lt. Knight that I've got my year.

At 3.30 pm we left the harbour and passed out thro' the concrete breakwaters. There is a statue of Lord and De Lesseps on one arm of the breakwater. He is pointing the way into the canal. There is a fine ocean beach with a great number of bathing boxes. Outside the harbour were the two torpedo boat keeping guard.

It was dark by 5.30 pm tonight. We expect to land at daybreak. Monday 3rd Dec.

We entered the harbour at Alexandria at about 5.30 am and proceeded right into the inner harbour. There was a large number of boats of all sizes kinds and nations including a number of German prisoners. We went alongside the wharf about 7.30 am. Since then we've been knocking about in full marching order with our black kit bags. Some infantry have got away and the first train load has left with some of our transport. Alexandria seems a fine big town. It has an excellent artificial harbour with

berthing for a large number of ships. Went a short way up the town in the afternoon. The native places are all very old and dirty. In the evening we drove up to the "Mansheeh" or big square in the centre of the town. This is a fine big square with trees & tables after the style of a continental Café. We struck an English "Tommy" who showed us round all the town. The European part is very nice but some of native part is filthy. Got back about 9.30 pm & just before a Roll call at which there were very few present.

Freitag 4th Decr

Raining during the night. Lot of the men with sore heads this morning.

We were loading trucks all the morning and supposed to leave at 12 am. We had lunch at 11 am and we were waiting about with our kits ready to go for a long while. We got into the train 3rd class dog boxes about 1 pm and were hunted out by New Zealanders. We were told to get into trucks with luggage so a couple of us went down to what serves as a brake van. This is just an open truck with a kind of a shelter on it . It served as a grand observation car altho' we had no seat except in the shelter. It was a great ride. We passed over the Nile soon after leaving Alexandria. It was about a 1/4 mile wide. The

Railway line was very straight and level. We averaged about 25 to 30 miles an hour to Cairo. It is 121 miles and we were travelling from 2.30 pm till 7.30 pm. The New Zealanders got off at Cairo station where I posted about 12 post cards. We went on for another 5 minutes where we got a cup of Cocoa and a roll of bread. This was very acceptable. We had eaten some of our beef and army biscuits on the way. We had to wait a good while at Cairo before we ~~good~~^{got} into the electric trains to the Pyramids. We did not arrive there till about 11.30 pm. It was a grand ride down in the train in the moon light but the wind was very cold. We found a tent up into which we crowded. Some slept out in the cold.

Saturday, 5th Decr

All day we were fixing up tents and at six o'clock we went on guard. We had to put up tents for all engineers. There were all Camp Accountants to fix up. It got pretty hot at midday.

Sunday, 6th Decr

On guard all day. It was interesting keeping the donkey men, natives etc away.

The rest of the men were working still keeping getting the tents up. Went into Cairo at night. Sent a Cable, saw some fine buildings in the best part of the town but the native quarters is dirty. Streets here are

narrow & crooked. Got a train
home about 11 pm. We had
some coffee & cakes at the
Soldiers Home.

Monday 7th Decr

Fiscing of camp continued
We had a swim in the bath
at mens house in the morning
Helping Capt. Sturley with Army
Medical stuff in the afternoon
Went to see the Spring about
4.30. It not as big as one
would imagine from photos.
Mail cleared at 2 pm.
Received cable from home
at 6.30 pm.

Tuesday 8th Decr

Getting stones from hill-
side for camp. Saw Laugel
Caine, Lumbert, Bourke
Had a swim in the afternoon
Went on guard at 7 pm.
It rained during the evening
and the infantry men
who are bivouacing must
have had rather a damp
sleep. Most of the men are
now in camp, one or two
battalions arriving last
night. Baggage was coming
in all night and the poor
mules must be worked to
death.

Wednesday 9th Decr

Rain threatening all the
morning. Had plenty of fun
keeping the natives from
coming thro' the camp. Off
guard at 6 pm. Walked to
canteen after tea and went to
bed early. Mail supposed to clear
Thursday 10th Decr

Rained during night. Infantry

are still bivouacing and they must be having rather a damp and cold time. No 1 Coy. Eng arrived about tea time last night. Carried stone during the afternoon. In the evening I went to Cairo & took two hours to get there and two to get back and we only had about an hour in there ~~the~~ Freitag. 11th Dec.

Posted letters for Aust. last night. Constructing miniature rifle range all day. Getting stones for revetting in the morning and forming stop butt in the afternoon. Took all the evening to write a letter home which I posted today. The mail ought to be cleared on 13th.

Samstag. 12th Dec.

Continued with miniature range construction as a carpenter. The range is 30 yds and made in sections 30ft long which are 50' apart. Disappearing targets are to be used and worked from the mound by pulling a string. 303 bullets to be used. We expected to get a half Holiday today but no luck. There is a nice cool wind making the day pleasant. We have been expecting pay every day for the last few days and also a mail but have received neither so far. We were paid today I received £30.0 in piastres five 50 pt. notes and a handful of money. The pay was supposed

to be from the commencement
to the 9th Decr. at 2/- a day.
minus £1. 10 received on boat.
At night went into Cairo &
had second game of billiards
since leaving Melbourne. We
had tea at the Café in the
gardens & played billiards in
Soldiers Club.

Sunday 13th Decr.

Tent inspection at 9.30.
Swimming parade at 11 and
off for the rest of the day.
After lunch we went into Cairo.
It was a fine afternoon and the
ride was good. On one side of the
line up to Gizeh is a canal
and irrigation blocks. On
the other are residences. There
are some fine residences at
Gizeh itself which is about
half way to Cairo. The zoological
gardens are there. We walked
round Cairo for a while. We
then went to the barracks which
is a strong stone building
with loopholes. The doors
are of iron with loopholes.
The clockhouse as it is called
commands most of the principal
streets. At present the "Red
Caps" or Military Police are
quartered there. From here we
took the train (electric) to
Heliopolis. The car has 1st & 2nd
compartments and has a pantograph
as well as trolley arm. It has
pneumatic brakes. The run
down is 6 miles. The houses
there & hotels are the best
things in architecture I've
seen.

Montag. 14th Dec

Rifle range work. Up
town in the evening.

Dienstag. 15th Dec.

Rifle range and
gathering stores. Went
into the 1st + 2nd Pyram
at night.

Mittwoch. 16th Dec

Working for S. M. Jones
sorting stores and
putting up tents. Went
into town in the evening
and got dictionaries

Donnerstag. 17th Dec

Attached to R.E. Paid in
the afternoon ~~bill~~ to today
(£5.15.0 drawn). Wrote post
cards home at night.

Freitag 18th Dec

Attached to R.E. all day.

Wrote Walter in the evening
leave stops till a stop
away comes back to
Camp.

Samstag. 19th Dec

Attached R.E. in the morning.
Leave in the afternoon. Got a
letter from K in the morning
In the afternoon H. L. + self
went to the Zoo. Saw plenty
of Giraffes and two young
lions in a wire netting
enclosure. It is a fine garden.
In the evening we went into
Cairo and had a look thro'
some of the big French
shops

Sonntag. 20th Dec.

Went for a swim but the
water was too bad so I just
had a shower

Mounted guard at 2 pm
till 6 pm. Went to bed
early and had a good sleep
as usual.

Montag. 21st Dec:

Changed over from camp
duties to field duties. No 1
Coy. took over our camp duties
and our routine changed.

Breakfast at 7.30 am & no
before breakfast parade. First
parade at 8.30 am. We went on
to the sand & did section drill.
Had a squad for squad drill.

