

Finance Section,
A. I. F. Hdqrs,
London,
15/1/18.

My dear Mother & Father,

Yours of 23/11 to hand, also one from
Perce and a newspaper cutting of Mr.
Hughes' speech on the Referendum. This
is the quickest mail we have had for
months and probably came via Panama.

It was the first mail from West Aus
since about the middle of September, so
you can tell it was looked forward to
by all. I had a letter last night
from Les from Warminster. He has
received his Xmas parcel you will
be glad to hear, and is much
more cheerful in tone than he has
been of late. He came up to
London for the weekends whilst I
was away at Calford with Mr Gibson,
but he says he will be up again
or leave shortly, when I hope to
see him.

Tom McGrath came in to see me
yesterday. He is almost as tall as
I am and I should hardly have
known him but for Paddy telling
me he was in England.

I had a letter a couple of days
ago from Charlie Trewatha. He is
a sgt. with a M. Medal and is
at present at an Officers' School at
Cambridge. He says his brother and
cousins are getting on well, and
wishes to be remembered at
Middle Park.

I have not heard from Bill Robbie for a good while now and have lost trace of his movements.

I have not played football the last two Saturdays but expect to be playing in a charity match on the 26th, to be witnessed by the King and Queen. I played in that match, the result of which you saw in the Melbourne papers.

I have been going to a few dances lately and it is a good thing to drive away the blues. Percy's remarks about dancing "tickled me to death" (Do you rag it kid? - to wit).

We have had phenomenally cold weather, the thermometer being below zero for the first twelve days of the year. All the ponds are frozen and there is a good deal of skating in consequence. I am dressed warmly and am more used to the frigid conditions than last winter. I shall have to become acclimatized again when I get back home.

I met my old section Commander, Sgt. Blancy, one night last week. He has only had nine bullets through various parts of him, and is now unfit. We went to a theatre and talked of old times. I learned that almost all of my platoon were killed or missing, just a few lucky ones like myself remaining.

Well, dear people, news is scarce these times. I shall write again in a few days. Love to all from your affectionate son, *John*

Finance Section,
A. I. F. Headquarters,
London,

14. 3. 18.

My dear Mother & Father,

Since I last wrote to you Les has been up on weekend leave to London. I spent a few hours with him on Monday. He is looking and feeling much better than when I saw him last. We are getting four days leave at Easter, and our football team is going to Bournemouth. Les hopes to be able to go down with me if he can fix up the leave.

We went down to Brightonsea Con on the east coast between Southend and Starviels last Saturday and beat the Australian Engineers 17-16 to 2-5. I had another photo taken there, so you will be getting a lot of football photos shortly.

There is another Australian mail on dated 23rd Jan. from Melbourne. I have had none from you by that mail as yet.

Neither Les or I can get over the size Ruby and Percy have grown during the last couple of years. The weather is finer and warmer, and consequently much more appreciated by Australians than months of winter.

The team from the O.T.C. at Cambridge, which we played on A.N.A Day, is coming down next Saturday. We hope to beat them again.

TRIAL BALANCE.

Unit

Date

191

Regtl. No.	Net Rate	£			s.			d.			
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	

We have just finished a big balance period. We have been doing a lot of night work, and am feeling a bit fagged. It is good to look forward to a foot game of "drinkum" Australian football on Saturday afternoons. I have not had any letters from Paddy Scanlon or Billy Robertson lately. Les thinks that the talk of a big German offensive is a big bluff. The turn of events during the last 6 months owing to the collapse of Russia does not tend to make one very optimistic about the duration of the war. I should not care to have to guess when it will end to the nearest 12 months. The submarines are still taking a huge toll on our shipping each week, and shipbuilding is being speeded up both here and in America. As usual we realize such vital facts always too late. What kind of a summer have you had this year? It seems ages since I felt the heat of the sun at all. I hope you are all keeping fit and well at Staraja Street. Much love to all from your affect. son, Jim.

TOTAL

C.W.L. EMPIRE CLUB,

ASHLEY PLACE,

LONDON, S.W. 1.

25. 3. 18.

My dearest Mother + Father,

Since my last letter ~~has~~
the much advertised German
offensive has begun, and I
am glad for your sake that
both Les and I are safe
in England. It should save

You a good deal of worry.

You have seen from the
papers of the colossal scale
of the battle and whatever
our own losses may be, it is
something to know that the
Germans are paying dearly
by using their massed attacks.

It is now that we realize
what the Russian debacle
really means to us.

I had a letter from Les
yesterday. He was to have
come up to London with the

2

football team from his camp,
but strained his ankle on
Thursday, and so could not
make the trip. We beat his
team by 15 goals 9 to 9-8.

The weather has been
wonderfully fine and mild
compared to last March.
The Germans are fortunate in
striking such a succession
of fine days for their push.

I have tried many times
to be relieved of my job here
to no avail, and my conscience
is free. It seems certain that
I shall see the finish of the
war in the Finance Section.

The conditions of such a
position are all one could
wish for as regards comfort,
but there is little or no
chance of promotion now.
Ability counts for very little.
It is favoritism chiefly and

then seniority of service.

There are many here I can run rings around at figures or any other clerical work, who are holding good jobs as S. Sgts and W. O's and waiting on commissions. Here the best crawler wins every time, and that is one thing I will not do.

