



PRG 244/9 Letters from Len Hussey to Wally Dodd 1915-18

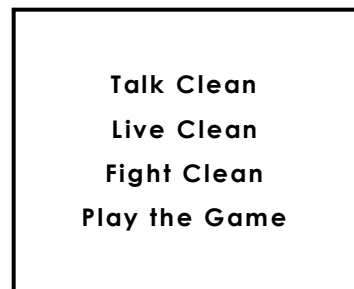
Transcribed by Ernest Roe, Volunteer at the State Library of South Australia, 2013

[This series is comprised of letters written by Len Hussey to his friend Wally Dodd between 1 September 1915 and May 1918. They describe his training at Morphettville Army Camp, his service on the Western Front and his convalescence in England.]

4197 Leonard Hussey, a driver, enlisted on 23 August 1915 aged 40. As a member of the 50th Battalion he served in France, suffering considerably from frostbite and scabies. Hussey returned to Australia in 1919.

Note: "4197" refers to Pte Hussey's allotted regimental number as a soldier of the First Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.)]

[Letterhead and slogan appearing at top of three separate sheets]



Adelaide Y. M. C. A. Army Department

Morphettville Camp
September 1. 1915

Dear Wally

It has been nothing but bustle & hurry since I said good bye to you at Elliot; First of all I went to the Camp at the Exhibition Oval first & had a good time. Of course the life is very different to what one has been used to but the discipline is perfectly necessary. There were about two thousand of us at the Exhibition, we used to get up at 6-15 A.M. have a big pannican of coffee after a nice shower bath (optional) then physical drill for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour after which, breakfast; 9 oclock a nice march, procession about a mile long to North Parklands for drill $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour drill smoko then more drill & a good old march home, wash a bit of a rest & dinner. 2 P.M. Parade for another march & drill except once a week when we were marched to the City baths for a nice hot shower we have tea at 5 P.M. when we are free until 9.30 P.M. unless special leave or on duty as guards or Picqueting in the city. The routine down here is very similar only we get a rout march to Glenelg every morning. Last Monday we were trained from Adelaide to here. C & D Companies, it took six Carriages to bring us down. I like the work very much there is a great deal to remember & one has to keep ones wits about because it is far from play but does one a deal of good I have a nice pal with me from the Commercial bank. I forgot to tell you that when we/ were at the Exhibition we slept in the Milch Cow stalls & here we are sleeping in the Derby Stand, Denny M.P. is sharing a bunk with my nephew in the stud sheep pens at the Exhibition he is a good sport. I do hope I shall be strong enough to go right through the Campaign & that nothing stops me now I should be dreadfully disappointed



I must close up now because there are about 100 fellows trying to get to the table to write. The Y. M. C. A. is very good they provide this stationary for nix. Kind Regards to M^{rs} Dodd & Alfie, I do hope old pal that you are feeling a bit better & will soon be right again.

Yours

Len Hussey.

Address

Private L Hussey

12th Section

11th Platoon

2nd Depot Battalion

C Company.

Morphetville.

Shall be glad to hear from you.

[Appended is an official "Adelaide Y.M.C.A. Army Dept. Tents" envelope, addressed as follows]

M^r Walter J. Dodd

Port Elliot

[New letter]

[A printed sepia and pink folded letter card, featuring an Australian One Penny postage stamp featuring the head of King George V; postmarked illegibly, presumably from Adelaide]

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

LETTER CARD

Additional postage must be affixed if this card is addressed to any place outside the Commonwealth of Australia to which the penny rate of postage does not apply.

[The letter card is addressed in handwriting as follows]

Mr Wally Dodd

Port Elliot

[Appearing on folded rear side is an oval shaped photograph of a troop ship with the caption]

TROOPS on board TRANSPORT

[A brief handwritten message appears on the inside of the letter card as follows]

Jan - /16

GoodBye Wally old man. Am off on Tuesday per "Borda" My address will be

4197 \Driver/ Pte L. Hussey

~~13th Rein~~ 10th Batt

A.I.F.

Cairo

Egypt

Best Wishes to Mrs Dodd & Alfie - also yourself from

Len Hussey



[Annotation written to the right in brackets]

{Transport Section}

{D Company}

{50th Battalion}

{13th Brigade}

[Annotation written at rightangles to the left in pencil]

Sniper R S Haddon

2571 B.

10th Batt

3rd Brig

A.I.F.

France

[New letter]

Military Camp Heliopolis Egypt

Feb 18th 1916

Dear old Wally,

I have just been wondering how you are getting on & it reminded me that I have not written to you since leaving Australia. I hope before you get this that you will have seen the diary letter that I sent to George with instructions re my aunt (M^{rs} Beeby) letting you read it. I thought perhaps it would interest you a bit. Any letters that I send you must be excused as far as the writing is concerned as we have not the facilities for writing that we had at home it is mostly done in a squatting position with the pad upon our knees as I have it now. You will understand that I am not able to tell you much or anything about what we are doing with regard to the war, but I might possibly make some letters interesting with an account of my private life.