In the afternoon we had a
route march in full marching
order for a distance of 4
miles along the Cairo road. Went
along and saw Peter Bowrick
to in the evening. Wrote home
Dienstag 22nd Dec:

Morning parade at 8.30
with rifles and side arms.
We marched over the
sand to a level stretch
of fairly firm sand.
Here we did some company
route marching with the
horses without carts. We
then had a bit of skirmishing
and arrived back in camp
fairly blown. In the afternoon
we went for a route march
along the Cairo road. This
was not very hard & we
got back to camp early. Had
a bit of sweet in the evening.

Wednesday 23rd Dec:

We fell in at 8.30 am in
full marching order and at
9 am set off. We went round
by Mena House to the

Sphinx. Here we stayed
some time buying oranges
for the march. We moved
off from the Sphinx out over
the sand at 10 am. We
continued over the sand
for about $\frac{3}{4}$ hr when we
had a rest on some green
grass on an irrigated flat.
We then moved up onto the
sand hills to the tomb of
some ancient king. It
was a very well carved
sarcophagus. There were some
very large granite blocks
which must have weighed
close on 100 tons. This tomb
had been excavated and was
about 60 ft below the present
surface. We went down
onto the flat again for
dining and marched
back starting about 2.20.
We came back round the
west side of the Pyramid.
Swatted in the evening.

Donnerstag. 24th Decr

Xmas Eve

This morning we marched
out with rifles and side-
arms to the plantation
flat and did company
route-marching. It is
nearly 2 pm now & it is
about 8^{pm} in Melb. I wonder
what is going on & what
they are doing at Home. In
the afternoon we were paid.
I received no pay this week
saving it up for another
time. We then went up to
see the trenches & sapping
done by No. 3 Coy and had a

lecture from Capt. Cloagham on
sapping &c. In the evening I
went into Cairo with Walter Lickie
and spent the evening seeing
the people in Cairo. There
were many Fast Europeans
about. I bought a table lamp
to send home. We went about
till about 8 & came home at 9 pm.
There was a considerable amount
of illumination in the town.

Friday. 25th Xmas Day.

Xmas day was a holiday and
Callaghan & I left immediately
after breakfast for Cairo but
we did not catch at train till
9.30 am. At camp there was to be
a Church Parade at 10 am. & the
men had put in for a Xmas
dinner, geese & plum duff.
However Call. had arranged to

meet a Greek friend who speaks
English well to take him to
the Barrage down below Cairo.

In the morning we went down to
the Citadel and the Mohammed
Ali mosque. The Citadel is
now used as a barracks for
the territorials and is situated
on a hill with a fine com-
mand of the City. Inside the
Citadel is the Mosque Mohammed
Ali. This is an immense
building almost entirely of
alabaster. The four pillars
supporting the main dome are
about 6' square support of
limestone painted to represent
alabaster. There are 4 other
half domes against the main
one. All the ceilings of these
domes are finely worked and

suspended from them are
immense chandeliers. These
are the presents of various kings.
Inside the mosque is the tomb
of Mohamed Ali the first of
the line of Khedives. Outside
is an immense Courtyard
with a fountain where the
worshippers bathe their feet.
Around the mosque runs
a promenade from which you
get a grand panoramic view
of Cairo. We then went & had
luncheon in town. I had
Chicken & roast beef. I had no
"ma puddy mo". We caught
a train at 1:30 pm for the Barrage.
It's about 1/2 hr. run thro' flat
irrigated country all brilliantly
green. From the Barrage station
you go by hand trolley over the

different barrages. These are
weirs with locks attached. Between
the locks are fine gardens & there
is a museum of models of
various barrages, dredges etc. We
then visited a cotton factory
by the river & saw a horis-
tiple exp. steam engine with
high & intermed. cyls. tandem.
Also there were Corliss valves. The
engine was Swiss made. We
returned to Cairo by 4:45 train
having a little cup of Coffee on
the Barrage station. We had
tea & toast at a very respectable
Greek Cafe in Chancé Boulevar.
We stayed there talking for a
couple of hours & then went
for a walk around the city. It
was crowded & many of the
soldiers were very merry.

Thought must report before leaving
for Camp to permit me it was
Dues day & thus finished a
very interesting day. The
greek man we were with speaks
9 languages and is of the better
classes. He was educated in
England & speaks English well.
Sunday. 26th Decr.

In the morning we went out
and did some section drill
and semaphore signalling.
We had half holiday in the
afternoon & W. L. & I went
up the Pyramid. It was rather
misty & we did not get as good
a view as we might have
otherwise. However you seem
to be up a great height & you
get a fine view. We then

went over to the Sphinx & saw
some of the temples near by.
He counted 196 steps coming
down the Pyramid. Stayed
in Camp & wrote at night.
Monday. 27th Decr.

In the morning we were paraded
for a swimming bath but
the water was too dirty & so
I got leave & went down to Eiza
to see the Nilometer. This is
an ancient affair. It is
just a carved column in the
middle of a 20' basin. The
column is marked in "pics"
you have to go thro' a very old
and dirty arab village. In
the afternoon we went to
the Gezira gardens. We saw
the aquarium in a grotto. This
contains only fish from the

Kile and there are some green specimens there. The garden around the grotto contains a very large plot of geraniums which must look well when out in bloom. We walked round the sporting club which is a fashionable institution providing all kinds of sports for the wealthier classes. Lorrain held their sports there boxing day. We went to the big gardens which are very pretty. In this island the wealthier European classes live. We went to the pictures in the evening and saw the ^{Mr.} 3. March past in Cairo & some war pictures. They were not bad. We came back to camp by 9 pm. Montag. 28th Dec^r

This morning we supposed to start trenching and sapping on 8 hour reliefs for the week. We did not start till 9 am & worked in the sand on the hillside at two parallels. The digging was not very difficult but the sand would not stand up and in places it ran in as fast as it was shovelled out. Not much progress was made in the morning and the task was discontinued in the afternoon. We started a mine near number 3 Coy's line. Service timber is used & the work seems rather slow. We knocked off at 4 pm. I had a kick of a football before tea. Posted a letter home.

Dienstag 29th Decr

We are working shift work now & so did not have to get up at reveille. Breakfast was at 7.15 am and we fell in at 7.45 am. It turned out that new arrangements were made and we were dismissed at 8 am till 4 pm this afternoon. I got a pass & went to Cairo & saw the Chief Clerk of railways trying to get a pass to Assuan. We do not seem to have much chance. I then went & got a vest pocket Kodak. On getting back to camp about 3 pm I found a cable for me which was addressed to West & had been since I was day finding me. I fell in for work at 4 but did none till after tea. After tea we lugged timber over to the trench for about 3 hours in a light timber. It was jolly hard work over the sand & during the night one man strained himself. We proceeded with the overhead cover of the trench, heavy baulks being used as supports. We knocked off at 12 & got back about 12.30 when we had plum duff. I did not get to bed till about 2 am this' seeing about the injured man to the hospital.

Wednesday 30th Decr

I bought a vest pocket Kodak yesterday & got it this morning.

We got up to breakfast about 8 am this morning. We do not go on again till 12 pm tonight.

Went over to be pyramided with
Camera and took a view of part
of the camp. Then I took one of
the Pyramid and sphinx with
Walter Leckie on the sphinx. We
then went & climbed the 3rd or
smallest pyramid. This is only
about 150ft or so high. I took
a photo of distant Cairo. In
the afternoon there was a review
of part of the troops by Sir F. Reid
along at the S. end of the camp.
I layed down at 6 pm and
had a sleep till 12 pm when
we had to start work. We
had a plate of rice and
raisons before going on to
work. We were were working
on the 2nd parallel and
connecting sap which was
being enlarged. The overhead
cover was fixed on the 2nd

parallel and a surface
sap started. We had hot soup
and coffee at 4 am. It was
a lovely clear moonlight
night and not particularly
cold. The sun rose just
after the moon set on the
opposite horizon, both were
fine sights.

