

Om 78-25/22

Pope Hill
29. 5. 18

Dear Mother,

Your cable of 9th inst with batch of letters of 12th April followed me right into the trenches at a place called Blain's Post. We have now been here under fire for almost three weeks. We were shelled while being landed in the Torpedo boat - the landing beach is constantly being shelled we have been bombed, sniped etc practically ever since. The first post this Regt held was "Blain's" where the trenches in some places are only 20 yards from the enemy & funny enough the position I held was & still is, connected by a communication trench with that of the enemy. The Infantry whom we relieved, bayoneted the Turks out of this trench & joined it with ours - then found it was untenable owing to machine guns enfilading it & had to abandon it, leaving it connected with ours, which rather adds to the interest of the position. One man who declared he was a Greek, surrendered at that point the first day I was on. We lost several men from bombs - shells & nerve racking things - which are easily thrown by hand into our trenches. The enemy have the best of the deal geographically & numerically - but thanks to the heroic performances of our Infantry before we got here, the moral superiority of our men is established. They embrace every

2 opportunity to get at them ^{the Japs} with the bayonet.
The Oland battalions (9th + 15th) have greatly
distinguished themselves but their casualty
list will stagger Australia. The whole of the
valley we hold is drenched with the best of
Australia's blood. But the spirit of the men
is splendid - especially the Infantry - whose
contempt for danger would do credit to the best
Regulars - We have had some rain - & as the
positions we hold is a watercourse, the bivouacs
in the gullies are even more uncomfortable than
the trenches on the ridges under these conditions
- so far, the saturated ground has not been
responsible for much sickness - tho' there are
great possibilities in this direction. There was
a nine hour armistice last Monday to bury dead
which were lying between the trenches & stinking
no out. It is said 3000 Japs & a good number
of ours were buried. Water for drinking
is scarce - washing forbidden (tho' small parties
are sometimes allowed to go down to the beach
at night as a great treat) & firewood practically
non-existent - The ridges round our valley
are something like One Tree Hill & covered with dwarf
Holly bush & no trees - climate good - outlook
over the sea beautiful

Best love to all G.H.P.