

# WWI Primary Source

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Bushman, Paraparaumu, Wellington, NZ

Sergeant Garioch Thomas Clunie

Service Number: 11/749

Wellington Mounted Rifles

Served: Gallipoli, Palestine

Discharged 1919

Died in NZ 1971



Look for further information:

Papers Past ([natlib.govt.nz](http://natlib.govt.nz)) | Online Cenotaph - Auckland War Memorial Museum ([aucklandmuseum.com](http://aucklandmuseum.com))  
Archives New Zealand ([archives.govt.nz](http://archives.govt.nz))

*L. A. B.*

# HISTORY SHEET.

E.F. Form No. 3A.

Unit: *6th Squadron* Rank: *Trooper* Surname: *Clunie* Christian Name: *Garioch Thomas* No. *11/749*

Advice despatched to soldier: *3.9.20*  
 Authority to Headquarters: *5.10.20*

Occupation: *Bushman* Religion: *Māori Presbyterian* Last New Zealand address: *Paraparaumu Wellington*

Last employer: *A. Chilcott Matawai* *7.7.94*

Name, relationship, and address of next-of-kin (if not resident in New Zealand, insert also name and address of nearest relative in New Zealand):  
*W. M. Clunie*  
*Paraparaumu*  
*Wellington*

Service No. *11/749* Rank: *Lt* Name: *Garioch J. Clunie* Address: *Paraparaumu Wgton*

EXAMINED.

Home Service:  
 Years: Days:  
 Foreign Service:  
*4 129*  
 Total Service:

Periods of Service. Theatres of Operation.

In New Zealand: *79* years *79* days. Australasian  
 Overseas ... *4* years *127* days. Egyptian *1915/16*  
 Total service ... *4* years *206* days. Egyptian E.F. *1916*  
 Date commenced duty: *25.10.15* Balkan Gallipoli *1915*  
 Date finally discharged: *17.19* Western European Asiatic

COMPLETED  
 MEDAL ACTION  
 20/9/20

Wounds Decorations: *JK*

*1914/15 Hon 26.2.20*  
 BRITISH WAR MEDAL  
 The foregoing particulars are correct.  
 VICTORY MEDAL Signature:

N.B.—Do not omit to advise this office of any future change of address.

1,000 pads/8/20—12058]

Sick ... Decorations:

*1914/15 Hon 26.2.20*  
 BRITISH WAR MEDAL  
 The foregoing particulars are correct.  
 VICTORY MEDAL Signature: *G. J. Clunie*

N.B.—Do not omit to advise this office of any future change of address.

1,000 pads/8/20—12058]

Killed in action ...  
 Died of wounds or sickness ...  
 Missing ...  
 Prisoner ...  
 Injuries in or by the Service ... *File Disch. No longer physically fit for War service on acc. of illness contracted on Active Service (Malaria M.?)*

Discharge ... Provisional: (Date) Intended address: *Paraparaumu, Wellington*  
 Final: *17th May 1919* (Date)

Pension ... *A & B. 102 rec. 1.5.19*  
*B & P.*

ISSUE AUTHORISED  
 Gallipoli Lapel badge  
 Gallipoli Medallion  
 Date *30/9/16* *A2763*

*19 thigh*  
*via for the fem*  
*just 11<sup>th</sup> 1916*  
*Left Shoulder*  
*1916*  
*30.9.15*  
*19 dysentery*  
*severe*  
*12.18.15*  
*12.18.15*  
*mil. duty*  
*12.18.*

\* Strike out words not required.



## GALLIPOLI - WALKER'S RIDGE

*Following the unsuccessful naval attack against the Dardanelles on 16 March 1915, the military campaign on the Gallipoli Peninsula commenced with the landings on 25 April by the Australians and New Zealanders north of Gabe Tepe, by the British at Cape Helles and the French at Kum Kale. The various Anzac mounted units were not involved at this time, but the urgent need for additional troops saw Australian Light Horse and New Zealand Mounted Rifles regiments preparing to join the ill-fated campaign, albeit as dismounted troops as the terrain did not allow for mounted warfare. Despite being required to forgo their horses and fight as infantry, the Anzac mounted units looked forward to joining the action.*

*Arriving on Gallipoli on 12 May, the newcomers including Clunie's Wellington Mounted Rifles were within a few days subjected to fierce attacks by the Turks. Once the heady introduction to war had subsided, the troops soon settled into a daily routine which saw the Wellingtons holding positions on and north of Walker's Ridge, a feature that led to Russell's Top, The Nek and up to the enemy positions on Baby 700, while Australian units held the Second Ridge on the opposite side of Monash Valley and further to the south to Lone Pine and 200 Plateau. In early July Trooper Clunie received a shrapnel wound to the leg and was evacuated to Lemnos where he celebrated his 21st birthday prior to returning to Anzac.*

May, 1915

5th We got word that we were going to the Dardanelles dismounted. Cheer. OK.  
The boys almost went mad.

Zietoun Camp Egypt  
May 6th 1915

My Dear Brother,

I am just going to scribble a few lines to let you know the best news we have had yet. We are off to the Dardanelles on Saturday dismounted. We heard the other day that the Brigadier offered the brigade as infantry and we are accepted. We are not going to carry any packs I believe, just our mounted equipment and a few little things that we shall need. Isn't it good though Will, after the way our boys fought there to be going over to help them, my word they did put up a fight. I believe it was real slaughter while they were landing. I have not heard how Ben got on yet. I see 3 chaps out of his section of 12 men are in the hospital but I have not had a chance to see them yet. Anyhow I hope he is still going strong. By gum Will you can't imagine what a pleasure it is to be getting out of

this hole of a place. Only two more days here. Oh it is all right. Well Will, that is pretty well all the news I can think of here at present. How is Nell and the children and yourself all getting on. I heard that you had been having good weather there lately and having a good season with the cows and I heard that Grandad was coming down soon, so tell him from me that is a great pleasure to know that there is two of the family at the Turks and I reckon with a bit of luck we will both give a good account of ourselves.

Our New Zealand boys lost a bit over 1000. There are about 7000 so they lost pretty heavy but things won their way. How are all the folks about there. I hope they are all well. Please remember me to all. The third reinforcement are to stay and look after the horses, so they won't be there for a good while if ever they have the luck. By jove there are a few cold feet in our regiment. There won't be no trouble if they call for more volunteers for to help the thirds at the base. Well Will old Boy I can't write any more as I have six more to write and I have only got tonight and tomorrow night.

So with heaps of love to you all I must close

From your loving brother  
Garry Kai – Ora

PS: don't forget to write.

PS: how is the garden.