Donnerstag. 31st Dec.

We ceased work at 8 am
this morning and came
over and had breakfast.
We then got our accoutrements
clean for Sir George Reid's
review at 2 pm this afternoon.
Many of them are sound
asleep in the tent. Had a
speech from Sir George Reid &
marched past Gen. Maxwell. Got
a photo of review and one of George

driving away. Feeling rather
influenzery to night

Freitag. 1st January 1915

I went to bed early last
night taking 2 quinine pills.
At 12 pm we were woken
up by the discharge of
rifles, the ringing of bells
and bands playing. At
12.30 our sergeant came
in and woke up all
those not already awake
and distributed raisins.

This morning we went
on at 8 am for 8 hrs.
work on New Year's day.
I was not feeling too good
and it was with reluctance
most of us went to work.
Before going over we were
distributed with a tin of

Fry's Chocolate presents by
the Australian War Centenary
Association. London wishing
us a happy New Year.
I was feeling better when I
came off at 4 pm. It was
then very dark & looked
like rain. No rain fell. Went
to bed early.

Saturday. 2nd January 1915

Had a good sleep last night
and feeling better today. Had
rifle drill and had a short
lecture in the morning. Went
round & posted table centre home
& saw Stanley & Snowball in the
hospital. Loafed in the afternoon
with the expectation of going on
at 4 pm but 3 pm were told we
could get leave. I went into

Came to get my first films developed at Kodak Co. Came home early.

Sunday, 3rd Jan. 1915

Tell in 8.30 am and went up to rifle range and carried sand all the morning till 12.30 pm. We expected to do the same in the afternoon but were given leave. I went to Cairns with Elsie Jenkins & we went to St Andrews' Church, I posted letter & camp panoramas home. Had a wander round native town.

Monday, 4th Jan. 1915.

Built wire entanglement near the trenches in the morning & for a while in the ^{tram track} afternoon we shifted rails over beyond Light Horse. We knocked off about 3 pm & prepared for guards. Mounted at 5.30 pm.

On 2nd relief 7.30-9.30. Just after going on at about 7.45 pm standing on road talking to Callaghan when we heard a rushing sound from direction of reservoir. It was soon apparent reservoir had failed and guard tent was cleared out of prisoners & gear. After a few minutes ~~the~~ a bay came clean out of the wall and a wave of water 3' deep came out & carried away the small wooden R & B store. It can't be found now. There are two slabs of wall 10' x 2'6" x 1'5" about 45 yards from the gap. No 1. Coy. lines were traversed by the water and sand and are in a fine mess. Most of the water went thro' their Cook House and mess room.

The companies were called out by bugle and assembled quickly. As there was not much snow a large crowd did not collect & things were quiet. Our Chap. threw up a sand wall quickly to keep the water from our lines. An extra guard was put on but was not necessary.

Menotaq. 5th Jan 1915

Things look pretty mucky this morning. A barrel of tar was was down & broken by the water & tar is all over No 1 lines. The whole of the n.w. wall has a lean out, a complete bay being out of one end (the N.) & the other end cracked right down. The water carved a deep passage about 20' at the foot of the reservoir and undermined the floor.

Our mess room was used as a guard tent last night. I got only about 3 hrs. sleep last night. The reservoir was about 65' square and 10' deep. The walls were 15" thick and of uniform thickness. The reinforcement consists of two layers uniformly spaced in the wall of expanded steel, both in wall & floor. Two bays broke right thro'  from the end. The sand was piled up about 1' on the road below the tank. We came off guard at 5.30. Got about 5 photos of the break. Hunted with Agurets (Egyptian) 5 each. Came off guard at 6 pm and went to bed early.

Wednesday 6th Jan 1915

Went up to No 2 miniature rifle range and made mound working hard shovelling all

the morning. There was plenty of gambling about working hard. There was plenty of sand blowing about. In the afternoon to our disgust we had to go to No 1 range & do some shovelling there. We got away about 4 pm & were paid I got two weeks pay 28/- I went into Cairo in the night & got my first film. There was only 1 complete failure. The photo of Wallie on the Sphinx is the best I think. I bought 4 more films making 8 unused now. When I got back to camp I found a mail had arrived. I got a handkerchief from I don't know whom, also a paper (Herald) from I don't know whom. There was a card from Greta and a letter from his written from home saying he's at the Cliff and Port at

Peterborough.

Donnerstag 7th Jan 1915

A terribly windy day with lots of sand shifting. We went over to trenches to continue sap but just cleared up & gathered in all sand bags timber &c. In the afternoon we went down to the canal a mile along the road to see the trestle bridge built by No 1 Coy.

In the evening I got an almanac from an unknown sender & a flower pressed. The wind has died down a little. The almanac is apparently from Iris.

Freitag 8th Jan 1915

To-day we've spent getting sandbags out of the trenches and counting them & piling them ready for bringing away. They were brought

back by light timber. Bags,
& timber and wine were all
brought back. I got a letter
from Mrs Watson & one from Uncle
John, this was most interesting
The "Herald" I got was from U.S.
& the Handkerchief from Mrs Callaghan
The sand has been pretty awful
today till it rained this after-
noon. There was not much
rain but it stopped the sand.
Two & half buckets of mail came
today & there was great rejoicing
The mail was about 6-8 p.m.
Apparently the mail between
has been lost. Bed early.
Saturday 9th Jan. 1915.

Patience section this morning
Rifle shooting all the morning
did well, grouping.

application and Snap shooting
Half-holiday this afternoon
and wrote home, this took
all the afternoon. In the
evening I read the Treasure
Island & some M.F.E.

Sunday 10th Jan. 1915

Reveille is a little later on
Sundays. We had our first
Church parade in the lines
of 2nd Batt.ⁿ Captain McKenzie
gave the ~~sermon~~ ^{sermon} He is a military
man, not a chaplain. We had
plum pudding for dinner
It was sent by "Daily News"
of England and was very fine.
In the afternoon McKee & I took
our cameras and went over
to the big date plantation N
of the camp. It was a grand
day and there is green

among the trees. The palms are green at the top and the whole presented a good sight. We got some interesting pictures. In the evening I went for a walk & talk with Snowball. Incidentally we met an Englishman of good family but slightly "gone". He had served in Africa and was interesting to talk to.

Monday, 11th Jan 1915.

Instead of going bridging on the canal about 1 mile from camp there was an exam. for N.C.O's. 18 were picked out for the exam and 4 were to be picked from these. In the morning we did infantry drill and in the afternoon knotting. I did a bit of

reading in the evening.

Tuesday 12th Jan 1915.

The examination was continued all day. In the morning there was trestle bridge frame building and in the afternoon gym, sheer and derricks erection. At the end of this practical exam., as the points were close a written exam was given and this was to decide. I did pretty well in both.

In the evening I went into Cairo and took film to Kodak to be developed and some prints. When I got back about 8.30 there was a large mail being distributed. I got cards from Balf + Mr. Payer. Letters from Balf Woodfull, Nell, K. E. One. There was great excitement in the tent

as most of the men had letters.

Wednesday 13th Jan.

This morning we went out in marching order without great coats to the canal & took down the trestle bridge and put it up again before dinner. After dinner two tool carts went over & some laden camels. I got photos of both. We had some impromptu bridging of a gap on the bank as a motor came along & could not pass. Tool carts were used as central pier & baulks put from edge to cart to take road bearers. Finished in 18 mins. Trestle bridge then dismantled & returned

to camp. Got paid 14/- and got a letter from Eva. Heard I got top marks in N.C.O exam. Wrote Judd Woodfull in the evening.

