

Aug 12 Received wire from Col Elliot C.O. 7th Batt recommending me for T. Officer & to hold myself in readiness.

Aug 1 Volunteered for Active Service

Aug 12 accepted for Active Service

Aug 18 went to Seymour with 24 men from Currow Longwood for medical inspection. Self and 17 men passed by Dr Morton

Aug 19th Arrived at Camp Broadmeadows

Aug 20th Noon. Reported to Capt Marsh, Major Cass & Brigadier McCay at V. Barracks - Approved by them

Aug 21st. Assailed by Capt. McCrae C. Coy. Brother Frank arrived from L. Land via home - he was posted to C. Coy on probation as Sergeant.

Aug 22 Commenced choosing men for drivers, Sergt. West from University, Transport Sergeant.

Sunday 23 Church Parade 10.30

Afternoon crowds of visitors arrived

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Monday 24th Laid out horse lines and tents for transport

Thursday 27th Frank posted to me as Transport Sergeant vice Sergt West exchanged to C. Coy. For a month went through drilling men, canousing & breaking in horses, and drawing gear etc from Ordinance. Horses allotted from Mairburnong depot. Some time elapsed before complement secured. Horses taken there all round a fair lot. - Repairs current re. embarking. Saturday 25th Sept. stated as day. All preparations were made. Orders cancelled on Friday morning previous. (much disappointed -) Vehicles taken to Station and put on train for S.S. Oveito Port Melbourne, on Friday 24th. Rumours current re date of sailing

continually reported. Continued on exercising and training horses without vehicles. Horses looking well despite many cases of strangles, cold and ^{minor} injuries.

Sunday October 18th Left Camp 4 am with horses for Rly Pier Port Melbourne S.S. Hororata reaching there 7.30 am. Saw mother, Peter, Lucy, Uncle C. & Aunt & Cousins for a very short time there before getting horses on Pier for loading. 1 1/2 hours saw all horses loaded, including Lieut Blier's horses which accompanied me. Troops arrived and all embarked by noon. Left Pier 3 pm for W.A. anchored out in the Bay. Monday 9 am left for W.A. watched Melbourne receding. Horses alright. Capt. Hankin A.A.C.

attached to Mr Blier and me in charge of the horses - passed a good night lovely morning.

20th Oct Fine day enjoying voyage. Ship very steady.

Wed 21. All going well

Thursday. Mare "May" Sick (influenza)

Friday. Dull day

Saturday. Fine day

Sunday 25th Daylight reached King George Sound Albany. Still around. Horse no better. Wrote letters and post them. Some officers obtained leave and went ashore Albany hills, rocky, scrubby heath, bracken. Fine harbour. Royal Princess anchored out in the Sound. Monday 26 Squally weather - other ships continually coming in. Mail arrives per "Britia"

Man on board
Col. G. B. Blier, and others
the return of the

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Frank and I got 6 letters - Fursker
 leave stopped - disappointed?

Tuesday 27 Rainy & squally
 Horse improving still anchored
 later went in to Pier Albany
 lovely sight, reached there at
 dusk - wonderful array of war
 ships, Melbourne, Pyramus, Philonoi
 Menotaus & Japanese cruiser (Sanki)
 New Zealand Troopships arrived
 28th Inoculated against Typhoid
 29th Fine day nooking down,
 anchored again in the Sound.

30th Some showers

31st News of the West rebellion

rumoured we go to 5th Africa
 purchase 19 bags green stuff for horse £4.5.9
 Sunday Nov 1st 8 am we are off
 all of us leaving the Sound. It
 is a magnificent spectacle. The
 great number of ships (37) in 3 lines
 Our escort in front protecting us

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I shall never forget the scene -
 Monday we are going 10 knots
 in a running sea. fresh wind
 ship rolls a little Tuesday
 sea rougher ship rolling some. News
 by wireless that war was declared between
 Turkey & G. Britain. Hear news of Cup winner
 Wednesday 4.11.14 Ship rolled considerably
 all night affecting me much (also horse)
 Thursday Got inoculated right arm against
 Typhoid, S.S. Osterley passed close to us
 bound for Colombo, from Melbourne at 6 pm
 Much interest evinced in the incident
 Friday a bit off colour. Saturday
 weather getting hotter (humid) Tropics
 Horse doing very well, but has with
 influenza. (~~Thursday~~ ^{Thursday} last) Announ-
 cement at mess that Turkey had
 declared war on Germany(?). Concert on
 deck last night

