

Transcript of collection relating to Sergeant Robert William Wyllie Adam

1DRL/0003

Transcriber: Helen Burfitt, May 2020

Transcript of the Australian War Memorial Collection relating to the First World War service of 1901 Sergeant Robert William Wyllie Adam, 11 Battalion, AIF, Gallipoli and France, 1914-1916.

This document includes transcription of three folders of letters and the transcriber's notes at the end. The transcriber's notes include a transcription of Robert Adams Red Cross file 1DRL/0428 and Recommendation for Honours and Awards AWM28 1/3.

Folder 1 - letters written by Sergeant Robert Adam to his mother, Mrs Jane Adam, in England between 1914 and 5 July 1916.

Folder 2 - two letters written by 2631 Sergeant Guy Clifton Lukin in 1916 from France. The letters describe the wounding and death of Sgt Adam in July at Pozieres.

Folder 3 - a condolence letter written by General William Birdwood, Commander 1st Anzac Corp France, August 1916, to Sgt Adam's mother.

[Folder 1 - letters written by Sergeant Robert Adam to his mother, Mrs Jane Adam, in England between 1914 and 5 July 1916.]

Dec 18

1914

PO

Beverley WA

Dear Mother

I got your letter today saying how pleased you all were that I had enlisted. Alas!!!!.

It was very noble of you to be so anxious for me to please myself, and I can tell you I thoroughly appreciate your feelings as I stand.

I think it was right for me to stay as things were, but I felt d - d sick about it after having quite made up my mind. However the war is not over yet nor the barley harvest.

Today I got an OR [Old Rugbeian, Rugby School UK] Society list of names of ORs on the active list; at this point etc. I see many names of friends & acquaintances, a few among the killed. There are over 1100 ORs. but of course not all at the front.

Another German raid to the English coast is the latest puzzler but nothing definite is through yet. 40 odd poor helpless beggars killed; Why don't the beggars have a go at the Forth Bridge or Portsmouth? The submarine attack on Dover is all denied.

I have lost a lot of time this week through the machine breaking down etc. But as soon as it is off I shall go to Perth and see what about enlisting.

Chaff is up to £10 11/5 per ton and today I was offered 6/- a bushel for my wheat but it will go up yet.

Many thanks for the papers and cuttings. I don't think any have been stopped. [...] Cycling still turns up, so I hope you or Rose have not gone and paid for another year! It is too good of you if you have. I have a memory like a dead cat's but that money will come someday. CK seems to be a cheeky cuss and it must be nice for you when he blows in at odd times. I wish I could have met him in 1912, but perhaps I will in 1915!

I am writing to Uncle Charlie to put my case clearly before him then I can't help what he thinks.

I have your blessing on it, I am young & able and every one of the Allies' killed has died for me as much as any one else, yet I am able to go and do a bit of biff myself.

My remittance came this week & will be very welcome. I had hoped to hand it all to Rose but I will fix my finance after harvest when I know what I am going to do.

Old Pat must have been the hero of Ham. Court!! Good luck to him.

Apparently I am the only one of our old gang who is not doing his duty towards Germany!

I am writing to [...] to find out if he has his peoples permission and to let me know his plans, as he is in much the same position as I am. I doubt if the old man will let him go.

The Bill for fixing the price of wheat etc did not pass; but I believe was amended to be able to collar what they wan't at current rates.

Wheat is just about double last years price and chaff over treble.

Rawsons teachings must be a great comfort to you, and I am sure that man is right, and I don't mind admitting is a big help to me, for which I thank you.

[written in the top left hand margin on the first page]

Forgot all about wishing you all a merry Xmas and "Cheeroh" as they say.

Best love from

Your aff son

R W W Adam

[Lettergram, folded in half addressed to]

Mrs Adam

1 The Mount

Heath Street

Hampstead

ENGLAND London N W

10/2/15

Feb 10th

1915

No 7 Depot

Black Boy Hill

Bellevue.

Dear Mother

By not keeping careful inspections of the papers I find I have missed two mails for England via America.

As you see I am fairly in it now, having been up here exactly a week. They are all decent men in my tent one very decent one, so I have been lucky so far. There are other decent ones about so it is by no means as bad as it might have been. I fancy we are called reinforcements and already rumours are about that we will get away early in April (presumably for Egypt.) As it is impossible to get a commission without

first going through the rank I have put in for the NCO classes and hope to come out as a corporal and section commander. If getting a commission means waiting behind I shall not try for it – however it is no good counting ahead, as I may only remain a private.

My money affairs are not fixed up yet for my will – but I [...] pay your rent for a year which is £45 or is that only half a year rent? You will be able to get my money if required from Mrs Tanner and will try and make arrangements for Rose or Nora to draw some of my pay if necessary. Life up here is pretty rough, no floors to the tents, simply hard bare ground like cement but plenty of fine dust. All we have for bedding is two miserable blankets so you can imagine how comfortable it is. Some nights a tearing wind gets up, and two nights it was impossible to sleep what with flying sand, dust, wind and cold, it was something awful. We get plenty of food, 6-30 milkless and generally sugarless coffee with bread & jam if any left over from tea the night before, 8 o'clock breakfast of Irish stew tea & bread, dinner same, tea time jam bread & tea. There are plenty of booths about where one can get meals & drinks etc. We are supposed to get a roast once a week instead of stew to vary the monotony but stew is the main stay. There is every description of brute in the camp but if a man is caught drunk too often he is kicked out. The language is such that I would never bring any girl or woman friend of mine with in half a mile of the camp without exaggerating. Privates get 35/- per week so I am not doing too badly. I can get weekends off, Saturday evening to Sunday midnight so I go to the Cliftons or Kelsalls.

Your aff son R W W Adam

P.S. I am not a member of the Y M C A. but they have a reading and writing tent which is very convenient and generous of them.

My previous training is of a certain amount of good to me but a lot is obsolete now and so many others have been in some corps or other before too.

I must write to uncle Charlie soon and tell him I have enlisted.

Things don't seem to be going too well with the Russians at present. In fact they seem to be having a pretty tough time on either frontier.

They are very slow here in equipping fellows with kits. Fatigue kit consists of a thin dark blue dungaree suit with kahki puttees & service boots and white (?) cricket hat. It is a very serviceable one and cooler than kahki. As they are so slow in giving them out you see fellows in every conceivable kind of rig and mixtures of rig - from full

kahki of those just going away to the last rags and [...] of a stony broke new recruit. My pannikin disappeared so I drink out of a jam tin now. It does not pay to leave anything lying about.

300 new men come with in the next week and I believe hundreds more are ready. Had the season been a real good one and work plentiful not half would be coming forward.

I must go now and see that my washing has not disappeared (today being Wednesday is a half holiday).

R W W A

24/ii/15

No 8 depot

Blackboy Hill

Dear Mother

I shall write this today, although it is not a week since I last wrote, but there is nothing else to do and may not get time or forget later on.

Today is a half holiday (Wednesday) but as our company is fatigue company, all leave for us is off. Luckily I was not put on so might as well have had it, (leave). A strong wind got up yesterday evening and has been going hard ever since. The result is that we live eat see and breath sand and dust till everyone is absolutely full of it (in more ways than one). It is simply vile and looks as if it will continue all night again. If you don't gobble your stew it turns in to mud before it gets cold. What Egypt must be like when it is windy heaven only knows, so I half hope we go to England instead, but I would like to see that country.

They seem to be very slow in organising things here, no N C O classes yet, so no chances of going for stripes, we don't know yet if we are a new battalion or reinforcements, but suppose it will all be arranged in good time.

Last Monday about 500 left the camp for Europe and there were some amusing incidents as they got off. About ½ of them had a skin full and some a good deal more. While on parade one merry soul stepped forth and began to sing "Auld Lang Syne" in very uncertain strains when a big Sergeant stepped up & [...] his fist in the

singers face, roaring "Get back you - - - or I knock your - - head off" which had the desired effect. However they got away alright, one N.C.O. I believe being seized with "cold feet" in the night as they say (cleared off). We have no rifles or any kit yet but are getting on with drill, so should soon get them. I was dropped on to go as escort to the guard tent to take a prisoner (absent with out leave) from the guard tent before the Company commander. The corporal of the guard was so tight he did not know which was the escort guard or prisoner or what was to be done!! It was lucky for him no officer happened along. Most of the officers are only 19 to 21 out of the Senior Cadets. However they seem to know their work.

Best love from your aff son

R W W Adam

[on the reverse]

24/2/15

5th Reinf 11th Battn

Blackboy Hill

Apl 8th 1915

Dear Mother

By the time you get this we should be a week at sea, but I don't mind betting £100 we are still here with another month of it ahead of us. Still no rifles or kit uniforms etc. I believe they are ready & and that we are to go to the ranges for shooting in a couple of weeks so that looks more hopeful.

I had another OR Old Rugbeian war list this mail about 69 killed, including a lot who were at school at the same time as I was.

That was a very pathetic letter of poor old Mrs Rutherfords, and it was very sad indeed about poor Andrew, who must have had a fine future before him.

I have just returned from a weeks holiday which I put in at St Aubyns and enjoyed myself poking about with out having to do any work.

I have made over 28/- per week to you out of my pay but I don't think you can get it till we leave this country. I am also going to pay your rent so hope you will have no immediate cause for worry. I also told Mr Tanner that I had told you to draw on my money whenever you needed it. I have insured myself with the A M P for £500 and when my will is properly fixed up my affairs will be pretty right. I suppose we shall go to Egypt, but the Lord only knows where we will go.

I got the girls photos today, but don't think they do them the utmost credit, but all the same I am delighted to have them and shall [...] soon as (per usual I suppose) but I will this time. and thank them. I expect next mail will say you have heard I had enlisted.

It looks very much as if we will be late, but I would love to be in some of it and have a crack at a few Prussians; I would sooner let the poor Turks sit.

One of my horses committed suicide by drowning itself in a soak (rolling and unable to get back). However perhaps I shall be lucky if I don't lose the lot. It is a bit Early but I am half inclined to think the season is shaping a bit like it did last year, but it won't do to dwell on such hideous possibilities as that.

There are a dozen or so in the camp from Beverley and as about 9 of us had leave together, the Roadsboard gave us a sort of send off. Speeches and a bit of a dance. [...] the girls and I went in. I only went out of duty as the parson at Bev [Beverley] is a chaplain of the forces (relieving Canon [...] who is at present at West Perth as that rector is away with the forces.) and he worked it for us to all come up together

Mrs [...] Lukin has flattered me by asking for my photo so have sent one, which reminds me I must send aunt Lilys soon.

My number is 1901 which I shall be obliged to wear on an aluminium disc round my neck like a dog!!

We had a route march today, pretty well the whole 1600 men. I believe only about 2 fell out, but it was only about 12 or 13 miles and dinner (tea, dog & bread) on the way. I do hope, as you say, that your getting moved on means you are leaving it for something better.

Ist you who sends the overseas Daily Mail as it comes from Hampstead in a hand writing I don't know and always to R W Adams? Whoever it is I thank most sincerely as it has most interesting war accounts.

Also the Motor Cycling. I asked Rose not to waste her generously spent money on it, so I hope she did not. Any how it still comes and my interest in M C ling is now nil I fear

Best love I must clear

Your aff son

R W W Adam

They are shutting up the tent.

[addressed and stamped YMCA stationery as part of letter above]

8/3/

Mrs Adam

1 The Mount

Heath Street

Hampstead

England London N W

Westward Ho

18/4/15

Dear Mother

As I have come over here for the day (Sunday) I am taking the opportunity of writing.

We are at present at Osborne where we came last Wednesday to undergo our shooting tests.

We left Blackboy hill last Wednesday morning. In order to get an early start we struck tents and got already to go the night before. Up till then the weather had been decent but threatening -- All went well till 4 am when it commenced to rain so we had to dress (or those who did undress had to) in the dark get our blankets and things together and make for shelter. Most of them managed to keep dry and 30 or 40 got into the Church tent and promptly began to hold a concert at about 4.30 am, Tipperary, Are we downhearted etc!! However we eventually got away alright (only our company, the 5th 11th + 30 or so of the 4th Reinforcements) and just as we got to Osborne it began to pour. They then shunted us on to Cottesloe and when they hauled us back to Claremont it had cleared. From Claremont station we marched to

the Osborne ranges and pitched out tents on the wet sand. Since then we have had some sort of rain everyday but nothing very heavy, but the ground is very damp under the tents but no one is any the worse for it. Up to date I am somewhere about top in shooting but we still have monday to go. It is very easy shooting compared to what I have been used to and plenty of the men have never handled a rifle in their lives before, but I think taking it all round we have done pretty well.

It is a lovely place to be camped as it is quite close to the sea and much cleaner than Blackboy. At 6.30 parade we go for a bathe (voluntary) and it is a bit cold being only sunrise. We can also get in another bathe at dusk after tea. I have twice been put on as marker at the butts, and a fellow can get some idea there of how a bullet comes along!! I have also been foolish enough to walk behind the butts to get to the beach while shooting was going on. Two bullets (ricochets) pinged over our heads so we cut it out in pretty good time. On Monday or Tuesday we go back to Blackboy and get fitted out and are supposed to sail before the end of the month, so hope we shall. The 4th reinforcements at present at Rockingham sail today or tomorrow and 15 of our men are to go with them to fill up the places of deserters "cold feeters" etc. Altogether the 4^{ths} are about 40 or 50 short now and those taking their places went through their shooting with us. As yesterday was pay day half of them came in drunk last night and the brutes were arguing and growling half the night; I suppose it will be the same with us when our turn comes to go!!!

I am going to see Joan Martin this evening, for the first time for 15 years

P.T.O.

I think I told you George Clifton was at Blackboy he came in last Tuesday.

Many thanks for sending the Punch. I am now in a position to appreciate that particular one!!!

Our two officers (only 21 or so) are about the pick of this camp. Very keen although not exactly aristocrats of the bluest blood / but what is more they are men.

Some up there are real specimens and am afraid the imperial O.S will do a bit of a gig at them!!

Best love to you all

Your aff son

R W W Adam

P.S. It is just possible letters you write from now on to here will miss me; as it seems

pretty hopeful about our going soon. Presumably Egypt and unless you hear to the contrary

Pte R W W Adam

5th Reinf 11th Battalion

A I E F

Menai Camp

Egypt but that is only supposing.

25/iv/15

5th 11th

Blackboy Hill

Dear Mother

We sail tomorrow, presumably for Egypt. It is now about 9.45 PM but we have already struck tents so as to be ready to get away in the morning without wasting too much time.

I quite forgot to compliment you on your typing efforts, you seem to be an expert already.

I managed to get in a night at Beverley as I got two telegrams one urgent; so the O.C. could not very well keep me back. Things are very dry down there, and although it is rather easy to say so I can't help thinking that things seem to be shaping much the same as last year.

Coming up on train last night from Beverley I spotted old Mrs Grover the first time I have seen her for about 6 years as I always missed her when I went to Katanning. She was up in the camp this afternoon saying good bye to various nephews etc. She wished to be very kindly remembered to you when I saw you. The two younger [...] girls were up too. The youngest one is quite pretty.

It was very unpleasant saying farewell to St Aubyns, but I may be back there again before very long. If I get a chance in the army or civil service in Egypt or Nigeria or some of the places after the war, I think it would pay me to accept as there is nothing but solid graft in [...]. I could not stand joining the army to stay in England especially as I would only be a sub and aged 26 instead of 19.

I shall be in a very different place this time tomorrow night!!

Hope you got my cable

Best love to you all, your aff son

R W W Adam

P.S. I made arrangements with Mr Tanner for you to draw on my money as you required it; also for your rent, or whatever you want it for. You should also from now on get 28/- per week of my pay, but how you will get it I don't know and if it does not turn up enquire at the A.Gs.

[on the reverse]

25/4/15

[For this transcription, the pages of the letter are rearranged into chronological order.]

[addressed side, stamped and postmarked Cairo 22.V.15]

Mrs Adam

1 The Mount

Heath Street

Hampstead

England London NW

22/5/15

11th Baln 22/5/1915

3rd Inf Brigade

Helmieh Cairo

Dear Mother

We landed at Suez yesterday morning and reached above address last night. It was a most thrillingly interesting trip. We followed the canal to Ismalia [Ismailia] (which I

need not describe to you!!!). We had the glaring desert on our left and the lovely green strip, on our right of the fresh water canal, along which there were irrigation patches all the way. From Ismalia we went west following the Fresh water canal to Tel-el-Kebir (ii) to which place there was extensive cultivation by irrigation. From there to Cairo the place was simply one huge garden and maze of irrigation ditches & canals. The contrast to the adjoining desert fairly takes one's breath away. No ferries or roads, simply cultivation patches villages date palms [...] etc. But for the railway, all as primitive as 1000s of years ago. Bullocks, camels their own patent wells & means of getting out the water, ploughs threshing etc, all going together! I think it beats Rome & Italy or very nearly.

I only wish I knew a lot more about it. We came into Cairo at Sunset and I was lucky enough to get a glimpse of the tops of two Pyramids (Gizeh) [Giza] over the city in the haze. It was thrilling. I hope to see them close soon but we are camped on the exact opposite side of the town to them now as mena [Mena] camp was condemned.

We may possibly only be here a week and then go to our base and then for some fun.