Donnerstag 14th Jan

Went out to the canal early but did no bridge building. We went along the canal & did some range finding and musketry. The F.O.C came along to inspect the bridge put up by No. 3 & 4 sections but did not trouble us. We did some communication signalling in the afternoon. Helios were used. Camp back to camp about 5 pm and found a great mail in, all our lost mail. I got my first letter from

mother. It gave me funny
feelings. 4 pages from mother
There was a shorter letter
from Father. Letter from Eric &
Card from Father. There is
more coming in tonight.

Just got a 5 page letter from Mother
Friday. 15th Jan

Mail pouring in. Lots of
letters from home down on
my head for joy. All the old
mail came to light. Up till
tonight we got 32 letters &
Cards this week. This morning

we went for brigade route
march of about 10 miles

got back about 4 pm. Gen

Briggs was out with us.

At the halt for dinner we got
out the trough from tool carts
and rigged them ready for
watering in 20 minutes.

Took a photo of the pump
and horses at the halt.

We passed thro' a large
native village practically
surrounded by water. All
the natives turned out en masse
to see us. I sorted letters
and wrote a bit in the
evening.

Saturday 16th Jan

Anniv. of Father's Birthday.

In the morning we went
up to the canal and dis-
mantled a barrel pier
bridge and afterwards
built several barrel piers.
Half holiday in the afternoon.
I went into Camp and got
photos the native quarters.
Went down all the old quarters
- got some interesting photos

I had dinner in town and returned early. I got "Life of French" & book by Baden Powell on "Duck training for war". Got 2nd plin.

Sunday 17th Jan 1915.

No 2 Coy takes over duty & No 1 Section's duty section. Posted in duties today. L. Corp'l least so I suppose I'm an N.C.O. altho' no orders to me effect have been read out. We were working on tram lines this morning while the rest of section went to Church Parade. A half holiday in the afternoon. I did the clearing up of my bag and arranged my letters and read them again. In the evening I went up to YMCA

& had a sing song. Leo Pearce spoke very well.

Monday 18th Jan 1915

At first parade this morning it was read out that I had been promoted to Lance Corp'l. from 18.1.15. We were working on worn out tram cars renewing brasses and bearings. The bearings in most were in a bad state not having seen much oil. In some cases the axle was thro' brass bearing and part of the channel frame. There are not many spare parts and it meant a changing of parts from one truck to another. At night from 7.30 to 9.30 pm I was in the post in Eng. Canteen for the purpose of keeping infantry men out.

Monday 19th ~~Dec~~ Jan. 1915

On the same job today. I went round to Mena to see Walter Leckie who is in hospital there with pneumonia. He is getting along pretty well. I saw Les Hurley. He is practically all right now & expects to be discharged soon. Had a drink with the boys to wet my stripe. Our section are duty section this week doing all the work needed around the camp. The other sections were budge (Suspension, barrel pier) building today. Tea was not till 6pm owing to these building sections getting home late.

Wednesday 20th Jan 1915

Initiated to the position of "Orderly Corporal" sick parade of about 15 keeping one standing outside the medical tent in the cold for an hour. No breakfast left when I got back. Found plenty of time for reading Gen French's biography in the morning. In the afternoon I had to go to the H. Q. Div. Amm. Col. as soon as I got back sick parade. There was not much to do but parading sick & mess orderly. Got three letters from home and one from Jean. Another from Hefane. I wrote in the evening to Val from whom I received a card. Also to Hel and Edna whose photo I

received in the morning.

Donnerstag. 21st Jan 1915.

Received the "Lion" today. This morning we were working on tool carts practising unloading & distribution of tools. In the afternoon put up a 3, 2, 1 holdfast and an anchorage. Today we heard the artillery quite plainly. Went into Cairo in the evening. Jack Bodace & I had a grand hot bath making one feel quite young. We then had a slap up dinner for 14 pishas. I got my second and third films. There are a good few failures due to underexposure.

Freitag 22nd Jan 1915.

Looked like rain all day but none came. We were retrieving sand bags from the rifle ranges (minature) which have been condemned. Only two are going to be used after about 10 being half made. We put up gyms & derricks during the afternoon. Told we were going to Ikhmal on Monday. Got an invitation to the Presby. ministers to an evening next Wednesday.

^{23rd}
Saturday. 24th Jan 1915

Out in the morning doing field geom. on the sand by Officers tent. In the afternoon I printed some photos. In the afternoon. I went down to see Billy Snowball in the evening and found him a lot better and on duty.

Sontag. 24th Jan 1915

Church parade in the morning and printed some photos before dinner. In the afternoon went out with range finder & did some topographical work.

Went to bed early. There is a good tale told of an infantry sentry who was sitting by a fire instead of on his beat. A major came up & asked him what he was doing. He replied "a bit of sentry work, sir." Major replied "Oh! In a bit of a major." Soldier "Wait a bit and I'll get my rifle and give you a bit of a salute."

Montag. 25th Jan 1915

An extra warm day today. We were doing demolition all day. In the morning we practised the use of gelignite with fuse and electric detonations. We greatly astonished a native by exploding a charge at some distance by electricity. After the explosion he said in surprise "In all my life I have seen nothing like it." We did not go to Dhurabia as rumoured. His alleged that it was seen in an English paper that we were not to form a part of Kitcheners 2nd Army. This means there is no fight for us for some time. Went along to quarry in afternoon and did some boring and fired one charge.

Gelignite was used with commercial fuse and electric detonator. Read "Lorna Boone" in the evening. Received letters from Father & Hec.

Wednesday 26th Jan 1915

Demolition on bores this morning, 12 detonators fired in series with exploder. Monobel & gelignite used in bores. In the case of one hole where too much was given to lift 7 cartridges of gelignite and 5 of monobel blew out. In the afternoon the section went on bicycles to Abbas II bridge over Nile between Ghizeh & Rodah. We went down to the room

containing the gear for turning the swing portion of the bridge. Electric motors drive the rack

Wedges are first lifted at the ends and the bridge then turned. I obtained three pictures of the bridge. I saw Eric Woods on the road coming home. In the evening we had a talk by Major Foote R.A.E. It was a talk on Soldiering under 3 heads Soldiering, Saluting, & Sanitation. Heard the 3rd Coy Engineers were engaged at Suez & that there was a force of 6000 of the enemy about 15 miles from Canal. A.V.A. day

Thursday 27th Jan 1915

A terrible day, strong wind and tons of sand sweeping over the camp. We were making sheer legs and gyms all day and making

holdfasts. It was decided that
figure of 8 lashing was best
for sheer legs also to lash gins
by putting marks together and
lashing up on outer and down
on middle legs, the right hand
leg to be lifted over the left. Legs
to be splayed $\frac{1}{2}$ height, 1" per 1'
allowed on leg for splay & lashing

We were payed in afternoon I
drew 28/- Brush with Turks
recounted in tonight's paper
Donnerstag. 28th Jan 1915

Nice calm day today. The
section were putting up
a derrick both morning and
afternoon. In the morning
Walter Leckie and self had parties
for ^{heliograph} ~~semaphore~~ signalling. Our
party got bicycles and went
along road to Canal and then
about 1 mile along Canal
Leckie's party on slope below
pyramids. I can't read yet
but send fairly. In the afternoon
we were on the derrick but
did not make a satisfactory
job of it. We were issued with
papers of details of barrel piling
pontoon bridging and trestle
bridging. Lecture in the
evening by ^{Col.} ~~Major~~ Elliot on
pontoon bridging. It was merely
a reading thro' to correct the
printed sheets issued. Its
plain we'll never be efficient
engineers in b.m.s. the way
we are going on now. Got a
letter from Amy & Lizzie. Its an
old one Dec 1st. There is a
parade tonight at 10pm for
some reason.

