

France
10/1/18

My dear Mother & Father

I have just come out of the line again for our usual spell out & I have got plenty of time to write so I must try & catch up on my correspondence. When I came into camp yesterday I received two cakes from you & the Parcel, from A & W, which I spoke of in my last letter to you. My Christmas cake was one of the cakes, & it was this bon & travelled over in perfect order. The Tennis cake was very good indeed but it had just arrived in time as it was just starting to get mildewed on top but it did not taste of it at all. - I am writing this letter in the Guard Room as I am in charge of the guard & have a fair bit of spare time. It is a miserable job for the Guard this weather, because it is so cold & they have to go on beat for two hours & have four hours off. Tonight it is snowing a treat & very cold. While I was in the line I received a very

(4)

It is satisfactory to know that you are receiving my letters fairly regularly, because you no doubt look forward to receiving them, although as you say it is a long time before you receive them after they are written. I don't know how my Parcel got wet but I suppose there are dozens of ways in which it could happen. Jack Bennett has joined up with the company again, but Sam is still in England.

I had a letter from Miss Treacy from Pongaroa, this mail & she gave me all the news from there. It is awfully good of Maggie to go to the trouble to send me a bake & I can assure you that it will be appreciated. I owe her a letter & if I don't write shortly she will give me up as a bad job. — I received the Butter that you had sent by Michael & it was really good. I told you all about it in one of my letters after receiving it. — Les has still got his longing for showing & I hope he was successful. He will be quite settled down to married life by this time & I envy him quite a lot. — Your little cow must be very good to make the amount of Butter you speak of.

I rance

28/1/18

My dear Mother & Father

Since I wrote you a few lines again. I intended writing from the line but lack of opportunity caused me to wait until I came out again. We have been getting a good deal of mail & parcels lately. I received a tin of Toffe from you yesterday & a few pounds of Tobacco from Tottie Scott & it is very good. You must have told her the brand I smoke because it is Imperial.

We had ten days in the line this last time & things were fairly quiet which makes a pleasant change. The weather here at present is very calm & mild & we haven't had any frost for a fortnight.

The other morning coming out of the line I saw Charlie Double who is in the Band but was on fatigue when I saw him. He said that he would be pleased when the war is over although he hasn't been here

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long. I also saw Tom Mattingly the other morning & he is looking pretty well.

The day before I went to the line last time I was coming back to camp & I ran across. I saw Thomas who is an Officer & I stopped & had a few words with him but he was with a Major & couldn't stop long but he said that he would call round & see me. — I have just received a pass to go on leave to a Belgian town a few miles from our camp. I cannot find out where Poley has got to. Yesterday Andrew Bain from Seadown was at our camp & I had asked him to make inquiries about Poley & he told me that from what he could gather Poley was still down at our French Base.

Uncle Will wrote to me the other day & he said that he had had a letter from Poley who told him that he was still in a training camp & was doing a good deal of Route marching with an ankle which was pretty sore

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Your letters were quite interesting regarding
Less wedding & other things. I would very much
have liked to have been there. It was evidently
a great success. Answering your letter dated 15/1/04

No doubt Denis Aspinall's death would be a
shock to you all. You say that he was in the
machine guns, well he was in what is called
the Lewis Gunners who are attached to
the Infantry & are part of the Platoon. It
is an Automatic Rifle & is a lot worse to
be on than the Vickers M. G. to which
I belong. We are separate companies &
don't belong to the Infantry. Billy Frisby
belonged to the Lewis Gunners. — I heard
to night that H. H. H. is back in France
& is expected to join up the company
again shortly. — I received a nice
cake from you the other day, also a tin
of State Express cigarettes. Harry Butler
must have had a great hearing when
he arrived in Temuka. — You are getting
quite a crowd of the Temuka war worn
heroes back. They seem to be getting a good

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many more Semuka chaps killed than before.

The Twomeys would be very upset over Frank's death, but I suppose it is all in the game & must be expected. Letter Oct 22nd.

You will have received my letter giving you an account of the 12th of October fight, & telling you that I am well and strong still. When I come to think of it I have had a terrible lot of luck to have come so far without a scratch. Mr. Bairsto's sisters have had a full share of bad luck during this war.

I am using the imitations to the wedding for a rest to my hand to keep the paper clean. It was a very neat invitation card.

They seem to have received a nice lot of useful presents especially the blouses which are always handy.

In your letter you say that I don't say much about my doings. Well our Officer trusts to our common sense not to put anything of that kind in our letter & then he just writes his name on them & puts them through without reading them too closely.

(5)

You will soon have a regular herd of Jerseys
 & then you will need all you can get to feed
 them with. When I get back you will
 want a cowspanker & I will be set for a
 job. I would like some of those Whitebats
 you spoke of as being so plentiful.

Three days ago I received a tin of
 Shortbread from you & it was very nice &
 had kept beautifully. I received two Presses
 a Bulletin & a lot of Leaders. Dave Bair
 is quite right about being lucky to get
 slightly wounded. I heard that Ralph
 Waring had appealed & been granted exemption.

Now my dear I must finish off this
 old scribble & write again shortly.

I must drop a little line to Lotte
 & thank her for sending me the Tobacco.

Heaps of love
 from your affectionate son

Sid

KING GEORGE & QUEEN MARY VICTORIA LEAGUE CLUBS
EDINBURGH

121a PRINCES STREET RAMSAY LODGE, The Mound
ST GILES HOUSE, St Giles Street
BLACKIE HOUSE, North Bank Street

RAMSAY LODGE
The Mound

Feb 9th.