I (and the rest) have taken French leave today and am now writing this in the shade in the Ezbekieh gardens opposite to the Grand Continental hotel, where four of us privates had lunch next to a Lt Colonel and his ladies!!!! We had a drive round this morning crossed the Nile and the Kasr-el Nil bridge round the Gezira gardens and back to the Museum where we "lobbed" on dear old Rameses the second in a glass case!!!. The city (European part) reminds me more of a French or Italian town as far as looks go but of course otherwise not. Kites birds crows & sparrows are every where & I don't think that now you would be bothered by a crowd at the Cairo station yelling for "Backsheesh"!!!

The city is full of Kahki men, Terriers [Territorials] and Australians chiefly.

We get very much tangled up with piastres but hope to get the hang of them soon. I have 560 in paper in a belt on me now / which I expect I shall leave behind me the first time I take it off

No news of any of the cousins yet but as wounded men are coming in expect to hear some soon. I have learnt the difference in looks between Soudanese and Lower Egyptian. Have kept a diary so will write a long letter when I get a chance.

Best love to you all Your aff son R w w A.

Helmieh

Cairo

31/v/15

Dear Mother

I was delighted to get a letter from you two days before after we arrived here. We have now been here ~~This is our~~ 11th-days here and we are all sick to death of it, and mean time, I have had two letters from you, about the last more anon. Now for a pretty full account since 26 Apl 1915.

The last night at Blackboy we had out in the open so as to entrain early. We got away early and were on board troopship No 24 SS Hororata at almost 10 am. There was not much of a crowd and I saw no one I knew except old Mrs Grover who said she was writing to you. I think some 8 [...] and Cliftons were there who kindly brought me magazines & books. The ship was crowded Must have been close on 2000 souls on board and she must have been a 12000 ton boat. Very much after the style of a W S L [White Star Line] [drawing of a star] boat. Up decks were mostly taken up with [...] detention forms hospitals etc; and what was left was partitioned off to battalions for sleeping [...] parade decks, (only amounting to a few square feet as a rule). The troop decks were where we ate and slept ie. below and went almost continuously the whole length of the ship, all on the one story as it were (I am not a sailor).

II

We did not have one rough day the whole trip. The hottest was up to the Equator as all that way we had following winds. Although smooth I was bad the first few days and had a heavy cold. 2nd day out our black service kit bags we stowed in a hold with equipment, keeping our sea kitbags (sort of pillow case) with necessaries for voyage with us.

Unless on a special fatigue as mess orderly, butchers fatigue or galley fatigue etc, routine was -

Reveille 6 am (or 5.30)

Breakfast 7. - At 8 all on deck except washers hose men etc. and mess orderlies.

10 - 12 parade and then others allowed below.

12.30 dinner and then all hands except mess orderlies up. 2 pm parade till 4 pm. Tea at 5 Lights out at about 10 pm.

It took a few days to get into shape and lots were bad. 3rd or 4th day out I was late for parade so had to go and report for duty to Chief Engineer (as none volunteered) with several others. I and one other were put on paint washing & painting in the engine room which was most interesting and pleased our selves whether we worked or not; the others were put into the bunkers, which it was well to be out of.

III

After about 5 days of that I gave my job to another man and took on mess orderly as my "cobber" who was on it went sick. The Troop deck was divided into about 100 messes from about 12-20 men at each. I was made mess commander of 16 (self included No.51 mess; I simply had to see we got our rights etc.

Mess orderly is excused all parades, has to get the tucker from the galley serve it out, do all the washing up, clean table and certain floor space. There are two to each table, and it is not much trouble if you have a good mate and sail in. At about 6 am one went for bread other for butter & jam pickles etc. At cookhouse call one for coffee or tea others for stew or what ever was for breakfast. After that we had to wash up and scrub our table & benches clean knives etc, sweep floor space ready for hose. After the hose had been along we had to get the floor dry and everything spick & span for inspection when the Commandant, Ships Captain etc came round to try & find fault. They carried electric pocket lamps so as to be able to see into all the dark corners & places but we were more often congratulated than otherwise. There was generally spare time between clean up & inspection

IV

so we could read play cards physical drill ourselves or sleep according to how one felt. Dinner was the next thing but the tables only needed a wipe over after that. We had to draw rations, more butter pickles etc at 3.30, which just broke a nice long afternoon nap. as tea was not till about 5.30. After tea washing up we orderlies were free (like the rest) when hammocks and blankets were allowed out. Most nights there were concerts or boxing competitions and some afternoons were devoted to sports (which were not very popular). Hammocks were slung over mess tables on hooks or [insert] Hammocks were slung across tables as a rule or else wherever one could get [end of insert] round beams etc mess tables being out at right angles to ships sides as on white Star boats. One blanket and one hammock per man. As it was so stuffy below I slept on deck as a rule which was even harder than Blackboy hill with only a thin canvas hammock and one blanket for bedclothes (I have found a man can get used to any thing). It was quite a sight to see the hammocks all slung below, and it was impossible to walk along without bending right - down and bumping into fellows as one went along. As they swung to the ships roll (as she was a brute to roll) most rubbed their neighbours as they were so close together especially if it was too wet to sleep on deck.

V

Off times on deck was worth seeing. The deck was one mass of men exactly like a huge jigsaw puzzle lying & sitting in all conceivable attitudes (no benches or chairs). Some reading some trying to play cards or [...] gambling games, others sleeping or trying to. They were compelled to leave a sort of passage way but even then one had to step over odd arms or heads or legs. A lot of gambling went on [insert] was

sometimes guilty [end of insert]. There was a dry canteen which blew out about the time we passed Aden. All the water was always warm, and now and then some sportsman or a member of the crew would get hold of some iced water & sell it at 3d per glass. It was rotten not being able to get nice cold water.

Food was good on the whole, stews roasts etc, coffee& tea (the cooks used to sell that at 3 per big mugful till they were stopped, it being our rations).

A band was got up which played pretty well every day and was quite presentable. There were good shower baths, which was a comfort, and fresh water washbasins. I lived mostly clad in football shorts only or a very thin singlet on, as it was warm below, especially getting ready for that mornings inspection, the perspiration used to stream off us. That gives a fair idea of life on board.

VI

We buried one of our poor beggars the day before we passed Aden, the only one I am glad to say out of the whole lot. He went off with full military honours, last post 3 vollies etc.

We arrived off Colombo one evening but as it was too rough to get a pilot on in the dark (or some such yarn) we lay out till next morning when we came in and commenced to coal. Only a few officers & one man who lived there got ashore (the natives had to smuggle us fruit, otherwise we would have got none.) Coaling went on till 10 pm or later and about 150 or more men were caught in the lighters in an attempt to get ashore, which failed. There was a bit of a hullabaloo and indignation meeting and going to play hell etc which of course all ended in smoke. They wanted to know why the officers should go ashore and not the men etc. Things looked a trifle ugly but it was all bark. After the Equator we had head winds all the way except the first morning in the Red sea when it was like a Turkish bath on the Troop decks. All men were glad to get ashore, as there was not one atom of comfort and nearly all seemed to get bad colds which have continued on here. We landed at Suez (God preserve me from ever living there.) were the

must now write on the backs

VII 7

[paragraph inserted]

Have made a will in which all goes to you and Mr Tanner executor. I would like Rose to have my Gold watch and Nora the ring and the Fisher girls my animal story books by Keaston, Long etc. The young Fisher boys can have the guns & rifle.

31/5/15.

[end of insert]

C[ity] of London Territs are quartered and some of the Punjarubis [Punjabis].

It was a dreary run to Ishmalia, or the station back of it, just the thin green strip of the little fresh water canal with cultivation patches and gardens at odd intervals all along, on the left the desert. There you could swear there are lovely lakes in the distance at times, but it was all mirage. Every few miles there were small camps of Indians guarding the canal (92 Punjarbis I noticed) there are also some of the H A C (artillery) [Honourable Artillery Company] there, (I hear rumours but hope we don't get these). At Ismalia we could get fruit and soft drinks (some managed to get enoug "Cognac (sic) to get "full" before we reached Cairo. From Ismalia we practically followed the Ishmalia (Nile water) canal, which floats quite large barges and Nile boats, As we proceeded irrigation & cultivation increased till we got to Tel el Kebir when we dived into the very essence of it. We could see them at work with their primitive water wheels, ploughs and mode of threshing(. Driving round on a sort of sledge drawn by two bullocks, ~~camels~~ or horses or a mixture, in a small circle). the threshed stuff being thrown in the centre. As you have seen Egypt I need not go into details, but you can explain them to Rose and Nora.

VIII

I have now seen most of the sights, so hope we soon get out of it. We are camped at Helmieh near Heliopolis to the north East of the city, it is really the suburbs but 12 or 8 miles from the City. We are just on the edge of the desert, camp is all sand but it is not so very loose.

The mosques are most attractive, being so beautifully carpeted I've seen the Pyramids, Sphinx (disappointing as to size) mosques, citadel, zoo, Museum etc. On one mosque or in its wall you can see a canon tree planted by one of Napoleon's guns. Inside you can see were he had the lovely copper inlaid with gold & silver door covers torn off.

It is hot here now, especially two days 110 & 115, 120 I heard, on one of which we marched to the butts in the desert. It was too hot to let one sweat as the wind was so hot & dry. At midday, we had a meal in the places where they kept the targets where one could get relief by perspiring. After that it was reckoned too tough to finish shooting so we marched back to camp and it was all a lot could do to just stagger in. Our hours are reveille 5 am tea or coffee if obtainable 5.80. parade & drill 6 to 9. Breakfast 9 am

IX

Parade in Mess shanties 10.30 or 11 to 12 or for about an hour. 12.30 dinner

4 pm to 6 parade drill etc. tea 6.30 lights out 10.10 pm.

I have broken camp three half days to go sightseeing but no one has been any the wiser it can also be done every night (to go into Cairo) and you would be unlucky to be pinched by a picket. It sounds very undisciplined but a man has to look after himself here.

I hope a small brooch will arrive for Rose & a wristlet affair for Nora (unless they like to swap.)

It is very pleasant dining in the cafés out in the streets with various pedlars and people selling all kinds of things, they are almost a nuisance. They are with the guides especially, a plague, till you get the hang of them & things in general. The Continental has proved too expensive. We braved (4 of us) Sheperds [Shepherd's] last night as the officers etc and their wives were going into dinner (we went for a drink).

I have been on fatigue today cleaning

X

rifles brought back from the Dardanelles. Some are good some in a bad state. Tonight I am on guard for the second time (24 hours).

It is very good indeed of you & Edward to go to so much trouble about me. I was going to stop with this lot as were were to have been off on Wednesday (two days time) but now there are rumours of the 11th Battalion returned wounded & Reinforcements having to guard the Suez Canal, if that is so I am going to do my best to get that commission so many thanks indeed.

I hear young Weaver (second son) and another Beverley boy were killed, that Melville Piesse is wounded and at Luna park or Heliopolis, but it is impossible for us to get information unless we run into other convalescents of the 11th Battln. We can't very well get into Hospitals or get casualty lists. I don't know how any of my cousins are. I have a very strong feeling that I am coming out alright C.S. or not but I am. And it is a glorious (selfish) relief to know you know too much to worry. I have just been handed another letter from you.

XI

The place is thick with wounded, they thrilled me at first but as I said a man gets used to anything and now I feel only envious if anything at all.

The letter was from Rose so thank her muchly, & tell her not to worry about being in the right place.

I must finish soon to get ready for guard so here ends my record letter. And it is just possible I may not be long behind it but man is in the right place etc!!! Don't expect letters ever. If we go on active service next week I stay here and can't write letters after that, if not, I shall try for that commission.

Flies are not just quite as bad as when at their worst in W.A. Here or v far in the desert, only around camps etc.

Good bye and love to all the Aunts and Your selves.

Your aff son

R.W.W Adam

P.T.O.

12

We were dismissed from guard after all which was a chuck in as they evidently had more than were wanted.

There is no doubt the Australians did magnificently at the Dardanelles especially the landing. One hears so many conflicting accounts here, that it is hard to get facts.

The latest rumour is that we are going to shift camp to the south of Italy but believe it if you like, believe nothing and trust nobody is the motto here as far as I can make out, that is as far as life in general is concerned.

Being on fatigue today, I escaped a night march and trench digging with pick & shovels.

I have a small "Ensignette" camera but am keeping it for later on. Just missed catching the first flea I have seen. Am handing those papers to my O.C tomorrow in order to settle things one way or the other.

Cairo June 6th 1915

5th Reinf

11th Batt

3rd Brigad

AIEF Egypt.

Dear Mother Many thanks for your letters 3 from England (one was Rose's) and one sent on from W.A. and was unfinished! Today is Sunday so as church parade was early 8. o'clock, and none after, I and another have come into the Zoo for a decent quiet shady spell.

Rumour has it and I think correctly this time that we are off on Wednesday. Those papers have gone up before the General commanding, so unless he fixes me up in the next two days I shall remain with the AIEF. If he gives me his consent & any encouragement I shall most likely turn up in England. I would not care about it if I was to be dumped down in some place and see no fighting anywhere. Life here is not very strenuous but very unpleasant as far as camp is concerned. Hot & sandy, just like and ordinary W A summer but there is always some breeze blowing but thank the Lord not enough to raise the dust.

I am writing this at the Zoo. It is a lovely place, full of green shady trees, palms ponds canals etc. and the only place where I have had a decent cup of tea since I left St Aubyns. I got letters from there today and am pleased to hear they have had good rains.

II

Never expect letters, or wonder why you have not heard from me, as I expect the next will be those patent active service cards and how often we are allowed to send them I do not know. I may be able to write from Lemnos island if we go there, or I may turn up myself!

I was on night picket in Cairo a couple of nights ago. About 25 of us had to go in in charge of two Lieutenants very young & inexperienced, to some barracks in the big square opposite the Station. We were there divided into two parties one to do the town from 7.30 to 9.30 and the second, which I was in, from 9.30 to anytime. As leave is only granted up to 10 o'clock all soldiers should be out of the city by then, so this first picket warns them and picks up the obstreperous ones. They only got one and he was holding forth to all the officers & their wives in the vestibule of Sheperds Hotel!!! All prisoners are placed in those barracks taken in a cab by two of the picket at the prisoners cost.

At about 9.45 we went out (always in the charge of 3 or 4 "red caps" ie M.M.P. mounted military police). They and the officers carry loaded revolvers while we have bayonets & entrenching tool handles, which make a useful waddy. We had to go round the bars & pubs and usual soldiers haunts and ended up with about 12 prisoners.

III

One I helped escort up was frightfully indignant and very drunk and was also a convalescent back from the front, which made him all the more indignant. What he and his mates were not going to do to us when we got to the front -----! While going along one street a whole crowd of natives suddenly came tearing round a corner from a side street right into us. We thought there was at least a riot or something of the sort on, but at their tails were two Australians with canes having the time of their lives. They were both drunk and came right onto us, so we got them

into a cab and sent them off, but I believe they got away before they reached the barracks. ----- We finished up about 1.20 am and marched back to the barracks! Our bed was a heap of straw in the barrack yard and a drink of cold water if you wanted it!! However the nights are not cold, but sometimes damp, so we might have been worse off. We were up at 5 next morning and then had to escort the prisoners out to Helmieh and from there to their various camps.

I also got a letter from C K today with Ham court news, which was nice to get.

With best love and hope you are all well your aff son

R W W Adam

P.T.O.

IV

P.S.

A pipe band has just struck up (plays here every Sunday). Every piper, about 16 of them and 3 drummers, are little nigger boys belonging to the Cairo boys reformatory school. They are top notch pipers and have Bonny Dundee going full speed ahead

Sparrows are just as cheeky & numerous here as in London, especially here in these gardens.

But for Church parades Sunday is as good as a holiday and Saturday is a half. On such days 25% are supposed to get leave passes if they want them otherwise not leave camp and then only by the proper way past the main guard, and must wear web equipment belts.

Even with passes one must be in camp by 10 pm. All the above rules are (apparently) only made as far as we are concerned, to be broken!!! It seems awful,

but in the same way the Australian only [...] salutes a passing officer when it pleases him to do so, much to the amazement of the Britishers. We were under better supervision at Blackboy Hill than here, and that was bad enough. However the Australian has proved he can fight when he is wanted to so he passes.

V

June 7th

As I have missed the mail I shall continue and give an attempt to describe our visit to Cairo. All rules as to passes, passing out past the main guard etc being ignored we cut across half a mile of desert to the Rly station two steps in that and one's boots are all grey. As you draw near small boys & big ones come out singing out "Clean boots" "Kiwi Kiwi" holding up boot polish of that name, and if you are foolish enough to stop will start in without being asked. On the station if there is time, it is as well to

let them clean them (which is any colour from red, bright purple to brown./All the AIEF wear brown boots) in order to avoid a worse rush of the brutes in Cairo. Meantime, child acrobats, post card sellers, cigarette, lemonade, orange ditto etc, etc are at you till the train comes in. Worse than Rome.