Freitag. 29th Jan 1915

The parade last night was a check as there was no leave and at it we were roused about the row we kicked up at mess owing to getting bad stew. Also roused up about the swearing going on about the camp. One could not imagine a military camp unaccompanied by "Australian". Today we were down at the Canal building barrel piers.

Wrote Jack in the evening
Samstag. 30th Jan 1915

Hot today. We saw the land mine laid by No 4 Section blow up. There was the equivalent of 120 lbs of powder in at a depth of about 5'. There was a great upheaval of sand, the extreme height must have been close on 100'. We then went down to the Canal & made a light barrel foot bridge. Got a letter from C. Burt London saying they had remitted £5 to Anglo-Egypt. bank. Half holiday in the afternoon. It took me all the afternoon to write home. I was doing a bit of reading in the evening when Snowball came along. We went down to the track lines & had a talk to some of the boys. Snowball has been transferred to Ordnance.

Sonntag. 31st Jan 1915.

Church parade in the morning. I went to C of E parade for a change, "it was no improvement". In the afternoon I read a little

did a little washing, went
with the horses to water &
filled in the rest of the after-
noon with talking. After
church I went up to see Capt.
Wells of the Sixth & at the same
time had a long talk with
Borwick Balge & Riddell. In
the evening I went along to see
Les Hurley. He is still on light
duties but expects to be placed
on duty at any moment.

Montag, 1st Feb. 1915

Close and muggy today. Instruct-
ion in guard and sentry duty
in the morning. The men who
were leaving to go back to
Australia have come back
into camp as the ship is not
able to pass thro' the Canal.
In the afternoon we were morse

signalling from the Canal to
Pyramid with flags and telescope.
Went to a lecture on Pyramids in
the evening by the director of the
Museum. It covers 13 acres and is
481 ft high.

Dienstag 2nd Feby 1915

Took cart instruction and
making 40' derricks in the
morning. Signalling round
the pyramid in the afternoon.

Wednesday 3rd Feb 1915

Went down to the Canal
to dismantle the girder
bridge put up by other
sections. In the afternoon
I went into Cairo to draw £5
transferred from Com. Bank.
In the evening went to an
evening at Kew Gardens in
Cairo. There were about 25 soldiers

here and some civilians. I had
a real good time. Met a R.E.
man just up from Idhmalia
He said there was a crush with
the Turks this morning. One
felt rather out of ones element
sitting in a drawing room
trying to talk

~~Donnerstag~~ Donnerstag 4th Feb.

On the bridge all day. We
erected 40' sheer legs, one on
each bank and had tackle
from each to the ends of
the girder, lifted till we
could slide her down the ways
Here a gyn was erected to
take the weight and swing
it. We did not get back to
tea till 6pm. I was tired
and went to bed early.

Freitag. 5th Feb.

Went out again at 8am to
the canal and finished
getting the first girder off
The second we started on
after dinner and worked
on till about 6.30 pm. The
hook on a 3 block broke
when we were trying to
lift on the gyn to swing
it. There was a lot of
hard hauling &c to shift
the girder but the men
stuck to it well with-
out grumbling even in
the dark. It got very cold,
when it got dark and the
stars were shining bright
before we had finished
coming home we stopped a
train & all boarded & thus
arrived home a bit quicker

This evening the Eng^l
reinforcement came down
to camp to see us. They tell us
we have a bad name in
Melbome which is hard on
us for the force is not bad.
Saturday. 6th Feby 1915.

We are to get a full holiday,
besides Sunday, a week. This
commenced today. Walter
Leckie and I caught 9.30 train to
Giza & thence by train to
Bedrasheim. We walked over
to Memphis despite vigorous
attempts of donkey boys to make us
ride. Here we saw the statues of
Rameses I & II. These are immense
things about 26' long. We then
took ferry across the Nile & walked
to Helwan which is not such a
fine place as it cracked up

to be. We saw the fine baths
(sulphur & turkish & electric) Came
into Cairo by 3.10 pm train
and had tea, we then went &
listened to military band at
Shepards. Bought a paper cutter
for father. Supper at Maison
Groppi.

Sunday. 7th Feby. 1915 —
Church parade and sent
inspection by Col. Elliot.

Wrote home in the afternoon
Monday 8th Feby. 1915 —

Went for a route march
into Cairo in full march-
ing order. Had lunch
on the bank of the Nile just
past the Zoo. After dinner we
came back towards Giza and
then went to the small bridge
over Rhade Island.

we got various sections of this bridge with the idea of calc. the amt. of gun, cotton required to demolish it. Coming back we passed a detachment of Egyptian foot soldiers in white spats. We saw some Egyptian lancers in a very flash uniform. They were attending the funeral of the daughter of the late Khedive. There were a great crowd of "head" here. I got off a photo of two native ladies with white veils on. Dined in the evening & went to bed early.

~~Monday~~ ^{Thursday} 9th Feby 1915

22 to-day, didn't think of it till midday. We went to a flat piece of ground by the Pyramids & Cairo road & had musketry

instruction and skinning. We got dismissed early 3.45 pm this afternoon and on getting back found a bonga mail. I got 9 letters & cards. One from Father & one from Mother. Later got 4 more from Jock & another from Wal.

Wrote Home & Mrs Watson
~~Wednesday~~ ^{Thursday} 10th Feby.

Breakfast at 7 am, fall in 7.30 in drill order. We marched out to the desert rifle range at "Ligers Look". This is about 3 miles out west of the camp. You go up the valley to a plateau about 300' above the camp. Here is a long flat space covered with small stones suitable for a range. We shot at falling plates.

individually and collectively
The first lot were square plate
at 300 yds and the second
round plates at 500 yds. The
shooting on the whole was remark-
ably good. The march over the
desert was not too bad. The
marching being good where
there were stones scattered over
the ground. We got back
about 5 pm. Paid tonight, I
received about 136¹/₂ PT.

Donnerstag. 11th Febr.

We went out to the range
again to finish our field
firing. We were shooting all
the morning and about
midday had Gen Bridges & some
French Generals out to see our
firing. After dinner we
came back and were inspec-
ed for vaccination.

Got ready to go into Cairo to
get some photos.

Freitag. 12th Febr.

Route march to Sakatna
Packed 3 single blankets &
waterproof to go on lumber
We started at 10 am had
a meal about 1 pm and
arrived at our destination
at 4.30. The march was
about 14 miles along the
Nohit Canal bund most
of the way. We got tea about
8 pm in the dark &
slept on the sand and
slept well.

Samstag. 13th Febr.

Reveille at $\frac{1}{4}$ to six. Blankets
rolled by six. breakfast at
7 am. On the march at 8 am
and we came right on

with 10 minutes to $\frac{1}{4}$ hr
halts. Our section went
on the last 5 miles without
a halt to fix up the small
trestle bridge over a gap
in the bund. We no
sooner finished fixing the
bridge than the other
sections came up & we went
on. We marched straight
to the bath where we had
a grand swim. Nearly
everyones feet were a bit
sore & chafed. We loafed the
rest of the afternoon. In
the evening Wal Leckie & I
had a long talk to one of 7th Batt
who had been to Ishmalia.
They did not see any fight to
their disappointment. There
is a fine lot of entrenchments

guarding Ishmalia. R^d Cable,
Sontag 14th Feby. 1915. [Vaccinated!
Orderly corporal. Frouble
with a boil on neck.