My dear Mother & Father

Just a few lines from Edinburgh.
My leave has been granted at last (14 days). I
arrived in London on the 3rd, stayed there until
Tuesday morning & then came on up to Edinburgh
which is a very nice place. I am leaving here
on Tuesday & going down to Cornwall & then
back to London to see Nell & then on to France
again on the 14th. — For the last three months
our Division has been in the Ypres Sector & it
has been a fairly hot show most of the time.
We are expecting to be relieved in a few weeks
& there is a big talk of us going to Egypt.
I hope it is true because France will be harder
this year than last & I don't suppose a fellow's
luck will last for ever. I will write you from
Cornwall. Loads of love from Sid.

France
2/5/18.

My dear Mother & Father.

It is time that I wrote you
a few lines again. You will notice that I
am back in this delightful country again.

My stay in England & Scotland was bound
to finish but it is hard to come back.

I wrote to you from Scotland & from
Cornwall (Uncle Will's). It does not take
long for the Boats to go across the Channel
& I had the good luck to go the shortest way.
Cornwall is a very nice place & the climate
was like a N. Z. Spring when I was
there. It was a long way from Scotland
to Cornwall but I was amply repaid for
the tiresome journey by the reception I
received from Uncle & Auntie. I saw Aunt
Willie's grave which is in a cemetery on the
side of a steep hill. Uncle Will told me
that I could picture him lying peacefully
in the same spot when he turns up his toes
which I thought was a remark which might

(2)

easily have been made by his brother
Joe. — After leaving Cornwall I spent a
night the Beckett family who were very
kind to me & seemed awfully pleased
to see me again. I was sorry I couldn't
spend more time with them but it was
impossible owing to my leave being up
& having to catch the train the following
morning. When I was waiting for the
train, in London, to come back to France
one of the N. 3. military Police came
up to four of us & told us we would
have to stay another day in London &
escort four prisoners back to France & of
course we jumped at the chance of
another day in London. The fellows
were very easy to bring across & did not
give any trouble. They had all been sentenced
to 90 days first field punishment for
over staying leave from convalescent camps
& training camps in England, but they don't
get detention now but have to join up
a unit in France & get their pay stopped.

(3)

I think I told you that I visited the John Macaulays in Glasgow & they were awfully good & tried very hard to get us to stay with them. My mate was a corporal Barclay out of the same section as myself. He is an awfully good fellow & he comes from Dundee. Since coming back here I have been made a corporal so if I live long enough I might get more promotion yet. The other day I received a letter from Alice Shaw & she told me of Capt Shaw's fate & she says that it is possible that he is a prisoner of war in Germany. I sincerely hope so. Lt. Lt. Lt. has not joined up the company yet but I suppose he will float along one of these days.

When I was in England I went to Grantham & saw all the boys out of the company who have been wounded & are in training again. Barn was there & is looking well but he reckons Frame is no good to him until he has had

(4)

a good holiday in England. When I was over there I went to several good Theatres & enjoyed them very much. The names of the plays were: "The Better ²⁴ ~~one~~", "Yes Uncle", "Empty Dumpty", "The Southern Maid", & "Zig-Zag". The last two nights I was in London there were five Air Raids & things were very interesting for a time. A lot go down the Tube Stations but it is not so bad as I imagined it would be. The guns all round London make a big row & I think they must be fairly effective because there was only one plane got through each night.

Since coming back I have received a large P.O. mail which consisted of five letters from you & several Parcels, one nice fruit cake, & two small tins of Tobacco a Tin with cigarettes, Tobacco & Rollies from Lizzie Macaulay & a Tin of chocolate from Harry Brown's little girl. - Your letters were very interesting & I think the best news is the way Les is getting along

(5)
Now I will answer your letters. I'm
awfully sorry I wasn't with you to have
a Christmas Picnic & see Roley send up
his fireworks. That reminds me that I
haven't seen Roley since he came over to
France & Alice told me that he had
~~written to her & told her where he had~~
been isolated with Measles, but is quite
alright again. — You must have had
a great time carrying for the Masenie Ball.

No doubt Jimmy is the subject of a
good deal of the Harung's conversation. I
told Jim, when I saw him going into the
Passchendaele battle, that he was just
lucky enough to get a nice Blighty
& the first I heard of it was your letter.

The price of Stock seems to be something
great & breeding must be a good paying game.

Your Gardener seems to be doing very
well this year & doesn't my mouth water
when you write about Strawberries

& Cream & Green Peas & New Potatoes.

Gilbert has every reason to look well

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are anxiously looked for. The six o'clock
closing will make a big difference to the
quietness of the Towns but I don't suppose it
matters much. — Your Lucerne has been
a great speculation & not doubt gives your
Jersey herd plenty to eat. — It is
~~very true~~ that my friends will
make kind enquiries about my welfare
& you may give them my kind regards to
any of them — Walter Evans has returned
to N. J., or at least is returning & he came
along & saw me & a few more of the Temuka
Boys. I gave him an order to give you
all sorts of messages. He has had a good
long spin over here & deserves a good spell.

Now I must close this scrawl
with heaps of love

I remain your loving son

S. D.

France

2/4/18

My dear Mother & Father.

This is a scratch letter & at our time about a week ago I wondered when I would get a chance to write.

Before this reaches you, you will have read of the great German attacks. We were brought here from the place I last wrote to you to help hold up the Germans who had broken through some distance.

When our Division arrived things were in a rather open condition & we had a certain amount of open fighting for a few days but our fellow attacked him & drove him back so as we could get in a decent position. According to the papers there have been some big attacks made by the Germans, & they were well met

(2)

up. The fighting we have done here has not been very desperate as there is not a great deal of artillery brought up on this side.