Get out at Cairo there is a disappointed rush of bootblackers, pestering guides, donkeys boy offers, etc. With "empshi" and threats of a cane barge along and shake them off. Sit down at a cafe for a drink, up come the post card men cigarettes, cane and walking stick man etc, all seeming to think we were only born yesterday. Stand still in the streets with an uncertain air on, up come the

VI

guides, "You wantasee mosques bazaars." "Going to the Pyramids" etc. We either follow our noses or get on a tram as I have a guide book with maps. The other day we cut through the native quarter along what must have been a main street, just room enough for two native carts to pass! It was interesting and weird as were the smells, but no absolute stinks like Naples, or I never sniffed any.

We generally end up with a feed at a decent café, out side, but as these various hundred & one vendors beggars etc are such a pest I almost prefer inside. Cairo must be fairly fattening on the soldiers, especially the AIEF. The natives are awful rogues and it takes some time to get the hang of their money of which they take full advantage. Counterfeit coins are very numerous and one has to be very careful.

The Greek element here is strong, they seem to run all the cafés and such places, and a good many of the shops. French of course is the official language and Arabic for the people. The "Lebbek" trees are in blossom now and have a very sweet scent. There are most glorious avenues of them all over the place.

The most striking tree is a feathery leaved tree of the fairly thick foliage & a glorious

VII

[orangey] red or crimson flower not unlike a large scraggy nasturtium blossom. It is most striking among the other green trees & palms and grey or brown houses, one mass of crimson.

It may be the "Judas" tree but I have forgotten the native name.

We were told on parade this morning that our company could consider itself warned to be ready to leave at any moment for the Dardanelles, most likely tomorrow or the next day!!! On each parade we practised advancing to the firing line under artillery fire, and at the second parade, 10.30 am were lectured in the mess shanties by a SM who had been in the Aisne battle, about behaviour in the trenches etc. I think we finish training at Lemnos and it will be about 3 weeks before we get into the trenches. I have almost given up hope of those commission papers passing Lt Gen

Maxwell in time but they may come in later on. My appetite is just returning, having left it behind in W.A. I am just beginning to feel decently fit again after a succession of colds since leaving Blackboy. Camp tucker is good but

VIII

I could not come at it for the past two weeks. Tea bread butter & jam at all meals - for breakfast usually hard boiled (fairly [...] eggs) or perhaps meat dinner tinned Salmon or perhaps stew.

Tea - stew or more often stewed fruit figs or apricots (dried) and rice.

I believe the 3rd contingent lands today, and it is rumoured the poor brutes are going to be put on the Suez to finish training!!

The other day they called for volunteers to go back to W.A. as guard & escort to invalided wounded etc. About 1/3 of our company offered its services (whisper it not) talk about "cold feet" I don't think a lot realised the war was "square dinkum" till they got here and saw the hundreds of wounded & heard facts first hand!

We have no parade this afternoon so can get this written in comfort, but we have a night march instead at 7. Well done Tom Deason, I have not even got a lance corporals stripe yet, but I may get anything later on.

I am afraid when tourists start here again

PTO

IX

They will get most awful shocks as the language a filth that the donkey boy paper boy types can come out with, in the right or wrong place, regardless of meaning application is astounding. It really makes one smile being so unexpected but at the same time it is deplorable, but causes great amusement to the AIEF who is responsible. A tiny boy goes about the camps and Cairo dressed as a soldier. He is a little native and calls himself Sgt Mackenzie! It is impossible to catch him at any point in ordinary parade ground drill, and he must be making a fortune. He was taught by some man or men at the Mena camp.

Australia has woken up alright now to the fact of the awfulness of the war, it must have made as big an impression on the peoples minds when the Australian casualties came through, as did the declaration of war. It is up to all who are able to come, and I think it is up to the Americans to send over contingents if they can't send armies.

X

I am afraid this letter is very jumbled but have numbered them in succession so hope you will be able to puzzle out their sequence.

I may be able to write again from Lemnos but can't tell yet, anyhow I will if I can.

Our battalion colours are chocolate & blue which must be worn instead of numerals.

I can only just part my hair now, just recovering from the criminal clip it had before going on board the troopship.

Oranges here are 1 1/4^d each at the cheapest in stalls & places. Nothing is cheap and at the same time reliable & clean. Money goes like water. I landed with £8 have drawn another £1 as pay and am now stoney broke, can't even buy a drink!

Water here is plentiful and good and inspite of pipes being laid in the sand the water is always cool in them (or ours are) so they must be down pretty deep.

Best love to you all and shall see you again before so very long.

Your aff son R W W Adam

[Pro forma 'Messages and Signals', a round date stamp as follows]

3rd AUST. INF BDE [...]

22 JE 15

[with the following notation in the middle of the page:]

on active service

Mrs Adam

1 The Mount

Heath Street

Hampstead

London NW

ENGLAND

Pte Adam 1901
B Coy 11th Batt
3rd Brigade, 1st Div's
AIEF

June 19th 1915

Gaba Tebe
[Gallipoli]

All peeping is done
with periscopes
over the top of the
trenches

Dear Mother. Excuse this but like a fool I brought no paper thinking letters were not allowed. We have been here now 3 days. It is a case of back to primitive man with a vengeance, and my only wash to date has been a sea dip. We live in dugouts high up on the side of a deep gully overlooking the sea (except when in the trenches). I am at the present moment in the firing line and have been for the last 20 hours and on till 4pm. Only fired two shots at a loophole we are only a few hundred yards over the ridge from our dugouts and for all the enemy visible and danger, might just as well be behind the butts on a rifle range. Shrapnel makes ones hair rise occasionally, but I consider my self just about as safe as you or anyone else going about London streets, tubes, busses etc.

It is hard to realise it is dinkum war with the blue sparkling sea to one side with the peaceful looking islands of Imbros & Samothrace right opposite. Torpedoes, destroyers etc patrol wherever one can see. Turtle doves or birds v likely them fly about and sometimes hear them cooing, it is bright and warm, yet all the time there is the incessant cracking of musketry and whizz and hum of bullets (everywhere) occasional booms of guns, loud shrill whizz & burst of shrapnel and the far distant boom of Tommy Athins or the navy's big guns by the just visible entrance to the Dardanelles. Things are very quiet here of course but we are bound to get some fun out of it yet. Have seen our aeroplane drop two bombs, and this morning it was high up over both sides reconnoitring. Turks trenches are 225 yds opposite our particular line. Have seen Arthur Phipps and Alvie all well. Alvie and I hope to be able to batch together.

Was delighted to get a letter here first night from you and know you are absolutely free of worry as you must be. Best love to all

Your aff son R W W Adam

near Gaba Tepe

Gallipoli

25/vi/15

Dear Mother

Please thank Rose & Nora for three nice letters but if I don't write to you I feel out somehow so this must do them too. It is simply ripping to be able to hear from you so often. I am still in B coy but still hope to get a transfer to A so as to be able to live with Alvy. I am a volunteer sapper now digging a tunnel to some new trenches we have dug just behind a ridge about 100 yds in front of the Turks trenches. We went out one night to dig them (moonlight and they opened a pretty [...] fire for a bit but we were perfectly safe behind the ridge all the same we were ready for them. Three

of the covering party got hit but most of the damage was done by fellows bumping their picks into one another tearing the seats of their trousers out etc.

Some of our saps go through dead Turks (buried during the armistice before we came) but I have not even seen a live one yet.

We wash ourselves & clothes in the sea as fresh water is too scarce for anything but drinking purposes just yet.

This afternoon an observation balloon is up about at sea and a battle ship was plugging at something out of sight over the peninsulas. The turks opened on her but none seem to hit her or the 5 destroyers escort.

Many thanks for the Punch, London Opinion etc.

The beach is dangerous except at night as they don't use shrapnel at night in case it gives the position of their guns away. Have been here 10 days now 16th to 25th and have had ~~three~~ four washes only (sea dips). It is a common sight to see a man very carefully examining his shirt & trousers, Oh for some films for my camera, I could not get them the last night in Cairo. Vest Pocket Hodoff not Ensignette please send some.

All the cousins are well, I don't suppose I shall hear any more about that com-. A small land tortoise crawled over our firing line trench the other day. A few nights before a mouse nearly frightened the life out of me by suddenly popping into view in my peep hole while on watch in the firing line!! No doubt it is great place for a person suffering with nerves; I am afraid it would shake the poor dear ladies up who write the blackedged letters to you!!!!

We get our daily dose of shrapnel, and bullets are always wishing & humming overhead (spent & stray). Yet a few seconds after a shrapnel explodes over head one can hear turtle doves cooing. I am surprised at the numbers of birds. Martins, doves, warblers buntings etc.

Am in the best of health and know you all are.

Best love to you all your aff son R W W Adam

[This next section is written upside down at the bottom of the page in a different hand. Robert Adam appears to have reused paper from a letter written by Ethel Fisher.]

III

me a pair of Turkeys. Must stop now as I have to write to Miss Cowan & there is no more news.

From your affectionate friend

Ethel Fisher

P.S. Have not sent the quail away, but had a letter from the Zoo saying they would be pleased to receive them.

[There is a section in the top right hand corner which appears to be his address and which is obliterated.]

June 1915 [written in the right margin]

Same Place

June

always address me as A Company as well now

Dear Mother

As you will see I have had to fall back on a bit of Roses letter and one of C Ks envelopes. I hope to get hold of some proper material some day even if it has to come from you. We are getting on with our new trenches and will soon have them finished. All the cousins are well up to date as far as I know, but Alvy is the only one I see anything of. I am in his section, and he is a real good fellow and very popular with all and sundry. We have had a few big shells over lately up to 11 inch but did little or no damage. This morning a "splinter" ie. the best part of a 4.2 case landed in among 4 of us right in a sap and it is a marvel it touched none of us. If it was not for shrapnel and snipers & odd stray bullets, life would be very peaceful but except at night you never know when they are coming along but all the same if a fellow takes proper precautions he is pretty safe. I am carrying a fair supply of livestock so after today shall have to wear my trousers inside out for a change. Two shrapnels have just whizzed over my head to burst or bury themselves farther on. Alv. and I have great talks about the past & future. We have great schemes for irrigation farming etc in the south West, when this rotten game is all over. We can hear the [...] or Tommy Athines shaking things up down below before today; things have been quiet down that way lately, but the poor beggars must have done some terrible fighting there by the sound of firing. A young naval officer walked through the trenches this morning having a look round. I believe he is commander of one of the destroyers off here anyhow I feel very much like jumping up and asking him if he knew about C.K. I am afraid he would have got a nasty shock if a dirty unshaved private suddenly hopped up & started familiarities. Hubert Parker the picture of health looked me up the other

day. I must have a bathe tonight, as it is about a week since I had the last wash. It is surprising how clean one can wash things, shirts etc in the sea. This must be a great place for birds, as even now I have seen about a dozen different kinds inspite of the continual firing between the lines and in our own territory like wise for butterflies and cicadas, the latter are going all day. I was out on sentry group last night protecting our forward right front, well out of danger. Two nights ago was on the protecting screen right in front from 9 pm to 3 am. One bullet ricocheted over my head and another sent some dust over me. However they omitted to machine gun us or rather the ridge, as they only chance we are there. The Turks keep up an intermittant machine gun & rifle fire all night plus a few bombs and some times they get quite excited. Out on the front screen we can hear them talking and coughing etc, but don't think there is much fear of an attack from them but "quite safe".

Best love to you all Your aff son

R W W Adam

[written in the left hand margin of the recycled letter]

Alvy sends his love to you all. I got some more papers from you last mail for which very many thanks. Am sorry Rawson is a fraud!!!! C S is not at any rate!!!! RWW A

[This next section is the text of the recycled letter around which Robert has written his letter. The recycled letter appears to be from his sister Rose.]

pretty dark - which is really very sensible of them - I could tell you a little more but my letter might get held up by the censor!

Mr McRichie has been away for a fort night looking for a [...] Eagles nest in N.Perthshire and was successful. He says it is the first one he has found with eggs.

[Written between the lines in Robert Adam's hand]

Well done Mackechnie!! and many thanks to Rose for her nice letters. Tell her to remember me to Mck.

[The main recycled letter continues]

I have been getting C.S. Sentinel every Wednesday so am sending them out to you. I hope they will arrive all right as it seems that papers sent to Phipps & the others have not turned up. (They might with this mail.

Best love as I must write to Charlie & its getting rather late.

[...]

Rose

[date stamp]

3rd [...] BDE.FIELD P.O.

8 JL.15]

Mrs Adam

1 The Mount

Heath Street

Hampstead

London N W

England

Gallipoli Penin

July 2nd 1915

Am fit & well and trust you are all the same. Tell Nora have not forgotten her birthday, but there is not a very large assortment of presents to send from here and money to get them with!! Many thanks to Rose for the C.S."Sentinel" which is nice to have and also the other papers. All the cousins are well. I saw Jack Skinner 16th Batt, the other day. He was just back from Alexandria having been wounded on the first day. Jack Lodge and Bob Clifton being drivers (artillery) and horses being useless in this present spot, have been left behind at Alexandria to look after their horses. Of course we have guns all about here but they are stationary batteries, this spot we are on being very hilly. Saw two of our aeroplanes up together this afternoon, the Turks seem to have given up shooting at them as a bad job. This is a potent sort of P.C. but serviceable. Very strange your step sister should turn up!! She writes to Alvy! It is almost too dark to see to write now so goodbye and best love to all

Your aff son R A

[The address side of a Field Service Post Card]

[date stamp]

15Jul.15

[part obliterated]

3rd [...] FIELD P.O.

Mrs Adam

1 The Mount

Heath St

England Hampstead London N W

[A Field Service postcard where the writer fills in the blanks or deletes what does not apply]

I am quite well

~~*I have been admitted into hospital*~~

~~*sick*~~

and am going on well

~~*wounded*~~

and hope to be discharged soon

~~*I am being sent down to the base.*~~

~~*I have received your*~~

letter dated

~~*telegram*~~[dated]

~~*parcel*~~[dated]

Letter follows at first opportunity.

~~*I have received no letters from you*~~

~~*Lately*~~

~~*for a long time.*~~

[Signature only] R W W Adam

[Date] 11/vii/15

[This letter has been placed in chronological order compared to the digital file]

Gallipoli

Saturday 17th [July] 1915

Dear Mother, I am using the fountain pen old Mrs Stovin gave me. I had it filled in Cairo last over a month ago but have not used it since so may as well finish it out now as let it dry. At present we are spelling ie living in dug outs away from the firing line, but get the usual shrapnel and fatigues. Other lucky battalions went over to Imbros for theirs why we don't the heads could explain better but I suppose they know what is best.

Major Brockman was severely hit yesterday afternoon by shrapnel while talking to the Colonel out side his dugout; however I believe he will get over it alright. We were innoculated for cholera 4 days ago and it made me feel rotten for 3 days, I have not got my appetite back yet. This morning at about 6.30 I heard the hum of an aeroplane over head but could not be bothered to get up & look as I was half asleep too. Presently there was an unusual crash then silence, then a noise something like a train puffing somewhat slowly coming nearer & nearer then a thud. It was a German and had dropped two bombs but only the first burst, the second one lobbed with in 100 yards of Alvy and my dugout. they did no dammage. Alvy nearly stopped the cap of a shell yesterday afternoon, he got well sprinkled with dirt when it hit the ground with in a few feet of him. Those papers (commission) came into Major Brockmans hands about 10 days ago as he had to sign his approval of me he will have had to send them back to Egypt whence I suppose they will go to the war office, I will have no say in the sending of them, but left Col. Fitzgerald's letter with them saying to send them to him: so hope I shall soon hear the result which I think will be satisfactory. I believe I would have good chances in the Air Service and it is far safer than people imagine. I have seen one of our machines here on a still quiet evening with its course roughly marked out by as many as 10 puffs of shrapnel, it is most amusing watching them trying to bring down aeroplanes. I have been here just over a month now and have not yet seen a Turk. The other day a battle ship came along and commenced to bombard a distant hill. It was a marvellous sight and as each big shell hit, all near the top, a great mass of dust & smoke rose in the air like young volcanoes. It was a great joy to realise that ship (and the rest) was playing on our side. If there is such a creature alive (Britisher) who does not realise what he can thank the navy for if even only morally (!!!!) send that wowser to Gallipoli and I guarantee he will change his tune by 5 minutes. The amount of dirt those big naval shells can shift in 1 part of a second is appalling. I really could not help feeling a bit sorry for the poor old Turks, but all the same that did not detract from the satisfaction & joy of watching. I got another bunch of papers from you today, which turn up most regularly. Please send some writing paper & especially envelopes wrapped up in

those papers, as sent in a nice looking box it is far more likely some other brute will get them a boxy looking parcel is a rare sight here. Best love to all & hope it won't be long before I see you. Your aff son R W W Adam

[on reverse] Gallipoli 1915

Don't address any letters here.

Lemnos Island

July 30th 1915

Dear Mother

I am writing this in bed having had a slight attack of enteric fever. I have been in hospital here now for 10 days, am still on milk diet but as I have been normal for 3 days will soon be on more solid stuff. I felt bad for 5 days on Gallipoli and as I could not eat anything, reported sick. The doctor sent me to one of the Field Ambulances where they found I had a temperature of 102.4. This was before dinner. All that afternoon the Turks amused themselves by sending over 6ⁱⁿ high explosive shells some of which came close enough to sling dirt over us.