Egypt is a great contrast to dear old South Australia. The only English people we see are Nurses & Soldiers the other part of the population is decidedly Cosmopolitan, Arabs, Egyptians, French, Nubians, & all the dirt & scum of other nations. The niggers are very funny in many ways they get hold of some of our sayings I would like to tell you some but could not very well put it in a letter. I saw on a restaurant the other day "Dinkum Eatup" & a menu paper in another This Joint is dinkum

[Page] 2

special prices for the Glorious soldiers. The journey from Port Suez to Cairo is very similar to that from Quorn to Hergot Springs. It is about a ten hours trip. Last Sunday I went for a lovely trip about 125 of us went for an excursion trip to the Nile we had 25 cabs & a guide, we visited several very old mosques & saw some wonderful Tombs of ancient Kings & Sultans then we went into the Coptic Church, here it is supposed that Joseph & Mary hid with Jesus when they fled into Egypt from Herod we also saw the place where Abraham was supposed to have offered Isaac. Then we went into a Jewish Synagogue where we saw a service in progress it is presumed that Moses & Aaron worshipped in this Church then we drove on to the River Nile & saw the place where Moses was supposed to have been found in the rushes, a red tower marks the place, we also saw Pharaoh's palace. Then we had a lovely drive back to Cairo on the way we saw the Khedive's palace it is a beautiful place all surrounded with Guards & two mounted Guards at the entrance gates, they looked superb,

We also saw the French Consul out driving in his carriage with a footman dressed in gold livery of course not real gold, but gilt, it was a grand sight. We saw two Arab wedding funerals & one wedding—



[Page] 3

they were very different from those one sees in South Australia. We had a very good trip in the boat, but it got very monotonous towards the end we were one day short of four weeks. After we left Western Australia we did not see land for about 16 days it seemed a long time. I have just been talking to a fellow who worked on Narrung his name is Perce Bennetts. I asked him if he knew you & he said he remembered you as a footballer, Do you remember him? All my poor old pals have just gone on a long route march with full pack up 60¾ lbs to carry. I have just missed it by having been appointed hut policeman. It is a duty that we have to take in turns week about or until you we/ are relieved. The hut policeman is in charge of a certain hut & is responsible for all articles left during the absence of men on parade. Please remember me very kindly to M^{rs} Dodd & Alfie also M^r Keen & any friends. I should like to hear very soon that you have quite recovered & when I get back hope to see you tearing along on your bike again. I saw Bob Sladden the other evening have not run across Vic Tugwell yet. Try & drop me a line sometimes I shall be delighted to get a letter I hope I am spared to get back & see you all again & then I can tell you some of my experiences. I must close now old chap with best wishes from
Your old pal Len Hussey

[Written at right angles in the centre fold of the reverse side of page 3]

Mr W J Dodd

[Written at right angles in the upper right fold of the reverse side of page 3]

later

Have just met Vic Tugwell he looks very well You could tell his people

[Appended are two printed sepia coloured envelopes, postmarked and addressed respectively as follows]

[Crown Copyright Reserved.]

ACTIVE SERVICE

This envelope must not be used for coin or valuables. It cannot be accepted for registration.

NOTE:-

Correspondence in this envelope need not be censored Regimentally. The contents are liable to examination at the Base.

The following Certificate must be signed by the writer:-

I certify on my honour that the contents of this envelope refer to nothing but private and family matters.

Signature}

Name only} L Hussey

[Several letters may be forwarded in this Cover, but these must all be from the same writer. The Cover should be addressed in such case to the Base Censor.]

FIELD POST OFFICE I.Y B AU 5 17

M^r Walter J. Dodd
Port Elliot
South Australia

FIELD POST OFFICE I.Y S SP 2 17

M^r W. J. Dodd
Port Elliot
South Australia



[New letter]

Military Camp 2 – 316

Tel-el-Kebir, Egypt

Dear Wally

I was delighted to get your letter yesterday & also to know that you are getting along so nicely as far as your health is concerned. Why old chap, we might see you over here yet before the war is finished. It is grand that you are able to go up to the "Stute" & do a bit. it will help the time to go much better for you. It was jolly hard luck about your Cow, but good of the folk to "come to light" as they did but after all old man as you say there is a lot of good if only one looks for it & I am sure the people down there would do their bit willingly. I hope you will have better luck this time. Fancy your policeman catching those two chaps it is surprising what fellows will come to, but you should just see Cairo. If I am spared to get back I shall be able to tell you something that will open your eyes. I saw Vic Tugwell the other day, he looked very well indeed. I also saw Bob Sladden he also looked well. I am afraid that after now my letters will be very short for we are getting further away from civilization Only I am not able to tell you much about our doings, I should not be surprised if our