I met Alf Bull last Sunday afternoon walking in Hyde Park. He is well and is now on 14 days leave from France. He has gone over to Ireland to visit Gillamey. He wishes to be remembered to you all and asks me "to strap the dad" for not dropping him a line. He is in the 8th Batts. Post Office and has a pretty safe job. He has not

⁴
been wounded. I have not
had any word from Daddy
Scanlan for a good while
now. It is a good while
since the last Australian
mail in. There should be
another shortly.

There have not been
many airraids on London
lately. They have been
giving Paris a turn instead.

Jack Draper, a pal of
Billy Bruce, who went into
camp with me at Albert
Park, is returning shortly.
I have told him to call on
you. I shall probably be
sending some photos & home
by him.

There is no more news at
present so I will conclude
with love to all. Cheers!
Your affectionate son,
Jim.

TELEPHONE: VICTORIA { 8391:
8390.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

A.I.F. & WAR CHEST CLUB.

Citizens "War Chest" Fund, Sydney, N.S.W.

BEHIND ARMY AND NAVY STORES
AND OPPOSITE A.I.F. HEADQUARTERS

97, HORSEFERRY ROAD,

LONDON, S.W. 1.

15/4/1918.

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

1 1

My dear Mother & Father,

Your letters of 3/1/1, 5/2, and 18/2
all to hand by the same mail this
morning. I was wondering when I
was going to get your next letters.
As you will see they are much
delayed these times.

I am pleased to say they
find me well and still in London.
When I read them and noticed
the anxious tone in them as to
whether I should be sent back to
France or not, I am glad for your
dear sakes I am safe in England.

But there are times I assure you
when I feel as I did during those
few months before I enlisted. I had
a letter from Les a day or so ago
in answer to one I sent him to

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

A.I.F. & WAR CHEST CLUB.

Citizens "War Chest" Fund, Sydney, N.S.W.

BEHIND ARMY AND NAVY STORES
AND OPPOSITE A.I.F. HEADQUARTERS2

97, HORSEFERRY ROAD,

LONDON, S.W. 1.

.....191.....

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

/ /

wish him many happy returns.
He is feeling well, and up to now
has no word of going to France.
He never forgets to remind me to
hang on here in London as long
as I can.

On Saturday we played a match
against the Australian munition workers
at Chiswick. They had a good side,
including Wally Johnson and Doohy
of Fitzroy, but we won comfortably
by 9-11 to 4-1. Did I tell you of
the Sports we held at Bournemouth
at Easter? The opposing football team
could not get leave so we arranged
a series of sports meetings. I won
a 100 yards footrace and a 66 yds
swimming race, both from scratch,
and was declared champion. You
did not know I could run, did you?

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

A.I.F. & WAR CHEST CLUB.

Citizens "War Chest" Fund, Sydney, N.S.W.

BEHIND ARMY AND NAVY STORES
AND OPPOSITE A.I.F. HEADQUARTERS97, HORSEFERRY ROAD,
LONDON, S.W. 1.

.....191.....

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

/ /

The war is now in the most critical stage since 1914. We appear to be holding the Germans during the last few days, and the situation is more hopeful than in the first stages of the offensive. Germany is making a final bid for victory before America can get her full strength into the field. If we can hold them until then, victory is assured and an early victory too I think. But for America coming to our aid, the Russian collapse would have been fatal to us and our cause.

There has been terrific fighting during the last two days for the village of Neuve Eglise. The Germans took it, but we have recaptured it by a counter attack and are holding it at present. I sent you about a dozen Post Cards of Neuve Eglise in 1916. Did you remember you had

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

A.I.F. & WAR CHEST CLUB.

Citizens "War Chest" Fund, Sydney, N.S.W.

BEHIND ARMY AND NAVY STORES
AND OPPOSITE A.I.F. HEADQUARTERS

97, HORSEFERRY ROAD,

LONDON, S.W. 1.

.....191.....

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

/ /

views of the place when you
 read the reports during the last few days?
 When we left Armentières (Rue Marle and
 Bois Grenier) we marched through
 Steenwerck to La trêche, only 1¼ miles
 from Neuve Eglise. We were there for about
 4 days before starting our march to
 entrain for the Somme. During those four
 days Les was with the Entrenching Battr.
 at Neuve Eglise, but of course I did
 not know at the time. It was then
 nearly 2 years since I had seen him,
 so you can imagine how I felt about
 it when I heard he was there near
 me. He sent a letter by hand into
 my little bit of trench at Pozieres by
 a lieutenant who was joining my battalion.
 I was brought away a few days later
 and I did not see him then until
 he came to England just 8 months later.
 These places, all now in German hands
 once more, have therefore a very live interest
 to me.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

A.I.F. & WAR CHEST CLUB.

Citizens "War Chest" Fund, Sydney, N.S.W.

BEHIND ARMY AND NAVY STORES
AND OPPOSITE A.I.F. HEADQUARTERS

97, HORSEFERRY ROAD,

LONDON, S.W. 1.

.....191.....

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

/ /

I was ⁵ only reading my pocket diary of those days the other night. I have sent it home, together with a few little souvenirs with Jack Draper, who is due to sail for Australia any day now. Keep the little diary for me please and don't shew it to anyone except our family as it is by no means meant for anything but a reminder of my adventures in France. Whilst I was at La Brèche I got to know a French family of the name of Saïlen, very well. They used to tell me of the days when the Germans first overran that district, until they were driven back a few miles into the positions they then occupied. Little did they think the same thing was to happen after another two years! Can you imagine the feelings of these poor French people in their little ravished homesteads? How thankful you should all be that you are

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

A.I.F. & WAR CHEST CLUB.