In the afternoon I was told to get ready to go off to Lemnos. About 10pm all sick & wounded were towed off in a barge by a pinnace handed over to a sweeper and then taken out to the hospital ship. There the wounded remained but all sick, after a breakfast of real new bread & butter & tea with milk (alas I could only eat one tiny piece) were sent aboard a sweeper again & from there on to a small transport bound for Lemnos. We got to Lemnos at sunset & to hospital at midnight, and what a relief it was to be at last on a soft comfortable bed after so much charging about. I am in the 2nd Australian Stationary hospital, we have beds mattresses and blankets (bad cases have sheets)

II

pillows and mosquito nets to keep the flies off in the day time, so I am in paradise after the last 5 months. I suppose it will be close on if not quite 3 weeks before I am quite fit again and the Penins is no place for a fellow when he feels "crook". By then it is possible that "corn" will be fired up and it may not be so very long before I see you all again.

A Hampshire A S C Territorial has kindly lent me writing gear (in the next bed) otherwise I might not have managed this. On my other side is an Tommy (both from [...] way) of the Enniskillins, but they come and go all the time. Although I have not seen anything terrific yet, it is a great relief to be here for a spell, and quite safe from

shells. I had a large piece of toast & an egg for tea since starting this letter which was much appreciated after not enjoying anything solid for over 2 weeks. When I get a bath & a shave & a clean shirt I shall be happy. I have never been so skinny in my life before but am by no means a living skeleton yet. I wish C K's ship was out here as I would be able to see a good deal of him in the next week or two as [...] seems to be the naval base.

Best love to all and hope you all feel as well as I do, but a bit stronger in the legs!!!
R W W A

Aug 10th 1915

Luna Park

Heliopolis

Cairo Egypt

Dear Mother

I suppose you will get as big a shock as I did when you see the above address. Here I am sound in body & limb, though weak & skinny and just a wee bit off colour, back at the starting place. Well, I shall start from the beginning.

The battalion was sent down to dugouts lower down the hill to be relieved from the firing line by the 12th [begin insert] but it would have been more of a relief had we been left where we were [end insert] who had their spell over at Imbros Island. We were inoculated for cholera next day and the day after that I felt decidedly off. On the 3rd day I went to the doctor describing my feelings chief of which were I was very tender all over my front and it hurt to put my foot down suddenly, used to quite take my breath way. He gave me a pill which stopped this. Two days after I still felt rotten & had eaten practically nothing all the time. He took my temperature and sent me to one of the field ambulances. They took my temperature and said I must go to Lemnos. At about dark I was sent down to the beach and about 10 all sick & wounded were put in a big barge and a small pinnace which towed us out to a trawler mine sweeper, which towed us out to the hospital ship. We were hoisted up in an oblong box which comfortably holds a man on a stretcher and all sick given a mattress and blanket on deck. What a treat it was to sleep on a soft mattress, to see real women nurses walking about and the clean elaborate fittings of what would have been the 1st class saloon. All this after pigging it for months. Next morning there was real new bread & butter & tea with milk in it for breakfast, and I nearly wept as I could not do justice to it. About 10 am or earlier a sweeper came alongside and all sick had to get aboard. The hospital ship is only for wounded, she lies off till full then, goes to Malta or Alexandria and another takes her place. From the sweeper we had to change again to a small transport (about double the size of a trawler) and feeling rotten I was just about fed up with changing boats. We got a drink of tea at midday and that is all we got till midnight. We got to Lemnos at sunset, when a few

slightly wounded were taken off, but us sick ones had to sprawl about till midnight before we were taken off. I got into a motor ambulance and was dumped at the No 2 Australian Stationary Hospital (W.A. men) where we got some arrowroot, and a mattress on the floor. Next day, after being shifted twice, I got a bed, a real bed, mattress and blankets & mosquito netting to keep off flies. Later the tent was filled, 9 or 10 beds, one delirious, some very bad, others like myself. For a few days I ran a temperature over 103 then it suddenly dropped, and I gathered from an orderly, I was an enteric. After my temperature had been down a few days I was shifted to No 15 Stationary run by Britishers, where you had to pretty well look after yourself a real rotten turn out. After a few days there I was told I was for the base. The reason I believe is that they want to get all they can out of Lemnos as there would soon be big doings on the Peninsular and were expecting a lot of wounded in. And we heard last night Achi Baba had fallen which I hope to God is true, but it has fallen so often. Water is scarce on Lemnos and the hospitals rely a lot on the ships for condensed water, we had to go 2 days running in the 15th hospital without a wash!!! By the way the Australian Hospitals there are very short of reading matter and I don't think there is any shortage of clothes at this point yet, as it is too hot to want many. Well after about 5 days at the 15th hospital I went aboard the Allan liner "Ionian" hospital carrier for Alexandria. I palled up with a very decent NZ artillery sergeant who was a bit worse than myself and was able to help him a bit. This fellow was worked his passage on the "Opawa" when she went to the rescue of the "Papanui" passengers at St Helena. He took on the job of cattleman and remembered the Matron!!!!!!...! Knowles is his name and is a gentleman. When they got to Auckland all the crew to a man deserted as they could not stand old Cameron. Knowles & his friend (also working his passage) stayed with Kim down to Wellington.

The Ionian left Lemnos about 5 pm, next day we were never out of sight of islands, day after never saw one and lay off Alexandria at about 8 pm. Next morning we entered and came alongside about 7 am. Tucker was rotten, stale bread, rancid butter, and liquid they called tea. We boarded the hospital train about 10 when I saw the last of Knowles as NZers had to go to a different part of the train.

The train is painted white with a red crescent & star on each carriage. Bunks along each side, two stories, three men on the bottom one and one on the top. I got a top one.

There were Indian orderlies and Red X sisters & we were well looked after, beef tea bread and "chicken diet" a tinned mixture of fowl & rabbit but good. 2 hrs later Lemon squash, cigarettes & writing paper, and some got pyjamas. It was a 3 or 4 hour run to Cairo and then we were brought on to Heliopolis a few miles out.

V

Heliopolis is a modern city in the dessert about 8 years old run by a syndicate the something oasis coy, 8000000 capital or must be more. We had to file into the

magnificent Palace Hotel (a gigantic place now the main base hospital for the Australians. The inside is all marble etc most palatial now full of sick and wounded & dying. There we were allotted to different local hospitals according to how bad you were or what was wrong.

I am only about 1/2 a mile away in Luna Park, which is a sort of Earls Court - business, water chute, skating rink, scenic railway, etc etc, none of which is now working as the whole place is one huge hospital for convalescents. There are quite a lot of our 5th 11th, among them my cobber, who has got a transfer to the 10 LH. A week after I left Anzac (galipoli) Australian & New Zealand Arry Corps, the 11th batallion charged & took some Turks trenches & kept them, with about 120 or 30 casualties so I have again missed the bus. I want to get news of Alvie Clifton as I hear his section was bombing and a bomb went off in a chaps hand which killed one or two and wounded three others.

Alvie I believe was hit, but I don't know how badly, not seriously I know but say nothing. I have heard two different accounts, but I don't suppose I shall know till I get back, anyhow I don't think there is any necessity to worry. George is here with the 28th Bat at Heliopolis, so hope to see him before I go back. From all accounts judging by the way they work things it may be 6 weeks yet before I get back though I would be fit in a fortnight, anyhow I don't want to stay here 6 weeks or even 3 unless necessary. We have nice grounds to walk about in, plenty of shade and good tucker, so I should soon be fit again. Continue addressing letters as before, but I fear I shall miss a lot now through this rotten business. The doctor at the 15th stationary at Lemnos came to the conclusion I had not had Enteric as my temperature had fallen so suddenly, but must be some other kind of fever that is going about there.

Coming down in the train the country seemed greener than when we left as the rice was well up two ft now, and also the cotton is now also in bloom. When I get back it is possible that commission will be waiting for me, any how I hope so.

We loaf about all day in pyjama's here and I must admit it is a nice spell after Anzac, although there are hundreds there who have been there from the start and really are in need of a change & spell, whereas I only had about a month of it.

I would have liked to have been there for the taking of the trenches which was a night affair, but providence or fate puts me out every time.

I have had no letters for a month now, and may be another before I do as I shall be lucky to get any that might be sent on.

As we went into the big main hospital each man is given a writing paper box white with a big red cross on it from the Aus. Red X. It contains a pencil and writing paper & envelopes which I am now using, nail brush, toothbrush, small packet of chocolates packet of cigarettes & tooth powder.

Most acceptable, also a card telling you the committee and the aim of the society.

I could not find a pen or would have written this in ink, so hope it won't all smudge.

Best love to you all & hope you are all well. Your aff son

R W W Adam.

Aug 10th 1915

From RWW Adam

11 Batt Reg't A Coy

Dear Mother

I am writing again so soon because we are back at Zeitoun and may be going any minute back to Gallipoli, and want to get enclosed off before it is too late. It is meant to be me but owing to the glare of the sand any haggard war worn face looks quite plump & round which hurt my feelings somewhat. He has also intensified my 'Alf-a-mo' somewhat, but it is only a cheap affair.

There is no knowing when we go back, it may be a long time or it may not, personally I hope soon as I am heartily fed up with life in this country. I hope to send a little book about Egypt, which as I found out, after I had bought it, was written for youngsters, but it gives very good descriptions of life in Cairo etc, if somewhat exaggerated in his "old [word obliterated] "ivory tints" "gorgeous burnished golds" sort of phrases. I shall also send my badges, which look rather vulgar, made into brooches etc I think - anyhow they are the square dinkum thing and have been in the firing line!

I went to see Alvy again yesterday; whilst I was in the van one of the "Sisters" named him & 30 others to get ready to leave for Australia on the following day!! So he is safely out of it. I saw another of our chaps there who had lately seen Arthur Leake now a 2nd Lieutenant!!! This said man a [...] (gentleman) has had two brothers killed, one in the 11th and one in the 10th L.H. [Light Horse]

Arthur was telling him about his brother in the LH and also explained how he managed to get out alive. The LH men carry haversacks on their backs which are supposed to fasten down at the bottom onto their belts. Arthur had not fastened his and when he jumped down over their parapet it flew up hit him on the back of his head and sent him flying head first into some bushes. A terrific machine gun fire opened on them when they showed, but this fall apparently half dazed him, and he had fallen below the line of bullets. When he came to he was able to crawl back unhurt. The charge was of course a farce, and nearly all wiped out.

We only had 3 days at Kasr-el-nil barracks thank the lord, when the Middlesex territorials came & relieved us (from Gibraltar). I was lucky enough not to drop in for any of the guards we had to do. The only thing I fell in for was a firing party for some Egyptian army major.

The firing party was about 126 strong and was (I believe) that is the whole turnout; a most impressive sight.

The firing party was all Australian, some with helmets, some slouch hats; some with drill shorts others corduroy breeches, on the whole a motley & disreputable, but presentable crew, - nearly all had also seen active service, so naturally were not up to a king Edward's standard funeral.

Only odd ones had been through reverse arms and rest on arms reversed, and as we had only one bit of a rehearsal before we moved off from the barracks, you can imagine how the various movements were carried out.

[The file appears to be out of order. Correct order seems to be Page 58 from the file (above) followed by Pages 69-70 from the file (below).]

We had to hang about and wait for hours both in the barrack square and on the way, and I'm afraid the deceased would not have felt happy at the remarks about things & funerals in general. When we got to the hospital where the body was, there was a squad of native lancers, native soldiers and various [...] & big wigs, with the usual crowd of natives. There we had another long wait. At last we moved off at the slow march, to a smart native military band, a long file of us on either side of the road right in front with arms reversed. After a while the band stopped and we got quick march ("at the trail" with rifles upside down). When we got near the cemetery the band again struck up the slow march and minute or half minute guns began firing. At the gates we halted, resting on arms reversed, and the cortege passed between us into the cemetery. We followed behind forming up in two ranks to one side. When the time came, we got load, present, fire! the first volley was ragged one chap miles behind & the second went off on the word present & pulled the bugles up before they were ready as they play a bit of last post between each volley. The third sounded alright. There were about 6 or 8 native buglers, who played rather too fast, and unfeelingly, so taking things alround I'm afraid I was not in the least impressed or stirred but the whole struck me as being rather farcical, especially being under the conditions that I was. Both before and after this big funeral a small mounted party trotted past with a gun carriage on which was a coffin covered only with a Union Jack some poor soldier "unwept & unsung" if honoured.

That happens several times a day at the cemetery, in fact a special permanent firing squad is told off at the barracks simply for soldiers burials.

You may keep those three PCs of self as I shall send the aunts each one.

Life is not very strenuous here, but disagreeable. Drill & routine, when one has been through all before, been to the Peninsular and got slack about it; add to that the climate, and the independent spirit of the Australian, it is a farce, and I feel sorry for the imperial sub who is over us as he really is a decent chap quite young but no fool. - and of course gets the blame for all "this -----rot" etc. All I have done this afternoon is to peel and cut up cucumbers, onions, & tomatoes for a salad for our tea, which I must go and eat soon or go without.

We get very little news here, the best we get either of the European part or Gallipoli is in the Australian & English papers; we don't even know our own casualties unless we happen on men who are here sick or wounded & were on the spot to know at the time.

They "cut the Khaliq" on the Nile about 10 days ago a ceremony which I have not yet altogether fathomed.

Best love to you all your aff son

R W W Adam

Kasr-el-Nil Barracks

Cairo Aug 31/1915

Dear Mother

My last letter was from Helouan I think and I am sorry I did not write in between. After a week of Helouan, I told the doctor I would be strong enough for my unit by the time I got there, so I was sent off to base details camp at Zeitoun (where we were at first) as fit for duty. From there men are sent back to the front as required. After about 5 days of Zeitoun it was given out we were to go on garrison duty in Egypt, so I don't know when I shall get back, if ever to Gallipoli, yet I may be sent to night one never knows. Anyhow here we are, in these barracks, which I expect you have seen!! right against the river, doing various guards pickets etc, about Cairo. At present I am on Cairo picket for tonight if called on. As I said before it is a low Nile this year over a metre lower than its right level which is bad for "cockies" on the higher irrigated parts, or anyhow for a lot of them.

Alvy has lost his right eye. I went to see him in the Gezirah palace hospital, 11 in the ward with about 13 eyes between them! He is very cheerful (the eye was never strong, the lost one) and is practically well again, and of course is done with fighting. He had a marvellous escape; - both from losing both eyes and being killed. He was only 4 feet from the bomb, which killed the man holding it, and the man on the other

side of Alvie from the bomb!! He got well filled with small pellets but no serious wounds except the one which hit his eye.

I wish my commission would turn up, it may be somewhere chasing me around, as I am about fed up with this life in Egypt. It may be pleasant enough from a 1st class point of view, but I am beginning to weary of a 3rd class, barrack room, point of view.

I got lost in the back parts the other day, but a decent educated arab boy offered his assistance, wondering what a soldier was doing in such out of the way parts!

There are quite a number of the 5th 11th about Cairo now, wounded sick, etc and ready to go back. There are very few of the original landing battalions left, at the front. It is time the poor beggars were withdrawn before they are all wiped out. I would sooner be taking my place there than living here, but I suppose I am in the "right place" etc, I am certainly in a safe one! On the way back from Cairo the other day there were two of our battalion men very drunk, and had got out at a station too soon. After arguing the point abit I got them in again (as it was where the pickets wait for drunks camp breakers etc.) Between Cairo and Zeitoun they had got through a bottle of whisky neat, both younger than myself or the same age, so they were a stage worse when I got them out at Helmieh where we got out, next station past Zeitoun. After a couple of hundred yds one collapsed, absolutely dead to the world, the other was not quite so bad. We tried to get the brute up but it was hopeless. I wasted half an hour over them, then left them to spend the night in the sand. The niggers all went through them in the night, but I had seen if they had any money before I left. They got in next morning one minus his jacket; anything but happy.

I can tell you I have seen enough of the effects of drink and all the other vices etc that "poor sojers" are liable to lapse into to put me clean off the lot as long as I live. I don't wish to pose as a wowser or Xtian of the first order, but from what I have seen, the second part is never by any means worth the first. When I was being conducted back to civilisation by my arab friend, we came on another soldier (Australian) Who was half stupefied, and said he had been lost there for a couple of days, I may also add it was in the rear of one of the choicest quarters in Cairo.

To get to more pleasant subjects, the river as I said, runs right against the barracks, the current must be about 2 1/2 to 3 miles per hour (according to my estimation). It is the colour of good strong café au lait. We can see the pyramids well, being 3 stories up, and facing in that direction, the opposite side windows looking to the city. Out to the right we get a grand view of the citadel & the mosque of Mahomet Aly, on the top of it, with its [...] tall slender minarets. Two of the new Australian brigades have moved off and I believe the 7th including the 28th Batt & George Clifton! goes this week. Both of our officers of the 5th 11th have been killed I hear, the best for certain, who could have made a splendid soldier had he lived & had the chance. Being on everlasting guard & picket it is not easy to break out of these barracks so

don't know when I shall see Alvy again. - before he goes back I hope. You had better continue to address letters to the battalion as I don't know when I may rejoin.