Machine guns have been the chief weapons used here & they are bad enough if used well. We have not received any mail since coming in here but I believe there is a W. I. made in & we are expecting to get it tonight with the natives. Some of our fellows have had their clothes off for a week, but they are in good form & I think quite ready to give old Fritz a holy time. Part of our company had some food to hand fighting with Fritz & had a few casualties but he got a bad time. One gun of ours wiped out nearly a battalion of advancing Germans, & I think that

(4)
 The bounding which we are fighting
 on, at present, is no more nothing
 coming with any fire, still holds
 a plenty of grass. It has all been
 fought over before but not with
 so much killing as there is now
 at present. My last concern
 is to get this kind of paper & the money
 One of the ships went back to
 headquarters & I was good enough
 to provide around for it. — There
 seems to be no good deal of
 hard fighting before the Allied ships
 this summer but from all accounts
 there are plenty of them to finish
 old Jolly. If a fellow manages
 to get a wound now he ought
 to be able to see the war out
 without doing any more fighting,
 but personally I would never
 finish without being hit.

(3)
 our fellow engaged shooting at each
 good length. — The weather here
 was rather cold & blowing for a few
 days but has improved in the last
 few days. One night I was in the
 village near our camp not visible
 & I met a fellow named "P" & George
 who had just come over with the 30th
 Regt & he said that he had met (P)
 who was in the 1st & 2nd & 3rd batts
 here that he was going to see him
 and by a mutual friend but I
 don't know what he says about
 us. Mr. Dwyer said that (P) was
 looking pretty well. I would have
 liked (P) to have done some fighting
 but I suppose he will be safer
 away. Old (P) will make up for
 gone back without getting to
 the line, but I don't suppose
 it matters much.

65
I forget if I told you that Rachel
Shaw was with us. Well, he has
been crowded since coming here
but I don't think that it is serious.
Since old Folly made her attack
there seems to be a feeling that
it will end the war all the
quicker as it seems a final desperate
effort & will surely be squashed.

Wm. my dear I must close

With Best Love

from your affectionate

Sam. Ladd.

France
5/4/18.

My dear Mother & Father

It is only two days since I wrote you last but I thought I must write you a few lines & tell you how I received four Parcels from you when they were more appreciated if possible than any I have received since coming to France. There is a N.Z. mail on & I expect to get some letters tonight, but the Parcels arrived two days ago & ~~oh~~ what joy to get them. Our bread ration was down to one loaf to eight men for twenty four hours & there was very little else to eat except carrots & Potatoes which our fellows found in the evacuated French Villages. The Parcels were, 1. lovely Fruit cake in perfect condition 2. two tins of Shortbread, tin of cocoa, & tin meat all ties home. 3. Tin Highland Milk & coffee & 1 tin Condensed Milk 4. 2. Tin Cheese & two tins Muscatels & almonds. The latter had a tin of Sardines packed with it. If you had seen the smile on the boys faces to say nothing of mine you would have felt repaid for your trouble & expense which

(3)

I am sure is not a small item. I can assure you that I fairly offered up a prayer for you. If I was at home I could have given you one of those old Snoodges of mine when you used to get all flustered. — I'm expecting some mail from you today but goodness knows whether it will arrive or not.

One of our fellows got this block yesterday so we are better off for writing material now & will be able to write a few letters. Our Officer, who is a good fellow, lives in our dug-out with us & he thought your Shortbread & baked a great institution. I don't know how long we are going to be here but if things are as quiet as this it will do me.

Now I will close these few lines with heaps of love & many many thanks for all the beautiful Parcels.

Your loving son
 Sid

France

14/4/18.

My dear Mother & Father

I have received this writing
Red from you & now I must send you
a few pages of it. After having been
in the front line for a few days I came
out to a quieter position with wet
sore feet after being in the muddy trench
& there were three Parcels for me & one
was a pair of Sox with Handkerchief
Tooth Paste & Brush, this writing Red
Envelopes & Handkerchief, & Lizzie Macaulay
had sent me a Baking Powder Tin of
very nice Shortbread which made the
third Parcel. It was very well made
& the Officer & I thoroughly enjoyed it.

The Sox I received were the ones
you spoke of Mrs bombs making
& they were a great treat & are fully
appreciated. Tell Mrs bombs that
she is a dear & I will give her some

(2)

fat kisses when I return, & I will drop her a line during the next few days telling her how much I appreciate her efforts on my behalf. — This writing block is just the right thing in the right place & the envelopes, well, I can't say how acceptable they are. It is impossible to get a really decent block here, but there are always some sort to be had at our banteens or the French Shop. — On our particular front where we pulled up the advancing Germans things are fairly quiet considering the big moves that old Fritz evidently intends making & my luck is still holding good as I have not been blown out or been sick.

During the first few days in we had a fairly wet time & I caught a cold & went to the Quack for some medicine which I don't think was much good but I am pretty well rid of it again now.

6)
There is one thing about it & that
is a broken record as it is the first
time on such parade since coming to
France. Last week I received three
letters from you & I burnt them before
coming into the line as I hadn't
anywhere to leave them & I didn't want
old Fritz to capture one with them,
& if he comes over in large enough
numbers he may get amongst us,
although we would warm things up
for him before he could reach us.

He has been advancing again in
a certain part of the line but I
think the cost to him must be very
heavy in casualties. — I also received
letters from Maggie & Nell (my two
sisters) & have answered them both.

I'm afraid I won't be able to answer
all your letters fully but I'll
remember some things. You asked
me if my parcels had the address

on plainly when they arrived here. Well they arrive in perfect order & the address could be read a chain away, in fact I haven't seen any parcels addressed more plainly & very few as plain. — When I was out for a few days spell last week, at our Transport lines, I received a big Fruit brake, with my mail, which made two in a week so I reckon I have done jolly well. I saw Anthony Tormay a few days ago & I thought that he had aged a good deal & was much thinner but he was very cheerful as usual.

