

Owen Donlen

Letter head: Y.M.C.A.

with the Australian Imperial Force

My Dear Jean,

you must excuse me for being so long in writing as I feel like crawling into a hole and never coming out again, I'm the miserablest and sorriest man in all the world since poor old George was killed we were like brothers, we were never apart out of the lines, they used to call us husband and wife in Batt [Battalion], so you can tell how much I miss him. I did not know he was killed until we came out of the lines either, as he was transferred into the Machine gun section a few weeks ago and I was in the bommers [sic], it's the first time we had been parted in the lines, oh dear Jeanie the way I feel this last

[page 2]

few weeks I wish I were gone with him. Well dear little girl I can just imagine how you all fell [feel] at home being so far away but we will all try and cheer up and pray to God that we may meet in the next world, everyone [in] the Batt thought such a lot of him, he was so good and kind, anyone that knew him couldn't help but like him and he had grown such a fine boy since he left Australia, he must have stood six foot and was nearly 13 stone, so you can guess how he filled out and grew, I can't realise [sic] its true yet, oh how I wish it wasn't, every line makes my heartache, no doubt [doubt] poor boy he is better off but it is us that are left behind that will suffer, all his dear ones that loved him so well but we will all bear up a little for poor old Georges sake, he wouldn't like to see all so downhearted, I am sure of that.

[page 3]

Adress [sic]
49 Batt D Coy

I am verry verry [sic] sorry to have to bring back old memories to all Georges dear ones at home but I know you would like to hear as much as you can about him, he was never so happy as when he was in the lines plugging at old Fritz. I'll bet he made the dirty wretches suffer this time with his machine gun before he died by what I can hear from one of the chaps that was near him at the time, he was killed instantous [instantaneous]. It was on the 5th of April at a place called Dernacourt [word censored], poor old boy was shot through the head, as soon as we go up there again I will do his grave up with some flowers, we are trasferred [transferred] into different Batt, now there is [words censored]. Well dear Jean I will close with deepest sympathy to all at home and with tons of love to all your sincere friend Aussy.

[on right margin] NOTE none left, 52nd became 49th - per Xmas card
[July 19 to Jean]