Sunday Oct 18 passed the Moldavia
she dipped flag
Monday passed French barque great
excitement played the Marseillaise
Tuesday passed several whales spouting
Tuesday 27th moved into pier Albany
to take in water. Story of England from
Iland alongside us Friday 30th Great
boxing contest Carey v. Smith. Carey won
The Coy 6th Bats left for Amrah
Sunday Nov 1st Left Albany great
sight complete fleet, saw flying fish
39 miles. Monday 227 miles, Tuesday 212
steaming direct for Colombo - 231 miles
Osterley made appearance 4:30 pm
passed in Starboard side 6 pm. ^{mountain passed} ~~and~~ received
salute from us. Boxing match Carey v Smith
again 10 rounds. Smith won. Friday 250 miles
Grand home concert on upper deck

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Sunday Saturday 7.11.14 Heard news of engagement
between small squadron British Fleet & German
Squadron (6) Monmouth ^{repeated} ^{circumstances} ^{report of sinking} ^{of German in America}
Sunday, very hot sky clear received invitation
to afternoon tea from Skipper (Capt. Cameron)
spent a couple of enjoyable hours.

Monday 8.11.14 news hot. A bit of a scare
prevalent - rumours of attack or danger.
Bill has belly aches. Storm standing
heat well. Lophy holding his own.

2.20 pm Monday. Wireless just
received that German Cruiser breached
herself to save sinking. A.A.A.
Sydney searching for merchantment's
colliers. (Much excitement & pleasure)

Tuesday Nov 10/14. Heard that the German
Cruiser sunk was the "Emden" & that
the "Sydney" caught her apart. Hurrah.
Very hot, sun intensely so. something
went wrong with steering gear last

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night causing us (Horvath) to lose
of our position. ^{Cabin} Catchain up to place
quickly. Wednesday Nov 11/14. Spent
toast at dinner last night to "Sydney"
Received message giving particulars
of the episode. Sydney: Killed 2
wounded 13. Emden knocked out
with heavy losses. Sydney caught
the German Collier & sunk her.
Weather very hot. (Jack the horse)
very ill but improving slightly.
Another horse sick. Lophy better
Jack Thursday Nov 12/14. Jack (horse)
down, very bad pneumonia, case
almost hopeless. To night cremation
takes place "Crossing the Line" (Put off)
weather very hot. Friday 13th
raining hard. "Jack" died
this morning, cast him overboard
Last night Great Court Case. Tubb
v. Eller & Co. Ltd.

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Capt Mason Prosecutor Lieut Connolly Counsel
for defence. Elton & Goudon convicted for
stealing open trousers. Friday Afternoon,
Together with other Officers was given
freedom of M. 45 by Foster Replume. The
ceremony was interesting and exciting.
Saturday 14 Nov Rainy.

Sunday 15 Nov, sighted Ceylon going
round E. coast to Colombo passed through
dozens of Calamangas, Cingalis on
board of them fishing. The Calamangas
queer looking fellows with outriggers. Saw
any beam. Sky & sea very clear.

Monday Nov 16 Anchor Roadstead
off Colombo, Very hot, ships all
around us, 8:30 pm moved up
further in saw, this afternoon some of the
German prisoners from Emden taken
over to "Onrahi" others on "Orveto". Got
Ceylon paper to day saw interest in news
Lord Roberts (report of death)

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Tuesday Nov 17, 8 AM. moved into "breakwater"
breakwater made of cement. Pilot station at entrance
ships all around us. "Iouki" close to us
"Sydney" the Emden has, also. The spectacle is
magnificent. Colombo buildings large
Weather hot, but a breeze blowing.

Tuesday afternoon Mr Pearce from the
"Sydney" (Bro in Law Mr Johnston) came
on board & told us all about the fight
between them and the Emden: the
Sydney sighted the Emden off Coco Island
& at 8000 yds the Emden fired 4
shots at them that fell short. The
Sydney's first shot struck Emden
amidships. Sydney was hit 4 or 5
times but not damage was done.
In about 20 minutes the Emden's
funnels, masts & some guns were carried
away. Emden full speed pushed on
to direction Island. The Sydney

left her and went after her Collier and sunk her then returned to Embden the ship was almost a heap of scrap iron the Lyddite shells played havoc in her. 300 Germans were killed & wounded. 90 prisoners were taken 50 other Germans escaped in a schooner bound Batavia. It was a great fight. The Sydney fired 500 shells the Embden 1400 every one she had in her. She was preparing to fire a torpedo but a shell from the Sydney struck the tube & jammed it. The Germans speak highly of the manner in which the English treated them. The prisoners including the Captain & Counts are on the Empress of Russia & Donrah now. When the prisoners were going on the Empress of Russia which has Dutchmen

