

1st Australian General Hospital, Helipolis,
28th August, 1915.

Dearest Mother and Boys and Doll,

I wrote you a letter some days ago, but I was so tired and sleepy I forgot whether I put it in the right envelope. There was nothing in it that I would be afraid for anyone to see, so if it turns up in a strange way you will understand I am on night duty. Think I told you. Have 250 patients, mostly convalescents, young Fox from Bombandii is one of them. He says poor Edward Williams from "Burrumbring" was killed right beside him, you know he is from Mackay. Everybody seems to be having sorrow and losses in their family now. Poor bright Lucy Wright I saw, died of pneumonia in Melbourne too. I motored out to Helovan yesterday afternoon. It is a pretty run all along the Nile and the roads are just perfect with trees on either side.

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I am getting used to soldiers now. Bugles all day and revellies, and every morning the hoses [horses] go by, miles of them being exercised, one man has four, rides one and holds three. It is the Light Horse. The men are over at the penin. They were so disappointed not being able to take their horses with them. The Sixth Brigade are leaving tomorrow for Anzac, so they will be marching past. As soon as we hear the band, we all fly to look out at them. They often pass on a route march playing the band. I have not had any letters for weeks now, in fact no one has, so the mail must be late. I have a night off next Friday, so Sister Hodgson and I are going up to Alexandria for the day just to have a swim. They have a lovely beach I believe. Have written Will Lee to meet us.

Page 3 parts missing at top. About the heat.

there won't be much left after the war is over, brown grease spots. We have all decided to secure a husband while we are over here, as the boys will be so few and such heroes, the girls in Aust. will rush them, and no one will bother about us. I have had several proposals, but none I like "my fis" with them that's Arabic for the end. "Baccsheesh" means money or present. I can't write the dozens of words I know. Can talk them though the natives Arabs and poor dirty Egyptians cry out to us "baccsheesh" and we say "Emshee Yalla" or it sounds like that it means "Clear Out. "Eshma" means "Come Here" and "stanna", "stop". "Messquish" means "no good". The natives often say

Page 4 top missing. The Egyptian men are such darkeyed devils with their little scarlet Fez on, they always wear them and they look at me and with great admiration but we hate their looks. They are mad for women and keep heaps of wives. I have not been inside a harem, but am going to, before I come away. The women are so pretty and wear flowing coloured silk gowns and sit on beautiful rugs and cushions. Well, Mum, I must end off. My patients all have the nightmare – killing Turks, and yelling out. They always do a week after they come from Gallipoli. Quieten down later on. It is so severe on their nerves. Poor chaps. I do think it is a shame they have to go and put up with all this for the sake of the war. I have made such a lot of friends but they might be taken. Heaps of love to you all, Doll and Ken & babies.

Queenie xxxxxxxx