From your letters I take it that you must have had nearly a market garden, judging by the amount of stuff you have given away, & it makes me envious to think of all the nice vegetables I might be helping to eat if I was at home.

Sometimes I long for a nice Island & Dressing with some nicely roasted Beef.

It will be two years next month

(3)

since I first went to camp. I have had
very few dainty meals since. Although I
might say that I have been jolly pertinate
as I can hardly claim to have been really
hungry. — Andrew, Constance & Sid seem
to be doing jolly well & I would like
to see them, but I suppose I will have to
wait for some time yet. — In our recent
scrapping our company V.B. Co. have been
rather unfortunate & now we are short so I
may possibly get a third ship before very long,
& my Officer told me that when the time
comes, if I am still alive & well he will
recommend me for a commission, but of course
that is some way off & I will want a lot of
luck. — Daisy's health does not
seem to be too good & I hope it will
soon be better. Give her my love when you
write. I must close now with fondest
love from your loving son

Sid

France

27/4/18

My dear Mother & Father

Lately I have received a big lot of Parcels from you & I don't think they could have arrived at a better time as we have had a good long spell in the line. Sometimes in the trenches & rest of the time in fairly good dug-outs which is not so bad, & we are able to cook for ourselves. The parcels which I have received lately since last writing, - 1. a Tin of Biscuits, 1 Tin Cheese, 1 Tin Sugar, 1 Tin Condensed Milk & 1 Tin Tea. We generally get plenty of Tea but lately it was shorter than I have known it to be, so the Tea & Sugar were very acceptable. The other Parcels were 1 Large cake & 1 Large tin of Shortbread, Tin of Sultanas, 1 Tin Shrimps, 1 Tin Baked Meat, & it has all been greatly appreciated. One of the fellows said that he is going to Femeke when he gets back & he is going to see

(2)

you & say "How then Mrs Ashwell where^{is} some of that sort of bake that you used to send Sid."

At last I have got in touch with Polcy who has joined up his Unit here & has been in our Camps looking for me but I have been in the line all the time. I was due for a spell a few days ago but one of our Corporals was recommended for his commission & he didn't come back to the line & I have had to wait a few days longer before going to see Polcy. He has evidently been getting his Panels because one of our fellows was round at the Artillery Camp looking for a mate & he saw Polcy who asked him if he knew me & the fellow said he did, so Polcy took him to his tent & gave him a piece of bake, much to the fellows pleasure & surprise. I am naturally very keen to have a yarn to Polcy.

Yesterday I was afraid that I would miss him, because I was not too well & vomiting all the time & unable to eat

(8)

anythings my Officer wanted me to go & see the Dr. but I thought I would be alright, so I am today going to a Dr. here is not much good unless one has a temperature & if yours are about 102 they take quite & interest in you. — Yesterday I had a short letter from Nell Beckett & she told me that she had received the Photos, which you said you were sending, & she seemed pleased to receive them. She said that she had written ~~twice~~ in answer to the nice long letter which you wrote to her.

Jack Knowles has gone to hospital with Lumbago. He was our Transport Officer & I don't think he is fond of coming into the line, ~~but~~ he was being taken off the Transport & put in the line for a while, & he went sick.

When I get out & see Poley I will drop you another line & this is all just now.

Heaps of love
from your affectionate son
S. D.

France

10/6/18.

My dear Mother & Father,

I have just received my 1st mail to day & amongst it was three letters from you. I might state that I gather from the tone of the letters that you are worrying a great deal too much about my welfare. Things are certainly very lively here & one is apt to get a whack at any time but it is likely to be a light one & then there is a good chance of getting through all right. In one of my letters I sometime ago when we first arrived at this spot I would have liked to have told you where we are, as did as you suggested. I expect you have seen before this. Riley is still well & was round at our camp looking for me while I was in the line the last time. At present we are out

(2)

for a rest & it depends upon the German
moves & successes how long we will
be out of the line. The weather here is
beautiful & we are camped in a big
French Wood which is ideal for a camp
as it is so shady. Yesterday I received
two Parcels. One of Assorted Biscuits &
the other was Tobacco, Highlanders Milk
& Coffee, Sugar & Tea. Last week I received
a Pair of Sox. Many thanks for all the nice
Parcels which I am sure you go to a tremendous
amount of trouble to send. I seem to get
a pair of Sox once a month in fact I think
I have received a good deal more. This
writing Block grinded in one of the Pencils
which you sent ^{& I received} yesterday. The Pencil which
you sent me was far too soft & I could
not write distinctly with it. You have evidently
found some of my letters hard to read
& I can quite understand them being a
bit faint after all the time they take

to reach you. — (2) Yesterday I was coming
down the road & I saw Billy Spillane march-
ing with his company. He has got very
much thinner than when I last saw him.

He is still a corporal & I have wondered
how his company like him holding stripes
because they have got a great set on fellows
going up with stripes. — My Section
Officer told me that he had recommended me
for a commission & I have been told that
I am to receive a third stripe shortly.

Of course it will be a few months before
I get to England even if the Battalion
Colonel & the General approve of me when I
go before them to be questioned, but if I
have the luck to get away it will mean a
good few months in England & will be a
good rest. These things are all subject to
my having a continuation of my past luck in
the firing line. Now I think that is about
all the news at present so I will conclude

your letters. — I am ⁽⁴⁾ pleased to hear that Father still carries on his jokes, & just wait until I get back we will have a few of the old family jokes over again. You will not be any more pleased to welcome me back than I will be to get back home to you all. It is quite easy to understand how much you feel the welcoming back of the fellows as you must think of Polley & I especially when the papers have been making such a lot of the great German offensive. Hite would be very pleased to be back again as he had had a good long go at it but was lucky to get back. I am awfully sorry to hear of Nell's illness & sincerely hope that she will be well again before this. Give her my love. Lauchie wrote to me & I received the letter today. — The Bain family must be very anxious over Lauchie's health & wonder why he has not written. There is no doubt that Aunt Clara is a funny stick & if Jimmy was in a photograph it doesn't

(5)
prove that he was in messines. I think
I told you that Pathecondale was the
first big fight he was ever in & his mates
were joking about him going in after missing
everything else. I would like to have had
half as good a time as Brian has had
& I wouldn't want any soft billets.