Citizens "War Chest" Fund, Sydney, N.S.W.

BEHIND ARMY AND NAVY STORES
AND OPPOSITE A.I.F. HEADQUARTERS97, HORSEFERRY ROAD,
LONDON, S.W. 1.

.....191.....

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

/ /

6

so far removed from all the horrors of war!
I am wondering if they had time
to flee, or if they stayed behind as
in 1914.

The snaps taken at the Post Office
Picnic is very good. Ruby and Perce
are quite distinct. I have never seen
such a likeness as between Les and
Perce. It is very evident in a photo.

When Les met me, almost the first
thing he said was, "How like Harry you
are, especially when you talk."

I am enclosing a P/C. Taken at
Brightlingsea of our football team. We
played a match down there against the
Australian Engineers. I come out fairly
clearly and I think you will pick me
out. I have sent home my old Rugby
jersey with a red kangaroo on it as a
souvenir. Jack Draper is taking it.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

A.I.F. & WAR CHEST CLUB.

Citizens "War Chest" Fund, Sydney, N.S.W.

BEHIND ARMY AND NAVY STORES
AND OPPOSITE A.I.F. HEADQUARTERS

97, HORSEFERRY ROAD,
LONDON, S.W. 1.

.....191.....

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE
/ /

7.

It should now be getting a bit like Spring but it is still cold and windy. I shall not be sorry when the fine weather sets in.

I hope father's leg got O.K. again and Lennie quite well. You say Lennie was starting her second year at the Mid. Park High School. I did not even know she was there last year.

I am glad Percy is getting along alright at work. You say Percy is always swimming and could beat me by now. Perhaps so, but he would be busy I think. I hope we shall swim

together in the old baths again one day myhow. I shall be content to be

beaten, believe me. Well, I must close now

with fondest love to all, including Harry, Essie and dear little Lucre. Your affectionate son,
Jim.

DRG 191

C.W.L. EMPIRE CLUB,

ASHLEY PLACE,

LONDON, S.W. 1.

24. 4. 18.

My dearest Mother,

Your letter of 24/2 just
to hand today. I am
glad to hear you are all
keeping well. News is
scarce except for the
war, about which one
can always write pages.

I had a letter from
Les during the week.
He is still down at
Warrminster and has no
marching orders up to now.

Another Anzac Day
tomorrow! How the time
flies round. We are
having a Church Parade
in the morning, and a

2

bit of a concert in the evening, - otherwise work as usual. I daresay Les will take part in a few celebrations in camp.

There is a football match at Oxford next Saturday against the cadets in the officers' school. It should be a good wind up to the season. We have had a very successful season, - about a dozen wins and two losses on very bad days when it was anybody's game.

I like my new job in the allotments section. There is more work, but interesting, and the time passes quickly.

1 DRL 474 1/2

Tonight's paper contains just enough news to make one impatient to see the morrow's paper. The Germans have renewed their attacks in the hope of capturing Amiens. I hope they get knocked back hard and often.

The Naval forces made a very successful attack on Zeebrusse yesterday. This is the best news we have had on sea for many months past. The Australians did very well during the recent heavy attacks in France, but did not get much

4 mention ⁴ in the papers;
until Stairs' despatch
came out yesterday
people did not know
they were even in the
vicinity. They are now
mentioned amongst "the
divisions who saved the day."

There have been no
more men sent from
Daly. Since the first
week of the scare, and
things appear to be going
much as usual now.
You need have no fear
of me going back to
France. I am here as
long as the war rolls on
and a few months there-
after I am afraid.
Well, I must close now
with love to all at home
from Your affectionate son,
Jim.

Finance Section
A.I.F Headquarters,
130 Horseferry Road,
London, 12.5.18.

My dear mother & father,
Since my letter of a week ago I
have not received any further letters
from home, and consequently I have
not got as much news to write about.
I am now comfortably settled down
in my new residence, and I like
it very well. It is only about
20 minutes walk from Putney Heath,
a beautiful strip of country in
spring and summer.

During the last week or so
all the trees, which have been bare
and cheerless throughout the dreary
winter months, have burst into
leaf.

Yesterday afternoon was beautifully
fine, and being Sat. we had the
afternoon off. My pal and room
companion (a Sydney boy named
Fred Juergens) accompanied me in
a long walk across the Common.
We made up with a number of

small boys² and bought into a
some of cricket. The kids were
honored for us to play with
them, and played their hardest.

In the evening we went to
the suburban theatre to a spy-
play called "Inside the Lines."

You have no idea of the row
kicked up by the gallery folks,
almost making the actors inaudible.
The poorer classes of Londoners
are frightfully ignorant, and have
no parallel in Melbourne in this
respect.

Les is still at Warrimoo.
I daresay you have as late
news of him as of me, as
I suppose our letters travel
home together.

I told you, I think, that I
had thrown figures to the wind.
I am now a correspondent
in the allotments section, and

I write ³ 30 or 40 letters to the various States of Australia every day. I dictate as many as eighty letters a day to my typist, right from the files.

It takes about a month before one becomes accustomed to the work, and it is about the only job I have been in since I enlisted where I can show a little individuality.

I shall not be long in getting another stripe on this work I think, if I get my dues; but of course one seldom gets that in the army.