- 8th We left Zeitoun at 11 o'clock at night and arrived at Alex at 8 in the morning.
- 9th We embarked on the *Grantully Castle*<sup>1</sup> and sailed at 8 o'clock for the Peninsular. (Peninsula)
- 10th On our way. It is a lovely day and the sea is like a mill pond.
- 11th We passed through the Archipelago today. Little islands all round us.
- 12th We lay off Cape Helles all day and went up to Anzac and landed at 7 o'clock under fire. We were marched up a bit of a gully and camped for the night. It seemed as though our boys were just up on the cliff but it was the bullets cracking instead of rifle shots.
- 13th We relieved a battalion of the R.M.L.I. Nelsons<sup>2</sup> off Walkers Ridge. The Nelsonians they reckoned they were glad to get out of it.
- 14th We have only got one pint of water a man to do us for 24 hours, to make tea and all. So we are going pretty dry. It is hot and dusty in the trenches too. We have a terrific fire turned on these trenches at night. They are frightened of an attack. Got 2 fine fat gobblers.
- 15th I had some very good shooting this morning at some 5 Turks laying a line at 250 yards. I hit two and the other three got for it – got one sniper.
- 16th I had a very interesting duel this morning. I put my head up and very nearly had it shot off, so I got to another position and watched and presently I saw him in a bush just behind the Turk trench at 200 yards. So I got to it and so did he. We must have fired about ten shots each and at last I hit him and he

after myself with. I suppose you have had a letter from me telling you I was going to cable, but I changed my mind and quietened down. I still go out to the hospitals and to Cairo for a good feed, but I am just about as fit as I'll get now, so I shall have to look out and not get too fat or that will be worse than ever.

My word you have heard pretty right about the flies and the heat of over here and I can tell you it is very annoying as you can't sleep in the day time for them and you can't sleep at night for the Turks for I believe they are as thick as the flies but they are getting thinned out now I think Will. I have had as good a season as ever I had before for by joves I'll swear I have got a good few brace of Turks and by the row of the one I got on the bayonet I think it was a wild pig. It is better sport Will than chasing round the old sand hills after rabbits with a dog.

By joves old chap you are not the only one that wishes I would drop in to your place for day or two I can tell you. I would not refuse. Oh for a bucket of good milk. I hope your cows are milking well when I come back. Why I don't think you will need to go to the creamery for a day or two. I am glad to hear that the mangols lasted as well, you must have had a good crop all right. I hope that Grandad is better by this time and you can tell him I have squared up a little of his account with the Sultan I have paid off a few Turks. Poor old Ben was unfortunate he was hit very early in the game.

That is a nuisance about Trenthan camp isn't it, although that is an unhealthy hole of a place. It is so damp and windy. I say Will that is just about right what you reckoned we would be doing. I was a bit surprised I must admit but we saw a few Turks there at the start they were very cocky for a bit. They used to walk along shallow trenches with their heads showing but we soon taught them that it wasn't good for their health to show too much of themselves and I tell you they soon learnt caution. By joves Will I just wish you had been there to see how our boys fought for that 971, it was enough to make anyone cry to see them, they fell in heaps but they never wavered. Never thought of turning back and to tell you how they were in comparison to tommies what was left of our regiment held 971 for 60 hours and were relieved by two battalions of Tommies 1000 Lankshires 1000 Welsh. They were there about 2 hours when the Turks charged, the Lanks fell back on the Welsh and they all came down the hill in a complete rout. Our Wellington infantry were down the hill a bit resting and they tried to stop them but they hadn't a hope and the Turks had put in eleven attacks like that on our poor bit of a regiment before and were stopped every time. If they had only stopped to fight. The Turks hadn't got a hope of getting near them, and after all our boys and the Australians had to go back and take it all over again. Oh Will it was a shame. I do wish old NZ could only put about 100,000 more like these boys. You will have most of the main body back in NZ before long. There is 6 of ours still on the peninsulas and a lot in England. Some in Malta, some at Lemnos Alexandra Cairo Heliopolis all over the place.

I could have got home if I had wished but I would only be dissatisfied the whole time wondering how they were getting on and as I felt fit I would not go. If I get hit again and the offer is still holding I won't refuse it though. We expect

to be going back any day now and the sooner the better. It will be pretty cool over there now, I suppose for it is getting a lot cooler here. It will be much better for the wounded from this on. I have got a bit of a map here I am going to send. It is a bit out in some things but it shows very well how little ground we have been holding. I will mark the present line on it with ink. I am sending a post card of the place and whatever you do don't lose it and a photo of Clem and me, it is not too good but it is better than none.

Well Will old Boy there is not much news to be got out of this place, so with love to you all I will say good Bye with love from

Your loving Brother

Garry

PS: Tell em I am well and tell Donald that I want to know when he is going to start working for Kitchener.

Au Revoir

- 13th I went to Cairo.
- 14th Went to Cairo and Abbassia Hospital.
- 15th Received letters from Jo.
- 16th I went to Ghezirek Hospital.
- 17th Stayed at home.
- 18th I went to Cairo.
- 19th I went over to Heliopolis to see Jock with Clem.
- 20th Reinforcements 6th and 7th arrived last night.
- 21st I went to Cairo and Ghezirek Hospital.
- 22nd I went to Abbassia and said goodbye to Lofty.
- 23rd Saw Gordon Anderson and went to Heliopolis in the evening.

Zeitoun Camp  
September 24th

Dear Will,

Just a few lines to let you know that I am still well and fit and that I shall be going back to the front again either tomorrow or the next day and although I have had a bit of a spin at them, I feel almost as exited about as I did when I was first going. It will be grand to get back again and avenge some of the poor old boys that went down. Poor old Bill Lynch. He was a fine chap Will and when I got hit I sat down and was bandaging up my leg and sooling the boys on and as old Bill went past me he shook hands and said good bye and soon after he was killed.

Parade	9.30 a.m. - 12 noon
Lunch	12 noon
Parade	2.00 - 5.00 p.m.
Tea	5.00 p.m.
Parade	7.00 p.m. - 9.00 p.m. Route March

Meals:	
Breakfast	Tea and bacon sometimes fried, sometimes boiled.
Lunch	Tea and plain boiled rice.
Tea	Tea and stew, sometimes boiled beef.

Lemnos Island  
Oct 27th, 1915

My Dear Brother,

Just a line to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I suppose it will be getting on that way by the time you get this letter. I hope you are looking after old N.Z. over there, I would not mind being able to drop in for Christmas dinner. I don't envy myself on bully and biscuits on good old Christmas day, especially now I have no teeth. I had mine broken yesterday trying to split wood with a pick and the dentist tells me he won't be able to fix them untill next Tuesday at least and perhaps not then. So if I have to go back to the old peninsular without teeth, I can picture for myself a pretty hungry time. Fancy chewing an army No. 5 biscuit with ones gums.

How is the weather over there. It is hanging out pretty well here, we get a drop of rain now and again but not much. It is very much like N.Z. weather here. We had a few of the old hands come back last night, two for our squadron, one was my mate that was in the bomb with me when we were on Walker Ridge. He is right again now. I don't think we shall be here much longer now and the sooner we get out the better, providing I get my teeth in time. Well old boy, I am going to cut this short so with love to you all and the compliments of the season.

I will say Good Bye  
From your Brother

Garry

#### November, 1915

- 10th We left Lemnos at 2 pm on S.S. *Osmeneik*,<sup>3</sup> arrived at Anzac at 8 o'clock and came up to Taylors Hollow<sup>4</sup>.
- 11th We are making our dugouts.
- 12th Jack Robertson<sup>5</sup> and I took a walk up to Walkers Ridge and had a look round. They started making terraces.