Best love to you all your aff son R W W Adam

Zeitoun

Cairo

Egypt

9/9/15

Dear Mother

I sent off a small parcel this week which I hope turned up alright as I put my badges in it and also in the same little tin some lotus seeds which I got off a dead stalk in a little canal in the Zoo. The dirty green badge is off my field service cap the others off the front of the tunic collar, the numerals & Australia go on the shoulder straps as [drawing of shoulder strap with words 11 Inf Australia follows]. When they landed first in Gallipoli all shoulder numbers & badges were removed off the shoulders & colours worn instead, one colour for the battalion and the lower one for the brigade; these were worn just below the shoulder straps on the shoulder, or rather top of the arm - Ours are chocolate for the battalion and bright blue for the brigade, which is composed of 9. 10. 11. 12. Battalions, black dark blue chocolate and white above light blue respectively. There were good reasons for it at the start, but not so necessary now. I hope to enclose some colours which are worn thus (full size).

[drawing of colour patch follows]

They called for volunteers to go back the other day. I gave my name in but am only down to "stand bye" but may get away which should be tomorrow or the next day.

[The pages following in the digitised file, pages 69-70, appear to be in the wrong order and are now in the undated letter on YMCA stationery]

The other day I went to see a sick mate at Geznink [Gezirel] and as I was coming away ran into George Clifton who was going up to see Alvey who had left for Australia the day before! He was very disappointed, but I was very pleased to see him as I had given up all hope of seeing him as his battalion had left and I was unable to get him before. He is attached to 2nd Divisional headquarters at Heliopolis as a motor cycle despatch rider; calls himself a sapper, so is no longer anything to do with the 28th. He then took me into Cairo on the back of his bike among niggers and trains all the way, and my heart was in my mouth all the time as he and his

breed (m d Rs) are no believers in anything but speed! We spent the evening together and arranged to meet at Midday next day at Heliopolis. I turned up at the appointed time & place next day but no George, so after half an hour I gave him up, had a feed & set sail for the Zoo, forgetting all about George. After I had had a poke around, I had some afternoon tea and was just finishing when I felt a tap on the shoulder & up comes Sapper Clifton with three other ditto's not having the faintest idea I was there. He had been sent off with a message so was unable to meet me. We all spent the evening together again but as I was out without a pass (as usual) had to leave soon after nine.

I hear Dr House has arrived at the 1st General Hospital at Heliopolis and is going over to the peninsular, so I am sure to see him sooner or later! The same nurse or "Sister" as they are called, told me Cecil Piesse had committed suicide in a dam, which if true is an awful thing for the poor old lady. - Anyhow I can quite believe it.

I saw Arthur Chipper the other day who is in the 10th L.H. [Light Horse] reinforcement ammunition train, He is a big lump of a chap and still stutters, but not very badly. He told me young Harry had been killed, the same time as Phipps and the others in early August. I also gathered from him that our doctor on the Peninsular Brennan Grame, a popular man, was Muriel's husband!! I wish I had known but Brennan is at Heliopolis General now for a spell.

This company I am in, D company, is getting more & more unruly, refused to parade last night as there was a route march on 6-10pm! taking as an excuse we had not been paid as we should have been. The officers are pretty well powerless:- all the refusers had their names taken but that is about as far as it will go. I being a "stand bye" to leave any minute am excused parades.

I shall be very glad to get some letters from you again as to my surprise I find it is about 9 weeks since I had any!! I left the Penin about the 18th or 20th July.

Best love to you all, Your aff son R W W Adam

[Letter dated Saturday 17, no month, 1915, follows next in the digitised document. It is determined to be 17 July 1915 and has been re-positioned in the transcript in its chronological order.]

ANZAC

23/9/15

Dear Mother

As you will see I am back again and I am feeling very fit & well. We are a little to the right of our old place when I was here before & far safer, in fact it is very hard to realise we are "warring". There is nothing doing up our end – all the terrible fighting

your read about is always at Cape Helas [Helles] or on our far left, - up this end you might say there has been no real fighting (bar the one trench they took when I was away) since the day they landed. Our position is one maze of deep saps & tunnels (most bewildering at first) on the top of a steep ridge, as safe as any body on the east coast of England & about the safest position on the whole line (without exaggerating) If the powers that be allowed it it would be perfectly safe to show people round, firing line inclusive. I simply tell you all this to prove I am not in a quarter of the danger I am afraid some suppose me to be in. I got the first letters (2) I have had from you since I went away sick, and was very glad you were able to get a little spell up at Weston. So poor old Arthur Leake has gone & Capt. Phil Fry, two of the best. Arthur got his commission not long before. Their position was a long way to our left, hence more fighting and greater losses.

I hope you got the badges & book and those so called "silks". I will enclose 2 10/- notes so that when you feel inclined you can send along a cake or plum duff (not those nasty super rich black things you get at Xmas time or at the Buzzards.) all the same something which will stick to ones ribs as they say. Also stuff like Milkmaid brand Café au lait (in tins like condensed milk. toffee & plain chocolate & such like. Please get them packed in air tight tins as it lessens chances of pilfering, and not in big lots at a time as such a small percentage of parcels turn up here, some unnameable brutes get them in between. Beyond papers I have had no parcels from you and nothing from Katharine. It is generally agreed now that all parcels arriving for sick or wounded absent men are divided among his mates. That is fair, but it is a different matter when parcels never reach here, & even then are often tampered with somewhere enroute. It is cold at night now but a good climate, - flies & lice, especially the first are disappearing, fleas being worse enemies than the Turks. We get better food now too (to my mind) a bit of bacon for breakfast tea with milk & sugar in it for all meals, fresh meat & bread odd times a week, otherwise "dog" & hard biscuits, also jam. For tea we get rice, sometimes has currants in it, far better than cheese, and as we have platoon cooks is all right. We also get dessicated vegetables in the daily tin dog stew (unless fresh meat).

Enclosed notes are what we draw for pay here, as it is possible to buy cigarettes & tobacco & some times on the beach one can buy tinned stuff, chocolate and eggs but not often & v expensive.

I am sitting in the firing line writing this now being off duty for a few hours, - Jacko seems to have dropped his habit of plugging at our sand bags, & rarely seems to fire at night now, leaving that to us. Don't send any more films as I have lost my camera, never having used it, which is a pity. I see Cecil Piesse is supposed to have put an end to himself, awful for the poor old lady. Many thanks for the papers which are most acceptable, especially the mirrors and daily sketches; - some of those & one weekly newspaper would be A.1.

Please thank Rose for her letter & must drop a line to aunt Constance. Many thanks for enclosed writing paper. I am afraid Mrs Eddy's book must be hunting me round so shall write to the Alexandria P O.

Best love to you all

Your aff son R W W Adam

Anzac 23/9/1915

Anzac

Gallipoli

1/10/15

Dear Mother

I have just been reading Ashmead Bartlett's [Ashmead-Bartlett's] account of the new landing at the beginning of August up at Suvla bay. The fighting must have been awful, & the conditions. I don't think there will ever be any fear of me seeing anything like that; - the landings are always the worst & that end must do the fighting now, as they apparently did not quite achieve their object. So the Allies have at last commenced the offensive & making great head way up to date, let's hope they can keep it up.

I can quite understand the depressing effect your co-workers could have on you the way they "carry on", I could call them some names which might shock you or the censor if he reads this so will refrain. How nice thought to be able to overcome it all & how glorious to have C K back after the "heaving main" for a spell. Has he seen any fighting yet? I often see middies and R N [Royal Navy] officers on the beach & long to go up & have a yarn but it would not do I suppose.. One of the dirtiest unwashed looking individuals I have seen (certainly in the Officer line) was an R N [Royal Navy] captain, but perhaps he had been going through trying times. Anyhow if you want to hear the navy praised have a yarn with an enthusiastic 3rd Bgde man who was here for the original landing. What is Cptn Hopwood doing or in or on! Rodger Keyes has come out on top with his submarines alright.

I wonder if Adnan rejoined, I expect he did, if he did not enlist or get a commission in Canada. I wish I could hop in now at Hampstead while C K is at home, he would not get any salutes out of me all the same!!!!

What is Uncle Charles? R N A S [Royal Naval Air Service] in [...] to me. Fancy the Bart saluting at the nephew, – well honour to whom honour is due. Many thanks indeed for the fly protectors, - it has become very warm again and consequently the flies have become more lively. A notice is up now that lice must be kept out, as it appears they are fever breeders, “hand picking of lice to be zealously carried out.” Fleas are the worst trouble now, as they are such beggars to crawl, & always seem to be on the move!! I have had two bathes within a week so am pretty free. Fancy old Frank Hutt in command of his regiment!! Who is Gordon Clay? I got a note from him from the Turf Club in Cairo last mail, but unfortunately he was unable to catch me while in Egypt. It is certainly very kind of him and Aunt Kate to take such an interest in me!

We are in great luck today, half a loaf of moderate bread each, a feed of fresh meat & a lot of Rum (I just drank mine neat so if sentences becomes somewhat mixed & disconnected you will know what is wrong). fancy, all these luxuries in one day, let alone one week!! I do hope I get Mrs Eddies book which you so kindly sent me. I have had your [...] letters forwarded from Helouan and Luna Park.

Also before I forget I really do hope you are making use of my money!!! There is no need to scrimp or hesitate about it. As you say, the right type of Australian is a real fine fellow & can't be beaten anywhere, that does not include the street corner wowsers of the towns but chiefly the country lads. Any of Kitchener's men & Territorials look very awkward beggars beside the Australian, [... ..] (that is judging the [...] by appearances). The Britisher seems to be all boots, & gapes, but the Australian usually looks as if he knew what he was after. I am not talking about Tommy Atkins!!!

Harry Chipper and two cousins were the Chippers you referred to. Arthur is in Egypt & [...] in camp at Blackboy, or were 3 weeks ago.

I met none of the [...] you referred to in Egypt.

Poor old Arthur Leake was shot dead through the forehead after they had captured a shallow Turks trench. He stood upright to let a wounded man out & was killed as he stood up. Poor old Phipps never got clear of the parapet the day he & the other four contemporaries were killed in their charge. I got this from an L H man who helped to bury Phipps & was next to Arthur when he was killed.

A German aeroplane come over a few days ago & dropped some bombs, soft “[taubes] eggs”. You hear the infernal thing coming down, hoosh, hoosh! Fellows eyes grow rounder & some begin to scuttle round & duck about, but it is no good because it is impossible to tell if it is coming fair down on your own head or 300 yds away – a most alarming & disconcerting experience. It is a fact that here, they always seem to be in the most open & deserted spot.

Yesterday a monster was putting some "bonzer" big shells onto Gaba Tepe from what looked like miles away. You should have heard the "ooooohs"! & various other Anzcal expressions of delighted wonder as they burst. Regular young volcanoes. There have been terrific bombardments (naval by sound) down Achi Baba way and last night a lot of rifle fire. Must close up now

Best love to you all, your aff son

R W W Adam

P.S. Please send out of the £1 a little box of coloured crests of the army & say give 2/- to the Fisher girls for me to be had at stationers. 216 different ones in all.

Anzac

Gallipoli 6/10/15

Dear Mother

We are back in the firing line after a welcome 48 hour spell out side in the support trenches, two good complete nights sleep. What a thrilling experience the Zeppelin raid was, what a pity they did not fetch the brute down. It seems as if Germany's day is done now & that the Allies are going to have their fling. I think I get all your letters, but seem to have missed a parcel or two, notably Mrs Eddy's book but that may be doing the round of the hospitals & fetch up later on. I hope Charles gets on a destroyer out here & he would find it a great change & I should say most interesting work, compared to what he is on now. I have reaped the harvest of two parcels sent to poor old Alvie, one a 5/- Dail Mail war parcel, cake sweets, etc & another lovely cake & chocolates from W A and it was as fresh as a daisy. Thats what my relatives could send me if they want to know how to do me a good turn!!!! It is now possible to raise fresh eggs, indifferent Greek chocolate, tin milk, etc on the beach at exorbitant prices, smuggled in by sailors. One day a Greek turned up with 40-50 partridges of some sort, feathers and all on 1/2 crown a piece. Eggs run up to 3/- per dozen, milk 1/6 a tin etc. At last I believe the YMCA or someone is going to run a properly conducted canteen where things like these little luxuries will be more reasonable. I have managed to get a bathe every day the last 5 or 6 days, which is very pleasant & good for one after being shut up in the trenches all day & night.

While watching a couple of boats bombarding a point to the [...] of Gaba Tepe, we could see the airship in the distance against the glow of the sunset returning to Imbros from the Dardanelles (yesterday evening).

Aeroplanes are always active sometimes even at night, but they never seem to come to grief over this way. Yesterday morning some of us saw what I swear was a submarine (presumably ours) going southwards along the coast towards Gaba Tepe. I got 6 letters last mail and none out of a huge one a few days before:- one was a photopost card from Aunt Lily of herself a most charming photo. She hoped to be off to B C in a few days but I don't suppose she managed it!! They are having a great season in W A, a trifle wet if anything. Among the 6 was a letter from the Weaver whom I helped get in his crop one time, batching together. His brother (second one) was killed on the day of the landing and now I believe the youngest has enlisted. There is still a steady stream, coming in from Australia (recruits) How they manage, & at the same time raise all these Red X [...] beats me. I was on sniping this morning when the sun was low down the other side of Turkey's trenches from us, & so could see daylight (when not suddenly blocked) through his loopholes. I undarkened one three times, but don't think I damaged Jacko much, - I also either put a periscope hors-de-combat or else induced its observer to shift elsewhere. They gave us a lively 20 minutes with small shells the other day at breakfast time, but beyond make a noise & raise dust did no harm! A lot of English migrant birds seem to have got down here now, especially pied wagtails - any amount of these along the beach (reminding me of the lawns at Borns!). A few days ago there were lots of swallows but they have gone on. The doves that were here before have gone and a large bobtailed crested lark taken their places, - cheery little fellows absolutely regardless of danger or noise. This seems to be a wonderful dry country considering, but when it does rain!!! It will be like walking on lard, the soil being very clayey & such steep slopes to walk about on - it is quite bad enough after a light shower now. I was on the beach this afternoon when old Beachy Bill let drive 3 or 4 shots, - although dozens were bathing only one was hit, - you should have seen the others scuttle. The beach is all stones like Brighton & need careful walking on, but after the first two bangs they broke records for shelter stones or no stones. I was higher up in the proper place dressing behind a wall of biscuit boxes. That is Beachy's game lay low perhaps for a day or two or leave one spot alone for a week then suddenly sail in. I never runs no risks!!!! Love to all your aff son

R W W Adam

Anzac Gallipoli

14/10/15

Dear Mother

We are having another spell of cold N Easterly winds, which is the only effective way of dealing with the flies. I have plenty of clothing & we have not had our winter [...] yet, so don't bother about sending me clothes thanks very much all the same, all the same I can do with the one you sent when it turns up.

I hope you have not been disturbed by any more Zeppelins lately. George Clifton suddenly turned up the other day, he is sapper and attached to 2nd Div HqRs, at present on making officers' dug outs etc. I paid him a return visit yesterday as we are out for another 48 hr spell. He lives with another in a snug little hole in the side of a steep hill with everything handy for cooking etc (the best of living in a permanent posy & not being in the infantry) when you live in the firing line & trenches). In time it will be an ideal haunt for fleas & lice but is a bit new at present. They face a high narrow ridge where some of our artillery are and we watched some of Jackos shells trying for them, They certainly make a mess when they burst, but it is not often they happen to lob fair on a gun. N C Os are going round today with lists of stuff such as tinned fruit chocolate cigarettes etc, price & all; we put down what we want and hope in time to get [...] what we have applied for – it is for some canteen somewhere!

I got a muffler from the Fisher girls last week so am well set up in that line now – if Rose & Nora have acquired the knitting mania and want to make something they can make me thick pair of stockings. I don't need them now but they will come in handy when they do get here. Numbers of v-shaped flocks of cranes or storks have been flying south along the coast here the last two days, proof that the winter is setting in up north. We had a sprinkle of rain it [...] day, just enough to make the place greasy, as it is pretty well all clay here.

I am getting so fat now that it will soon take me all my time to get along the saps & trenches, will be as well to have a good layer on for the winter. One hears all kinds of yarns about the severity of winter here but except for occasional North winds I don't see how it can be any worse than Porto Fino or Rome, where snow is not unknown, but we know what it can be like there!!

Some of the 5th Gurkhas had a look over our firing line the other day. A very young white officer (who could yabber their language), several native officers and N C Os. They are fine little chaps & have a great name. I believe the 5th was uncle [...] regiment. I see in the papers an O R was killed in the Suvla bay fighting. He was in the SH school XV and used to sign my impositions, a real nice fellow too & and an artist by profession. He and Rupert Brooke the young poet are two I know of who have died out here but were in the XV & had cricket colours, Brooke was in the X1 (son of one of the house masters)

Not much news these days so best love to you all

Yours aff son

R W W Adam

14/10/15

Anzac Gallipoli

21/10/15

Dear Mother

Not much news this week, just the usual ordinary life. Rumoured we shall be off Gallipoli for a spell soon perhaps by the time you get this, hope so anyhow if it not going to be Egypt. It has been beastly cold lately and threatening but nothing worse, – too cold to go bathing! I am glad CK has had a change of ship & Rose in her nice long letter, which I much appreciated tells me he is 2nd command of a destroyer. Hope he gets out here. Plain solid chocolate, cake & occasional tin of milk, is most appreciated here, but that quid or 10/- I sent wont go far, but too much sweet things are upsetting, in one lump. I can't imagine uncle C without a moustache, Rose says he looks a dear! I saw George Clifton again the other day, and met Hubert Parker yesterday afternoon, looking very fit and well, he is now a capt. Many thanks for the papers, which always turn up alright, as a rule it is only eatables that get astray, or things of any value.