When the last lot of promotions came out and I was excluded you could have knocked me down with a feather. It was a great injustice, and I told the responsible Lieut. off in great style.

4

It remains to be seen whether he will nurse a grudge against me in consequence; probably he will.

Brian Rust, formerly of the Customs in Melbourne, is a Lieut in Finance, but in a different section. Darry knows him I think. I often see Charlie Dunn of Armstrong & Co. He is a Lieut. in the Engineers, and is stationed down at Salisbury Plains somewhere.

Crickets has started again in England. The long nights (it is quite light enough to play at 9 o'clock) are suited for plenty of practice, and England should produce the best cricketers in the world.

The Westminster School, about the largest public school in London, has an oval at Vincent Square right in front of our building. All the boys of this school pass from Cadet schools, and all

become officers. Every afternoon
they are playing Cricket or
football, and I believe much
more time is devoted to sports
than to learning. Looking
from my window across to
the ground, I am always
longing for my school days
again, and think of these
long, wasted months. Wasted
of course I mean in my own

selfish light, but I suppose I
am helping to vanquish old
Trity. all the same, and in
this sense perhaps the time is
not wasted.

It has been raining
heavily all the morning, but
the sun is just beginning to
shine again, and I am
looking forward to a good
long walk this afternoon.
After a week of solid

indoor walk⁶ I breathe a sigh
of relief on Saturdays. Now is
the time when it is good to
be alive. After months of foggy
wet week-ends, one sees the
sun, one is walking about the
streets one notices the Aust-
ralians basking like so many
snakes. Their faces are fairly
radiant with the joy of being
alive. On such days as
these we needs must think
of our sunny native land,
and wonder what our good
people are doing.

I trust you are all well
and happy. I should give
a lot to know you are not
worrying overmuch, and
getting at the time it is
taking to finish this ghastly
business and bring us back
to our loved ones. Best love
and kisses from your affect. son,
Dennis

1 DRL 474 1/2

Finance Section,
(Allotments),
A.I.F. Headquarters,
London,
26. 5. 18.

Dearest Mother,

Your ever-welcome letters of 24th and 30th March just to hand. Somehow when I get your letters, dear mother, I always get a violent spasm of home-sickness, and in a few moments my thoughts fly back to all my dear people so many thousands of miles overseas.

I often want to write to you just as I feel when I get your letters after weeks of waiting, - when I am almost too full of pleasant memories of home for expression in writing. Do you ever think my letters very impersonal in tone, - not like a son to a mother?

It is because I disguise my feelings with writing commonplace news, and outline my sports and work in great, big London, so that perhaps you will think I am not worrying of you, and that I am making the best of things while

2

I am lucky enough to be living in safety and comfort. I have often wanted to tell you how I appreciate your beautiful words of motherly love. They comfort me greatly and it is pleasing to reflect that one has been some comfort and little worry to the best mother in all the world.

You were asking if I still have the crucifix and other little badges and things I brought with me. I am proud to say that I have every one, and I treasure them very dearly, because I know it is your wish. I shall bring them all home to you some day; let us hope it will be sooner than appearances indicate at present.

I shall go to church and live up to my religion. I try to live cleanly, and though we are confronted with many pitfalls in the way of temptation, I have confidence that I shall be always able to resist them. Last time I saw Les he showed me some medals he brought away with him; he would

not lose them for anything. I had a letter from him yesterday from Warrminster. He is well and cheerful, and says he is likely to be here for some time yet.

I never hear from Harry now. The letters passed from "seldom to never." I suppose it is my fault for not writing more often.

I want you to keep this letter for yourself alone, dear mother, for I know what father is. He would sneer to himself, or openly perhaps, and so hurt your feelings. I shall write another for his benefit tomorrow. They will both go by the same mail.

How does he behave these times? This as of old? Believe me, I am always thinking of you, and how I could have been some degree of comfort to you in your times of worry, but for this unfortunate war. It hurt me much more than ever you could imagine in leaving home to come. I daresay you regarded me as thoughtless and

impetuous, but I had thought
 of it continually for months before
 I finally decided I had to come.
 When I get back I know
 I shall appreciate home once more
 all the better, for the old saying
 is wonderfully true, "absence makes
 the heart grow fonder." I hope
 you are looking after yourself as
 far as possible and not overdoing
 that endless task of house keeping.
 I suppose Ruby is a grand help
 to you now. I absolutely cannot
 realize Ruby quite a woman and
 Percie and Bert quite grown up.

When I think of you all, it
 is as I knew you when I left,
 Bertie a bonny little girl, Percie in
 short pants and Ruby a young girl.

I have to close now, dearest
 mother, as it is getting very late.
 Keep on smiling through your tears,
 and pray that God will bring
 us both back home to you safe
 and sound of limb to the welcome
 which we know awaits us.

Dearest love from your affectionate son,
 Jim

27 Chesilton Road,
Parsons' Green,
London, SW 6,
28.5.18.

Dearest Mother & Father,

I am afraid this is
going to be rather a
rough old letter. I have
come home early and
gone to bed, but now that
I am in bed I feel
like writing a letter.

Things are much as
usual in London.
I am still doing my
job on 24 days week in
week out without much
variation. The week
end before last I went
down to Bournemouth
for a couple of days.

the Monday² (Whit Monday)
being a public holiday.
We were fortunate enough
to strike two successive
fine days and had a
good time. We went on
swimming in the Eng.
Channel. The water
was very cold but the

swim was very enjoyable
nevertheless. Last Sunday
I went to an exhibition
of Australian War Pictures
at the Grafton Galleries.
They are very fine indeed,
and will eventually
be seen in Australia
I suppose.