- 13th Kitchener landed at Anzac today. We were going on with the terraces.  
14th I was down tunneling at Div. Head Qutrs.  
15th General Russell<sup>6</sup> called up all old hands and made a speech concerning his decoration. I went up to Walkers Ridge and back.

Gallipoli  
November 15th, 1915

Dear Will,

I just had a letter from you yesterday that was written on July the second. It had been a good while turning up but I suppose it is better late than never. I hope you are all keeping well as this leaves me. I am feeling a heap better since I have been back here. We have not been here long yet this trip, but by gum Will I like it far better than that Lemnos. That was a rotten hole of a place and I think most of the boys were glad to get away from it.

Things are fairly quiet here just now. A mate of ours has just had a cut across the eye from a piece of shell, but it is very slight. It was hard luck though he was a sergeant and just promoted to Lieutenant. I don't think it will put him out of action anyhow, I hope not for he is a very decent chap. I suppose you have heard that our Brigadier General has been decorated with K.C.M.G. He had us old boys out yesterday morning and made a speech about it and thanked us all for the work we had done. He said it was an honour very seldom conferred on any Brigade and he only wished it was like a big cake that he could cut up and give us all a piece and he would be content with the crumbs that were left. It was a nice little speech but Will he deserves all the honour of it, my word he is a fine chap, absolutely one the best and I hope he gets more of it before this is through. Well Will I have got to go to work again now so I will close with love to you all.

I will say Good Bye  
From your affect – Brother

Garry.

PS: remember me to all the folks and tell them all I am well.

- 26th We have orders to pack up and leave for Hill 60 at 8 p.m.  
27th The order was cancelled last night. Wet night. We left for hill 60 at 5.30 this morning and relieved 5th Essex at West Ham North at 7 o'clock this morning. Raining and very cold. No. 2 in support, No. 1 in line.  
28th It snowed like the deuce last night. I am almost frozen and all our gear is wet through. Not dugouts made yet. We were relieved at 9 a.m. by 3 and 4 troop. It is wet, cold and muddy.



27th General Hospital  
Cairo Egypt  
Oct 17th 1916

My Dear Brother,

Just a few lines to let you know that I am doing well. I expect to be out of hospital again before long, anyhow I hope I am. I thought when I got out of this last time that I was finished with hospitals for a while, but a chap never knows does he. It is not my collar bone that is broken, it is the scapulam, another bone in the shoulder. I saw the x-ray photo of it myself. It seemed funny that so many doctors should reckon it was the collar bone. I went through 6 of them before I came here. I was a couple days in the 31st General in Port Said and they sent me on here. It is just about a week and half since I did it, so I am doing all right. I have tried to get the doctor to let me out, but he won't yet. I think if I keep at him for a day or two he will though. It is still pretty sore and I can't move it about very much, but still I think it would get all right if I was out. He still keeps it tied up in a sling and bandages, but I take them off to write and I can manage quite well.

By joves Will, I was narked when I had to come away again, I had just been back two days in the regiment and I had all my own gear back and my pony ('Darkey') was looking as fit as a fiddle, almost as well as when I left Zeitoun with him. They had given him a spell all the time I was away. Done nothing with him bar exercise and look after him and then I had to come away and go through this all again. The regiment went back out to the desert two days after I left and



Clunie holding horses, his own 'Darkey' is in the centre.

I wouldn't be very much surprised if they get a bit more scrap out there too, but still it won't be my fault if I don't get out there in time for it, yet it won't be for the want of trying, anyhow for as soon as I can get clear of this place I am going to push to get right back to the boys again. I have never missed a fight that the mounteds have been in and I am jolly sure I am not going to start now. Even if my shoulder does not get quite better, so long as a chap tells them it is not sore they can't say it is and I reckon I will be out of this in a few days time and then I won't lose much time.

I reckon this is the first bit of real bad luck I have had in the army yet, so I have not much to grumble at have I Will.

Well old boy, give my love to everybody and tell them all that I am still as fit as a fiddle and intend to always be so and now I will say Good Bye

With fond love to you all  
From your loving Brother

Garry.

PS: write soon. I have had no mail for about five weeks. Kia-Ora.