Ian Hamilton has been withdrawn so I wonder how our new boss is going to shape.

This morning a German aeroplane was very busy looking over the country up to our lines. The machine guns opened on him, but we might just as well as spat at him, except they may have kept him from coming too close. We had a new cook on recently – He blossomed forth into sort of pancakes, duffs, etc, with raisins and currants in them. For tea two days ago was a mass mess in the dixie which was meant for a duff (the first I struck since leaving W.A.) it was alright but proved too much for my constitution as I was violently ill that night and on sentry go. Remarks by other members of the community will not bear repetition except the [...] being “they wanted to be sick, but it was too tough to come up”!!! etc etc.

You never say if the authorities are forwarding my pay to you, if they are not, I must write a rouse on them: you should be getting 28/- per week. I sent each of the aunts a portrait of my military self from Egypt and meant that three for you R & N.

Hope you are all in the best of health Your aff son

R W W Adam

29/10/15

ANZAC Gallipoli

Dear Mother

This won't be much of a letter as time & conditions are against. We are relieving battalion at present – we have no firing line of our own but swap round relieving other battalions of the Bge for 48 hr spells. George Clifton looked me up yesterday and we had a bathe together. The weather has set in beautifully warm now, a most pleasant change from what we have been having. A mail is in but is not all issued yet.

Yesterday was my birthday so I went to see Hubert Parker thereby guaranteeing a decent birthday feed!!! He and Harold are both very well.

After all, that business about me had been fixed up but as I was away sick and could not be found was sent in again. I found this out from Hubert who is now acting camp Commandant. I shall make enquiries at HQRs when we get out & may be able to tell you something more next mail. I should not be surprised if it is all off now after so much delay; anyhow it won't worry me much if it is. I got a tin of Insectabane off Hubert as lately living in old dugouts has given the fleas plenty of scope. They are sometimes a perfect pest at night, and in the morning it is nothing to look inside ones shirt & find 3 or 4 with an odd louse or two thrown in!!

I got a pair of mittens this week from St Aubyns, so am well set up for the winter, which is supposed to start for certainty in January, blizzards etc etc.

News seems to be good coming in from the different fronts, but I don't think this winter will settle Germany: – the beggars are bound to have one or two big schemes up their sleeves yet. I am glad Bulgaria has been checked. They & Greece deserved to be wiped out, twofaced rotters.

A bit of a Y M C A canteen opens down near the beach now, where we can buy cakes etc. I have not tried yet, but from all accounts you are lucky if you get anything and want to line up two or three hours before opening time.

I am getting very fat for want of violent exercise & have an appetite that I can't satisfy.

Hope you are well

Your aff son R W W Adam

Anzac Gallipoli 4/11/15

Dear Mother I am afraid I upset the apple cart by saying I had had no letters for so long, but thought I had made it clear that it was because I was going from Hospital to hospital & they would catch me up in time. I have been back close on seven weeks now and today I got a small matter of 40 odd letters for a mail!!!! all my arrears have turned up so have a regular little library to get through. Never address me anywhere but here unless I tell you otherwise And I will be sure to get them in time, if not always parcels. We have had glorious weather lately but has gone off a bit this afternoon, but hope it won't rain. Hubert Parker is making enquiries about my commission which came through alright when I was away sick, - as I could not be found it has got off the track somewhere & as it was before the August doings may be lost. If it meant C. Helles or Suvla bay I don't think I would take it on, only if I can get to France, if possible via England. Many thanks for the most interesting Zeppelin Sphere & C.S. papers which I like getting: like letters, papers always turn up. In the "Observer" I see Lt F R Forbes R E was killed, I am afraid that is poor old Fergus, as he was F R & in the R E. George Clifton came over yesterday & handed me a letter each from you and Rose. I got a letter from Kitty Clifton today telling me all about Alvie's arrival; poor beggar had a near go at losing his other on the boat but is well onto recovery now. We have had a slack time lately as the other Divn Bgdes are back from their holiday at Lemnos, also their Reinf's' have turned up, so we don't have to do so much relieving in our own Bgde. We relieved the 10th for 48 hrs in their firing line, sentry posts 1 on & 1 off all night for 2 nights: and since then have had nothing worse than rifle inspection & some guards which I have escaped. Last night A Coy was "in line picket" simply have to be ready in case of emergency, sleep in equipments & stand too at dawn. I had been in bed about 1 1/2 hours when I was hauled out to go down to the beach (William's pier) in a fatigue party to bring up brigade officers canteen stuff, oranges, apples fruit, eggs etc, - as all is fair in love & war I fear we sampled the oranges & figs & and found them A.1. but the O's must take that as a matter of course!! It meant close on a two mile walk.

The fleas are a bigger pest than the Turks now a days. Hubert Parker gave me a tin of insectabane so at night I pepper down inside my sleeves, neck & shirt, round my belt & round my knees, just as if I was a dog. This morning with out a very thorough search I got eight & one louse but the latter are gentlemen compared to fleas. A

louse does not seem to mind insectabane, but is easily caught. Mr Flea is vice versa, and is always in such a devil of a hurry - on your shoulder one minute then down your arm & all over the shop

My dug out looks straight out to sea, between Imbros and Samothrace. Just across a gully to my right about 150 yds away or less is a 4.7ⁱⁿ gun. Being about the same level as myself & being in front but to one side of course, get the full benefit when she fires. The first shot is always unexpected & makes a fellow jump (must catch a flea in my shirt) Got the brute but was too small to be interesting, enough to enclose. To continue 4.7 if she starts when I am feeding I get a liberal supply roof shaken into my "chinaman" (rice) or stew as well as nearly deafened. I hope next mail I shall be able to announce I am "drawing my long sugar" (trip to England or Aust.) with a commission. I've "drawn my sugar" (a trip to Lemnos Egypt or Malta etc) so hope the next is my long'un. Anyhow there are plenty worse places than Anzac so time & things can take their own course, mean time, must get well into C.S. It is very nice of you all to see the wounded so much & am sure that appreciate talking to sensible Australians, instead of gushing idiots who talk tripe.

Best love and thanks to you for this pile of letters

Your aff son R W W Adam

Mudros West

Lemnos

20/11/15

Dear Mother

Just a line to let you know I am well & safe away from bullets & shells. We arrived here two days ago & expect it will be close on 2 months before we see Gallipoli again. We are having our long promised spell & if the censors are not too severe hope to be able to tell you more about the island later on.

I enclose £1-10 as promised for Mrs Eddy's book & a small up to date pocket atlas. My bank account is too low to send anything for Xmas, and there is nothing to be got here. I think this will prove an interesting place in many ways but unfortunately don't suppose there are any small history books of Lemnos available. The villages are quaint little places mostly square stone houses well built with red tile roofs as often as not two stories high, – windows as a rule being boarded up, glass evidently being a luxury as far as house building is concerned. There does not appear to be a presentable tree on the island, which reminds me very much of the wilder parts of Scotland minus heather, & stones & rock everywhere, must be awful ploughing, as the arable land is very rich judging by appearances but stone picking never appears to have been a weakness of the islanders

Best love to all

Your aff son

R W W Adam

20/11/15

Mudros West

Lemnos Island

2/12/15

Dear Mother

I went to the Y M C A tent to get some of that "pretty" paper but as it was not open for business at the moment, did not wait as I had intended putting in the afternoon writing in there. I am writing out side in the sun, which is a wonderful performance for this infernal hole. In Egypt we growled about the heat, now we are fairly cursing (to put it mildly) the cold. The Penininsula was A.1. when we left, but since we arrived here it has done nothing but blow like "stinkin' hell" chiefly from the N N E with snow. If the wind had dropped for two days especially we would have had inches of snow, as it was we could just see small flakes, but talk about cold!! There is no wood on the island except what's imported for the cooks (I was on a fatigue party unloading some off a barge the other day and it is nearly all olive (green) pine & some fig, a good mixture!!) The last two days have been nice, especially today, no howling wind for a wonder & warm enough to be pleasant sitting out on the sunny side of the tent. I went for a long walk the other day & got to the top of the highest point of the island & could practically see all round it. I just got a glimpse of Castris (the chief town) & had a fine view of the country. It is the wildest barest most uninviting looking place imaginable. The main colour is various shades of brown, steep hills and chiefly narrow deep gullies, rocky everywhere, rich clay loamy soil even the flats being strewn with round smooth stones, & it would amaze even a W A farmer, the stony ground they plough & the old fashioned home made things they do it with. Little villages are dotted here & there & gardens walled in & trees (chiefly fruit almonds olive mulberry) in the best sheltered & most favourable places. Fresh water is plentiful in springs & wells. The wells are neat stoned in ones usually 2 or 3 feet square, about 20 deep & all stoned. Close by are generally some stone hollowed out troughs for watering stick & washing clothes. They (troughs) have a hole in the bottom which the old ladies block up with a rag when using them as wash tubs. Over one well I came across was a large circular domed stone (like half an egg & the end cut off) quite 3ft/6in diameter at the base, 6 inches thick & 2ft at the top. [small diagram] Some of the troughs and wells must be very very old. On the top of the Mount was a modern chapel 1872, a very tin pot affair whitewashed inside &

scrawled all over with fellows names etc. After I had been on the top a few minutes the clouds came down & I might have almost been back on the top of [...] on a cloudy day. On the top was a little brown wren!!! who was most indignant at my approach. There was a lull in the wind when I got up & on every side could hear nothing but sheep bells (all round).

Little flocks graze all over the island, and childrens voices yelling out; but no dog barking. Perhaps you have never noticed, but whenever I get up on to a high place anywhere, if still & calm, I can always hear dogs barking & children shouting, here on the big pyramid, [...] or anywhere else, the other day being the exception for the dog. In one gully where there were brambles & thick undergrowth along the steep banks of a bit of a brook were robins, blackbirds, chats etc, also a big grey heron, all apparently the same as the British birds. I also put up several covies of partridges and came across a party of imperial officers & nurses or wives, with some tommies as beaters working up a gully for partridges. It poured with rain on my way home & I was that leg weary I could hardly drag one leg after the other being recently so unused to long walks.

Yesterday I got 4 parcels 1 of Selfridges chocolate addressed by Rose, a parcel of socks tin of cocoa & milk & Oxo, And a glorious looking cake & cigarettes in a big tin. I put "looking" because after putting off cutting it in anticipating a good feed, it was all mouldy right through!! I am afraid that you & aunt will be as sad about it as I was (sent early in October) and would not have mentioned the fact only you may send more which might go the same way. It is most awfully good of you to have sent all you did, & but for the poor cake all was A.1. Don't bother to send cigarettes as we get well supplied & I am no great smoker. An occasional thick pair of socks, under pants or singlet & ditto "lollies" or choc, otherwise don't worry about me. The 4th parcel was from Cliftons chocs & cigs so am well set up. Many thanks for parcels & papers & hope money comes along alright. In the best of health & hope you all are.

Your aff son R W W Adam

Mudros West

23/X11/15 Lemnos

Dear Mother

Tomorrow will be Xmas eve, and we are still in this hole. We may shift any moment as no one is to leave camp on passes or anyhow; as far as our destination I expect you will know as soon as we do ourselves. It won't be a very Xmas Xmas but think we shall get our fair whack of "good cheer" considering circumstances etc. Mails are hanging fire owing to shortage of transport etc, so it is some time now since we had

any letters. I am sending you a cable as a Xmas "present" so hope you got no unpleasant shock at the sight of it before opening, that is if it ever arrived. I also sent one to the Fishers. It is not from the firing line or anywhere near that sort of thing.

Weather is cold again & may be setting in for another nasty cold windy snap, hope not, or rather hope we are well out of it before it does come. Am enclosing CKs letters to Rose which she wanted back & many thanks for sending it.

I am company orderly Corporal this week, but don't suppose that conveys much to you. I am only a lance Jack so far but hope for more later on.

Our battalion sports came off yesterday, but did not take part and was too cold for looking on. We had a heavy shower of rain the other day & as fresh water is very scarce in camp (even for drinking) we washed in the water as it ran off the eaves of the tent. Fleas seem to have died out, but not so lice; - they seem to be proof against everything except a gentle squeeze between two thumb nails. My washing is out in one of the villages and as we can't get out am wondering how I am going to get it.

There appears to be trouble in Egypt again and shan't be sorry if that is our destination as we could do with a little sunshine now. - give me heat to cold. I have had two interruptions since I started this letter, one to take a sick man to the doctor - then to draw the company's beer!! Getting the money in & all the rest of the business is more bother than the stuff is worth from the orderly Cpl's point of view.

Hope all well& in the best of health

Your [affectionate] son

R W W Adam

P.S. You will now Anzac's fate by this - came off without a hitch last Sunday night!

23/12/15

Egypt

19/1/16

Dear Mother

I expect you have been wondering what has become of my letters etc, but owing to getting away from Lemnos and then settling down here, it was just about out of the question. We are back in the land of the Pharaohs and camped almost on the exact spot where Lord Wolesly [Wolseley] licked the Gyppos in '82, Tel-el-Kebir. As far as

deserts go, it is a “nice” desert ie firm and gravelly, not loose & sandy, so makes an ideal parade ground, but too open & featureless for ideal manoeuvring. Gravel is from grains of sand to odd ones half the size of ones fist, all smooth & rounded and all kinds of colours, quite interesting going out looking for different coloured pebbles agates etc. Arabi Pasha’s [Ahmed Urabi] last line of defence (a few hundred yards behind the camp) is in good preservation, and fellows dig up skulls (of Gyppos we hope) bones coins cartridges etc etc, buried in the trench. There is one long line of trench running roughly east & west, gun emplacements still intact here & there and odd earth works behind. I have heard the frontage of the main line trench is 12 miles, but I have not been the whole length of it yet. We are on the railway, otherside of which is the Ishmalia Canal, a strip of cultivation palms, etc then the desert onto the horizon to the south.

We had an uneventful trip from Lemnos, were possibly escorted by CK!! but at that time I never knew his ship was in the Mediterranean. Have written him telling him to waste no time in looking me up.

II

We landed here in the middle of one night, cold & overcast and found we had no tents so had to bivouac. That was about 2 weeks ago & have been (my platoon) sleeping “à la belle étoile” ever since. Tents come in ones & twos and it wants 3 more for our company before we are under cover. 2nd night it rained, rained in Egypt, however next day there was enough sun to dry blankets and have had a few light showers hardly worthy of the name since. It has been just as cold as W A in winter, minus rain, sometimes quite unpleasantly cold at night, but as they say “We’re soldering now!” The morning after a warm cloudless day & cloudless night, the top coverings of one’s “bed” get real wet with dew. – Have met Jack Lodge & George Clifton again too, & both the Parkers are here, Hubert much to the fore as a staff officer in a practise review we had the other day. Robin MacMillan is in Heliopolis, L H reinforcements, so hope to meet him soon. We get leave at the rate of so many percent for so many hours to Cairo & my turn will be coming along soon. Bill Leake is also in the neighbourhood of Cairo & hope to see him soon. – I was delighted to get the photos, not flattering of the family group, but that makes no difference, C K does not seem to have altered a scrap. Many thanks indeed for the parcel from Selfridges, I got the singlets etc at Lemnos. We got a huge mail

III

when we arrived here I must have got close on 100 letters near 70 anyway, been collecting for weeks. As a result I cant answer individual letters or read the piles of papers you so kindly sent me, however others enjoyed them, so they were not wasted. Thanks for the 10/- which will come in handy, but I am in no need of money, when I am shall send for it – hope to be able soon to add 1/6 to what you can draw

as I now get 10/- per day. Hope the [...] will be no inconvenience but as I told you my money is always get atable from Mr Tanner.

Yesterday Mrs Eddy's book turned up!! C S people had posted it on Aug 3rd so now I am right, & very many thanks for same. I am now in command of no 15 section 4th platoon A coy. 11 men besides myself, an excellent training for one lacking in self confidence!!! as I have to put them through drill etc & in turn be sworn at by superior officers for not being quick enough etc etc etc. The desert is intersected all over by shallow gullies & depressions which are all loose sand placed there by water & wind. There only does anything, grow – odd tufts of the coarsest of grass, prickly grass etc. However since the rain I have seen little seedlings in it and one day found some small bulbs that had sprouted, but their lives must be very short ones, the coarser grass of course always being there.

IV

Shall let Mr Clay know I am here, but don't think I shall be much in Cairo to make it worth while. An aeroplane flew over the camp other day going east, one of ours a red circle on each of the planes as opposed to the Germans or Turks black cross. This would be an ideal country for a water colour artist, there is no detail, colouring is lovely and seems to go in distinct streaks. From a certain spot or spots behind the camp, you can get a foreground of desert (standing in a depression) then a streak of white, tops of the tents, then a strip of green broken by palm trees, telegraph poles, masts & sails of boats on the canal etc, then a strip of yellow desert, backed by a purply distant one, onto the skyline.

We are kept very busy here, hardly any time for reading or writing, as having no tents at present that is out of the question at night, Y M C A is not here yet but a big picture show will soon be open.