The Germans haven't got to Paris but
they are making a big bid for it at the present
time & they are paying dearly for it with
casualties. — Poor old Daisy seems to be
in very poor health since she got married
& I'm afraid she will never be strong, give
her my best love when you write to her
again. — Guy Aspinall is certainly taking
on a big hurdle & I'm like you & would
like to know how he will keep a wife.

The first I knew of Phil Shaw being
missing was when I received a letter from
Alice telling me about it after I came
back from England.

(6)

You will have received my letter from Cornwall before this & know all about my trip to Cornwall. — H. H. H. was held in reserve during Messines & it is generally the case in a big battle because it wouldn't do for all the Officers to be knocked out. He is on the N.J. list so I don't suppose he will see any more fighting & he will be pleased because he was not fond of it. I hope you will see Harry down, you will find him an awfully decent fellow & I'm sure you will like him & he will tell you about things as they happen. So Les & Maggie are starting a family. Les will be quite a proud Dad. It is satisfactory to think that Gilbert has remembered some of the things I taught him. Taking all things into consideration Gilbert & I got along very well. I must close now with heaps of love.

From your affectionate son

Sid

Don't worry about me too much as I'm doing well.

France

18/6/18.

My dear Mother & Father.

As I have not written to you since answering my last N. 3 mail about a fortnight ago, I must make another effort which I am afraid will be a poor one. We are out of the line at present having a rest & we have been out about ten days now & I don't know how long it will be before we go in again. I have not seen Roly for sometime but I heard from some of the fellows, that he was round our camp looking for me while I was in the line. He is on a pretty safe job at present as long as there isn't a big battle starts. Last week I received four small parcels from you one Lin of Sugar, one Lin of Tea & one tin

of chocolate & salts, & one pair of Sox one tin
of Tobacco. Sometime ago I got a book
of Y M C A Tickets. I bought
chocolate at the Y M C A one day
when I was coming out of the line
for a rest. My many thanks for sending
them all & I can assure you that they
are much appreciated. Billy Bain
came to our camp a few nights ago
he has not joined up the company
since he went to England wounded,
but he is here in France with
the reserves. I have not heard
of Jack Cornell for a long time
& I wonder what he is doing.

Archie Shaw got rather badly
smacked in this Sector when we first
came up here & I heard last night
that he is not doing at all well.

Jimmy Moore sprained his ankle
about ten days ago & was sent to Hospital

I am going to try & get an envelope
large & strong enough to send you some
Photographs of different fellows in the
company. — The boys here have got a great
rumour going about Joe Ward & Bill
Massey coming over to see the
Division & from the way they talk I
don't think they will give them a very
warm reception but I don't know
why but they seem to think that
they have a set on them. In one of
your letters you asked me if I still
write to Alice Dickens. Well I do, but
she must think I'm a rotten correspond-
ent. Of course Father would say what are
my intentions & I'm blowed if I know.

I heard yesterday that there is a
N. 3. mail in so I hope to get
some letters from you soon.

Heaps of love
from your aff. sons

Edith

France

20/6/18.

My dear Mother & Father.

It is time that I dropped you a few lines & I think that out of the line this has been quite an exciting week. Last Sunday was the Divisional Sports, Thursday was the Divisional Band contest, today Sunday Joe Ward & Bill Massey came & inspected the Machine Gun Battalion. At the Sports I met a large number of my acquaintances & friends & I will just tell you some of them. James Guild, Rolyn, two of the Ellinghams one an Officer & the other a Sergt. Jack Mage, Billy Spillane, ~~Jack~~ Sam Aspinall who is still in great condition. The Ellinghams were very friendly & told me that it reminded them of home to meet me again. I went to their camp a couple of nights through the week & spent the evening with them. I visited the Perrots with Erald the Sgt.

(2)
& the entertainment was very good. - James Guild told me that Roley was asking him to get him on to the guns but James refused & told him that he was alright & not to leave his present job & of course I told Roley the same. Of course most of us believe that if there is a shell which is going to get us we can't very well dodge it, but at the same time that is just probably superstition. Roley seems very well & was undoubtedly pleased to see me & I am going over to his lines tomorrow sometime because we are due in the line again any time now & I always like to look him up before going in. He is like me & has been receiving his parcels lately. There are fourteen Bands in our Division & Platoon were competing at the contest & the music was great especially when the Judge conducted the massed Bands (1) playing a piece. - The visit of the Prime Minister & the Finance Minister was quite an event & they received a very good hearing from

(3)

our Battalion. Of course we were on Parade & warned against any rowdyisms, but I think we would have given them a good hearing in any case. There was a moving Picture Camera present & it took Photos of the Battalion & a Machine Gun & in one of them Massey was sitting behind the gun & Ward was seeing that the belt worked properly & they both had steel helmets on. I was there in the movie but it would be impossible to recognise anybody. No doubt the pictures will be shown throughout the 3rd & you will all have the opportunity of seeing them.

They both made speeches & spoke very nicely & of course soft soaped us to some tune. No doubt they were sincere to a great extent as there is no doubt they the Division has done well.

Lately I have received quite a large number of Parcels from you, & they consisted of a large tin of Shortbread which was broken, a Tin of Sardines a Tin of Sweets & a Tin of Fish.