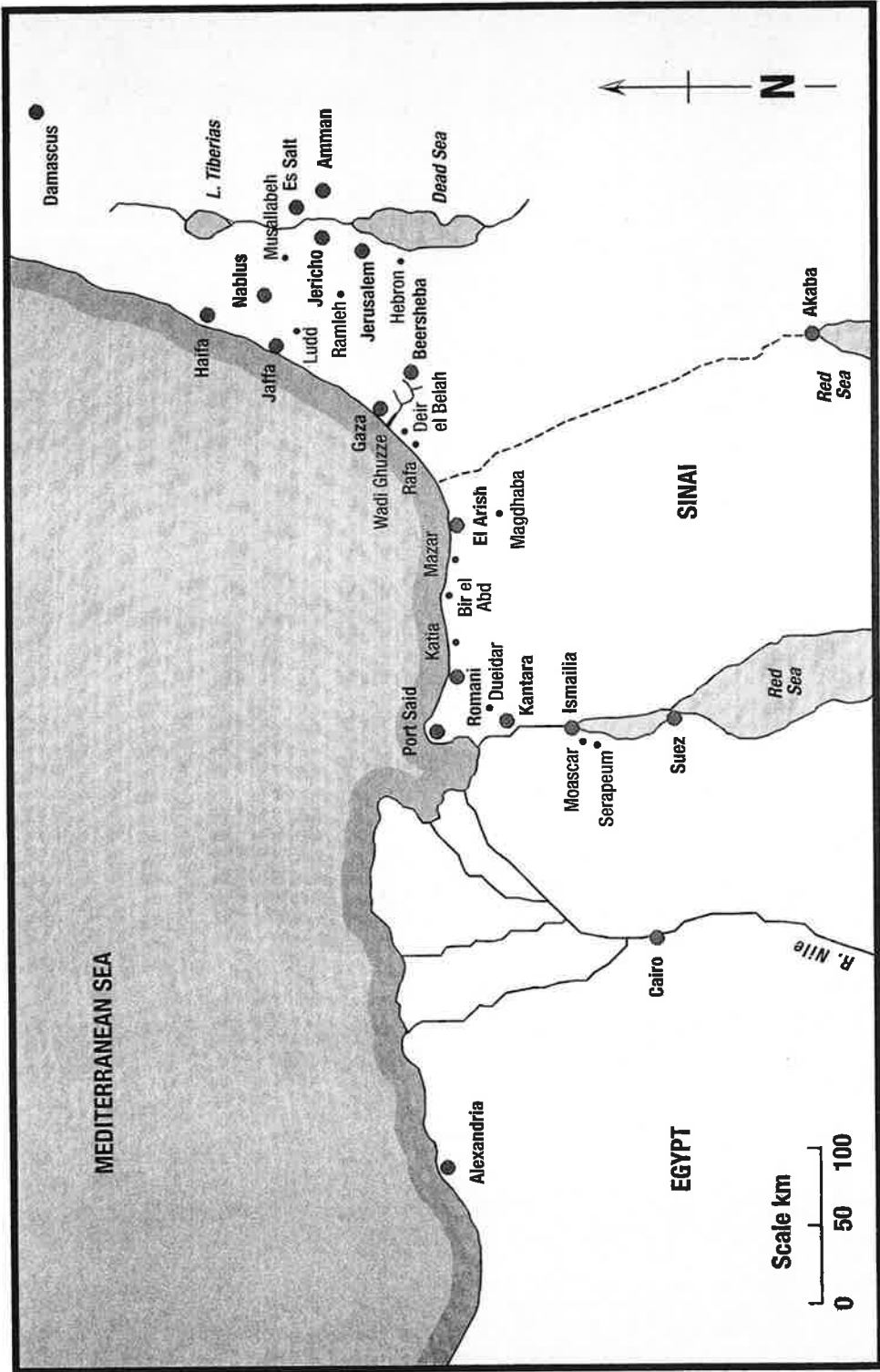
\* \* \* \* \*

27th General Hospital  
Cairo Egypt  
October 23rd 1916

Dear Will,

I have just received your most welcome letter dated August 8th and am very pleased to hear that you are all well. I had a letter from Edna and she was telling me that Nan had another baby. I hope she is getting on all right now. By joves I will hardly know the families when I get back, there is a general increase all round.

Well Will, what do you think of the war now. How long do you reckon it will last. I am giving it nine more months, the way our people are closing in all round now, seems like as though its getting towards the finish. Some people don't seem to think there will be much done during the winter, but I think myself that our people won't stop for any winter this year and that is when the pressure will tell on the Huns. By joves Will they are going to lose a lot more men getting out of France than they did coming in. I guess the old Kaiser wishes he could find a bit more neutral ground to scale out over. I would love to be over there when that comes off, I mean the pushing of them out wouldn't you Will, but need I ask. I often think its a jolly good job that you have a wife and family as you would be here too and I'm right glad you are not, for we can win easy enough as it is with the single men.



Egypt, Palestine and Syria

## 1917 - ON TO RAFA

*By early January the enemy held a strong hill top position at El Magruntein about two miles south-west of the village of Rafa which lay on the Egyptian-Turkish border. After a night march the Anzac Mounted Division attacked on the morning of 9 January but, by mid-afternoon the action had not been successfully concluded. Just as orders were being prepared to abandon the attack, the New Zealanders advanced from the north-east and captured the position. Some squadrons of the WMR were given the task of protecting the northern and north-eastern flanks of the main attack, and it was in this role that Clunie was involved in a minor action which resulted in the capture of about 15 enemy soldiers. The Rafa action which saw the end of the Sinai campaign was described by one historian as demonstrating 'the natural aptitude of our men for warfare of this nature'.*

## January, 1917

- 1st I was on guard down at the dump at Kantara.
- 2nd I went over to the hospital to see Jack and Will. Will came back with me to swingbridge.
- 3rd It was a very rough day. I stayed in bed all day and then I got 14 letters in the afternoon.
- 4th I went over to see Jack. He is going to Cairo tomorrow. It was a very rough day so I stayed in the bivvy and answered my letters. I also wrote to Evelyne.



Turkish POWs taken at Magdhaba on 20 December 1916.



Prisoners taken at Rafa, with Germans in foreground.

El Arish  
January 18th 1917

Dear Will,

I thought I would drop you a line and give you the news of our last bit of a dust up. It was a decent sort of turn out only very nearly lost at one time. Well we started out from here at 12 o'clock on the 8th. We went about 8 or 10 miles and stopped for an hour. We boiled up our dixies and had a drink of tea and a bit of a feed of bully and biscuits and fed our horses. At five o'clock we left there with orders that we would halt at ten o'clock for three hours at a certain place and that there was to be no smoking after dark. Well everything turned out as was said and at one o'clock we started out. We were told what was to be done so that we all knew our jobs, then our brigade moved out in a westerly direction and arrived about daylight at a place called Guba a few miles south of Rafa.

We collected all the male Bedouins and held them as prisoners and then our brigade moved right round the back of the redouts (redoubts) of Rafa and attacked from behind so that the Turks were completely surrounded. Then our troop was sent out on a line of outposts about 2 miles out to watch for a Turkish reinforcement of four thousand that were reported coming down to the assistance of the ones we had surrounded and also to catch any that were getting away. Well our posts were about a mile apart and I and a sergeant and two sections were on a post within about a mile of the sea. We were of course on top of the highest nob about there and we had lots of fun. About a half hour after we got there about 7 Turks came out of the sand hills and squatted on a hill about 400 yards away and seemed to be debating as to whether they should come in or not and I wanted to put a few shots into them to make them hurry up and make their minds for we had other things to do but watch them, but the sergeant would not agree. So we sat and watched them and presently 5 more



came round and joined them. Then one chap came up to us and didn't want to give up his rifle but of course a little gentle persuasion with a bayonet soon settled that question and in the finish he was quite anxious that we should have it. It was an old Martini carbine too. Great big lead bullets. Well when the others saw us disarm this chap, they started to run for it and we all got down to it and pumped it after them to some tune. You would laugh to see the pace some of them got on. Talk about world records, they weren't in it. Well we couldn't shoot straight enough to hit them so sent a section down to cut them off, which we did. We raked them all together and just then we saw four more coming along the beach, so two covered them and waited for them to come up and when we got them, they were four Germans. Oh how I would have liked to have drilled them but of course they put up their hands so we couldn't.

Well after we got back with them all to the post we were called in and handed these prisoners over to a troop that relieved us. We went back in and our line shifted out about another mile, so as to give our people plenty of warning if the reinforcements got too close. Then the fun commenced. Of course the fight had been going on all day at the redout and just before dark the position was very critical.

The new force were only 4 miles away advancing and our chaps had to get the redout before they got there or we would have been done. Well orders were out to retire that we couldn't do it when our brigade made such a charge Will and took everything in front of them. It was great. They charged across fourteen hundred yards of ground as clear as a billiard table with a slight slope upwards and although they fell pretty thick nothing could stop them. They were seeing red and the consequence was they saved the day.

Well we were away out on this outpost line and did not see the finish of the charge so did not know exactly the position, so at 7 o'clock, it was dark and no stars at all to guide us. Our troop officer asked me if I thought I could find our



A WMR trooper giving Turkish POWs a drink after Rafa.

Colonel so of course I said yes and off I set with my section with a good idea where to go and after riding for about two miles I started to listen for the sound of horses, but could hear nothing and after hunting round for about half an hour I went back and told the officer I could not find the Colonel nor any mounted troops at all, so we came in and very dicky to for we thought it possible the day had gone against us and the Turks still held the redouts and so were careful not to run into them. Well after riding for a good while we came across some artillery chaps and an escort looking for the captured guns and we helped them find them, then we saw some ambulance gathering in wounded and so we stayed there untill they came in and about 10 o'clock we left there to come back to where we had halted for three hours the night before and there we watered and fed our horses and turned in about 1 or 2 in the morning ready for a bit of sleep.

The next day our regiment moved out at 7 o'clock and went a few miles back towards Rafa and halted to act as a rear guard to the whole lot. Well about 9 o'clock our troop and No. 4 troop were told off to escort the prisoners from there in to El Arish about 20 miles distant. We had all together fifteen hundred Turks and eleven Germans and got started at last about eleven o'clock.