1 DRL 474 1/2

3

The Germans have made
a further big attack
and tonight's paper
reports them across
the River Aisne. They
have achieved a good
initial success and
it remains to be seen
if they will be able
to follow it up.

I had a letter from
Les a few days ago.
He is well and going
strong. He has no
word of going back to
France as yet.

⁴
I think it is better to
send my papers direct.
It will save the doc. a
good deal of trouble in
bringing them up from
Westcliff. He is a
very busy man these
times at the Admiralty
and I seldom see
him at all. The
airraid last Sunday
night ^{week} on London was
the first I have missed.
There were over 200
casualties.

The light is falling so
I must bid you goodnight.
Tenderest love from Jim

27 Chesilton Road
Munster Park
London S.W.6,

4. 7. 18.

My dearest Mother fall at home,

Your welcome letter of 9/5 just to hand.
Am glad you are getting some of my
letters. There is no sign of the parcel
as yet, but I live in hopes.

I have some very good news. Leo
will not be going back to France for
at least another month. He has just
written to tell me he has not got
anyone to relieve him and does not
expect anyone for at least a month.

During the last few days I
have seen Jack Richardson and
Ron Gibson, both old U.K. S. boys,
and just arrived from Australia a
few weeks ago. Jack is in camp
near the town of Bedford and Ron
is a Sgt. in the Ordnance Corps and
is stationed in London for the present.
He is a Military Staff Clerk in
Melbourne, hence his stripes.

You have got no idea how glad I
was to see those boys. Wally Cosgriff
called in to see me yesterday. He

is over on leave from France and
 is just back from Scotland. He is
 Armourer S. Sgt. in the 39th Bns, - a good
 job. He is looking very fit and well.
 Bill O'Briens is working with him
 in the Armoury and is keeping well.

I am glad to hear Gordon
 Shirling got home alright. You
 might remember me to him and
 to Mrs. Shirling and the girls

I was ever so pleased to
 see Gerrie's snaps taken at
 Kavalgon. She appears to be ever
 so big, and a bonny little girl.
 Lenore must be a bonnyer little kid.
 She will think it is her birthday
 when Les and I get back. You
 did not say how you enjoyed
 your trip to Ballarat. I hope you
 had a good time. How is Auntie
 Kate taking the bad news about Alesc.
 I am writing to her by this mail.

I had a letter from Reg. Bennett yesterday. He was telling me about the celebration of Anzac Day. I think there is one of your letters missing because you have not mentioned Anzac Day.

Today is American Independence Day and a great day it has been. King George and all the heads were at Stamford Bridge to witness a famous baseball match between teams chosen from the U.S. Army and Navy. It finished up in a big victory for the Navy.

The Yanks are hustling some, now, and have 1,029,000 troops in France by now. 276,000 for the month of June was good going.

The German offensive has been brought to a standstill, and in view of the Americans arriving "in big lumps" the situation is rather more cheering than for some months past.

I went to the National Sporting Club last night. The Yanks have

4

arranged a series of boxing
events, known as the "American
and British Empire Competitions."
An Australian named Smith (just
lobbed over) won the middleweights,
and another named Eugene was
"runner up" in the lightweights, won
by a former English champion,
Seaman Hayes.

This news will not be very
interesting but I just write any
things come into my head. I
am lying on Putney Heath, and
it is quite light enough to write
at after 9 pm. I must be
getting home however as I must
be up before 7 am the morning.

I trust you are all enjoying
the best health and keeping your
spirits up to full height. Much
love to all from
Your affectionate son
Jim

No. 1. Command Depot,
Sutton Veny,
Wilts, 27. 7. 18

My dearest Mother & Father,

I trust you will not be very
grieved to hear I have left London
and am going to be a soldier
once more. You must know how
fed up and disgusted I have
been during the past twelve months.
It finally got unbearable and I
threw in the sponge. I am glad
to say I got away without getting
a crime against my name.

I have been here 3 days
now and am just dropping
into my stride. The life is quite
enjoyable and I shall be feeling
the benefit of the change in a
few weeks time.

I shall probably be just
leaving England by the time
you get this letter. I am quite
confident that I shall come
through alright and have no

apprehensions about going back.

Les is at present on a few days leave from London, probably his last before going to France. I am only about 1 1/2 miles distant from his camp and shall see him next Tuesday. I am trying to arrange a transfer to his brigade, not necessarily to his battalion. I think it were best to address my letters to my pal as follows:-

3862 Private J. J. Makins,
21st Battalion A. I. F.,
c/o Cpl C. J. Juergens,
27 Chesilton Road,
Manster Park,
London S.W. 6.

When I am definitely settled I shall advise you further.

I met Graydon Burston, an old U.S. boy, here yesterday. He has been over in England since October and is likely to be here on a base job for some time.

I received your large parcel the day I marched out from London. I think it was the one you sent for my birthday. It contained a large cake, sugar, cocoa, Cafe au lait, chocolate, cigarettes &c. and of course was very acceptable. I am very grateful indeed.

I had a letter from Dr. Gibson two or three days ago saying he had received some papers for me. I intended to have told him to re-direct them to me, but I am afraid they will never find me.