②
I received three small Parcels one with
chocolate & sugar lumps, & one with Gelaceo &
a Jar of Butter, for which I am highly delighted
& must thank ^{you} very much. Now I think that
is all the news so I must answer your four letters
which I received a few days ago. I was
awfully pleased also interested to hear that
Harry Bowie had been out to see you & from
your letter you seemed please to meet him.
He wrote to me & told me that he had had
a most enjoyable time & of course thought
what a wonderfully young looking & active
mother I have & also what a cheerful summer
& he said that it did him good to be with
Father who was so cheerful. Harry would
be very interested in his drive round &
visits to the different homes. He knew Jellist
& he was with the company when Harry
was second in command & he knew a bit.
A funny thing the Harry & Hilda met in a
place called Barchud last time I saw them.

& what a pity I was not there to make up the trio when they met again. The Menu you spoke of was some good & no doubt was enjoyed. I would like to try it.

Percy Howard seems to be just as bad as ever & a bit worse if possible. Harold & Louis were both caught in the first Ballot but I expect they will appeal & get exempted.

As usual Father your few lines were much appreciated: it is nice to know that there are many kind inquiries from numerous friends. I am not likely to forget your assistance even if you do not write & I am looking forward to gripping your hand on the station, the day I return.

No doubt you will miss Dr. Seannell who seems to have been a frequent visitor as well as a very attentive Dr, but Dr. Burtis will fill the gap & his recent experience will make him all the more reliable. The only thing is his likelihood of giving medicine & Disty from force of habit.

(6)

I'm sorry that Fottie did not receive my letter acknowledging the receipt of the Solace which he was so kind as to send. I thought Mrs Lorne was a nice little woman but of course I saw very little of her. — The sailing is a very unsatisfactory business & I won't need to cable unless I get to England shortly, because my present rate of pay my balance is mounting up, of course I have the money which Polly holds for me in the Bank.

There is a possibility of my going before the heads shortly to see if they will allow me to be sent for a commission & if I get away I will need a good deal of money for my expenses in equipping myself. & I don't have to cable you.

Aunt F Lorne seems a good sort. & was awfully kind to me. I don't think he is at all strong.

Now I must close with

Best love
from your affectionate son

Ed

France
15/4/18.

My dear Mathias Faltin

The N°3 mail arrived here
a few days ago & I received quite a
bundle of letters from you & have
been answering since every day
so I have done fairly well.

We are out of the line in case
for a few days with the
army in a few days for a good
place, but it is a quiet sector so far
& if it remains so, the line is not a bad
place. Roby is camped right alongside
of us & I see him every day hearing
signalling when we are signalling
to him. He is looking pretty well
& seems very cheerful & has been getting
his parcels just the same as I have
this week & I have received his
looney but not his books & I have received

④

but he has not arrived, so I suspect
that he has had to do a Picket or
something. Now I must answer your
letter. In your letter dated 5th May
you mention Andrew's death.
He was a brother to my friend Bill
& he (Andrew) was a grand chap
he was on guard at a Battery & got
his head blown off. It is nice to
know that Sam will hasn't forgotten
you after all the times he used
to spend with you. Harry & I
must have rather liked his visit
to you when he took the first
opportunity of repeating. - Shooting
does not seem to have been a great
success this year from your account
of Lachar's experience. Howard is
like a bad penny to old Phil & sticks
like a leech. - I'm sorry that
Frank does not make a fist of

(13)

farming because there is nothing else
to do but to amuse at unless it is
for the Rogers. My letters are always
sent as soon as possible after they
are answered because they mount up
and get badly to coming around.

I did see Ballings in France
he used to lead Anthony's horse
as a mate of Young Anthony
who I often see around here.

Poor old Phil will be quite
upset over his loss on battle. Suppose
it is the shipping that will trouble
him. Will the boys fairly
my heartiest thanks for their
contributions to the cause.

I'm glad you don't get your pencils
returned to you. — Don't you
talk to me of getting tired of reading
your letters because they'll never be
long. I hope of the
longer and more elegant

Trance

20/4/18

My dear Mother & Father,

I wrote to you a few days ago but I did not have much time to catch the mail so I cut it short, and I thought I would complete it before after getting home in the train, since we came in here a few days ago.

I have received another Parcel containing 3 small light Muscatels, a tin of Goldenrod Mulk & Cocoa & 7 lb. tin of Mather's all of which were in good condition & much enjoyed by the inmates of my hospital. In one of the letters which I received some days ago, I found a book of 21 1/2 tickets & I

(2)

brought some stuff of the 9th & 10th 1/2 coming into the bank.

Parcel which I was out last time. He got a tin of Honey but I could not come to hand but will probably get him yet.

We are in a good place here & only get an occasional shell near us which is part of the game.

The number of my team who does our working has just told me to tell you that we enjoyed the Muscatels & hope they will be more forthcoming.

Our partners are a good deal better stocked now & we are able to buy a good deal of food such as Corn & Beans. And our Mulk & etc. so we are living very well & without storm.

(3)

Before you get this letter you
will have read all about
the Germans latest offensive
which has ended so far as
a substantial win for our side
as the French & Poles have
made a counter stroke & taken
19,000 Prisoners I don't know & advised
right sides so far & there is
a better feeling for being round
& the general impression is
that the Germans will soon
get tired of it & I hope so.
Now I must go & do a
guard for an hour & see if
old Fritz does any wild things
as our fellows have made a
small advance to day & he
might try & get it back
Heaps of love

from your aff. son

W. G. P.

(2)

I don't care about them at all.
It seems to me that the more
one sees of the dam things the more
it is for his enemies, but I think
I would stand up a good deal
if I got a good spell away
from this, of course I hope to
get away before very long, if
I am successful it will mean
eight or more months in England.
I have been put through for my
dangerous stages & expect to put
them up any time, but as it has
not come through order yet I
may have to wait for a while.
Since last writing to you I
have received a fruit cake a
tin of honey & bottled meat & also
a large tin of shortbread, so
I don't think that there are
many parcels going away.