Well we plodded along very slowly and about dark we thought some of the Huns may give it a go to escape as it was very dark untill moon rise, which was about 9 o'clock. Well all the way I rode alongside the Huns hoping one would make a break for it. I can tell you he wouldn't have got far for I had a very reliable automatic pistol pretty handy. Well we got in eventually and handed them over to Tommies at El Arish about twelve o'clock and got home to our camp at one and put in the rest of the night in bed, but the rest of the regt did not land home untill next night, although they had a good sleep out there, the night were riding so it was 6 to one and half dozen the other. So after all she



Turkish prisoners taken at Rafa.



Turkish soldiers captured by Clunie's troop on Rafa beach.

turned out a good win for us. We got six guns all together and of course a lot of machine guns and thousands of small arms.

We have had a very easy time since then. We are in a good camp alongside the sea with good tucker and water both for ourselves and our horses and the weather is great. I think we are likely to be in this place for some time too as they are giving leave from here to Cairo, 4 men from each troop go in for about four days at a time. I think they get three clear days in Cairo or Port Said which ever they like.

But I don't want to see neither place for at least 6 months unless peace is proclaimed. If we are still out here about June and there is leave, I will get it but I don't want to go yet for a long time, I am full up of the place.

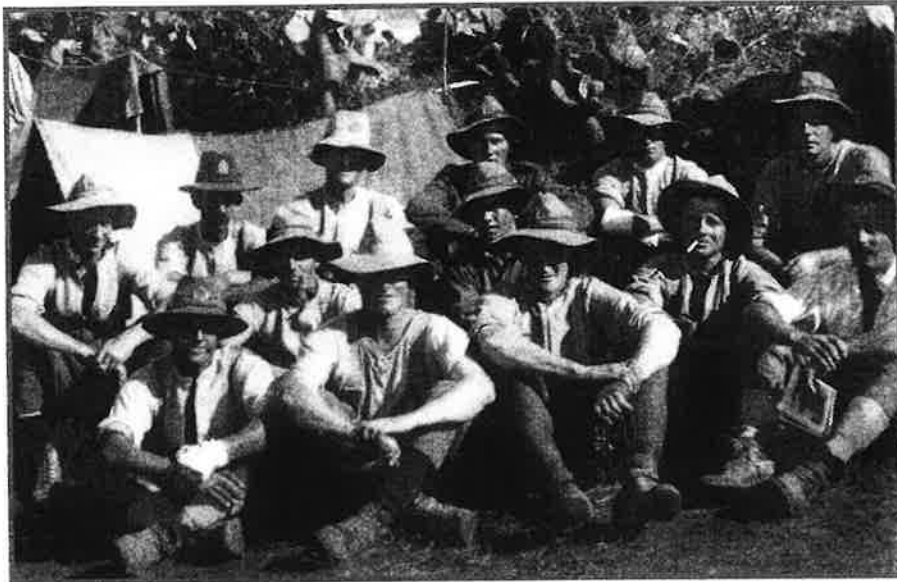
My word it was great to get back to the boys. Will it was like coming home again and I hope I never have to go away again untill we get home.

There is one thing I am not going to let football send me off again for I have given it up. I am too jolly unlucky at it. Well old boy I think I have written enough tonight so I will say Good Bye.

With fondest love to all  
From your loving Brother

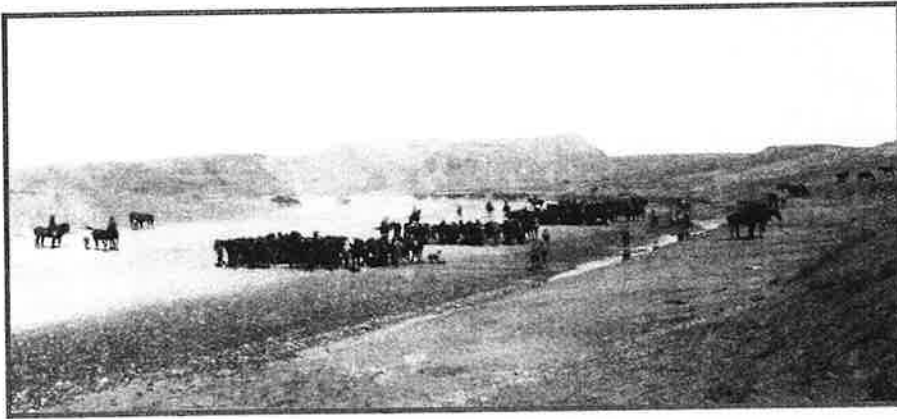
Garry.

PS: I hope you are all well as this leaves me. Remember me to all. Ben Perret and Earnie Howell both well / Kia Ora.



Two photos of Sgt Clunie's troop.

We have had a very busy week since last Sunday week and we are just getting settled down again now. On the Sunday before last we got up at 1 o'clock, pulled down our bivvies and had breakfast and led out at half past two. We came on up the coast for several miles and branched in onto the hard going and struck a pretty little fresh water lake. We had breakfast alongside of it and then went on to the



The WMR horse lines at Wadi Ghuzze with Tel el Fara in background.

waddie El Gurza (Wadi Ghuzze) and put in the day on an outpost. We left that at 4 o'clock and came back to the lake, where we drew rations and water and possessed up for the night. It was about ten o'clock before I got settled, what with issueing rations and feed and one thing another. Then at one o'clock we were up again and moved out at two. It was a deuce of a foggy morning and we had a very slow ride as the country is pretty rough round about here. Deep little dougas all over the place and when it is dark, a chap could easily fall into one of them, but after what seemed hours, we arrived on a big flat away out. There we stayed untill about half past two. The fog did not lift untill about 9 o'clock so untill then we could not see where we were. Then after it did clear up and we did get a look round, old Abdul could see as well as us and he started pumping a few shells after us, but did no damage at all. Then their aeroplanes came over and had a go at us with their machine guns, but could do no better than their artillery as far as inflicting casualty on us went. I could hear their bullets but they were flying very wide of us, then our chaps started and had a go at them, with machine guns and rifles and kept them off a bit. At half past two we started off again and went away round the back of Garza. At 4 o'clock we dismounted for action and started to advance on the town. We had not gone many yards when one of the boys out of our troop stopped one from a sniper. We got down on to a big flat and ran into their field ambulance. About 200 of them surrendered with all their gear.

Then we carried on without stopping up the flat towards the town and by joves they gave us a lively time with shrapnell and snipers. Anyhow we got within a hundred yards of the town and down behind a bit of a mound and then we got it thick. The snipers were enfilading us, they killed one chap and wounded 6 in about fives minutes. Two of my section were hit there so I thought I would get them out of it before they got any more, as I consider one enough for any man although, one of them all ready had two. I got them back to a bit of a douga one after the other and dressed them and left them there. Then I got up to the mob again and the fun commenced in earnest. We were only a few yards from a couple of their guns and



of course were bent on getting them and the Turks were equally bent on us not getting them, so a good little scrap came off. We were in a cemetery behind tomb stones and they were in ditches behind cactus hedges about twenty yards away and I tell you it was willing, only we did not stop there long. We fixed bayonets and got to them and some of them stood up to it too, but they never had a hope. We were too good for them.