aboard. The German started punching the French ship. The prisoners say (& the papers they have heard it out) that Germany has overrun Europe & are winning all along. Germany expects to finish & conquer by January. - I have a piece of a shell from the Embden that struck the Sydney which killed 3 men. The Sydney's losses are 4 killed & 7 wounded among the wounded are two boys 14 & 16 years respectively who were severely burnt through bravely throwing lighted cordite overboard. 66 ships were cooped up in Colombo afraid to move thro the Embden. They left for their ports as soon as they heard of the Embden sinking. The Sydney is going now to the North Sea.

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We are still in breakwaters
at Colombo some of our lines of ships
have gone for Aden we leave
tonight.

Tuesday afternoon

Nov 17th 1914

Dear Mother I am sending
you my diary as far as today
I hope it reaches you (write as
soon as it does) I am taking
advantage of sending this volume
to be posted by Mr Pearce a
friend of Jimmy Johnston. Be
sure and keep this all intact
I want to keep it for a
record of our doings so far
Frank & I are well so
are the rest of us from
Langkoot & Europa. It
is very hot & I am pressed for
time. The bum boats & rickshaws
here are funny - funny for money
etc. No more till next chance
Love to all from Fred.

Officers' Mess.

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6TH BATTALION,
2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,
A.I.E.F.

Wednesday Nov 18 1914

Yesterday morning we moved into inner harbour Colombo, to take in water and some stores. We passed through concrete-cement walls, which form a fine breakwater. Water boats came alongside. The place was alive with craft of every description, from warships to katamarans. Like active niggers were everywhere pestering us to buy their wares. The Cingalese were very interesting. From the water boats alongside us, were several of them, who dived into the water for money, thrown in by us. Some clambered up to the top of the boat deck and dived from there. The niggers got many mouthfuls of money for their performances. Some of the officers including Lieut Eller went ashore and came back laden with purchases and information. At about 7 pm we moved off for Aden where the rest are preceding us.

Wednesday 18-11-14. We are steaming 12 knots catching up to our Convoy. The weather is hot. Rain fell through the night. The horses were not exercised yesterday though we being anchored and our winches being used. To day the horses are pretty well, and routine work is again in full swing. We are looking forward to meet Port

Officers' Mess.

6TH BATTALION,

2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,

A.I.E.F.

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Thursday 19.11.14 Very hot. nothing doing. Kerang
more ill. purpura. Haemorrhagic. suddenly developed
Friday Still hot. More a little better. Caught
up to the Fleet this morning. Saw North Star
for first time last night (Capt. Cameron. showed
to me). Peter Eller has developed nerves very
badly (complaint). Capt. Hankin extra busy today.
J. Whitehead very lively last night. Frank recovered
from inoculation. Cabin 25 accused us of fueling
beer. Had much controversy re same today.
Boxing contests took place. Match between Fitzpatrick
and Pearce disappointing (two rounds only).

Saturday 21.11.14 We passed the rest of the
boats in the night. and are now in front. Report received
from Signalling Officer at breakfast that a ^{horrible} man overboard
occurred on the Shropshire this morning. We have to
for a time. have not yet heard anything except that
two men were reported overboard. Later rumoured a
Collision ^{had} occurred (behind us somewhere). Kerang more
very little better. Other horses well. but 2. A collision
took place early this morning between Scanlon & Shropshire
resulting in slight damage. Fire alarm practice took
place at 4 pm. Transport stood to horses' heads.

Officers' Mess.

7th BATTALION,

2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,

A.I.E.F.

Sunday Nov 22. Church Parade 8.30. horses

22. 11. 1914

looking well. Major McNeill's pony treated for sore eye. Many
more not much improved. Steaming along at full speed
expect to reach Aden on Wednesday. Did 298 miles to day,

287 yesterday. Our division (Eurydice's Flag Ship)
are now in front. Monday 23rd, Socotra island on
the Port side. Horses looking well. The patient improved
Socotra 40 miles away, high mountains in view. Capt.
McCrac in hospital with sore leg. have visited him several
times. He is giving me lessons on Engineering. Received
and invitation from Capt Cameron to dinner for tonight

Had a splendid time, a good dinner, and talk
Had the ^{pride of honour} & best feed we had on board.

afterwards Capt Cameron told me about Socotra viz
Socotra 192 miles long, fertile parts & good streams

Inhabited by Bedouins, some dwellers, under control

of Sultan of (Pozini?) ^{who is under British Rule} who receives taxes from the
exports (Aloes, chiefly) amounting to 7000 dollars

British Govt. allows Sultan 300 dollars also.

etc etc. Did 299 miles. Tuesday 24. 11. 14

Sea like glass. Winches & ship being prepared

to take in coal from Aden, which we will

soon see. Four of the horses off colour. Two

pretty bad. Am enclosing account of Embden &

Sydney fight, together with many notes give full

details.