[Page] 2

next move is *[word scribbled out]* the *[word scribbled out]*. My Aunt (M^{rs} Beeby) sent me one of those letterettes with views of Port Elliot by last mail. I could almost feel the salt air, here we can see very little but sand & niggers. Albert Knott told me that he knew you, he used to have a barber's shop at Mount Barker. Well Wally old man I must close now. Please remember me kindly to M^{rs} Dodd & Alfie also M^r Keen & any other of my old Port Elliot pals. I am lying flat out on my stomach in my tent, writing this & suppose you are well in bed it is now 4.30 P.M. which would make it about 12.30 or one A.M. at Port Elliot, we are situated about three hundred yards from a railway so we are frequently seeing trains several go by each hour, the railway runs between Suez Suez & Cairo. Well old man good Bye & good luck & I shall just look forward to the time when I get out of the train at the old home again & see you all again once more

Your old pal

Len Hussey

[New letter]

Address

Driver L Hussey
Transport Section
50th Battalion
13th Brigade A.I.F.
Egypt 12.5.16

Dear old Wally

Just a line to let you know that I am well. Got amongst the mules at last. Am sending you a photo hope you will like it. There is absolutely news now. have finished sightseeing for pleasure at any rate. Best wishes to you all Yours
Len

[The accompanying envelope is covered with crossed out scribbling and doodles. It is postmarked and addressed as follows]

[Imprint of red triangular stamp]

PASSED BY CENSOR N° 3272



FIELD POST OFFICE A.N.13 A MY 19 16

On Active Service
Field Post Office
Mr W. J. Dodd
Port Elliot
South Australia

[New letter]

[Letterhead and logo appearing at top of eight separate sheets]

On Active Service



WITH THE BRITISH
EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

Address, France, instead of Egypt

My dear Wally.

Let me tell you first of all how very sorry I am that at last the authorities have had to report the death of poor old Howard I deeply sympathise with you & will you please convey same to the rest of the family. Well dear old lad as you say we can just mourn his loss & then face the reality of things & go on doing our bit, you in your small corner & I in mine. I am so glad Wally that you have so far improved even to be able to walk around the

[Page number in Roman numerals] II

table that is a marked improvement since I last saw you. I often feel as if I would like to write miles of news to you old boy but one has to consider the poor Censor & it is hard to know just how far one can go. Anyhow I do not think there can be any harm in telling you about our trip from Egypt to here. The first thing I was sent in Charge of some baggage in our little military train from our Camp to a railway stn about six miles that was on a Saturday morning, on the Sunday the rest of our

[Page number in Roman numerals] III

section turned up with the horses, (twelve all told) at about midnight we entrained, & travelled through the night arriving at Alexandria at 9.15 A M where our boats were awaiting us. Of course there were more than just our Transport Section & their horses. We steamed out of Alexandria that evening & reached Marseilles after eight days of suspense thinking that any minute we might be torpedoed but we went under escort. Now about Marseilles, it is a beautiful place, the harbour is magnificent Could not possibly

[Page number in Roman numerals] IV

describe it on paper. we were taken to a rest camp for a couple of days during which time were were able to have a look around the City & indeed it was a wonderful treat after being so many months in Egypt. It was grand to see white people again & really Wally the City is most beautiful & all the shops looked so nice & clean & I think I saw just about all the kinds of fruit that grow beautiful strawberries that compare very favourably to those in Australia, grapes, oranges &c all very fine. The City itself



[Page number in Roman numerals] V

is beautifully laid out & one can walk through streets of Avenues of lovely trees. Well after a couple of days we got on board a train again, of course we always travel on specials) & we started for a four days trip & I can tell you Wally it surpassed anything that I have ever seen. We started through mountainous Country one engine in front & one behind one tunnel took us seven minutes to go through & I suppose we were travelling at about 20 miles per hour. Well we had four days & three nights of that then we pulled up at a big

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town where we stayed for several days then we were supplied with more horses & a lot of mules & started off, in our lot alone there were about 50 horses & mules besides the other sections we came along the most beautiful Country imagineable had about 5 days per road Camping out at nights with the sky above us & the girls to love us(?) on Sunday week we arrived here after nearly three weeks continual move & now here we are old chap well within sound of shot & shell & I can tell you

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sometimes I think of the dear old Office on North Terrace. but I really do not think I could be happy there while there are so many dear old Chaps laying down their lives for the home land. I hope you will excuse this writing old lad but I am doing it with a public pen & you know what they are like. It must have been very disappointing to poor old Bill Barrett to be rejected but I am afraid he is hardly the stamp of fellow that would be useful out here. Your news that Aleck B. is likely to

[Page number in Roman numerals] VIII

enlist nearly took my breath away but perhaps it will make a man of him. as you say he ought to make a good sniper. That little race meeting at at H.V. must have been tip top. Stan was lucky to win the Cup. What horse won it for him? Well old chap I must close now. Kind Regards to Mrs Dodd & Alfie please remember me kindly to any enquirers. Best wishes Wally & I hope that long before I get back you will be able to walk far more than around the table. GoodBye old lad
Yours &c Len Hussey

[New letter]