We got the guns and some of our chaps turned them round, backed them up again. Port sighted them through the barrel onto a house where a lot of Turks had gone in and then they stuck a shell in and let go and by joves they created some dust. They tore the house down, and burst in another one and what Turks were not killed came out and surrendered. It was good sport. Then we got some more that were in a trench a few yards further on and as it was dark then we got orders to retire, so I skipped back to old Johnny and Alick and got a sand cart to pick them up and then went and joined up the boys again.



Turkish cavalry captured on 26 March 1917.

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Palestine  
May 5th 1917

My Dear Brother,

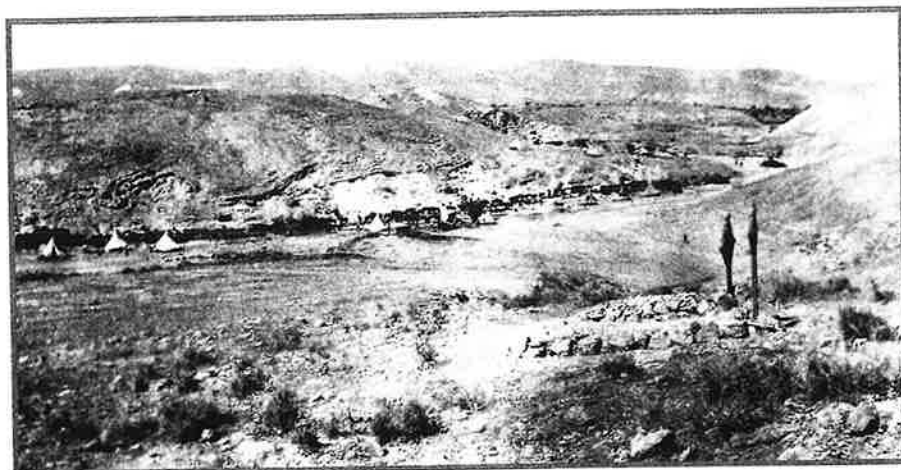
Just a line to let you know that I am still keeping well and fit and hope you are all the same at home. How are things going in old Pram? Much the same as usual I suppose.

It will be pretty cold there now. I wish it was so here. We have been getting it pretty warm lately, but not so bad as it might be. This is a great life we are leading at present, we started out three weeks ago from camp and have been going ever since. The first week out we had a pretty solid time travelling all night and digging trenches in the day time except one day when we had a scrap. So it was just as hard as the digging. The enemy aeroplanes were a source of annoyance to us too, hounding us about bombing us. Our Brigade was very lucky through it all though, they never got right on to us once and so we had very few casualty.

The second week we were much better off, we got more sleep although they kept us busy and this last week has been better still although there is any amount of digging to be done yet.

The enemy planes bombed all the Hospitals at Bela (Belah) the night before last and inflicted fairly heavy casualty, so last night our planes got busy and gave them some of their own back.

We had a great bit of sport out here one day when the Brigade was out on reconnaissance. A part of our troop was on a very isolated outpost all day, in a rotten position. The enemy could get up to within almost 800 yards without us seeing them and they did too.



The WMR camp, with two graves in foreground.

Of course the outposts as we were have to act as rear guard when the brigade moves back and at dusk when they did move, orders came out to us to retire at 6.45 and it was after that time when we got this order. The other posts had gone.

The enemy cavalry about 50 strong, formed up behind this ridge where we could not see them and had made up their minds to catch us and they would have very nearly succeeded only they made a mistake in showing up a little too soon. Had they waited until we came down off post and charged then they would probably have caught us fixing our gear on our saddles or else just coming away at a walk as we usually did, but as it was, they came over the ridge at the gallop just as our post was coming down so of course we jumped straight on our horses and got for it, even then we had to go a good way round to dodge them. They chased us about three quarters of a mile, when we got a bit ahead and dismounted behind a low ridge and ran up and met them coming on at the gallop about two hundred yards away. We fired as hard as we could load but it was too dark to do good shooting and I could not see whether we knocked any over or not. But anyhow they about turned and went harder than they came and we came on home in peace. They have very well trained horses and must be good riders themselves for they were blazing away at us as they came on and the bullets were not going very wide either. I would like to meet some of them out in the open and have a fair go at them. I reckon we could smack two to one up all right. We gave em a surprise when we dismounted and got to them while they were chasing us. They did not expect it.

Do you know Will since we started out, I had the first clean up that I have had yesterday. We have not been able to get much water neither for our horses nor ourselves, but now we are camped not far from the Waddy el Guzzi (Wadi Ghuzze) and there is plenty good water in it and so we made use of it. By joves it was good to get the dirt off, you know what it is to be sweating and dusty how dirty you get, well we were like that for three weeks and what with that and the whiskers we had on, we were fine looking fellows I can tell you. I wish I had got my photo taken before I shaved.

Anyhow now we are ok again, cleaned up and fresh. From the way things are going now I think we shall be stopping where we are for some time. They are arranging a big days sports for the brigade on the anniversary of the mounteds landing on the Peninsular on 10th of May and its going to be some day. They are getting some beer up and are going to have a wet canteen so I guess it will get a pretty good hearing.

Our regiment have got to go through gas tomorrow. We have been prepared for it for some time now with helmets and so tomorrow they are going to make a test of us. Our regiment go through the gas while the other two regiments look on, so it will be quite a new experience for us. Our people have enough gas shells here to kill everything on the Sinai peninsular but they don't want to use it unless old Abdul does, but myself I reckon they ought after the way he bombed our hospitals the other night don't you. It would do them good to have a bit of something out of the usual.

for a week or so just to see your dear old dial again and have a good old yarn. But never mind, when I get home and settled on a bit of bush farm, you will have to try and spend the first winter with me and what yarns we will be able to have after tea by a good old log fire.

By joves how a chap longs for the nice green cool old bush, out here in the heat. I can just picture you and I away in a camp with plenty good wood and water and tucker, slogging away in the day time and telling yarns by the fire after tea. By joves that will be a happy time won't it. It seems almost too good to be true, but it will all come some day.

I met Ben Perret today and he is looking well and wishes to be remembered to all. Well Will dear old brother, lights out has just gone and they are pretty strict here, so I will have to say Good Bye

With fondest love to all  
From your loving brother

Garry.

PS: write soon. I am going in for a better camera, will probably have it in about a fortnight. Au Revoir.

\* \* \* \* \*

Palestine  
June 3rd 1917

My Dear Brother,

Just a line to let you know that I am still alive and plodding along all right and hope you are all the same at home.

This is the second mail and no letter from you Will. They must be going astray somewhere but I hope they soon turn up.

Our Brigade is back in reserve at present, we have been for about a week and expect to be here about another week and then move. I don't know wether we will go back for a rest or up to the front line again. Rumours have it both ways, however my opinion is that we shall go back for we have been in the front line now for close on six months so it's time we had a bit of a spell.

They are giving a little leave from here. 40 men a regiment go away for six days. That will be about three days in Cairo and when they come back another 40 will go.

Canterbury regiment were the lucky ones in the draw, they sent first lot and so the next lot will either be from Auckland or us.