My latest letter from you is dated 9/5. There is a mail dated about 23/5 but I have not got any letters up to date by that. I must expect them to be delayed a while now. I must ask you again not to worry about me. I shall be as right as a bank. You must realize it is almost

I DR

two years now since I left
my battalion, and that in
time I did a bit more and
took a few risks. Perhaps
You will think that I do not
consider your feelings and
that I am inconsiderate, but
I repeat Lovelace's Lines on
going to the Wars:—

"Tell me not sweet I am unkind,
be

"I could not love thee half so well
Loved I not honor more."

It were ever so much better to
be stoical, and should bad news
ever reach you, bear it as did
the Spartan mothers of ancient
Greece. I cannot write more now,
so will conclude with love to all
you dear people at home. Believe
me, I am always thinking of you.
Your affectionate son

T DRC 474/12
John

No. 1 Command Depot,

Sutton Ferry, 6. 9. 18.

My dearest Mother,

The day after I last wrote to you I heard that Les had been wounded, but I have delayed writing on the offchance of finding out the nature of his wounds.

He was wounded on 25/8, and shifted from the 61st C.C.T. to the 8th General Hospital,

Rouen on 31/8. I am expecting any

day to hear he has been evacuated to England, and hope such will be the

case before the 13th, when I go on four days leave to London. I was to

have gone yesterday, but have delayed it a week on hearing the news.

I daresay you know by now, and I sincerely hope you will not worry overmuch dear mother, and break down your health. I have been worried a

great deal on your account, but of course I await definite news of

misfortune before taking anything to heart. I always look at it on the

light that it will mean a trip to

Australia for a certainty, and hope his wounds will not prove too serious. I shall send you a cable from London next weekend, when I should have definite news about Les. I had a letter from him on the 20th Aug. and as I said in Ruby's letter, the fighting was pretty severe although our troops have done so well. I cannot help feeling sorry to think you will have the news about my returning to France about the time you hear of Les being wounded. It is just circumstance, and I trust you will prove as brave as you have always been, and rely on prayers. Up till now we have been very fortunate and there is no reason to think our luck is going to change.

Things are running smoothly here, and my arm is alright again. I hope I shall have good news for you next mail, and will conclude with much love to all from
 Your affectionate son,
Jim

No 1, Command Depot,
Sutton Deny,
Wiltshire,

9.9.18.

My dearest Mother & Father,

Long before you receive this letter, which I write with a heart ready to break, you will have heard that poor old Les has made the supreme sacrifice for his country.

I have been expecting this sad news for ten long days and nights, the tension during the last day or so being almost unbearable. When you hear of the nature of his wounds you will know, as I fully realize now, that it is better so. I had a wire from London

this afternoon to say Les died at the 8th Gen. Hosp. ^{honour} yesterday. I have tried ever since leaving hospital (6 days) to get leave to get across and see him, but had not got a definite decision up till getting the wire today.

Now I hope, dear parents, you will take a brave view of our misfortune, and try to derive some consolation in knowing that Les died in the most

noble and honorable way, in defence
of a his country, fighting in an
unquestionably just cause. It is
true that we only realize the most
fearful and cruel aspect of war when
our own blood is involved, and
when sons are lost to their parents,
and brothers to sisters and brothers.

I thank God Lee had not a
wife and kiddies depending on him.
You must be thankful you have all
sons and daughters to be some
comfort to you.

I feel too upset to write further
tonight, but I shall write again in
a day or so, when I am more at
ease. The memory of our last
parting; the few brave words and
strong grips; ^{is} ~~are~~ too fresh.

Rest assured I shall find out
all the news I can and let you
know as soon as possible.

I shall not be leaving England
for at least a month, perhaps not
at all now.

Love to all from
Your affectionate son,
Jim.

If no S.S. of do not forget dear Franky no do to day
wind and rain in moments. am
a most shocking day here, a driving

I DRL 474 1/2

No. 1 Command Depot,
Sutton Veny, Wilts,
26.9.18.

My dear Mother,

You will see I am still at this depot, and my stay has been much longer than I expected.

I have not had any letters from home since I last wrote - 14th July, the latest. There should be more letters shortly.

The weather is still wet and stormy, as one must expect at the time of an equinox.

We have started the football season already, and played a match against the 1st Training Battalion yesterday.

Two 5th Coy officers, pals of Les, were playing against us. They recognised me, and spoke very kindly. Three or four other 5th Coy chaps lamented ~~for~~ the loss of Les as "one of the battalion's very best."

I hope you will not think it was out of place for me to be playing so soon, but you will understand

that I felt so worried that I was
 had of a game to forget for a while.
 Somehow I am always thinking of
 you now, dear mother, and wondering
 if you are going, or bearing up
 bravely against misfortune as behoves
 a mother of such a fine chap as
 Leo was.

I daresay you got my cable
 alright. Possibly you had a notification
 from Defence previously.

There is absolutely no news to
 tell you from this side. The news
 from Palestine and the Balkans
 is very encouraging, and the Western
 front has quietened down.

I shall write again shortly.
 Best love to all at home

Your affectionate son,
 Jim

I DRL 474 1/2

Paid Office,
No. 1 Command Depot,
Sutton Very, Mills,

1. 11. 18.

My dearest Mother & all at home,

I have just returned from five days leave to Ilfracombe, North Devon, with Gay Burston. It was at his suggestion that we made the trip, and I never having been to Devonshire readily assented. We had a "bonzer" quiet time, enjoying the magnificent scenery and the food food which is fairly plentiful there. For the first time since leaving home I tasted real cream, "Devonshire blotted", and believe me it was hard to take (I don't think).