France 14.2.17

Dear Wally

Thank you very much for your last nice long letter I always find your letters interesting you have a good chatty way of writing & seem to dig up a decent bit of news – I saw you very plainly last night Wal in fact I think as plainly as I have ever seen you, you were driving a Jersey cow along by Cliff House & you were walking quite upright but had a stick & Alphie was with you but he was only a very little chap. It was a very vivid dream I only hope it is true about you being able to walk without the aid of your crutches. Well lad I have very little news as usual only that I am in hospital suffering from Frozen feet which is very painful We are having a pretty hard time as the cold is intense & for the last

[Page number in Roman numerals] II

six weeks one could see nothing but ice & snow. I feel very sorry about poor old Tom Errington. I shall miss him if ever I go to Port Elliot again for he was associated with my life ever since I was quite a young boy. We often speculate as to whether we will be home by Xmas. It will be jolly good if we do. Well Wally old pal I must ring off for my fingers are just like icicles & my feet are giving me what O, Kind Regards to M^{rs} Dodd & Alf – also any of my old friends at Elliot.
Your old pal
Len



[New letter]

Belgium, 3.6.17

My dear Wally

I am sorry that I have not answered your last letter but I know that you will excuse me for really at times it is very hard to rake up news. Of course I could write a book to you of happenings but the next day I suppose I would be in the Guard tent with an armed Guard keeping watch over me for we are unable to say much about the war & there is absolutely nothing else only that I am quite well & how are you? Thank Alf very much for sending me the books

[Page number in Roman numerals] II

they have not yet arrived but no doubt they will in due course & I know that I will appreciate them for reading matter is very scarce here. I saw Gill Snell yesterday his camp is only a few yards from ours – he looks very well after having seven months in England he was wounded in the arm – Fritz gave us a very warm time the other night & I began to wonder if I \would/ ever see any of you again, but you see I am still intact. I hope it is true that Howard is only a prisoner, that is bad

[Page number in Roman numerals] III

enough but not so bad as the supreme sacrifice. he may be spared to you yet. God grant that it may be so. This is an awful business, Wal, a horribly barbarous way of settling an argument. We have left our former front & had ~~two~~ 3 small marches & a night in the train to here – & I can tell you it is a little different from a S.S picnic in Welche's paddock Wouldn't I love to be there now? Well Wally I must ring off now. Thanks for all your letters &c I do look forward to them. Love to you all from

Len

[Appended is a printed sepia coloured envelope, postmarked and addressed as follows]

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Name only} L Hussey

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FIELD POST OFFICE I.Y JY 6 17

M^r W. J. Dodd
Port Elliot
South Australia



[New letter]

Belgium 13.6.17

My dear Wally

This will be just a short note to tell you that the parcel arrived quite safely a few days after I had sent off the letter to you. I must thank you all very much for it the socks were grand they could not have fitted me better if I had been measured for them & they were a nice useful Colour, sweets of course are always a treat, likewise Cigarettes, & reading matter please thank Alf very much for the books, I have just started on the last one & am handing them on to the boys – I feel very grateful for your thoughtfulness. At times we are mighty hard up for reading matter & happy to clutch onto papers even months old. I had a letter from Bert the other day, Unfortunately he is in a hospital, having had an operation for Hernia but is getting on well. I must ring off now Wal, again thanking you all for your kindness.

Best wishes from

Your old pal

Len Hussey

[Post script]

Best wishes to all

Trust things OK.

Len H.

[Appended is an envelope postmarked and addressed as follows]

[Black stamped imprint]

[?] FIELD CENSOR 1380 *[written in pencil at right angles]* L E Harding.

FIELD POST OFFICE I.Y [?] 2 17

O A S

M^r W. J. Dodd

Port Elliot

South Australia

[Handwritten annotations in pencil on back of envelope]

I suppose you have noticed who censored this. LH

F W Preece

36 King Wm Str.

Adelaide

[New letter]

Belgium 5.7.17

Dear M^{rs} Dodd,

I was delighted to get your letter a week or two ago, but dreadfully sorry to read that poor old Wally had had a relapse. it is most unfortunate for you all & I can just imagine how disappointed he would be but perhaps the Summer will fix him up again. We also are a bit disappointed over here, we all thought that we would get back to Australia for Christmas, but afraid it will be impossible now. I wonder why some of those chaps dont come over & lend us a hand surely there are some who could come. We just dread putting in another winter here it is so frightfully cold, nothing but ice & snow for weeks & weeks. ~~when~~ I say nothing but ice & snow, well there are other things as well shells galore & not the ones that you pick up on the beach either. I had a very narrow escape the other day. I was standing next to



[Page number in Roman numerals] II

a Sergeant having a chat & Fritz sent over some schrapnel & a piece came down between us & hit him upon the shoulder if it had caught either of us on the head we would have gone down, so you see one never knows when his time is coming. I suppose you have heard that I have been transferred from the Transport to the Battalion Postal department. It is much nicer than the Transport the work is not so rough of course but there is just as much danger for we have to go wherever the Battalion goes because of any urgent letters for the Officers, I just missed a bit of excitement the other day. We were using a tent for the P.O. & orders came out that we had to take our things into an old shed. we had just ~~come~~ packed up ready to go, when the order was rescinded that night Fritz lobbed a shell on the shed so had we gone I dont suppose I should have been writing this to you. We had the