I am not worrying much about it anyhow as I don't think I will bother to go in, its hardly worth the train journey in for three days. I may go at the last when all the rest have been if it lasts long enough for that, but I am not in the least particular.

I have got a new camera Will, and its a beaut. I sent into Cairo for it about three weeks ago and got it about a week back. I ought to get some very good photos to send home shortly.

It cost £3 and the case 10/- so it was cheap enough and even so it was bought with foreign capital. I had a great nights gambling one night and won £22 the first time. I haven't done any gambling since I have been in the outfit. I had three pound ten stolen out of my tunic pocket the day of the brigade sports and as it was all I had I was pretty wild when I discovered it gone, so I borrowed a quid and went up to a two up school and I spun heads eleven times and won the £22. If I had got set up I would have had about £50 but as it was I was quite satisfied and came home. I was only there about half an hour all together so it was quick work. I have not been back again and what's more I am not going. I have enough left for a good little holiday if I do decide to go on leave, besides the camera so I won't go back in case I lose it. It was funny winning like that after having all I had pinched. It seemed like providence.

By joves there is some great air fights out here lately. The Huns seems to have got some new machines and they are a good deal faster than the ones we had here and so they got quite a lot of ours. I saw them bring down three and on each occasion there was three of ours to one of theirs, but our people have got some of the late planes again and are sallying them up again. I have not seen them get anymore Huns but it's reported that they got one all right this morning, anyhow, I notice they are not so cheeky as they have been whenever they come over now.

They are so high up that you can hardly see them and so they are not much nuisance with their bombs, as they can't hit within hundreds of yards of their mark from that height. We saw a fine scrap the other evening. One of ours chasing a Hun and blazing away, but they went out of sight and we did not see the finish of it.

There is a rumour going that all the old hands are going to get furlow when their three years is up Will, I am afraid it's too good to be true although its possible. There is not that many of us left now that we would make much difference if they bumped us all out and filled up with new chaps. There are plenty of reinforcements down at Moascar so its quite possible if not probable. Wouldn't it be just lovely to land back in time for next Christmas, even if it was only for a week or so, just to see you all again. It seems ages and ages since we left instead of only 2 years but I suppose its drawing near the end now. Surely Germany can't hold out much longer with the internal trouble she is having and our people forcing her the way they are at the same time. From recent papers the Austrians are just about getting a good hiding now too. The German heads have given up hope of defending Trieste though the Austrian Government has issued an order to defend it at all costs, so things are not running too smoothly with them. I wouldn't care to be on their side anyhow.

The weather here has been very rotten lately. We have been getting a heavy wind with blinding dust storms every afternoon and it gets on a chaps nerves. The mornings are all right though before the wind starts.



I saw Ben Perret the other day, he is looking well on it and wishes to be remembered to you. How is Nell and the kiddies keeping Will. I hope they are all well, give them all my love and remember me to all the folk and now I must say

Good Bye with heaps of love from your loving Brother

Gar.

\* \* \* \* \*

June 9th 1917

Dear Will,

Here I am again and have not posted the last letter I wrote to you, however I shall just add what little news I can rake up and send it along.

We are down at the beach (at Marakeb, near Khan Yunis) for a rest at last, came down the day before yesterday and by joves its decent. The Australians that relieved us came out from here and by joves they left their camp in a disgraceful condition. We came in here and could hardly see for flies and they were savage witches too, they bite like mosquitoes but we have got them fairly well in hand now having a general clean up all round the camp and so having as little breeding ground as possible for them. We had a bit of a bomb scare just before we left the last camp. A taube came over and let go four at us, but they went wide, two dropped about two hundred yards too soon and the other two about the same distance too late and so dropped either side of our camp without doing any damage. They got out to the camel corps though, he let four go at them and got right amongst them too. He killed 2 men and wounded 14 and killed about 40 camels, so they were lucky to get off so light after him getting in amongst them like he did.



Watering horses at Khan Yunis.



Troopers and their horses enjoying a swim.

There are a lot of chaps going to hospital from here with septic sores and one thing another, the flies are the cause of it, they get everywhere in a chaps food and all over the place. It gets on a fellows nerves you know Will. The weather is not bad here lately, nice and cool and fresh. The sea is great, we are swimming pretty well all day long and also our horses, by joves they enjoy it too.

I say you have misunderstood that in the paper about poor old Jeff surely, his dad died of wounds just about the time Jeff would be arriving home, so you must have got them mixed up.

Poor old Watty had hard luck chopping off his toes didn't he and he was a plucky beggar to carry on and win. I would like to have been there and seen it.

Well Will, you will think this a pretty short letter after waiting so long for it, but I can't feel like writing and there is no news, so I will have to say Good Bye with love to all

From your loving Brother

Gar.

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Palestine

25/6/17

My Dear Brother,

Just a line to let you know that I am well and plodding along in the same old way.

How are you and Nell and the kiddies all keeping? Well I hope. I suppose it will be fairly cool over there just now. Are you having a wet season at all.

We are having a much better season here than we expected, it is not nearly so hot as I expected it to be and of course we are not going to growl about that. We get a good deal of dust still out here but that's not as bad as it was, so taking things all round we are fairly well off.



Clunie patching his breeches at Tel el Fara (20 miles west of Beersheba).

Commander in Chief General Allenby<sup>3</sup> which caused a lot of unnecessary work, polishing stirrups and bits and one thing another, then the same night an hour after we got here, we had to go on outpost then straight on out on a days stunt at daylight. We arrived back last night at eleven o'clock pretty tired.

The weather is a good deal warmer now than it has been but still we have no room to complain. Its not nearly so hot as it was this time last year. There was some very heavy artillery fire up Gaza way last night. I don't know wether old Jacko had a go at our infantry or wether it was just a little bit more, as a present for them during this Ramadan or feast which is in full swing now. They usually fight after the feast is over, so they may possibly attack us, but I don't think it at all likely.

I wish they would myself, we would just about wipe them out. I say Will would you send me out a decent big ring steele bit for my pony. Mine will only last about a couple more months and I can't get one out here. You might also send me a rough carborundum stone as a chap always wants something to sharpen his knife with and can't get it. These people out here don't understand you when you go in ask for a carborundum stone, they open their eyes and wonder what you are talking about, as they don't seem to have ever heard of any such thing.

So I hope you will send me one out first chance you have of getting one. It doesn't matter if the bit is an old one Will, so long as it will wear for a while. These heavy mule bits they issue are cruel on a horse and I hope I don't have to use one on my pony. Well I don't think there is any more news for the present so will say Good Bye with tons of love to all from your loving Brother

Gar.

PS: write soon.

\* \* \* \* \*

Palestine

21/7/17

Dear Brother,

Just a line with this parcel that I am sending home with a mate who has been fortunate enough to land furlow on business. I won't have time to write a letter but am just going to scribble a note.

This camera is my old one and is quite good yet except that the shutter has got some sand in it. I would like you to keep it till I get home so that I can get it fixed up and give it to one of the kiddies.

The spurs belong to Massa Johnston,<sup>4</sup> the chap that went home last boat. I have kept them ever since he was smacked at Gaza and have not had a chance to send them to him before, so have taken this chance of getting them home.