Am about done now for news, so best of love to all

Your aff son

R W W Adam

19-1-16

26/1/16

Dear Mother

The envelope forbids all mention of movements of troops so can't write the letter I should like to at present as we are by way of being on active service again. We have moved on from where I last wrote, but as a matter of fact expect you will know exactly where we are before this letter reaches you, you yourself have passed with in a few hundred yards of where I am writing this, several times!!

The other day at Tel-el-Kebir I got a telegram from C.K. Most exciting. He said his boat was in Port Said for a few days & could I come along. It was out of the question so sent a reply saying better luck next time, so I hope we can manage to meet. I understood it never rained in this part of the world, but it has rained nearly every day for about the last week & the desert is wet for 6 inches down. It has been rottenly cold, most extraordinarily so so an old station master told me.

I got Mrs Storins parcel & will thank the old lady, it would have been an absolutely ideal gift for Gallipoli & and may prove to be here yet; anyhow it is very handy to have at any time, as the climate here at present is exactly like the W A winter at present.

I must also thank Aunt Clem for the two bonza pairs of socks. Fancy Edmund Clayton engaged, it surprised me. Alvy writes to me & seems to be getting on all right hope he gets hold of some nice girl

||

like Nora Kitty has her hair up, two sights to look forward to seeing!

My section is composed of self as Corporal & 12 men mostly all young fellows & all good ones, & I have the pull of having seen more service than any of them though 2 or 3 have been in hotter corners (while I was away sick in August.) If I can't earn a commission or be granted one now, without going to any trouble or taking steps on my part I shall go without. The one that came for me on the Peninsula I feel sure is a bye gone now, but I never grieved over it, and as you say, merit is better than influence. My two greatest ambitions at present are to meet C K, which should be possible, and see you all in England, I give this war 8 or 10 months at most, knowing nothing whatever about it.

I could write a far more interesting & lengthy letter, but at present is not permissible. At present we are waiting for a ---: general to come and inspect the lines, wish they would leave us alone when we do get a chance of a quiet afternoon off!

Many thanks for the last lots of papers.

Best love to you all

Your aff son

R W W Adam

Camp

18/2/16

Dear Mother

I am afraid I missed a mail through not being on the watch. Many thanks indeed for the parcel from Selfridges: singlet etc. Don't bother about sending the book on the Aegean Islands, every little extra to carry about means a lot & a good book is not worth chucking about

They had an awful hot XMAS in W A, and Mrs F is taking the whole family over to Victoria to school at Easter. Good news of Alvie Clifton, can now go to Cinema shows which is a good eye test; he now hopes for a commission if the doctor will pass him.

Life here is quite uneventful & hope we shall get a shift somewhere soon. Fancy Nora having to set too!! We shall look for something out of the ordinary then! Have not heard from Charlie lately so suppose he is up Salonika way or enjoying a visit to Lemnos!! In last weeks Australasian (to here) was a fair account of Anzac which I shall enclose. We still have our faithful little friends with us [drawing of 2 insects] but I sleep out side the tent every night so am not much worried by them. I had a bath last Sunday with two pints of water standing on a piece of canvas to stop waste!!

Stuck for news so love to you all

Your aff son

R W W Adam

Camp 25/2/16

Dear Mother

Many thanks for the papers, which containing the latest reliable news are of great interest at the present juncture. Russia is going ahead splendidly now, so lets hope the beginning of the end is in sight.

I hope young Dick Brown turns up, it would be an awful blow to Dag and the poor old man. Well done Sir Charles I should like to meet him in his new role. I think I thanked you last mail for the parcel from Selfridges anyhow thank you very much indeed again. I don't know which is the biggest surprise old aunt Kate & her tea parties or Edmund Clifton!! I see you have had another air raid as you expected, but they seem to have the upper hand of them now alright. We are still as we were

when I last wrote, each day the same as the last. However it is a very healthy spot in everyway so we can't growl, even if it is uninteresting. This isn't much of a letter, and as there are half a dozen others in the tent arguing the point about nothing at the top of their voices & my writing table is a pack & half a magazine to write conditions are not the best for letter writing. Am writing to Rose too.

Love to you all

Your aff son R W W Adam

Usual Address

(Zeitoun) March 17th 1916

Dear Mother

If I don't forget I shall enclose that scarlet Hybiscus from the garden where the Virgin's [...] at Motasieh is! Am going strong & have another week to finish here yet. We have two exams tomorrow, one musketry, & company drill. I got 90 out of 100 in the first musketry & should have been able to get 100.

Last Monday I and another were asked out for the evening by a Mrs May (who helps in soldiers club) her husband is in the railways & an old Dover college boy. It was the first decent private house I have entered since leaving W.A.! They were very nice. A couple of nights ago I went to dinner in Cairo with Dr House! He had another Capt Dr with him so I dined in style, both inwardly and outwardly!!

Beatty Cook (ex-nurse) has married young Albert MacLeod, son of George of the Katanning hotel. He is a St in the 16th I believe & gets on well.

There is very little for news these days only unmentionable probabilities.

Verdun & its vicinity seems to be a good place to be well away from!! Hope we get a look in for the final kick, can't help thinking it looks as if Germany was getting desperate.

Hope to get some letters next week when I get back to my unit & also hope they are no longer camped on the sand; anyhow where they were when I left them!!!

Hope you all in the best of health

Your aff son

R W W Adam

Reply to No. 1901 Coy. A Bat. [drawing]

Stationed at [drawing]

March 23rd 1916

Dear Mother

I expect you are hearing all kinds of rumours about us in England but as we don't know ourselves & can only guess our future it is no use trying to tell you:- anyhow I don't think it will be ENGLAND so don't raise hopes of seeing me. until the end of the war, which lets hope will be this year!! We had our 4th & final exam this afternoon, so shall leave this letter open till tomorrow so as to be able to tell you the result. Total marks in each exam are 100 – so far, I have 90, & 91, & 80 for company drill & I reckon I deserved 90 for that, first two are musketry. It all depends on who is your examiner etc etc. In company drill you go out under the instructor's nose and roar out orders etc for movements he gives you to put the company through & judging by some fellows' performances & marks I earned about 95. Anyhow it does not matter as 75 passes & gets a first class certificate & I should get that. We finish & return to our units tomorrow, when I shall be glad to get the big mail which must have accumulated for me by this time.

I cabled to W A for some money the other day, but I think I shall have to ask them to send it on to your bank so you can use it or send it to me. Don't think I am hard up or starving!: but it is always nice to have some to fall back on if required.

It was quite hot today, but the nights are chilly, but summer will soon be along now! Some mornings on early parade it is quite cold & cloudy, but is always nice at midday. There are still hundreds of little wagtails about, but expect they will soon be making north.

I sent some relics of Anzac to the young Fishers last mail, so hope they get them. I did not think you would altogether relish them! as much as young Fred & Charles, so have an acorn which I shall send or bring along some day. Parts of Gallipoli are covered in dense scrub chiefly oak, some prickly like holly but bears large acorns & this is one.

Hope you got the flowers from Motasieh I sent last mail in the letters! more pleasing than shrapnel bullets & chunks of shell!! My writing fit has gone off & as I have no letters to answer am up against it to carry on. I tried to ring up Port Said to find out about the "Minstrel" yesterday but was unable to get on so far away. I fancy C K's headquarters are up the other end of the Mediterranean.

There are some British West India men (every cross & colour of negro & full blooded Europeans) at the school. Marching along the other day a little Arab boy came up & said to one "Hello [...], much to B.W.'s annoyance!! who absolutely ignored young

Arab. Just out side the Ezbekieh Gardens the other day an Arab bootblack said to me "Hello Snowy cleana boots?!!!" I ignored the little arab too! too many people about to put the boot into him.

Have been recalled this morning after writing this last night. Have passed alright.

Am getting some fellows to post this

Aurevoir Hope all well best love – Your

aff son R W W Adam

10/4/16

Dear Mother

You would be surprised if you knew how close I've been to England since I last wrote, I expect you will get this before my last from the lands of the Pharaohs We had an uneventful trip over, plenty of rumours of the proximity of U boats etc, but they never interfered with us. We passed very close to Malta, stood off Valetta for a while. A few hours before Malta I was talking to some one up forrard. Suddenly I looked up & a few hundred yards away coming in the opposite direction was T P.D 69!!!!!! I never knew one was in sight as I had been on the lookout for 69. Before I could get glasses she had slipped by & we never saw her again. I saw a man up in one of the boats who may have been making himself conspicuous! – but – wireless was out of the question. So near yet so far!!!!

We had a 58 hour train journey through the most glorious scenery – early spring!! a country that any man would fight for. At the end of the trip we woke up to the sound of distant guns, so we had fair idea of where we were!!

We are now waiting miles back to take our turn, which may not be long. It is not as bad as war artists & folk at home imagine as battles of Ypres & St Julien etc are not being fought forever every day!

The weather is glorious, but cold. We are billeted on farms sleep in straw on the floor etc or where ever on can get. It is strange to see the ordinary farm life going on, pigs mooching about & fowls, the farm folk going to church on Sunday in their Sunday best & church bells ringing etc etc. Meantime here we are & in the distance, the boom of guns.

I shall have to indefinitely post pone my trip to England!! date of arrival will be somewhat uncertain. I got a letter each from you & Rose dated March 11th. I hope the watch did not go down in the Maloja! as it will come in handy now. I am a Lance

Sgt now, can wear 3 stripes but do not get a Sergeants pay, that may come later. I hear mails go out twice a week, but I am not going to promise to write even once a week so you must not get in to the way of expecting a letter every few days or at regular intervals. From what I gather we have so many hours in the firing line then so many getting back to billets then so many hours in billets again, so you must not imagine we are always in the danger Zone, & it will be a week or two before our brigade gets that far.

I can mention no names or give no details. We are all becoming great French scholars!!! Mine comes in handy at times but nearly all speak English.

Love to you all & hope this finds you as fit & well as self.

Your aff son

R W W Adam

25/v/16

Dear Mother

Many thanks for the papers which came along yesterday. As, for the next few weeks possibly, (3 or 4) we shall be out of range of shops & luxuries, an odd small parcel or two of edibles will be most acceptable. Such as a small tin of butter, milk, cocoa cake etc. The weather is still very well behaved for this part of the world. – last night there was some drizzle and the result is that if one walks off the foot boards or slides off, it is a case of slide & slip about in a mixture of lard & cheese alias local clay or mud. This is a quiet peaceful part of the world, if it was not for the artillery on either side slinging off at one another one would sometimes wonder if there was a war on at all.

It is great place for rats and frogs – sparrows are almost as cheeky as the rats. Early every morning I hear skylarks & other birds singing, some times blackbirds. I had a long letter from the Lairds of B A but fancy from what he told me it will all be out of the question, but he was by no means disencouraging!! (I think he mentioned to you what I had asked him about). Am in the best of health,

love to all Your aff son R W W Adam. P.S. hope the school [...] flourishes!!!!!!
Please send me some decent envelopes!! have plenty of paper P.T.O.

Don't send too many couple of packets will be plenty.

25/5/16

July 5th 1916 France

Dear Mother

I am sorry it is so long since I last wrote although I have no real excuse, as you most likely think I have! Things in general seem to be going well and the general tone of papers etc seem to be optimistic for the near future!!

I have given up hope of leave now or just about and am sorry I ever worked you up to any expectations but I always emphasised that it was more of a possibility than a probability, if you get one. The weather is not of the best some sort of rain every other day at least, but might be worse.

“Louse shirts” are A.1 so please send a couple more – quite a long time since I had the pleasure of meeting any of those little friends and may it be the same before I meet any more.

Thank Nora for her letter, with the enclosed flower which was not for sentiments sake. Tell her I apologise most humbly for the trouble which I have cause via the junior members of the Sth Hill family! “Cast they bread upon the waters etc.”!!!! I have suddenly woken up to the fact it is someones birthday soon!!

We are in a very pleasant little spot at present & beginning to wonder what war is! Might not have long to wait though!!

Am sorry indeed to hear about up St Johns Wood way!! I also hope you are not overdoing things from what you said about yourself & trust your victory was not only complete but lasting!!

Well here’s “Bon Santé” & “Après la guerre” if that will suit Nora after her little bit of sarcasm at my usual terminations!!!

Many thanks for the addresses & hope the Bank is still a success for R

R Hall Love to all Your aff son

R W W A

[Folder 2 - Letters written by 2631 Sergeant Guy Clifton Lukin in 1916]

France
August 1st - 16

Dear Mrs Adam

You will no doubt be surprised when this letter reaches you but I'm writing a few lines while there is a chance to find out how Bob is. I expect that he has told you that we were in the same Brigade & saw a great deal of each other while he was here but since this "stunt" which took place a few days ago I hear that he has been wounded – in fact I cannot get any very satisfactory news of him at all so perhaps you will be able to enlighten me & let me know his address so that I can write to him. I hope he is in England at present so that you can see him if he is wounded & if you do see him, tell him that we won our position & that the 11th & 12th did splendidly but we were "cut up" very badly. However I'm pleased to say that I'm perfectly well & came out of it with out a scratch. We are all more or less suffering from shell shock from the want of rest but that will soon wear off. Tell Bob that I have been recommended for a commission & that I hope he gets his soon. Must stop now & trusting by the time this reaches you, you will have had good news of Bob.

Yrs sincerely

Guy. C. Lukin

Sgt Lukin

D Company

12th Battalion

France

[on reverse of page]

Guy Lukin

1st Aug. 1916

France

14 August 1916

Sgt Guy C. Lukin

D Company

12th Batt.

AIF France

France

Aug. 14th - 16

Dear Mrs Adam

I received your letter last night so will seize this opportunity of answering it and letting you know any-thing that I possibly can about poor old Bob since last writing to

you. I have been to the 11th Battn H.Qr & made enquiries and also from the men in Bob's platoon and at both places they told me that Bob was killed in action early in the morning of July 25th.

You asked me in your letter to let you know anything I could about your son and I feel it is my duty to do so. I will tell you exactly what happened & what I do know is correct because I could not rest till I heard everything about him. During the early hours in the morning of 25th July, the 11th & 12th Batt were sent out to dig a trench in front of the position we held & we had not been out there long before the enemy started shelling us very heavily & putting machine guns on us - well you know what a cool, brave fellow Bob was. He was walking along the parapet going [...] to his crew when a machine gun was put on him. The poor old boy was hit in several places & died immediately. He did not suffer any pain. I tried to get out to him to get his wallet so as to send it to you but they bombarded us so terrificly all that day & the next. It was impossible to move & we were relieved the next night. The place where he was killed belongs to us so he will be buried with hundreds more of our poor chaps. One of the men in Bob's platoon told me that he (Bob) was the bravest & coolest man he had ever seen under fire, in fact he was too brave & it makes me almost cry to see our boys being killed with big shells & we don't even get a fighting chance with them. The Germans will not face us at all, we could walk through the whole lot of them if it was not for their artillery. Captain Vowles is in charge of our Company & is a fine man. I went down to the 28th Batn yesterday & making inquiries I found that Harry Lukin from Deepdale has been killed up at Pozieres also - we are going back there again in a few days so goodness only knows how many of us will be left: but there is one thing certain our boys will never give in they will fight to a finish & to a man

If you want to know anything at all M^{rs} Adam I will only to glad to do what I can. I convey my deepest sympathy in your sad loss & I am proud to have been a friend of Bobs - he was loved by all his men & no one could have done more than he did in this great shiggle Good bye for this time. Hoping you are well & be sure and let me know if I can do anything for you.

Yrs sincerely Guy

[Folder 3 - a condolence letter written by General William Birdwood]

1st Anzac Corps, France

23rd August 1916

Dear Mrs Adam,

My wife has written and told me about the great loss which you have sustained in the death of your son, who was killed when fighting with us on the 25th of last month. I am afraid that no words of mine will be of any good to help you in your trouble, but I should just like to say how sincerely and deeply I do sympathise with you, and it may perhaps be some small consolation to realise that he died fighting for King and Country – and probably the death for which he would himself have wished.

As you probably know, my 1st Australian Division was engaged in the capture of the village of Pozières towards the end of last month. Your son's battalion – which is quite one of the best we have, took part in the operations, during the whole of which we were subjected to a terribly heavy bombardment. During an advance on the village on the morning of the 25th, your son was hit by a shell. He was at once picked up, and his wound attended to, but from the first it was evident that his case was hopeless, and though he was carried back to the village, he died in about an hour's time without having recovered consciousness, so I am thankful to think that he did not suffer. He was buried in the village of Pozieres, as owing to the heavy, continuous shelling that was carried out, it was impossible to think of removing his body or those of other brave men who fell at the same time.

I have just had a talk with his Colonel – a Colonel Roberts – about him. He tells me that your son was one of the finest soldiers he had, and a most brilliant non-commissioned officer, who would probably have been granted his commission very shortly, so you can imagine how much his death is felt. Colonel Roberts has I think already written to you to let you know the high opinion which had formed of your son.

I can only again say how deeply I do feel for you in all this – a trouble which I fear many mothers have to face, and I fear will have to continue to face for some time yet, as we have not yet beaten these Germans in the way we have to do.