To be continued

Officers' Mess.

7th BATTALION,
2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,
A.I.E.F.

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Convoy of the A.I.F. + New Zealand
Three divisions

<p>2 A 18 Wiltshire 14 knots A 7 Mead 13 " A 11 Ascanius 13 " A 15 Star of ^{England} Victoria 13½ " A 2 Geelong 12 " A 17 Port Lincoln 12 " A 10 Harro 12 " A 21 Maree 12½ " A 6 Clan Macquodali 12½ "</p>	<p>12 A 3 Urviato 15 knots ³ Carpidas 15" A 27 Southern 10½ " A 8 Argyleshire 14 " A 4 Pera 11 " A 9 Shropshire 14 " A 26 Armadale " A 19 Africa 13 " A 12 Saldanbra 11 " A 24 Benalla 14 " A 13 Kaluna 11 " A 22 Rangata 14 " A 1 Hymettus 11½ " A 16 Star of Victoria 13½ " A 23 Suffolk 12 " A 20 Hororata 14 " A 25 Anglo Egyptian 12 " A 5 Umrah 15 " A 28 Melitades 13 "</p>
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New Zealand

<p>1 HMNZT 3 Manganui 16 knots " 6 Urari 13 " " 8 Star of India 11 " " 7 Limerick 13 " " 4 Tahiti 17 "</p>	<p>2 10 Arawa 12 knots 11 Atheni 12 " 9 Hawkes Bay 12 " 5 Ruapehu 13 " 12 Waimama 14 "</p>
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Our Escort

Melbourne, Sydney, Minotaur, Philomet,
Ibouki,

Officers' Mess.

1 6TH BATTALION,

2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,

A.I.E.F.

Wednesday 25/11 1914

Wednesday Reached Aden 5 am. ~~Ship~~ ~~was~~ & anchored
for a little time & am moved in nearer. Pilot came aboard
High jagged rocks on starboard side & same on Port side.
In the distance in front is a range of mountains. In this almost
land locked harbour are at present many vessels. Our transports
of our divisions & Indian transports besides other craft. Niggers
(Arabs) are much blacker than at Colombo. Buildings numerous
on Port side some decent ones. ^{Camp Town Aden} Light in front of us is
a large town. Coal boats came along side manned by niggers
who passed from one to another $\frac{1}{2}$ sacks of coal into the
tanks of the *Storvats*. Bum boats were numerous & we
the sellers did a great trade with the soldiers.
The place seems dirty, we could see Camels drawn
carts & being ridden along the road a little distance
from us. The bargaining between the Arabs caused
amusement. The niggers seemed all varieties & mixtures
& were easily ^{more} to cheer than the soldiers in bargaining.

Thursday 26 Moved off at 6 am for Suez. The
sky is clear & the sun intensely hot. It was a
fine spectacle leaving the harbour. On the starboard
side we saw two native villages with mosques close by.
Had a wireless message read to us at breakfast
stating ^{rather} successes of the Allies. Fine breeze sprung
up during the afternoon, men and cool on the barge deck

Officers' Mess.

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7th BATTALION,

2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,

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Friday 27. 11. 14 Proceeding along in the Red Sea. Indian
Transports ^{returning} (empty) frequently passing us. Sun very hot.
On Starboard side at 7.30 we passed a number of rocks
of different shapes standing high out of the water. These rocks
are known as the 12 Apostles
Still learning Semaphore ~~text~~ signalling at the early morning
parade. Horses looking well but 3. Herang mare
steadily improving. Had a busy night. Found stable
pet just asleep, have crined him, ~~two~~ two horses fell during
the night had a little trouble in getting one of them up.
The Trampal men are being vaccinated this morning.
The effects of the Typhoid inoculation ~~have~~ were slight, and
have now disappeared. Today afternoon was vaccinated
by Lt Black. Received invitation to afternoon tea
from Col Simmons & had a pleasant time. ^{Final} Boxing
contest took place.