[Page number in Roman numerals] III

the honour of a visit by the King yesterday, he & the Prince of Wales came along. I was glad to see him for it will be something to remember if I should get back home. I have seen the Prince of Wales quite a number of times but I had not seen the King since he was Duke of York a good many years ago. I am expecting to go to England for my leave any day now. It will be grand to see London one of the greatest cities of the world & the Capital of our huge Empire. We are having lovely weather over here now & everything looks at its best. I often have a good think about old times, when we were at the "Gables" with our Cows &c they were A1. & then when I used to run down for my holidays I wonder if I shall ever see the dear old spot again? I have seen nothing of Harry yet I may run across him some day, I saw Gil Snell yesterday he looks very well indeed

[Page number in Roman numerals] IV

he has had several months in England on account of his wound. he got it in the arm. Les Harding is the only other P. E. boy that I come in contact with. Please give my Kind Regards to all Wally's people, Also M^r & M^{rs} Keen & any other P. E. friends. By the way you can let any of them see this letter if you care to. Now I must close with love to dear old Wally/ yourself & Alfie. Hope Wal will very soon be quite well again.

Your old friend
Len Hussey

[New letter]

August 2 1917

My dear Wally –

I have been wondering how you are getting along? I hope you are much better than when I last heard. By the time you get this the weather ought to be warming up a little which will no doubt be beneficial. Well old lad I have had my trip to England & enjoyed it very much indeed. London is a fine city but I did not stay there long for I was anxious to have a look at Devonshire & I was well rewarded, I will now give you a little account of my journeyings. First I must tell you that my pal, who is in Brigade H Q was able to get away with me, in our wildest dreams we little thought that we would ever do London together. We left France on Friday July 13th crossed the Channel & arrived at Folkestone at 11.30 AM, boarded a special leave train which left at 1 PM getting us in London at 3 30 PM. It was a most beautiful train journey & it was lovely not to hear any guns & to get away from military discipline for a

[Page number in Roman numerals] II

while. Geoff went to his brother at Croydon that night & I went to Woodford Green nine miles from London to some friends. On the Saturday I returned to London & caught a train for Ilfracombe on the coast of Devon. Left London at 1 PM arrived at Ilfracombe 8 PM. Ilfracombe



is a fashionable seaside resort & there were hundreds of visitors there. It is a most beautiful place, when I get back I will tell you all about it. The Railway Stn is on a tremendous hill overlooking the town & sea & one can see the Coast of Wales quite plainly. I put up at the Royal Clarence hotel & was very comfortable. I can tell you I enjoyed the feather bed & sheets & made good use of them. I indulged in Raspberries & Devonshire Cream to my hearts content, fruit was rather dear but one did not mind when upon a holiday. I had some lovely Australian apples 3^d each & I bought a nectarine 10^d but it was well worth it. Grapes 4/6 per ^{lb} but I did not buy. Strawberries were very reasonable. I enjoyed the fruit immensely. I had a lovely rest on the Sunday, then went for a motor

[Page number in Roman numerals] III

trip to Combe Martin (5 miles) on the Monday – I suppose you have read the Mighty Atom by Marie Corelli. Well I saw all the places that she mentions in the book. the Church 900 years old Clarinda Paynes Cottage, Watermouth Castle, also Reuben Dale's grave, Had lunch at the Pack O Cards Inn, look up the book & you will see all this mentioned, On Tuesday July 17th I left Ilfracombe at 11.35 AM & arrived at Salisbury at 4 PM. Now Salisbury has a personal interest for me, because my mothers Cousin bishop Webb was for 6 years dean of the Cathedral there. I was shown over the Cathedral paying special attention to two Stained Windows one erected by the parishoners in his memory & one by his widow then I was taken to the Cloisters & saw his grave, The Cathedral was started in 1220, I also visited St Martin's Church supposed to have been built in the year 597 AD. That evening I went to a theatre & saw a Vaudeville Show. Friday July 20th I left Salisbury at 10

[Page number in Roman numerals] IV

AM & arrived in London at 1 PM, in the train I met Herb Turner so you may guess we had a good yarn he was asking after you & of course we had a laugh at poor old Joey's expense. That night I went out to my friends at Woodford. On Saturday I met Geoff in the morning & got a taxi & had a look around London & finished up by seeing High Jinks, at the Adelphi Theatre, met Bob Sladden in London. We had a lovely day on Sunday. Got a taxi & went to Petticoat lane in the morning, that is where the Jews hold a sort of paddies market, All the theives & rogues of London seem to meet there & one has to keep his eyes open & his mouth shut, then in the afternoon we got another taxi & visited Hyde Park, Rotten Row, & the Zoo. Rotten Row is where the ladies & gentlemen ride & walk Quite a different place from Petticoat lane. On Monday July 23 we left London at 6.30 AM arrived at Folkestone at 9 AM Crossed the Channel at 11.55 &