Yours
31/7/18.
My dear Mother & Father,
A few more lines from the
Lunches when we are not doing at
all badly, plenty to eat's not much,
to do, my few shells near us do I
suppose we cannot hope for more under
the circumstances. You will have
seen long before this that the
Germans have not only withstood the
German attack but have attacked
him & driven him back twelve
miles & taken a large number of
prisoners & material. Of course as
soon as we push a little more they
start to talk peace but I think
that we have a long way to go
before that happens, although I
hope not, my regard for shells
has given a good deal lately &

(3)

All the boys look forward to my Parcel's arriving, because they always get a good at the good things & didn't they go for the things.

I saw Riley the day before I came in last & he was well then & I hope he is camped in the same place when we go out again as he is alongside our camp. We are seeing a good deal of the American troops now & they seem to be real good fellows. They have been scattered through different Divisions for line exposure & we have had a few of them.

In the part of the line where I am I came across a fellow named Abraham who is a son of Abraham of Abraham & William. I knew him well enough but of course he didn't know me.

(4)

until I made myself known him some had a great year. He was Auctioneering for the term when I was with them.

We are expecting an it I mail anytime now & I suppose I will get a nice little Budget from you as usual, anyhow I hope so. The weather here is very nice at present although we have had a good deal of rain & has made the trenches very muddy & more or less uncomfortable. This seems to me to be about all at present & I will be answering your letters in a few days I hope. I have received a letter from your affec. son.

Yours affec. son
J. S.
I have received heaps of Papers lately

France

14/8/18

My dear Mother & Father

The other day I received four letters from you which were written in May & I received two letters from you written at the beginning of June so things must have got disorganised somewhat & I also received a note from the Base P.O. telling me that a Parcel of mine had been sunk hard back. We are having beautiful weather & the Allies are smacking old Fritz to leg a treat so I feel sure that your war news will be a lot better & no doubt it could stand an improvement. Since last writing to you I have been transferred to another Section (N°4) as Sergeant. I have been in N°3 Section ever since coming to France but of course it has got ^{nearly} all strange fellows in it now & my present Section has an Officer who was in charge of N°3 for a long time & I know him & he was

(2)

instrumental in getting me to his Section.
 We are out of the line again now for a
 few days still after doing 24 days in
 & it all depends on circumstances how
 long we will be out. Of course we are
 all expecting to get amongst something
 fairly warm before long. I have seen
 Policy again since coming out & he is
 looking well. One of his letters got
 mixed up with mine & I took it along
 to him. He is an Officer's batman &
 I told him I didn't think that it
 was much of a job, but he is only doing
 it for a fortnight as the other chap is
 on leave. The Officer whose batman
 he is is a good sort I believe.

Two nights ago I received a Parcel
 from you & it contained this Block
 a tin of Maccateels & Figs & a Tennes
 cake which was a bit mouldy.

I don't think these Tennes cakes
 keep so well as Ransom or Fruit cakes
 as this is the first cake which has

(3)

a bit off. I forget whether I told you that I received two trust letters about 17 days ago, but I think I did. Now I will answer your letters 20th May.

You must have given the return troops a great treat who they called you sports, because that word means a lot. It was a pity that you did not find a machine gunner who knew me.

Ted Webb could not have been very to see his mother if he wouldn't stop in Semuka to see her. Donald Grant was evidently anxious that the Ducks should arrive in good order. — You are just about right about Jimmy doing any old job for the club but when he is so game under shell fire it is a wonder that he is not keen to come back to France. You must miss the little bar when it is out of gear. I knew Ralph's wife's brother & met him several times in France here.

(4)

I have seen James Gould several times lately & I believe he was alongside some of our guns asking for me.

Wallie Evans got to it 3 o'clock but I thought he would be sent back to France. — I'm pleased that your little Jersey bird is growing well.

My bombing app. has grown quite a good deal & it ought to grow faster now with the extra sixpence a day.

My pay-book has come in again so I'm ready for leave again.

Goodness knows where Victor Brooklands hides his intelligence.

Perhaps Maggie thinks that you were influential in persuading me to desert.

Old Dan O'Rourke still thinks of me occasionally & I'm pleased to hear that he is doing well.

Now I must finish this now & if we don't go into the line tomorrow I will write again in a day or two. Heaps of love from
Sid

France

18/8/18

My dear Mother & Father

A few more lines which I promised on my last letter if we did not get hurried into the line. Well we did not get bustled in but we go in tomorrow. Since last writing to you I have received two bakes one posted on 20th May a Fruit bake & one posted on the 27th a Raisin bake & I also received six other Parcels & Righty Pressed Biscuits & Loaves. The parcels were posted from 20th May to 27th & contained two tins of Tobacco, William Megget Plug cut in two, a Pair of Sox, Chocolate & Muscatels, Black Balls, Sugar. The Raisin bake had Muscatels on top of it. One tin of Shortbread. So you see I have received about nine Parcels this week & enjoyed them immensely & am very thankful to you for them. I quite realise all the trouble & expense you must go to to send all these things. — Roy also received a good number of Parcels & now he has gone away to the south

(2)

with an Officer to a rest camp near the seaside as his Batman. He is lucky to have had the chance as he has has dysentery slightly for a few days & his face has a nasty skin sore on it which looks as if he has come in contact with some of old Fritz's mustard gas which takes the hide off of a fellow if it touches him, but he has not been close to the line so I wonder how he managed to get it. He is looking jolly well & I think he will be all the better for this outdoor life in France. My section Officer is named Brochetter & he is only a young fellow but a real good sort & he told me that he never censored his Sergeants letters so I just seal mine down, of course I'm on my honor not to put anything in them so of course it is really harder than before as there is always a chance of letters being opened at the Base & if anything was found in them I would get him into trouble. Stanley Bick showed me some Photos of his People

(3)

& they don't seem to have got much thinner since he left. — In the Leaders I notice accounts of your send offs to the 42nd Rnfts so they have had a few since I left. I also noticed a welcome home to Fred Comer who is a Lieutenant after coming away with the 7th Rfls as a Private. — I haven't seen many

Tomuka chaps for quite a long time & I think they are mostly wounded.

