

dear Cousin Marjorie,

I am very sorry to tell you that the "fiver" Aunt sent me has been blown up with my tunic. Tell Aunt not to bother to send any more. However, if she insists, tell her I am thinking of Blighty leave and that, as a lot goes a little way there, she had better please make it a "tenner".

Since writing you last, we "pulled out" from Messines on 31st Aug. at first we did not like Messines, but, by comparison with later experiences, it was not too bad. While in action at Messines, the "Order of Hard-Thinking Wagon Liners" (of which I am a member) had some anxious days. Fritz occasionally sent some over and snailt the usual slumbering serenity of the Wagon Lines.

On the 1st Sept. we started out for the much-looked-for rest. We stayed at Staples the first night; the second night, we "lobbed at" our destination, Merck-St-Levien, south of St Omer, a very pretty little villag with plenty of historic associations, and a very quaint stone Church perched on a high hill overlooking the village and the surrounding country. Fruit trees were plentiful and we helped ourselves. Altho' Autumn was in the air, we had many swims in the fine little brook, running through the orchards. The days were sunny, but the leaves were beginning to turn golden, and the Autumn breezes whirled them, one by one, to the ground. We were expecting to have a very long rest; but, dear, we came such an awful "Gutzer". (Gutzer is a word taken from Australslanguage meaning a sst-back and is accordingly much used by we "Ossies"). After being four days out, we were suddenly told to go back into action. It is awful, dear, to be so indispensable.

The return march occupied three days. we left Merok-St-Levien on the morning of the 7th Sept. First stop Flechin, the second Morbecque, and the last night we stopped at Dicoebusch. The concentration of Wagon Lines and Cams told us that something was doing. We made ourselves as oomfortable as a few canvas coverings would allow; but the following morning brought us a terrible blow - a blow which by it's very suddenness sent the Brigade reeling. Whilst the lads of the 26th Battery were grouped together at breakfast, a high velocity shell burst in their midst. It was an unlucky shot (for us), and was the only one of a series that did any damage; but it did terrible work, and by it we lost many old mates who had been with us all the time, and many others were wounded.

That night our guns and their crews went into action in front of Zillebeke Lake. The proximity of the "possy" to the Menin Road made it an attraction for old Fritz, to fling his "ironmongery" about. Needless to say the Batteries got more than their share, particularly the 25th Bty.

After having given Fritz a good "kick in the ribs", we received orders on the 21st Sept. to advance and take up a position on westhoek Ridge, in front of Chateau Wood. Here the Batteries were under direct observation from enemy balloons and suffered accordingly from concentration of fire; but the determination of the lads was more than what old Fritz had reckoned on and still the guns continued to fire, in spite of being put on their backs more than once.

Another advanced "possy" to the north, this time on Friezenburg Ridge near St Julien, which we occupied on 30th Sept.

A week later, we again advanced, this time to Borry Farm, which afforded the gummers their first opportunity to use the Telescopic sight by laying direct on Passchendaele Church as their Zero Point.

However, the positions occupied by the Brigade were very unfortunate. Unfortunate as it seems, our casualties would have been greater had it not been for Fritz's thoughtfulness in providing us with his substantial "Pill Boxes" to live in.

For a sample of the vandalism of the Hun, we were astounded at the sight of Ypres. Ypres? - Well, hardly Ypres, for all that remains are heaps of bricks indicating that houses - homes once stood there. The country between Ypres and the Ridges (for the battles were fought for possession of the Ridges) was the most desolate, hellish scene, the human imagination can picture. Imagine a large plain, so pitted with shell holes, that the holes are all joined together and filled with muddy water, all the visible land, mud, a shell-torn tree here and there, mud-covered Tanks dotting the plain; and haunting it all, the Ghost of Death.

The road over which the traffic passed, and ammunition was carried was a river of mud and slush. On either side in the shell holes lay horses saddles, limbers, and G.S. Wagons.

But I won't go on Marjorie. It was an unlucky "possy" for this Brigade, but the mates who have gone - that is what saddens the chaps. As for their endurance and pluck - well Marjorie, like you, they were

My

Australians, and we are proud to be Australians.

It was a bitter experience and we hope our fortune will be brighter in the next position.

Don't forget the "tanner".- Headquarters have already all had their leave, so the Batteries should soon get theirs.

Love to all,
Yours,
Egbert.