[Page number in Roman numerals] V

alas my holiday was over & once again it was France & Guns. I have given you just a rough outline Wally but will enlarge upon it if I have the luck to get out of this. I was so pleased to see England. It was always my ambition but I little thought that I should ever do so. While in England I saw Admirals Jellicoe & Beatty, General Smutts M^r Lloyd George, M^r Balfour & other big men. Well dear old Wally I wish I had been telling you all this instead of writing it. Please give my love to M^{rs} Dodd & Alfie also all your people & any other friends in fact you can show this to anyone if you care to. Good luck dear old pal & love from

Yours
Len



[New letter]

In the Field 31–8.17

My dear old Wally

It was good to see your hand writing again old lad it showed that you had so far recovered I hope that you will continue to progress it must have been a great disappointment to you to have to go to bed again but now you will be getting the nice warm weather which will give you a chance to pick up again. I was sorry to see by the paper that Harry had been wounded & sincerely hope that it is not serious. by the way have you heard any more about Howard ? You must have had quite a number of weddings down there as you say probably they took place for the reason you mention. I think where there are several boys in one family, one or two ought to try & get away. I think M^{rs} Dodd is really wonderful the way she manages. It is surprising how quickly a dairy farm grows. It does not seem

[Page number in Roman numerals] II

very long since you started with the one little black cow at the “Gables”. I often think of those old days. Since I started this we have moved back a bit & are likely to have a little rest, it is grand to be away from the guns. I had hoped to get back to Australia before Christmas but am afraid there is no hope now. I saw Bert for a couple of nights a few weeks ago he was looking very well & was quite cheerful. I often wonder why more of the fellows in Australia do not enlist they are badly needed here. Well Wally old Chap I must close now with love to you all from

Your old pal

Len Hussey

[On a separate sheet]

[Centred title] Ships that pass in the night

A soldier lay on the battlefield
Of Belgiums war torn land
No comrade heard his dying word
As they ran, in a mighty band –

Across the bridge they took the ridge
And dug in fast and hard
But no one knew that in mud like glue
Lay their true and faithful “Pard”

He lay for hours through the dark cold night
And yet he felt no pain
But the ground was wet with bloody sweat
And soaked with a deep red stain

A vision he saw through an open door
Of a river and “Wonderful Sight”
For floating along in an endless throng
Were ships that pass in the night

over *[overpage]*



There were ships of love and ships of hate
And ships of Sorrow and Joy
But no one saw through the open door
The dying soldier boy –

But at last there came, like a golden flame
The ship whose name is Grace
And the Captain saw through the open door
The brave young hero's face

He pointed his hand towards the land
And beckoned the lad on board
And so there passed, true to the last
A soul, to his sure reward –

L Hussey

France 18–10–17

Written in memory of some of my dear old pals who fell in the World's great war —

[New letter]

Abroad 2–11–17

Dear old Wally

I have been debating in my mind whether I ought to write to you or not today. For I am not very well & feeling a bit down, then I feel ashamed when I think of your great affliction & the Cheerful letters that you write to me I am really glad that Harry has been able to get back home and sincerely hope that his wound is not serious enough to incapacitate him for life. Poor old Chap he has seen a bit of Hell & I suppose some of us will have to go on for a while yet – I for one would be sorry to give in until we have crushed Germany so that she will be unable to rise again, God help us all Wally if Kaiserdom wins. I saw a horrible sight a week or two ago one of our planes brought down a Fritz & long before the plane got to the ground the observer fell out then the pilot was crushed under the plane I only saw ~~the~~ his hand & arm but the observer looked awful – One shell killed my O. C. ~~mules~~ 2 drivers 6 mules, & wounded a Corporal & driver. So you can tell what things are like here – We are having a nice rest for a few weeks but

[Page number in Roman numerals] II

it only seems like feeding a rooster up before you pot him. Tomorrow is my birth day, the third in the army & second in France I hope the next will be in Australia or Heaven, I notice that you ask if I have had my leave to England I expect by now you will have recieved my letter telling you all about it I had a lovely time. I did get a very nice parcel from you all I wrote to you re it, perhaps it went to the bottom (the letter I mean) M^{rs} Dodd must be doing A 1 with her dairy & I am very pleased. I should like to be near & have some cream I had some beautiful Devonshire cream while in England & the Raspberries were ripe \so/ you can tell how I enjoyed them. You seem to have had a wonderful amount of rain but I do not think it can beat France – I think it is just wonderful how Port Elliot supports all the funds that are going, but I feel so sorry that so much money is being spent on Belgium for they are a rotten crowd. I have known them take the handles off their pumps so that we should not have a drink



[Page number in Roman numerals] III

& other things I could tell you but would not be allowed to. The French people are different they are very kind and cannot do enough for us. The Belgians are so closely related to Germany they have intermarried a great deal Well Wally old lad I must close this I hope it has not been too dismal for you. We Please give my Kind Regards to M^{rs} Dodd, Alf & all friends who may enquire. Your sister hit on one of the best funds for troops of her Social. We get many little luxuries at times that we would never get but for the Comforts fund. Dear old Wal I feel that I would love to be talking to you & there is such a big lump in my throat & my eyes are not as dry as they might be Good Bye dear old pal

love from

Yours

Len

[New letter]

[A printed sepia coloured post card, postmarked and addressed as follows]

A.F.A. 2042.
114/Gen. No./5248.