Wrote home in the afternoon
Sent home photos and
cutting from Egyptian mail
about Carr fight with Turks
at Canal. Also sent home
registered parcel containing
paper knife and another with
small elephants in
Montag. 15th Feb. 1915

Pontoon drill on the new
 pontoons which arrived last
night. We just did some
preliminary drill of unpacking
and lifting pontoons off the
wagon. Half holiday in the
afternoon to make up for
missing our whole holiday

Saturday, Had boil lanced this morning and my neck is a bit sore. Read during the afternoon. Went to see Hurley & Snowball but both out.

Dienstag 16th Feby 1915

Had my boil lanced again. It's a pretty bad one & is a bit sore. To-day we were building a barb wire fence round the isolation hospital to keep patients in.

Wednesday 17th Feby 1915

~~Bare~~^{Barb} wire fence round isolation hospital.

Went to see Snowball in Ormau in the evening.

Donnerstag. 18th Feby 1915

Started on the barb wire fence in the morning but was taken away in charge

of job repairing the stop butt of the rifle range. There is a wooden wall filled with sand to stop ricochets and this had been knocked about and had to be repaired.

Saw Hurley & wrote home in the evening in the expectation of going to Idkuatic Friday night.

Freitag 19th Feby 1915

Went pontooning on the Canal all day. The drill is very interesting and easy. The development of the drill is very good and a length of 45' of bridge was built in 5 minutes and dismantled in 3 minutes. The day passed quickly and at the

End of the day most had a very fair idea of the forming up drill. There was a lecture for N.C.O's on pontoon drill by Col. Elliot. in the evening Saturday 20th Feby

We could not get the lat. & Sun leave for Idkuatic much to our disappointment. We should have a holiday today but this morning we went down to the canal and did some more pontoon drill. Washed some clothes in the afternoon

Sunday 21st Feby

Wrote home in the morning Church parade as usual followed by a good shower at the

newly constructed regimental showers in Gunner Lane. I wrote another letter home in the afternoon and one to Walter & one to Jack. In the evening I went to a lecture on the life of Christ at the Sydney Y.M.C.A. The lecture was illustrated by lantern views of Palestine. I was surprised to find it quite a different land from Egypt where save for a narrow strip along the valley of the Nile is desert pure and simple. Palestine is more hilly and has trees and streams. The River Jordan being a fine stream. I wrote to Roy while waiting for the lecture to start

Montag 22nd July

As we have only 6 pontoons with the division, 2 to a Coy, only one company can work on them at a time when forming bridge with rafts so this week No 1. Coy. and ourselves are working time about on them. We either have nearly a half day off every day, one day the morning & the next the afternoon. We started with the morning off. There ~~was~~ usual 6.45 am check parade was dispensed with & breakfast was not till 7.30 am. Thus we had what must be practically our first sleep since joining the army altho' it was only till 7.15 am. We fell in at 9 am for

tent inspection after which we had the morning to ourselves. In the afternoon we went down to the canal and worked on the service or "weldon" trestle and formed a couple of bays. The trestles are easily made but are difficult to launch and place in position. We did not leave till after 6 pm and had tea about 7 pm. We were to have commenced the new method of spending the 6 a day ration money issued because the A.S.C. cannot supply jam, bacon &c. The Q.M.S. has been spending the money of the company but owing to dissatisfaction it was decided to let each section spend the sections

money. This would allow more flexibility & possibly provide some variation in the food. Even better results could be hoped for if there were section cooks instead of company cooks. I thought I would have some work tonight as Corp Cooks & self were deputed to spend our sections money, but word came thro' that the 9th & 11th Batt^s were leaving on Sat & Capt. Williams told P.M.S. not to change the old arrangements as we might be leaving soon. This was the first real news of a what is apparently going to be a general move by the division to Asia Minor. In the evening I went to a lantern lecture on the war

by a Mr Oatke from Scotland. He had views of Scarborough, Rheims &c.

Monday. 23rd Feb.

Reveille at 6.15 and breakfast at 6.45. First parade at 7.30 am when we moved off to the canal where we continued our trestle bridging. We got about 5 bays out by 1 pm. whereas the rest of the Company built about 100 feet of pontoon bridge in $\frac{1}{4}$ hour. Pontooning is easily the fastest method of bridging. I had special leave to 2 am to attend the performance at the "Kingsall" or music hall. The performance starts at 9.30 and ends abt. $\frac{1}{4}$ to 12. The program was not up to much, not a

patch on an Opera House performance in Melbourne.

Arrived in camp about 1 am & found 4 letters for me & a letter & photo from Father.
Wednesday 24th Feb. 1915

Another late morning in bed. Received eight more letters during the morning including one from Hector & one from Mother. & a "leader" to very hot today with practically no wind. Fell in at 12.30 & went to the Canal Pontoon bridging all the afternoon. Sent a "statue" or lucky hand home to Hector as a Birthday present. Was pay order in the evening when all hands were paid in an hour.

Thursday 25th Feb. 1915

Breakfast 6.45 am & down to the Canal. It was very hot & we did not do much work. Dismantled the bridge built yesterday under the cinematograph and built & placed a couple of welded trestles. Took a couple of photos of the Bridge. In the afternoon I arranged the films in a film album. Laughlin asked me to play lacrosse against Territorials. Received paper cutting showing Walter Peckham and self passed on fourth year. In the evening I went to the pictures as a guest of Jack Darbyshire whose birthday it was & afterwards partook of supper at the canteen. Jack was my companion when I went

ashore at Colombo on our way
Over. There were five Russian
Dancers on as a variety turn.
Their dance was of the
vigorous acrobatic type.
Lieut Bridges and staff came
to see them.

Freitag 26th Feby 1915

We departed from our usual
routine today and went to
the canal this morning instead
of the afternoon. We built
a light pontoon footbridge
made by halving the pontoons
for medium bridge. Wrote
home in the afternoon. Took
Kacey's place as orderly Corp.
I wrote a letter and a couple of
post cards.

Saturday 27th Feby 1915

A whole holiday to our
surprise after the number
of half holidays during the
week. I had been picked
to play in a Lacrosse match
between A.I.E.F. & the Tommies.
We had a team with
representatives from
at least 8 states but none
of us had touched a stick
since leaving Australia
and all were short of a
run. I thought the match
would be postponed at the
last moment as the 3rd
Brigade was leaving. Some
of our players were in it
but the match was carried
through although we did
not have as strong a team
as might have been obtained.
Jack Bourlase & I went into
town in the morning & had

lunch in Cairo. We went
down to Helipolis on the Elect.
Rly arriving there about
2pm. There are fine sporting
grounds made on what
was originally desert by the
Helipolis sporting club. The
ground we played on had
been watered and rolled
and was just nice and
firm. The Tommies were
a good lot of fellows apparently
above the average. Their
stick work was good and
they played well together
we were beaten badly 20-6
but it was an enjoyable
game. We had tea in
Helipolis and then went
to Luna Park where we
put in a good night going
on all the hills

We got home thoroughly
tired after a good day.

Monday 28th Feb

Callaghan & I applied for
leave from 9am to visit
Sakkara. We were going
by train to Siya then by
train to Memphis & from
there by donkey to Sakkara
& Mena making a round
trip. However the train
was delayed on the road
and we missed the train.
We tried to hire donkeys
at Siya to go to Memphis
but the things offered
did not look much so
we decided to come back
to Mena & get good donkeys
there as the trip is 14 or
15 miles to Memphis.