Yours sincerely,

W R Birdwood

Transcriber's Notes

a là Belle étoile	à la belle étoile; under the beautiful stars
Aisne Battle	Allied Offensive against the Germans at Aisne, France in September 1914
Arabi Pasha	Ahmed Urabi/Urabi Pasha, leader of the Egyptian forces at the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir in 18812.
Ashmead-Bartlett, Ellis	Ellis Ashmead Barlett, influential English War Correspondent
Brockman, Major	Edwin Alfred Drake Brockman
Brooke, Rupert	Rupert Chawner Brooke, Royal Navy; died 23 April 1915; English war poet
Chipper, Arthur	Arthur Rupert Chipper, SN 199
Chipper Harry	Henry Thomas Chipper, SN 860, KIA 7 August 1915
Clifton, Alvie/Alvy	Alvared Roe Cecil Clifton, SN 155; cousin of Robert
Clifton, Bob	Robert Algernon Clifton, SN 1795
Clifton, George	George Leake Cecil Clifton, SN 775; cousin of Robert
Continental Hotel	Grand Continental Hotel, Cairo
Cook, Beatty	Florence Beatrice Cook
C.S./ C.S.S.	Christian Science Sentinel; periodical of the Christian Science Organisation
Eddy, Mrs	Mary Baker Eddy, writer, Christian Science Sentinel
Fisher, Ethel	Ethel Constance Fisher, born 1901 in Beverley WA, the town where Robert Adam lived.]
Forbes FR	Lieutenant Fergus Robert Forbes, Royal Engineers died 25 September 1915
French Leave	Absence without permission
Fry, Phil	Captain Henry Phillip Fry, KIA 29 August 1915]
Gezirel	Gezira/Gezirah, a former palace in Cairo converted into the No 2 Australian General Hospital; now part of the Cairo Marriott Hotel
Hamilton, Ian	Sir Ian Hamilton, British Commander, Gallipoli Campaign
House Dr	Captain Frederick Maurice House
Ismalia	Ismailia a town in Egypt, approximately half way between Port Said and Suez
Keyes, Roger	Vice Admiral Sir Roger Keyes, RN
Leake, Arthur	George Arthur Leake SN118, KIA Gallipoli 29 August 1915
Lodge, Jack	Robert John Lodge, SN 1840
Luna Park	An amusement park in Heliopolis, Cairo; converted to an Australian Hospital in World War 1
MacLeod, Albert	Albert McLeod, SN 366
Maloja	SS Maloja, a P&O passenger liner, sunk by a German mine in the Strait of Dover on 27 February 1916.
Maxwell, Lt General	Lt-Gen Sir John Maxwell, Commander of Forces in Egypt
Nora	Eleanora Constance Adam, Robert's sister
OR Society	Old Rugbeans Society, the society of former students of

	Rugby School, UK
Parker, Harold	Harold Wyborn Parker, SN 1871
Parker, Hubert	Lieutenant Hubert Stanley Wyborn Parker, ADC to GOC
Piesse, Cecil	Mr Cecil Ernest Charles Piesse, farmer and business man from Katanning.
Rawson	Possibly Frederick L Rawson, a writer for the Christian Science magazine, a publication which Robert Adam received during his time in the army.
Rose	Rose Emily Adam, Robert's sister
Selfridges/Selfridges	Selfridges, a department store in London
Shepherds Hotel	A Cairo hotel known for its opulence, well patronised by Allied officers
Skinner, Jack	John Russell Skinner, SN 357
SM	Sergeant Major
Terriers, Territs	Territorials. The Territorial Force of the British Army, consisted of volunteers
Weaver, Leslie Pooler	Leslie Pooler Weaver, SN 119; KIA Gallipoli 2 May 1915
Weaver, youngest	George Leatham Weaver, SN 1352
Wolesly, Lord	Sir Garnet Wolseley, British Commander at the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir, 1882
Lukin, Henry	Sergeant Henry Wedderburn Lukin, KIA, 29 July 1916
Vowles, Capt	Alan Stewart Vowles
Col Roberts	Stephen Richard Harricks Roberts

Mrs Jane Emily Adam, Sgt Adam's mother, was the sister of George Walpole Leake, the third Premier of Western Australia. The Leake family arrived in the Swan River settlement in 1829 and were active in the establishment of the legal, political, business and community aspects of the settlement. George Walpole Leake was particularly active in Western Australia's response to Federation.

Sgt Adam's father, William Keith Adam (died 1900), was the Resident Magistrate of Katanning in Western Australia. Sgt Adam's grandfather was the Rt Hon William Adam, at one time Liberal Party Whip in the House of Commons in London. One uncle was ADC to Lord Elgin, Governor General of India. Another uncle, Charles Elphinstone Adam, was Lord Lieutenant of Kinross-shire, Scotland

According to stationery used by Mrs Adam, during the war she was the Secretary to the Australian War Contingent Association Work Rooms in London. The Association supported sick and wounded Australian soldiers and distributed gifts, often tins of chocolates, to soldiers in the field to celebrate Christmas and New Year.

Additional records transcribed:

Transcript of the section of Honours and Awards (Recommendation) AWM28 1/3 - relevant to Robert William Wyllie Adam

Recommendation Military Medal

Unit	Regtl. No	Rank and Name	Action for which commended	Recommended by	Honour or Reward
11th Battn	1901	Sergt. Robert William Wyllie ADAM	For conspicuous gallantry. During an intense bombardment by the enemy on the front line defences they showed great resource and courage and immediately the bombardment was lifted off the parapet, occupied the debris and by fire prevented a raiding party from destroying important underground works in the line.	E.G. Sinclair MacLagan, Brig Gen Comm,'g 3 rd Inf Bde A.I.F.	Military Medal
	111	Sergt. Harry VINCENT			Military Medal
	1910	Sergt. William BELL			Military Medal
	368	Sergt. David WALKER			Military Medal

[stamp]
30 May 1916

[Transcriber's Note

Sgt Vincent was the only person awarded a Military Medal for this action. Sgt Walker was awarded a Distinguished Conduct Medal for other activities.]

Transcription of Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing
Enquiry Bureau files, 1914-1918 War

1DRL/0428

1901 Sergeant

Robert William Wyllie

Adam

11th Battalion

54, Victoria Street
London, S.W.
August 11 1916.

Victoria 8858.

Dear Mrs Adam,

In answer to the inquiry concerning Sgt R.W.W. Adam A Coy, 11th Battalion I am bitterly sorry to have a sad piece of news to break to you. A wire has come to us from our Rouen office stating that Sgt Adam was wounded on 26 July and died.

We are keeping your son's name among our inquiry lists so that if anything more can be ascertained we shall be sure to hear it and be able to tell you at once.

I dare not say do not yet give up hope, the tidings may not be officially confirmed! Because then, if they prove true, the pain will be doubly cruel.

It can be of very slender comfort to you to know that we sympathise with you in your sorrow and suffering, nevertheless we sincerely do. The time has come when we will all begin to feel that we women would gladly make any sacrifice if only some of the promising young lives could be saved.

You may rest assured that we shall make every possible inquiry, and send you all the details of his admission into hospital, his condition then, and, if we only can, his last word

May God and the memory that your boy gave his all for England and honour help you in this sad hour.

Believe me, dear Mrs Adam,
very sincerely yours,

VD.
Secretary.

30th August, 1916

Sergeant Kohler,
11th Australian Battalion,
B Coy. Machine Gun Section,
B.E.F. FRANCE.

Dear Sir,

I am very sorry to trouble you, but am referred to you for particulars of the deaths of Sergeant R.W Adam, 1901, and of Sergeant W. Bell, 1910, 11th Battalion, A.I F.

Details are often a great comfort to the sorrowing relatives at home in Australia, and we are anxious, therefore, to obtain all particulars possible.

I know you will sympathise the more with this feelings because I understand that both these sergeants were friends of your own.

With good wishes,

Yours faithfully,

VD
Secretary.

Rouen 1st September 1916
[stamped] RECEIVED
4 Sep.1916

Frank Lamb Esq
Hon Sec. A.B.B.R.C.S.

Dear Lamb,

I shall be glad if you will ask the Enquiry Department to have enquires made as to the circumstances of the deaths of Sergt Robert William Wyllie Adam, of the 11th Batt A.I.F. who was killed on or about 26th July Any information as to the burial is particularly desired.

Captain Howse of No 1 A.G.H. Rouen is enquiring on behalf of the relatives and it would be better to send any information to him.

I enclose a letter apparently intended for the Enquiry Department which has been sent here.

With Kind Regards
Yours Sincerely
[...] Kiddle

1. The Mount,
Heath Street.
Hampstead.
12th Aug.
1916.

Re. Sgt.
R.W.W. Adam
1901. 11th Battn.

Dear Miss Deakin

I thank you very much indeed for your extremely kind letter received this morning, which alas! I must take as final. It was easier to hear it as you so kindly wrote than in the usual terse official intimation & I am indeed grateful that you will get me any news possible when you can.

Y^{rs} vy sincerely Jane E. Adam.

3.9.16
To The Secretary
Australian and British Red Cross Society
London S.W.

11th Battn.
Missing
kia
P.I.

Dear Madam

Will be pleased to give you any information I can regards Sgt Adam and of Sgt Bell. Both of these Sergeants I was very intimate with,

Sgt Adams met his death on the 24th July. at Pozieres. was wounded in several places. and died in the trench almost immediately, after receiving his wounds. – Sgt. Bell is on our Books as missing: on the night of July 22nd he was in a charge on the German trenches and has not been seen or heard of since, it is quite possible that he is still alive, it is very common for missing men to turn up very unexpectedly, and we are in hope that this may be the case with Bell. He was very popular with his men, and always proved himself a good soldier.

It was a hard blow to Adams Company when he was hit. A splendid chap. the trench he was helping to hold was one of the hottest spots in the line. and although held, was the scene of many good mans end and Adams was of metal that helps to hold such places

he was unconscious until his death.

This is as much as I can tell you about two very fine fellows. I hope it in your power to lighten what is a very heavy blow to their parents and friends, and thank you for the honour of assisting you what little I could.

Yours Faithfully
Sgt E F Kohler 11th Battn

4.9.16

Dear Sir,

We were asked by Mr Kiddle to obtain information for you concerning the death & burial of Sgt R.W. Adam 11th Battn, as you were making enquires on behalf of Mrs Adam.

Since Mrs Adam is already an enquirer for details of her sons death, therefore all the particulars we can obtain regarding Sgt Adam are being sent direct to her, we believe you will not care to also receive them. Should you desire me to send the information to you also, we should be obliged by note from you to that effect.

Yours truly,
VD.
Secretary.

Capt Howse,
1st A.G.H.
B.E.F.

Mrs Adams

1 The Mount
Heath St. replied 9.9.16
Hampstead N.W.

Dear Mrs Adams

We received the following information concerning your son Sergeant Adam 11th Battn A.I.F. from Sergeant E.F. Kohler 11th Btn B. [Coy. A.I.F B.E.F. on Sep^t: 3rd and hasten to send it to

Sergeant Kohler writes that he was very intimate with you son. He says he was wounded on July 24th at Pozières and died in the trench almost immediately afterwards.

“It was a hard blow to Adams’ Company when he was hit – A splendid chap, the trench he was helping to hold was one of the hottest spots in the line and although held was the scene of many a good man’s end. Adams’ was of the metal that helps to hold such places. He was unconscious till his death.”

In a note at the foot of the letter, Lieut. A.B. Brook 11th Btn writes

“Regarding Sergeant Adams whom I considered a personal friend, I might add that his loss was a particularly heavy blow to his company. He was a splendid type of the very best West Australian soldier.”

We are sure it will bring you great comfort to know how very much your son was liked and respected by his men and [...] and that he was unconscious at the end. Assuring you of my deepest sympathy yours faithfully.

11th September, 1916.

Sergeant E.F. Kohler,
11th Btn. B. Coy.
Machine Gun Section
A.I.F. B.E.F.

Dear Sir,

We have received your letter dated September 3rd, giving us the circumstances of the death of Sergeant Adams, 11th Btn. A.I.F. and wish you to know how grateful we are to have those details. You expressed the hope that Sergeant Adams’ mother might get some comfort from the information you sent. We know how much she will appreciate your kindness, because she came into our office to enquire, and we are sending her a copy of your letter. We sympathise with you in the loss of your friend and with the Battalion and Company in the loss of their Sergeant.

Wishing you good luck and again thanking you for finding the time to write such a letter.

Yours faithfully
VD
per FIB
Secretary

[printed stationery, hand written letter]

AUSTRALIAN WAR CONTINGENT ASSOCIATION WORK ROOMS

Lady President:
~~Lady Reid.~~
Hon Work Superintendent:
Mrs. Halliday.
Secretary:
Mrs. Adam.

[stamped]
Received
12 SEP1916

Telephone
Vic: 208

1, Halkin Street.
Belgrave Square
(Hyde Park Corner)
London. S.W.

Re. Sgt. R.W.W.
Adam, 1901
11th Battn.

Sep. 11th 1916.

Dear Miss Deakin

X I am so intensely grateful for the kind letter received from the Australian Branch of the Red Cross, today, containing messages from two of my son's comrades. It is such tributes as these that comfort the mothers in a way, for we all want the world to know no acknowledge goodness where ever found, & when it is acknowledged in one such as my son indeed was, one knows that the good lives on, & the splendid influence is not lost, through other material causes the loved personality is gone.

Thank you so much - & I will like to write to Sgt. Kohler and L^t Brook & perhaps see them later on. Y^{rs} Vy sincerely Jane E. Adam

11th Btn.
A.Coy.
Adam
Sgt.Robert William Wyllie
1901

"Died of Wounds 26.7.16"

No trace germany
Cert. by Capt. Mills 10.10.19

London
21.10.19

11th Battn.

A. Coy.

A.I.F.

W. in Aug1916

Adam

Sgt R.W.W.,1901

(Robert Wm. Wyllie)

No report of any casualty.

Cert. by – A.I.F. Headquarters, 130 Horseferry Rd.

Died of wounds 26/7/16

Cert. by – Rouen wire 10/8/16

London

14/8/16

11th Battn.

Sept. 3rd 1916.

A.I.F.

“Died of wounds. 26-7-16.” Sgt. R.W.W. Adams, 1901 (Robert Wm Wyllie)

“Official Missing. 25-7-16. Sgt. W. Bell. 1910

The Secretary,

Aust. & British Red Cross Society,

London, S.W.

Dear Madam,

Will be pleased to give you any information I can regards Sgt. Adams and Sgt. Bell. Both of these Sergt. I was very intimate with.

Sgt. Adams met his death on the 24th July at Pozieres, was wounded in several places and died in the trench almost immediately after receiving his wounds. Sgt. Bell is on our books as "Missing", on the night of July 22nd. he was in charge on the German trenches and had not been seen or heard of since, it is quite possible that he is still alive it is very common for missing men to turn up very unexpectedly, and we are in the hopes that this may be the case with Bell. He was very popular with the men, and always proved himself a good soldier.

It as a hard blow to Adam's Company, when he was hit. A splendid chap, the trench he was helping to hold was one of the hottest spots in the line, and although held, was the scene of many Man's end. And Adams was of metal, that helps to hold such places. He was unconscious until his death.

This is as much as I can tell you about two very fine fellows, I hope it is in your power to lighten what is a very heavy blow to their parents and friends. Thank you for the honour of assisting you what little I could.

Reference:- Sgt. E. Kohler, 11th Battalion, A.I.F.

Regarding these two Sergt whom I considered personal friends, I might add that their loss was a particular heavy blow to their Company. Both were splendid type of the very best Australian Soldier. Sergt. Bell was my platoon Sergt. and it would lift a weight off my mind to at least know his fate. Before going into action he gave me the address of a lady friend with whom to communicate in case of his death. I sincerely wish I could help you further;

Reference:- Lieut. Brook

Censor

London

11/9/16

FRANCE

A.I.F 11

Adam. Sgt. R.W.W.1901.

(Robert Wm Wyllie)

D.of W. 26.7.16

I know he was killed, but Sgt. Kohler (write) of the 11th. Battalion, B.Co. M.G.Sec. could tell you all about it.

Reference: Donaldson 1929

Ho 26 Gen. Hosp. Etaples. 23rd Aug. 1916

11th Australian Imperial Force

Adam Sgt. R.W.W. 1901.

A. Company. (Robert Wm Wyllie)

D/W July 26/16 Details wanted)

Informant states that on July 26th 1916 at Pozieres, Adam was brought in on a stretcher with both legs shattered. He died on the way to the dressing station. Informant said "he was the finest Sgt. I ever knew. He will be a loss to the world".

Reference: Pte C Oates 5169

11th A.I.F., A. Coy.

Bramshott Military Hospt.

Sept. 20th 1916,

N.Bewley.

Transcriber's notes Australian Red Cross Wounded and Missing File:

Bell Sgt	William Bell, SN 1910; KIA Pozières, 25 July 1916
Brook	Lieutenant Arthur Bird Brook, SN 143
Deakin, V; VD	Vera Deakin, daughter of Australian Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin. Miss Deakin established the Wounded and Missing Enquiry Bureau of the Australian Red Cross in Cairo. The office later moved to London.
Donaldson	William Donaldson, SN 1929
Hon Sec ABBRCS	Honorary Secretary, Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society
Kohler	Edward Frederick Kohler, SN 1970

Lamb Esq	Frank De Villiers Lamb, Esquire
M.G.Sec	Machine Gun Section
Oates	Clarence Hubert Oates, SN 5169