Saturday Nov 28th Passed a hot night. Sun
burning hot. No land ~~now~~ in sight. Expect to
reach Suez on Tuesday. Am looking forward to cooler weather.
Received congratulations on today (my birthday)
celebrated same with many friends. "

Received telegram that we are
to garrison Egypt. No one quite
knows what to make of it - whether
to be glad or sorry
JW

Officers' Mess.

3 4 6TH BATTALION,

2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,

A.I.E.F.

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I got Mr Whitlaw to write the preceding news going into Cairo (Egypt) & so soon has given us plenty to talk about. Though am sorry that we are not going straight to England. To train in temperate Egypt (this time of the year) will have advantages, besides having splendid opportunities of seeing the Pyramids etc. My birthday passed off splendidly. Almost all day I held a reception in Cabin 26 & at 10 pm a coterie of special friends came in & we passed a jolly evening. 14 of us altogether Capt^s Mason, McCrae, McKenna, Lieutenants, Finlayson, Capt. Hankin, Lieut^s Swift, Dorekey, Davey, Eller, Hershway, Whitlaw, Connolly, Conder, & Dubb Chief Officer Coyle, & wireless operator Lister (Mark II) At dinner in the mess room I was the subject of felicitous remarks & my health was drunk with musical honors. The 4th Officer McHershey was the mess president & proposed the toast.

Sunday weather a little cooler. Church Parade at 8.30. by (Chaplain Miles) houses looking well. Monday, lovely morning, nice & cool, expect to reach Suva by midday tomorrow. Making preliminary preparations for the disembarking. We do not know how long it will take to disembark, or where we shall

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7th BATTALION,

2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,

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disembark, It may be, Suez, Port Said, Alexandria, or
some other place. Capt Cameron paid us a visit in our
Cabin 26 ~~today~~ ^{this yesterday} afternoon. I think he enjoyed himself
just before returning ^{to land} last night my head bumped
violently into the angle iron of the bed sustaining a
washed bruise & cut. Capt Hankin V.O. rendered first aid
Monday 30.11.14. Copied out from Ships chart our
route and days running. Have received another
account of the Sydney Emden fight ^{war} per Correspondent
on the Orvieto. It is slightly different from Mr
Pearce's account. I intend sending it home first
opportunity. Capt Hankin is busy fitting horses
teth to day. Have arranged to be put aside
full rations for 3 days for the horses at the end
of that time we expect to disembark for Cairo
Horse belonging to Lieut Eller, up forward ^{end} sustained
severe injury to hock ^{this morning} & other ⁱⁿ horses are improving.
Am enclosing with this route copied from
Ships chart. Geoff can have the one not
fully completed to show his school teacher.
6 pm passed Chadawan island on Port side saw
Haskaf lighthouse further on on Port side 7 pm expect to
pass Mt Sinai tonight which is 15 miles inland
on Starboard side + 7000 ft high & only tomorrow morning

Officers' Mess.

5 7th BATTALION,
2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,
A.I.E.F.

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we pass the spot where Israelites crossed the Red sea.
We are still in the Red sea about 100 miles from Suez.
To night the Officers are giving a supper to the
Ship's Officers. Just heard that the mail closes at
7.30 am. tomorrow so am writing this for the
post. A strong ^{fresh} breeze is blowing & weather is very cool
and pleasant. A boxing competition took place
to day. my transport driver Barber got beaten first round
by Mr Grills, who has been through the Red sea 6 times
(+ is now in my cabin) says that this is the coolest
trip through the sea he has experienced. The Starboard
division of the Convoy steamed ahead ^{in single file to make distance} in order to
avoid loss of at time at Suez, and to facilitate the
passage of ships through the Canal. The fleet
which comprises 38 vessels will take 16 hours
to get through. At present we are escorted by only
one warship (the H.M.S. Hampshire). The sunsets
hereabouts are magnificent. We have had
an extraordinary trip, as regards weather up to date.
6 weeks to yesterday, over the whole course is
a record so those who know say. We received
wireless messages with regard to events at the front.
We are looking forward to reaching Cairo and to
learn of our future movements.

Officers' Mess.

76TH BATTALION,

2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,

A.I.E.F.