Last time in the time we occupied the same Dug-out as the two Ellinghams (Sgt & Lieut). — Poley told me that he was writing a letter to you & was on his twelfth page so my letters will seem quite small compared with them. Today we had an examination by the Major who is second in command of the Battalion. It was very simple & only consisted of four questions which took two pages of foolscap to answer them on.

Heaps & Heaps of love
from your aff. son
G. J. J.

France
21/8/18

My dear Mother & Father

Just a few lines before attaching
the Hens. I'm writing this in a small
Dugout during our ~~Bomb~~ preliminary
bombardment & there is a slight rumble
going on at present. These are the times
that a fellow thinks of home & People near
& dear to him, but if my usual luck holds
out I will have a good deal of excitement
& come out alright. I wrote to you the other
day but I did not know then that we were
in for a stunt & in any case I could not
have told you anything. If this business
today is a success I think old Fairly will
begin to think very seriously, anyhow I
sincerely hope so. I will be in charge of
two guns today under our Officer of course
so I must proceed to fix things up.

I will enclose this letter in a green Envelope
as our own Office will not have time to censor.
Heaps & Heaps of love from Dad

France
25/8/18.

My dear Mother & Father

A few days ago I dropped you a few lines telling you that I would probably be in for some excitement well we arrived in the Arena & hopped the bags with great dexterity & captured quite a large number of guns & also two machine guns & all sorts of material. Of course you will see by this that I am still well & strong & hope to be for a few more days yet & I believe we are in it again very shortly. There is one thing about it we are getting on with the war & the German Prisoners don't seem to think that they will win out.

Our Officer was speaking to a German who could speak English & he told him that we had one million & a half Americans in France & the German said "Oh well God help us." Another prisoner saw a dead him & a Tommy lying dead on the road & he shrugged his shoulders & said "the Kaiser & pointed as much as to say that it was all his fault. - Riley is well away out of this old show.

A few days ago when we were on the road up here I met Malcolm Gould on the road with an ammunition box & he was dusty & sweaty & looked rough. I was sorry that I hadn't time to have a yarn to him but I was coming to the rear so of course had to keep going.

Give my love to all the Grant family & anybody else you think might appreciate the news. Will write you more fully in a few days & give you the latest news. Now I must close with best love from

From your loving son
Sid

P.S. If anything happens to me my Badges & personal gear will be sent home & I would like young Sid to get my Wristlet Watch. Sid

France.

9/7/18.

My dear Mother & Father.

Time has slipped away & it is now quite time that I tried a few more lines. Two days ago I received a Parcel from you containing two large Bell Tea tins of Ginger Nuts & the gun team in the Dug-out enjoyed them very much, we had them for supper. Our company is going out of the line for a weeks reserve & I expect to meetoley again as his lines are fairly close to our camp. In the line where our guns are Jim Palmer & Jim Fitzgerald are both with the Infantry & yesterday Billy Spillane came in to the Dug-out & had a yarn to me his company is relieving the one which is here at present so I am quite amongst old acquaintances. - Things are fairly quiet all along our front but I saw by the Paper that the Austrians had been very successful in an attack on one part of the line & then were a few Americans attached to them for experience & I guess that the Aussies would give them an eye opener with the dash that they put into it.

(2)

The Yanks will be saying "I guess they're some fighters."

It is a well known fact that there are a million Yanks in France & I'll bet old Fritz does not relish the idea of starting on a fresh nation with so many troops, & I believe they are a fine lot, although I have seen very few of them but those I have seen are very decent chaps. We've had a few attached to our Battalion for experience & they seem keen on smacking up the Germans. — In this envelope I will enclose a Rose Bud picked by me from an old French Village garden between our lines of trenches. — We had an appeal, from a Captain, for souvenirs for a N.Z. National War Museum, & I expect he will get some good things which will be interesting to the N.Z. People. — The weather here is still very nice & just at present we are having a very light shower which will clear the air & lay the dust. — A few nights ago I saw Ernie Twomey & he was not looking at all well & he said that he had been before a Medical Board but had not heard the decision yet but he understood that he would not be doing any more line work. He also told me that Leo had lost his left arm & was doing alright again. I guess they have been rather unlucky.

(3)

Now these are larger sheets of Paper than I have been used to. I am jiggled if I know how I am going to write on this page enough to fill. I have just finished the last block which you sent me & our Officer gave me this. In one of my former letters I think that I told you that Jack Kennell had not returned to this ~~camp~~ since he went on leave four months ago & that there is a warrant out for his arrest. They know that he is in Ireland & it is possible that he is under medical treatment. A few nights ago a parcel came for him from his Sister Budget & it contained Sugar & Biscuits. I will write to her & tell her that I opened it & enjoyed the contents. I would not like to be in his shoes although he is out of the war at present. Not wishing to blow over ^{it} but since I came to Leam I have not missed a day ~~away~~ with the ~~camp~~ ^{18 months} & have only been sick for a few days a few weeks ago.

There is a possibility of my interviewing our commanding Officer regarding my going for a commission shortly & if I get away I will feel rewarded for my services. Now I must say au revoir until next week. Hoping you are both in great health.

I am
your loving son

S. J.