There was an empty ^{V.O. motor} ~~passing~~ ^{passing} to Mena which we
hailed & got aboard. We
travelled about 30 miles
an hour or more all the
way to Mena. It a lovely
straight road under an
Avenue of huge acacia
trees & we enjoyed the ride.
We bargained for donkeys &
eventually set out with a
guide about 11 am. We
first visited the remains of
the temple of the Sun. This
once had a huge Obelisk on
it is of the 1st Dynasty nearly
3000 B.C. The alabaster
basins for the blood of the
slaughter cattle & the
alabaster altar on which
offerings were placed still
remain. I have a piece

of alabaster from there. We
then visited the pyramids
of Abusir and their
temples one of which was in
rather good state of preservation
showing the lay out quite
plainly, also the causeway
up from the valley temple
where the boat originally
tied up with stone at flood
time. Now it is fertile land
at the foot of the cause-
way stretching away over
to the Nile. From here we
went on to the tombs of
Sakkara which are the
best examples of their
kind in Egypt. Many are
in excellent state of
preservation altho' now
about 5000 years old. The

scenes depicted on the wall of various occupations & belonging of kings & people are in many cases marvellously well done. We visited in turn the Tomb of Ti (Vth dynasty) Serapeum (late B.C. 663-525 XXVI th dynasty) Ptahhotep (Vth), Tomb of Mesa, Street of Tombs Tomb of Kagem (VIth dynasty) Step pyramid. Pyramid of Unas Vth Dynasty, Persian shaft & tomb B.C. 525. All these things were absorbingly interesting. In many cases the original colouring was on the writings and carvings. In the Serapeum are the immense tombs of 26 sacred bulls. These tombs

or sarcophagi are carved or chiselled out of black granite and are about 20 ft long and six high & are covered by immense lids 2 feet thick. You pass along great vaults to these tombs & its with awe & wondering that you contemplate the huge coffins. We had intended to go on to Memphis to see the statue of Ramses II but it was too late & we returned across the desert & had a beautiful moonlight ride arriving back at Mena about 8 pm tired but immensely satisfied with our days trip. I would take too long to describe in detail the tombs visiting

so I'm sending home a
written description to be kept
Montag. 1st March 1915

Orderly corporal!

The 3rd Brigade and the
1st Field Coy moved out last
night for an unknown
destination. We expect to
be following in the course of
a week. Had some washing
in the afternoon and
had to parade pack drill
again before tea. After tea
I wrote home about our
Sakkara trip

Dienstag 2nd March 1915

Officers and N.C.O.s without
dunnage packs went out with
bicycles on a road reconnaissance
the company remaining behind
to brand kit bags and prepare

their kit ready to march out and
clear out everything else. In
the afternoon we were marched
down to the canal to see a
bridge made by Capt Popstun's Coy
of pontoons to carry motor
transport. After tea I endeav-
oured to get a hot bath at Grand
& Chini's hot baths but found
the hot water lacking so I had
to be content with a cold one
I bought a Maltese lace collar
for Mother's birthday and gave
it to Herb. Lee to take back to
Australia. Yesterday I sent
home a box on the Sakkara
Tomb & some alabaster & faience
from Abusir.

Mittwoch 3rd March 1915

Breakfast at 7 am & two blankets
packed on limer. Route-march

with pontoon waggon &c along
Sakkara bund for about 5 miles
& then turn to right for about 2
miles onto edge of desert. We
started about 9.15 am and
arrived about 12.30 pm. Had
lunch and came down and
did some fishing with the
native tackle in the afternoon.
We also had a swim and
after tea did a bit more fish-
ing.

Donnerstag 4th March

Walter Leckie and I slept together
but both were pretty restless
and a little cold. Breakfast
at 7.30 am. We came down
and did a bit more fishing
after breakfast. Caught a
couple of small perch and
cat-fish with peculiar feelers

The natives fish with a net single
handed in most cases. They tick
up their clothes to the middle
and wade into the pool &
throw their nets just outside
some reeds and beat the
water amongst the reeds
& frighten the fish into the
nets. When they use a rod and
line, it's just a date stick, a
piece of light ^{thin} string and a small
hook with a small piece
of bamboo for a floater. We
left bivouac about 9 am. and
kept on due east instead of
turning up the bund we
came down on. We came
on for a mile & before turning
up a track which brought
us out on the Giza railway
about a mile from Giza

We passed thro' several dirty
stinking native villages. We
passed by some wattle trees
one of which had some bloom
on. It smelt grand. We
arrived at Giza for lunch
at about 1 pm. The lads
amused themselves after
lunch by putting bread
on the native kids hands
&c. We left Giza for the camp
about 2.30 pm and had a good
march along to Mena arriving
there about 4 pm having had
one halt at the canal. There
was a good breeze blowing
and the march along the
road under the shade of the
big trees was not at all bad.
We covered $14\frac{1}{2}$ to 15 miles on
the day. We were marched to
the bathos at Mena for a

Swim but you can judge of
our disappointment when we
found they were empty. How-
ever Walter Leake and I went
up to the showers in Artillery
Lane & had a good shower. After
tea there was a box on outside
the mess room to settle an
argument, gloves were used.
I went to bed early as I did
not get too good a sleep last
night.

Freitag 5th March.

Check parade 6.45 am and
breakfast 8 am. I did some
washing before breakfast.
After breakfast I did some
cleaning up, rifle, boots, belt,
and had a shave. Dinner
at 12 noon. After breakfast
there was another fight.

a lance corp in our section
was drawn into an argument
and a fight with bare fists
followed. This was reported
by an Officer & the corp. lost
his stripe (rather stiff!) We
fell in at 1 pm to take part
in a scheme of divisional
manouvers. The Division
were attacking an enemy
which had been driven back
from the Nile. Our advanced
guard were driving the
enemy back s.w. from our
camp and the division
had marched from Cair &
Mena. Our job was to erect
a couple of bridges over the
canal. We built a basket
and a pontoon. The pontoon
was finished in half an hour
but the basket took consid-
erably longer & we were sitting
about most of the afternoon
while the action is proceeding
beyond the camp. We can
see clouds of dust marking
infantry proceeding into the
firing line and batteries
taking position. We're miles
from the actual firing line
and having a very easy time
We loaded a service truck wagon
in case we had to move off and
had tea about 6.30 pm. We
had brought this ration with us
& consisted of bread butter cheese
and jam. After tea our
section mounted guard
I had charge of the 2nd relief
to 5 1/2 midnight. There was hot
coffee and biscuits for the guard

as each relief came on. It was a beautiful night, half-moon but very bright. This rose about 10 pm. A very heavy dew fell through the night & it got very cold towards morning. During my relief there was a bit of excitement. Some soldiers stole a car in Cairo for a joy ride and passing Mrs' Giza they stampeded an ammunition column running over a couple of men. The car tore past the canal guard & was followed by a galloping horse man from the A.C. He was after the car which he found pulled up near Mena with the birds flown.

Saturday 6th March 1915

W. reveille blown this morning but we got up at dawn.

Drivers harnessed up and we returned to camp about 7.30 am for breakfast. As my blankets got a bit damp last night I put them out for an airing and while out I put my number on them. Walter Leckie & I then went up to the 6th Battⁿ to see our 'shop' friends up there. After dinner we went to the Museum. The Museum is a fine big building and well lighted. It contains only the wonders of ancient Egypt; mummies, statues, slabs of hieroglyphs etc. You gain but little real satisfaction going thro' without a good guide book because you're not in a position to appreciate the different exhibits. We came

back to camp to tea and after tea I wrote home. The days are getting longer and hotter now. The sun did not set till about 6 pm tonight.

Sontag 7th March 1915
Church parade at 9.30 am. It was attended by a few nurses and some ladies who were apparently relations of officers. Tent inspection by O.C. Ensign at 11 am. Wrote Fred. Eric & Justy. Went up for a shower in the afternoon.