We journeyed via Bath and Bristol, and on my return I spent a few hours looking around the latter City. I have some post card views of Ilfracombe and Bristol, which I shall write on and send within a few days.

The weather, which is so uncertain at this time of the year, kept fine, - at least it did not rain much. (It is pouring now to make up for it)

The visiting season to Ilfracombe ended in September, and instead of between 30,000 and 40,000 visitors, we found it almost deserted. We passed most of the time climbing the rugged cliffs which skirt the Bristol Channel at this part. From the cliffs one gets a fine view across the Channel to South Wales, and a bird's eye view of the shipping journeying to and fro to Cardiff, Swansea and Bristol.

The mine sweepers continue their patrol all day long and sometimes at night. Many German submarines have met their fate about here.

On my return I received your Post Card of 23rd Aug. and letter of 16th Sept. The latter is the letter written just after you had the sad news about Les. I cannot tell you how much I feel for you dearest mother, and I can well imagine the gloom the news has thrown over our home, just when you were living in such high hopes of his return.

I am surprised to hear that Les was merely reported "wounded". The first report was "dangerously wounded", and I have already told you of the fearful suspense I endured for ten long days. I think I told you I met a Middle Park boy named Maher who was with Jack Barry. He was one of four who carried Les to the dressing station. He said that Les was conscious and wonderfully calm and brave, until they gave him morphia at the C.C.I. I think that from this time onwards he was kept under morphia, and did not suffer the fearful agony which his wounds would indicate. I have told you that he is buried at Rouen, and that probably I shall be able to visit his grave before I leave for home.

It is glorious news this morning
that Turkey has surrendered and
that an Allied fleet is to proceed to
Constantinople and the Black Sea.

Later.

Jack Barry has just called in.
He came back off furlough this morning
after touring Edinburgh, Glasgow and
London. He got some further information
for me about her as follows:-

"Lieut G. L. Makin 5th Bn.

"This officer was evacuated wounded
on 25/8/18. Advice received by this unit
regarding his death is as follows:-

"Died of wounds 8th Gen. Hosp. Gun shot
wounds both legs, right amputated 8/9/18.
Previously reported dangerously ill

"This officer was leading his company
in the attack on 23/8/18, when he was
struck by a shell.

Major
C.O. 5th Bn B.I.F.

Copy of "D" 16.

"Lieut G. L. Makin 5th Bn B.I.F.

"The case Lieut G. L. Makin was admitted
onto this hospital on the 31st August 1918,
suffering from G.L.W. both legs (amputation
of right) and died at 9.30 am. on the
8th Sept. 1918.

"He was buried in the St. Sever Cemetery,
Rouen, on 10th Sept. 1918 Grave No. 6218.

Major R.A.M.C.
C.O. 8th Gen Hosp. Rouen

You will see that he was wounded on Aug. 23rd (not 28th as previously reported) This was the date Lieut Birchevaire, a pal of Les's in the 5th, told me, but on my saying it was reported the 28th, he said that possibly he was wrong. They had just gone through St Martin's Wood near Bray. I have a letter dated 22nd Aug. from Les, which I shall enclose. He says that there was a stunt on foot. Poor old boy, my heart aches for him.

The morning mail has just arrived, bringing Ruby's letter of 5th Aug, Yours of 22/8, and one from Reg. Bennett. Reg. has sent a Xmas parcel early in August. He is a fine boy and I am sorry you do not know him well.

Ruby's letter is a long one, well written and quite the best I have yet had from her. I shall answer it in a day or so. I am sorry you were worried over me not getting that money you sent me in June until six weeks ago. I have told you the Bank's notification went astray and that the girl at the Bank told me no money had arrived when I called there on several occasions. 35

5

Girls as a whole are most unreliable clerks and responsible for a lot of trouble in this respect. I am pleased to hear that Jack Draper called, and hope he will visit you again. Sgt. Kinsman did not manage to get home. He is at present in the Pay Office at No 4 Command Depot, Furdcott, and we correspond regularly. I don't remember Les mentioning Capt. Foughton to me, but no doubt he was one of his many friends.

I was very reluctant to cancel my allotment and was more than sorry when I found that you had sent the money, which would have obviated such a step. Still dear Mother if you can manage it will be better than you sending money periodically. I shall have sufficient now without you sending any more, and may be able to save some as well. I had no idea that the fact of Les having no allotment interfered with his pension. It will not matter in my case, as I shall not be in any more danger, and hope to be safely home by next Easter.

I have learned that Les left 31

a will in your favor. He must
have accrued about £180 deferred
pay. Is it not lamentable that he
was not spared to enjoy his well-
earned money and to appreciate
once more a peaceful life under
the old conditions? Harry must
have a good bit of his money,
and I suppose you will be
getting that also. I hope to
Godness you insist on getting
every penny of it too after the
way things have turned out. I forget
whether I told you that I wrote
him a long letter a couple of
weeks ago consequent on his leaving
you, and telling him all that I
thought about him and Essie also.
Whatever you do, you must not
be softened by any circumstances
whatever, and let him have any
of it. It would not be fair to
you old Les, whose views I know
so well on this point. I think
it is well for Harry Les did not
let back in this respect, for his
conduct would need a lot of
explaining. You need not mention
what I have written to him though,
for no doubt it would hurt his feelings.