If you get the parcel before he comes up to see you, you can give them to him and tell him I am sorry I could not get them to him before.

We have been fairly busy here the last few days. The old Turks brought in some guns to shell the waddy, but we got out and they got a pretty rough time of it. We had about 25 casualty's in the two days and I saw easy double the number of Turks dead the next day when we were out there so they came off second best.

How are you all keeping Will, all well I hope. I am feeling as fit as a fiddle myself. There is a fairly big possibility of this furlow coming off all right for 1914 men, so there is a good chance of my coming home this year yet. Although it won't be to stay if we do. Wouldn't it be glorious to land home for Christmas. I wish I had a good business reason. I would give it a good go to get home for that, anything to get a spell. I am getting pretty well fed up now although its no use getting that way is it Will. I am sending all my films home with this chap as he wants to get some prints off them so he will be sending them along to you as soon as he is finished with them.



Bivouac at Abasan el Kebir, north-west of Tel el Fara.

I think I told you about young Clem going home didn't I in the last letter. I would not mind being with him in some ways and yet the end is so near now Will that I think I would just as soon stay and see the job right through.

The old Huns are getting all the scrap knocked out them now just as fast as our boys in France can go and it won't be very long before the German people and soldiers both see that their game is up and then for the happy day.

There are a lot of rumours flying round about Turkey wanting peace now Will and I really think there is something in them, they have been very constant now for some time and there is usually something behind them.

The prisoners that we got out here on the 14th of last month all said that Turkey was finished and they reckon its only the German influence that is keeping them going and from all late reports the Germans are withdrawing all their men from out here and I believe that's true Will. They need them too much in their own country now to leave them out here and besides the Turk are full up of them too. Did I tell you about them firing on the Huns during the last attack they made out here? By jove it was great Will the old Huns were attacking in the front with the Turks on their flank and about 9 o'clock the old Jacko started firing on the Huns who of course had to get out. There was a great row among the Hun prisoners that we caught over it, by jove they were going crook and I guess they had good reason too. That sort of thing you know Will all goes to prove that the Germans are loseing this sway over the Turks and so it won't be very long before the whole thing falls through. I reckon our next attack on this front will open someone's eyes and it will push the Turks just about out of the hunt all together.

Well Will I have got to go and do some toil so Good Bye for the present and oceans of love to Nell and the kiddies.

From your loving Brother

Garry.

25th I am appointed intelligence sergeant for squadron. Put in all enemy dispositions on map.

26th Went out to Massalaba this morning with Coleman<sup>6</sup> and Harelley and had a good look round positions. Got back at 1300.

29th Went out to Auja bridge head at 0600 with Mjr, Perrett, Scholer and Evans. Got back at 1400.

#### September 1918

1st Went out to positions of assembly in case of enemy attack.

2nd Very strong rumours of a move on the 4th.

5th We moved out at 1930 and cam back to our old possie by the Auja in Waddy el Abeid, got settled by 2130.





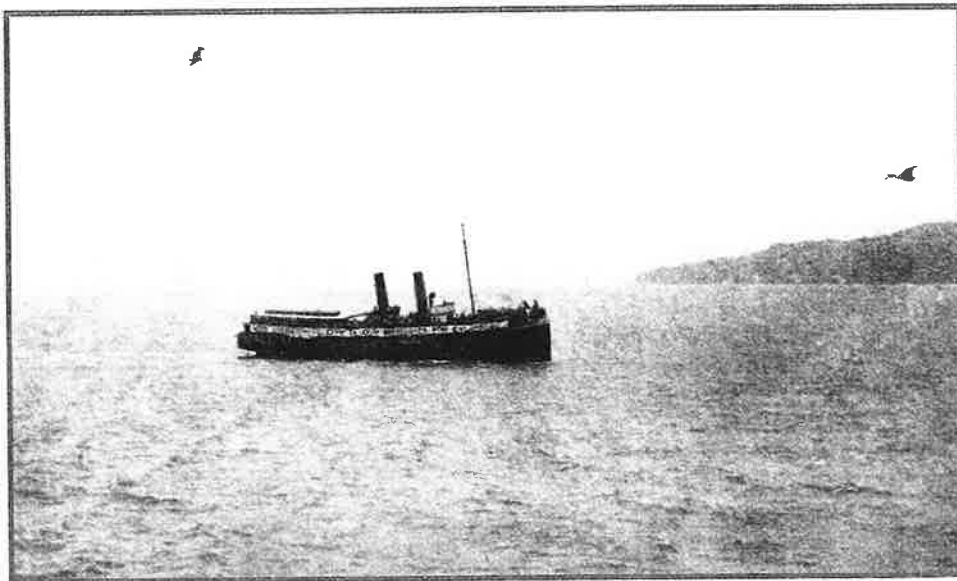
Horsemen of the WMR riding through a village in Palestine.

## EPILOGUE

After his return from the Great War in April 1919, Garry Clunie applied for a Returned Serviceman's loan to buy a farm on Rimu Road, Pararaumu. He married Doris Connor and together they raised a family of eight children.

During the harsh Depression years which followed the War, farmers received very low prices for their milk. To make ends meet, Gary grew vegetables for the Wellington market and also worked as a contractor for the Hutt County Council doing draining and road making. He later became an overseer for the Council. He often smoked a pipe which men in his gang used as a 'Mood Indicator' - they would say "watch out if the pipe is straight out."

He worked very hard to provide for his family, often having only a few hours sleep and going out on a moonlight night to dig stumps and rushes out of the peat land, thereby improving the farm. His family recall him becoming angry when hearing of farmers who, during the difficult Depression years, fell behind with their payments and were being put off their farms. Garry threatened to shoot anyone who came to do such to him, much to Dorrie's dismay. He said "I went and fought for the home and family I didn't have and now they want to take the one I have away from me." However, he managed to keep the bank happy and kept his farm. He always had a wonderful vegetable garden and for some years grew gladioli for the market and local florists.



'The ferry steamer *Duchess* with school children on board welcoming us in to Wellington, April 16th 1919.'

Garry became interested in politics during the Depression and was impressed by Major Douglas who was visiting New Zealand speaking about the Douglas Social Credit Policy. Garry became very involved in the party and spent much of his time campaigning and educating the public about the monetary reform policies of the Social Credit Political League.

He and Doris celebrated their Golden Wedding in July 1969 and he remained involved in various community activities until shortly before his death on 19 February 1971. His family said he did not speak much about his wartime experiences, except for when some of his mates visited, when they often shared some of their more humorous memories. One time when they were in Egypt they saw a poor little donkey straining to pull a heavily loaded cart. A man was whipping it along, so Garry and his mates took the donkey out of the shafts then put the owner in between the shafts making him pull the cart!

It was very sad during his last few days: it seemed that those war years were tormenting him and he would become very agitated saying that he could see the Turks coming over the hill at them. He was distressed to think of the lives he had taken - saying they were someone's son, husband or father. When the Second World War broke out Garry never again went to an Anzac service - he said he had gone to fight the war to end all wars, but realised that while man's lust for power and greed continue, there will be wars, and the futility of it all disappointed him.