Montag 8th March 1915
Parade 8.30 am. We went down to the canal and dismantled bridge (pontons)

and packed the pontoons on the wagons. We also loaded the trestle wagon. I borrowed a book on field sketching to read in the evening but Bill Snowball came along & I gave it to him. He informed me that ordnance were packing up to leave.

Dienstag 9th March 1915
Breakfast 7.30 Parade 8.30. We went to the canal. In the morning we built trestles. Sgt. Corp. Lancaster & self built a barrel raft to make some soundings but it was not too stable. In the afternoon we were pick and shovelling filling up the gap cut in the bund when the girder bridge was first put

up. We did not get back to tea till 6 pm. Last night & tonight we came back from the canal in a tram car. Read a bit of M. F. Eng. in the evening. Shave with new boots.

Wednesday 10th March 1915

We made an early start this morning, breakfast at 6.30 am and parade at 7 am. We packed wagons with timber and tools to make barbed wire entanglements. We marched out about a mile to a spot beyond the third pyramid where the 2nd infantry bde. were entrenching a position heavily. Our job was to place a wire entanglement before the trenches. It was a very hot day and pretty dusty. We drank pints of water in fact more than we ought have. We were kept going till about 5.30 pm and did not get back to camp till 10 past 6. When we returned I we had our mail delivered. I got about 9 letters and then to Cap. Knigs we got paid so every one was contented.

Donnerstag 11th March 1915

Today has been about the worst day we have experienced since being in Egypt. We moved off about 8 am after standing about for half an hour. We went out to complete the wire entanglement. When we got out in the desert we found it was

blowing sand. The infantry
did not come out. All the
morning it blew hard and
tons of sand were flying
At some periods we could
not see 100 yds ahead. We
stopped for dinner but I
did not eat any as you
would have eaten bread
and sand. We continued
after dinner under the
same severe conditions
till about 2:30 pm when
the major sent out word
for us to come in and
we were thankful for it.
I had a good wash and
some ice cream and
felt better but it was
a terrible day out on
the desert. I bought
myself a pair of shorts &
chanced no leaving soon
but there are rumours
we will be here for
another month or so.
The 2nd Light Horse arrived
the day before yesterday
The sooner we leave here
the better for our division
for the amount of beer
that is being absorbed must
be enormous but cannot
be doing the men good but
one is not surprised at the
men drinking after a
day like today. I have
received "Leaders" his
mail & so have had
plenty of interest by
reading. Wrote Mrs
Watson in the evening

Freitag 12th March 1915

Went out to finish the wire entanglements this morning, it was just a matter of using up wire. We heard there was £70 worth of wire on the entanglements which are nearly 400 yds long. Many kinds of trip ^{working} wires and flares and different kinds of alarms are attached. We completed the work & got back to camp about 1.30 pm for dinner. In the afternoon I did some washing. We were expecting a parade about 6 pm & a bivouac but we had an alarm parade at 8 pm when the 2nd brigade turned out to attack the ~~for~~ defences constructed by the 1st brigade. We (engs) were provided with wire cutters and grapnels. We marched out silently behind the 8th Battalion and took up positions about 1/2 mile from entanglements. The engineers went on ahead and cut thro' the entanglements & pulled them down with the grapnel, doing so under fire (blanks). Only one flare lit on our advance & we soon doused it. After the firing on us had ceased the infantry attacked. We got back to camp about 11 pm & turned in.

Diary cont in her
book

Doc & Currier's diary & account
Jan 18th 1894. Appointed 1st Lieutenant

Albert Haw Oct Sept.

W. Denville Knight.

Leant Nov Sept.

21

01

22

14

18

12

18

15

Principle Dates.

Wed. Oct 21. Embarked & sailed from M.C.B.

26 Arrived Albany

Nov. 1 Left Albany

3 N.A. ships joined

9 Embden action

15 Sydney passed to Colombo

Arrived at Colombo

16 Went ashore at Colombo

17. Left Colombo

21. Collision Ascanius, Shropshire

23 Sighted Sokotra

25 Reached Aden

26 Left Aden

27 Orders going Egypt

30 Arrived Suez, entered Canal

Guard on German Prisoner

31. Arrived Port Said

Dec. 2nd Left Port Said

3rd Arrived Alexandria

4th Entrained for Cairo



cubic yard of earth weighs $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons

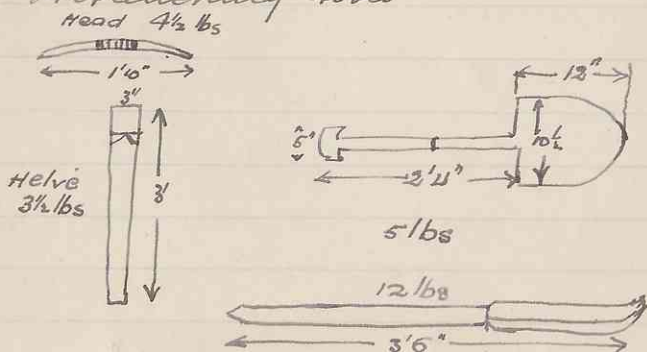
Angle of repose of earth = 45°

Gabion hollow cylinder of brushwood $2' \times 2'9"$ filled with earth, is one of best kinds of fascine revetment.

Muddle also used $6'$ by $3'9"$

All revetments must be anchored back well

Trenching tools



Remember that trenches placed well down the hill side may be against sky line from enemy's position

Essential points in design of fire trench

- Parapet shd. be rifle bullet proof
- Trench & parapet as unvisible as poss.
- Interior slope as steep as possible
- Trench wide enough to sit in
- Interior protected agst. enfilade
- Trench shd. be well drained

Weight of service rifle $8\frac{1}{2}$ to $10\frac{1}{2}$ oz.

When bayonet fixed, the rifle fires low $\therefore$ rifle is more stable & causes 2 ft drop to right at 600 yds. Danger zone is between bullet mark on target and where bullet hits ground, i.e. between first graze and catch.

Extent of danger zone depends on

- (1) Ht. of rifle from ground
- (2) Ht. of object fired at
- (3) Trajectory of bullet.
- (4) The extent of confirmation of configⁿ of ground to trajectory of bullet.

Inf. Training 1914 & 1917.

Entrenching implements & tools of Battn. Carried on 2 lumbered G.S. waggons each of which carries 8 felling axes.

4 hand axes, 38 picks, 4 crowbars, 20 billhooks, 10 reaping hooks,

55 shovels. 2nd waggon carries 1 hand saw in addition

2 picks, 2 billhooks, 2 shovels. Carried on lumbered waggon of mach. gun sect.

Brigade reserve of tools carried on 2 G.S. waggons consists of 1 handaxe, 368 picks, 3 crowbars, 3 hooks (reaping) and 568 shovels.

Recd. by Major Elliot. 2/11/14.

Proof thicknesses for rifle fire

Earth 3' 6"

Clay 5' 0"

Sand 2' 6"

" banked 1' 6"

brickwork 9"

Horse & fld. artillery

Shrapnel used mostly

Time and percussion fuse.

Trenches.

28. 10. 14.

Six considerations "C's"

1. Choice of position
 $\frac{1}{3}$ of height from crest of slope
2. Concealment. By sods to make trench resemble ground. Must not cast shadow
3. Cover. Must be placed so that artillery cannot enfilade. Not so important as ②.
4. Clear foreground to bring enemy into close rifle fire up to 400 yds cleared.
5. Construction of obstacles. Done with cleared material.
6. Communication trench are essential for food ammunition re.
(1) Pos. chosen with due regard to tactical requirements & with a view to economising men, its strong & weak points carefully studied.