FIELD  SERVICE
POST CARD

The address only to be written on this side. If anything else is added the post card will be destroyed. (Crown Copyright Reserved.)

FIELD POST OFFICE I.Y B DE 13 17

M^r W. J. Dodd
Port Elliot
South Australia

[on the reverse side of post card]

NOTHING is to be written on this side except the date and signature of the sender. Sentences not required may be erased. If anything else is added the post card will be destroyed. (Postage must be prepaid on any letter or post card addressed to the sender of this card.)

I am quite well.

I have been admitted into hospital

{ *sick* } *and am going on well.*

{ *wounded* } *and hope to be discharged soon.*

I am being sent down to the base.

{ *letter dated [in pencil] ?*

I have received your { *telegram* "

{ *parcel* "

Letter follows at first opportunity.

I have received no letter from you

{ *lately*

{ *for a long time*

Signature }

only } Len Hussey

Date 12-12-17



[New letter]

[Logo appearing at top of three separate sheets]



25-2-18

My dear Wally

I seem to be quite slipping back in my correspondence with you writing seems to be almost a matter of impossibility here at times but I am always delighted to get your letters & nearly always hand them on to Les Harding. First of all I will answer your last question – I am not in the Field P.O. now. These good jobs often change hands. I have a very different job, much harder & far more dangerous, but I suppose we must all take our turn. I am a despatch carrier attached to Head Quarters of D Company & for one my age it is pretty hard work for instance the other night I was called out, had to go about two miles & back again. Well you should

P.T.O.

just have seen me I do now know if you would have laughed or cried the night was that black that I could not see my hand before me I tumbled down shell holes & into drains. Off duck boards into the mud I was a sight when I got back to HQ my mate was cursing a treat & I was trying to keep good tempered at night we mostly go in twos in case one gets killed the other has to go on with the message which might save a Company or even Battalion from imminent danger or death so you will see how important the work is. Anyhow all good? things come to an end & at last we got back to H.Q. sad & sorry men. the Officer who was waiting up gave us a double issue of rum & my dear old pals had saved me a big issue, after which I had the courage of a dozen men the [noo?] but it did me good Wal. We have been

[Page] 3

working very hard lately on account of no reinforcements have had to double bank, let some of the slackers see this if there are any in P.E. of course there are not? Well we have had to all go on fatigues in the trenches & one day last week I had a very narrow escape. I wanted a piece of wire so I had to get up out of the trench to find some. I had not been there two minutes. When Fritz saw me & the brute sent a shell after me, anyhow he missed that time for it whizzed over my head. the Sergeant said I had better come down & I can tell you it did not take me long. the other day we were digging trenches & some of the boys dug up a Fritz my word he did hum, so you see we

P.T.O.

[Page] 4

have a variety. I hope this sort of thing is not wearying you old chap, so I will change the sub I should just love to see your dairy farm Wal it is just wonderful how M^{rs} Dodd manages – It makes me think of the dear old Gables days & brings a lump in my throat, they were dear old days lad weren't they. Oh lad it is sad to see the Villages & large towns flattened to the ground fancy if it were dear old P.E. there I go again, Wal, I am so glad that you have a motor car. It must be lovely for you when I get back I shall be so happy to take your for some drives & we will have some lovely yarns I shall tell you all about France, Egypt & England, but I suppose



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Harry will have told you all. By the way, there is a relative of yours in C Company – George Dodd he is a brother of Jack ~~that~~ who was so long with Miss Dodd at the Garden. It was very unfortunate of Charl & Gertie loosing [losing] their things Hope they got them again. Heard a good yarn the other day (not true of course). A Yank Officer was up the line with one of ours when a shell lobbed close to him he set off down the rode at a good pace, on the way he ran across a hare that kept getting in his way, so he said, Say guy, get off the road & give place to one that can run – Not bad Eh – Another – one of our chaps was wounded in a certain private part of his body & had to have an amputation when in hospital a dear kind

P.T.O.

old lady visited him & this was the conversation. K O L. Well my poor man & where were you shot? Soldier – Well mum, if you were shot where I was shot you would not be shot at all. Nuff sed Wal Well old lad please thank Alf for photo of trio of brothers which I am so pleased to have & when I get back to where I can get some cards I will send him some hope he got what I have sent hope you will not mind me sending his in [Marjorie's?] but am putting them both in a green envelope to miss the Censor here

Love to you all from

Len Hussey

[Appended is a sepia coloured envelope with the Rising Sun insignia “Australian YMCA” and with a handwritten note on the front as follows]

Will you please give this to Wally Dodd?