I am writing to London to get a photo of Les's grave, which I shall send you when it comes to hand.

I have just had a note from Kinsman saying he is coming here today from Hurdcott. I hope he will be able to get here on the Pay Office with me. He is a fine chap and the best of company.

I had a number of snaps taken at Afralcombe, and should they turn out alright I shall send you some. It was too dull for much photography though. You mention having your photo "took" in your letter of Aug 22nd. I hope you will be sending me one.

The doctor sent you a parcel of white leather some time ago. It should reach you shortly. He was very pleased with your little presents, which I am sure he will treasure.

His room at Westcliff is one mass of war photographs, - all his soldier friends. Les seems to be his favourite and his photo and name are together in a prominent position. He has a fine enlargement of that group of Carrie Tubb, the Misses Fairfax, the doctor, Les, and two other officers.

8

I obtained several other photos of Les and the doctor on my last visit to Westcliff.

When I met Les in London about twelve months ago he got three photos of himself from me, saying he wanted to get some printed from them. He did not return them to me, so probably they will be sent home with his effects. They told me at Hdqrs. that everything likely to be of any sentimental value, which he had in his possession, would reach you in due course. You will understand that I am quite unable to get any of them on account of my not being mentioned in his paybook or at Hdqrs. I am doing my best to locate his trunk, but have not been successful as yet.

I got a "Bulletin" and "Argus", both dated late in August, a few days ago. They were addressed to Fred Juergens, (London address).

I am pleased. I told you to write to that address, as it is much the quickest and safest.

He sends them on to me immediately. You will meet many of my friends "après la guerre." Most of them have

my address, and I think they will visit me whenever they hit Melbourne.

I sent a bundle of music to Ruby from Alfracombe a few days ago. I hope it arrives O.K. I shall send some to Gerrie shortly also. I am pleased that both have stuck to their music. I feel an awful dud at not being able to play or sing. I cannot help the latter disability of course, but I regret not being able to "manipulate the wires."

I wonder if I shall be home for next University year, and if I shall have sufficient courage to start again? It is a matter of conjecture, I am afraid. I feel I should like to get into a business, fearing that the prospect of being a paid clerk all my life worries me a bit.

Did I ever tell you Les and I had decided to go on the land? We did so on talking of home one day whilst strolling in London. At the time I could not picture myself holding the plough handles or sitting behind a reaper and binder, but I

I thought I might install myself
 in the business somehow as a
 sleeping partner, feeding the fowls,
 or something easy like that. But
 I think a man must be born
 a farmer, like everything else. It
 seems to come easier to me to work
 with my head than my hands,
 and it seems to me I have done
 so through most of this war.

Do you wonder when I am
 going to finish off this letter? It
 resembles macaroni to me somewhat,
 all chopped off short and in little
 pieces. Still I know you are
 my indulgent correspondent, and
 will not criticize my composition.
 I worked yesterday 14 hours, being
 the last day of the month. Today is
 slack, and I am writing letters
 instead of working.

I must finish off now though
 and do a bit more.

Best love to all, and don't
 forget to keep smiling!

Your affectionate son,
 Jim

No. 1 Command Depot,
Sutton Veny,
Wiltshire,

11. 12. 18.

My dearest Mother & Father,

Today I have received your letters of 30/9,
16/10 and 27/10, thanks to having them
sent to Fred. Juergens, and although
I am always awaiting them and
look forward to them from mail to
mail, at present I almost dread to
open them for fear of hearing some
bad news.

I know too well what a fearful shock
you have received, and that it has
come as a climax to several years
of almost continual worry. It is too
much to expect a mother or father
not to grieve, but I sincerely hope
you will bear up against this stroke
of adversity and say as I have
heard many French mothers utter
when several sons had fallen
"mort au champ d'honneur," "C'est
la guerre, c'est la guerre." It is
enough to know Les lives in heaven
as surely as there is such a place
of God's creation.
I am sorry to say I have not

yet any immediate prospect of leaving for home. You may rest assured I am leaving no stone unturned by which I may achieve my greatest wish, which is to return and try to comfort you in your trouble.

I do not wish you to forget Les or the greatest of all acts of love and self sacrifice in laying down his life for his country, that we might live, but I pray that God will strengthen you to bear your burden of grief the better.

I often lay awake at night and wonder if in time we shall forget, forget those who lie asleep, who did not live to see that great day in our lives, which we have all recently celebrated and hailed with joy, but which through all those black, dark days seemed too wonderful for realization. I fear that Harry already has forgotten, or else did not, at any time, realize how nobly Les was "carrying on," never murmuring against hardships and bitter disappointments.

seen by others.

What a horrible thing it is to think of such discord in a family of the same flesh and blood! Consider a man, who lavishes the money entrusted him by a brother who is risking his life that ^{the other} might enjoy his life of security and prosperity! And then the thanks he gives, and the consideration he shows, to his mother when he achieves a position in which he can afford to go away, after being helped along when things were not too bright.

These are some of the things which must be explained.

They are granting us ten days leave at Xmas or New Year. I shall try to get over to Rouen if possible. It will probably be the only opportunity I shall get of seeing St. Sever's cemetery.

I wrote to Ruby, Gerie and yourselves a day or so ago, so there is not much news left to tell you. Bill O'Brien leaves for Weymouth tomorrow and will soon be on his way home. Jack Barry, Dick Maher and I bid him "bon voyage" tonight.

Much love to all
Your loving son, Jim.