AMUSEMENTS.

A pleasing feature to the members of the 7th F.A.B. is the attachment of a Y.N.C.A. Officer and his marquees. On behalf of the Brigade we extend to Mr. Norman a hearty welcome and can assure him of the Brigade's whole-hearted support in the promotion of amusements appertaining to the welfare of the troops.

ROUGH DRIVING CONTEST.

It has been decided to create the above contest upon the solicitation of some of the older members of the Brigade. This inspiration is due no doubt to their keenness for humour, and we agree with them that the possibility for humour in such a contest is unlimited. The difficulties and pitfalls that continually confront the drivers are very numerous, but perhaps their greatest night-mare is the ditches that are always in company with the roads in Northern France and Belgium. Shell-hole country also presents many obstacles; clearing of gate-posts and ramps across ditches also gets a bit of lime-light in the daily routine of a driver's many duties. In a great many of these shall we call them accidents?- the driver is to blame as much as the horse.

The Brigade possesses some splendid horsemen, but we also possess what are known as "circuses".- their speciality is to do the wrong thing.-

Points will be awarded for the various performances as follows:-

Getting one wheel in ditch	(1W)1	Pt.
Two wheels	(2W)2	"
One horse in ditch	(1H)3	B
Two horses	(2H)4	"
Hitting Gate-post	(GP)2	"
Missing a ramp	(R)4	"
Completa capsize	(CC)6	"

AWARDS TO DATE:-

Dvr.Klaproth(27th)	(CC)6	Pts
Dvr.Harry Bott (107th)	"6	"
Dvr.Gordon Hogan(26th)	(2H)4	"
Dvr."Crowie"Watson(26th)	(R)4	"
Dvr.Tyrell (26th)	(1H)3	"
Dvr.Vic.Teasell(25th)	(1H)3	"
Dvr."Bricky"Stone(26th)	(1W&1W)2	"
Dvr.Stan Grainger(25th)	(2W)2	"
Dvr."Mel"Solomons(25th)	(1W)1	"
Dvr."Mucka"Frazer(27th)	(1W)1	"
Dvr.Pat Kennedy (27th)	(1W)1	"

Now Boys!!! Send in their performances!

Ft/Sgt Atkinson (107th) to Bill Mackie:-

"Do you or do you don't intend to do it?"

FOOTBALL.

The following scratch games were played prior to the Divisional Artillery Competition.

Results:-

Rugby Union:-

26th Bty beat 107th Bty	6 - 0
" " 25rd M.G.Cl2	- 0
" " 10th Btn.	20 - 0
" " 41st "	12 - 0
" " 9th F.Amb	13 - 0

Divisional Arty Competition.

1st Round.

26th Bty beat 107th Bty	40 - 0
" " 25th "	14 - 0

Semi-Final.

26th Bty rec. forfeit T. M.Bty.

Final.

26th Bty beat D.A.C. 23 - 0.

Australian Rules.

Scratch Matches:

27th Bty, 3 gls 5 Bhds beat Rest of Brigade, 2gls 2Bhds.

Second Match:

27th Bty 6 Gls 9Bhds beat Rest of Brigade 3Gls 9Bhds.

7th Bde team 3gls 5Bhds lost to 44th Bty 3 Gls 18 Bhd.

7th Bde team 6 Gls 2 Bhds

beat 5th Fld Amb 4 Gls 2 Bhds.

7th Bde team 3 Gls 12 Bhds

lost to 28th Btn 9 Gls 7 Bhds.

7th Bde team 3 Gls 5 Bhds beat

8th Bde 3 Gls 2 Bhds.

Semi-Final Divisional Arty Comp.

7th Bde 3 Gls 11 Bhds lost to

Trench Mortar Bty 5 Gls 2 Bhds.

To the winning teams of each of

these Competitions, Brig-General

Grinwade, C.R.A. presented hand-

-some silver cups.

STOP PRESS NEWS.

At Le Veau, (26) Wagon Lines

B.S.M. Harrison was gallantly

rescued on a dirty night from a

semi-frozen ditch recently.

(S.M.Herald please copy).

Capt Rourke's (27th) Petrol

oure would have been a success

only for the lighted candle.

Was it the Festive Season that

caused Dvr Jack Deer (26th) to

write "A Merry Xmas and a Happy

New South Wales"?