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Tuesday Dec 1 1914

Tuesday Had a good time last night at the supper social to the Ships Officers. Col Simmons presided Col Elliott + Capt Cameron (SS Hororata) supported him. The Chairman was splendid + kept things going merrily. The Toasts were the King + Our guests. I am enclosing a the menu card. with the signatures of the members that were sitting at my table. I recited "the man from Snowy Mtn". It blew some last night + this morning it is nice + cool. There are high mountains on the Port side + land on the Port starboard. We are steaming for Suva which we expect to reach before noon. The horses were very hungry. The cold makes them so. They won't be sorry to tread on land again. They have stood the journey remarkably well so far. There are 3 of them a ⁹³⁷ ~~1st~~ colour but the rest are splendid. We have received many congratulations on our care of horses since we came aboard. 9 am. Suva at last. we have anchored about 2 miles out. On the Port side are sandstone rocks. Small sailing boats are sailing about. The Hampshire (our escort) is transferring the German prisoners from the Omrah to the Swiftshire. We are waiting now to proceed through the Canal for Port Said where we expect to stop for a time. 11.30 Saw boat load prisoners (German) going across to the Hampshire. Have just had a lesson

Officers' Mess.

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7-6TH BATTALION,

2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,

A.I.E.F.

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on Machine Gun. Mr Whitehead the M.G. Officer showed & explained same to Harkin, Allen, Hershey and me. There are 4 M.Guns on board. 2 forward & 2 aft. Both the guns are now in position and readiness, in case of attack by Arabs or other snipers when we are going through the canal. This is the first time the M.Guns have been issued with ball ammunition since we came on board. Wednesday 2.12.14. At 6 am we are anchored still off Suez. We ~~can~~ saw coming in behind us a fleet of 14 big ships more transports they must be. 7.30 started at last. The harbour is full of boats of all sorts. Suez is a big place fine large buildings, grand road & parks. The inhabitants turned out to see & wave to us. The place is on the Port side and is all made apparently by man. A big sandstone building is in course of construction. There is a fine row of trees along the shore near the water. Gettys are numerous from the road to the Canal. It is a glorious morning quite fresh, & the sights are very interesting. Further on on the starboard side we passed soldiers guarding the Canal vs Indian troops. Territorials, East Lancashire's who exchanged greetings with us. The Canal ^{in many places} is very like the Goulbourn irrigation channel.

Officers' Mess.

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76TH BATTALION,

2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,

A.I.E.F.

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The sides are ~~not~~ a sort of sandstone ~~most of~~
The Country is mostly desert, with here and there green
places + a few trees. At 12 noon we passed into
a wider water, a lake where the *Teradules* passed
over. (The place mentioned earlier in my notes is
not correct as I am informed by those who know)
there are many dredges in the canal, ^{Some} of the troops
that we passed had machine guns + were entrenched
so I suppose there is a chance of a scrap taking place
The Mr Stewart Signalling Officer has just given me the
names of the different bodies of troops stationed along the canal
in the order in which we have passed them ^{They are as follows} 124th B. India
~~126th B~~ 126th Lancashire Regt 7th Gurkhas, 129th
Pioneers (Indians) 2nd Platoon 128th British Indian + other
Indian troops 4 pm passed Ishmalia on Port side
We take on another Pilot in the lagoon of the Bitter lakes
where we are now + expect to reach Port Said about midnight
Thursday we arrived Port Said, + have taken in
coal finished by daylight. This place is very interesting
A main street faces the water where there are
numerous boat sheds. The water is crowded with
small craft rowed about by men of various colours
There are plenty of big boats (transports) in the harbour
The warship Hampshire passed quite close to us at 7 am

Officers' Mess.

4 6TH BATTALION.

2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE,
A.I.E.F.

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From bum boats the soldiers are purchasing fruit and postcards. A mail arrived about 7.45. I have just been helping to sort it; haven't got a letter myself but got two for Frank. I am hoping that some letters for me will be amongst those not yet sorted. There are 69,000 inhabitants at Port Said. The population is a very mixed one. Greeks, Italians, Turks & natives of every hue. Some of the post cards for sale here are very fine, but many are vulgar. It is a glorious morning. I am sending home a few Port Said post cards and a paper. It is a lively scene here very interesting. The buildings are good and the streets also. We are about 19 hours from Alexandria. We don't know what day we disembark but it will be in a day or two. Capt Hankin received a communication this morning asking him if he is willing to join our force permanently as V.C. - He has accepted. The news from the front is very satisfactory, but we have a lot to learn yet re the situation. My left arm is itching thro' being vaccinated about a week ago. It is not causing me much inconvenience. I will post this now.

(Thursday 11. am) Hoping all are well at home.

Love from Ned. Keep all letters in rotation for them, are my dears
Dad

Handwritten notes in the left margin, including the name "Ned" and other illegible scribbles.