[New letter]

[Printed post card with Rising Sun plus YMCA insignias]

AUSTRALIAN
Y.M.C.A.
with the
A.I.F.

POST CARD




3.3.18

my dear Wally

Thank you all very much for parcel which arrived safely the other day. The Contents we [were] in good order & very nice. We are having cold weather & snow uncomfortable sort of weather. Have not been very well for several days. my poor old tummy gives me a lot of trouble in the cold weather – Very Kind Regards to you all from Len

[verso—on front of post card]

Verne Harding has just come in & is sitting in front of me reading M^{rs} Thows last letter First time I have seen him Verne wishes to be remembered to you all. Len

[Appended is a sepia coloured envelope with the insignia  at top left, postmarked and addressed as follows]

[Blue stamp imprint]

PASSED BY CENSOR NO. 1851

FIELD POST OFFICE 2.B B MR 5 18



O.A.S.

M^r W. J. Dodd
Port Elliot
South Australia

[New letter]

No 1 A. A. Hospital
Harefield. 9.8.18

Dear Wally

Thanks for very belated letter which came to hand a week or so ago. Am glad things are looking up so well in dear old Elliot. The boys will be glad to have a full size table & more room to get around. Wonder how long it will be before I walk into the old "Stute"? Three years this month since I enlisted quite an old soldier now. I find the A M C work very congenial am really fond of it; am getting quite used to probing wounds & making the poor old boys jump with hot foment. One of the boys complimented me this morning & said I had a very gentle touch, when squeezing pus (not puss) They said they were going to requisition for me to be kept in this ward. but we are only allowed on one ward for a certain time. Bert came to see me on Tuesday am sending you one of the results of his visit; must try & rake up some news for you next time. Best wishes to M^{rs} Dodd, Alf & yourself from
Len

[Appended is a sepia coloured envelope postmarked and addressed as follows]

AUSTLN IMP. FORCES BASE POST OFFICE
AM – AU 12 18

O. A. S.

M^r W. J. Dodd
Port Elliot
South Australia

[New letter]

No 1 A A. Hospital
Harefield
Middlesex 27–8–18

My dear Wally

I hope you will excuse me for writing to you in pencil but I have a ——— of a pen & cannot get another just now. Well dear old chap I have 3 letters of yours to answer vis May 18, June 20 & 13. It is jolly good of you old chap to write to me so often & I do appreciate & dont leave off because I am not in France for I still love to get letters from my old pals. I hope you people will not think me a slacker because I have got this job, but I always feel I ought to apologise for it although I did have a good while in France didn't I? & really I believe I am more useful here. Even now I feel very ill at times & think if I were to go back & rough it, I could not survive it. I am on night work again & have a pretty tough problem, 15 Convalescent wards containing about 300 patients I told them last night I was like the old lady who lived in a shoe – I go on duty at 8 PM & come off at 7 AM. & am kept going pretty well all the time for some of them have very bad coughs & other ailments & on my



[Page] 2

round I have to carry a young Chemist's shop. by the time I have done one round it is time to start again, but I like the work & am greatly encouraged for I had the honour of being mentioned to the Colonel last week for my work. I was put on special dressing work a few weeks ago for which I was proud I should like to have stayed there but of course must each take our turn at night work. You did undertake a task catalogueing (am not sure if that is a word of my own or not) any how it will do) your library. Come to the Cookhouse door boys has just been bugled another good word Eh? so must go will try & finish this after tea—

7.9.18. Well Wally I suppose you think I have taken a long time to have my tea but I have been busy & in the daytime must get as much rest as possible. & I am not at all well, have a nasty boil on my arm & the inflammation has gone right up to my elbow

[Page] 3

I went to London last Tuesday for my leave & back on Wednesday & considering the pain in my arm had a good time. Went for a nice trip to Norwood but not our dear old Norwood in S.A. Then I went to the Tower of London & saw some sights. The Armoury is wonderful Then I saw the room in which the two young princes were murdered & walked up the steps down which they were thrown afterwards. then I saw the block which was answerable for the beheading of Kings, Queens, & bishops, also the exact spot upon which Anne Boleyn was beheaded. The Royal Jewel house was closed so I could not see them but hope to later on. I am very glad that your cows are paying you so well it is encouragement for M^{rs} Dodd for all her hard work. I wish I could pop in & see you all now Wal. I was very sorry to hear about poor old Gil Snell – I had not seen him since last Xmas when I had a mug of tea with him in a YMCA tent in France I am very glad that Alf got that book, have sent him another since then hope he will get it also. If you have not yet seen my letter re Scotland please ask George

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for it. That Boyer episode was really good & being original makes it more so. Youngsters are jolly good fun at times. I heard one in a concert the other night. A lady had presented her husband with a third Child there being some time between events. The father told the next eldest, a girl, to write & tell her brother, at school, that a nice Kind Stork & brought them a dear little brother, the Stork had left him the night before under a gooseberry bush in the garden when posting the letter the father thought he would see just what she had put, & to his surprise found this. Dear Jack I win the half crown, its a boy – nuff sed – Well old pal after that I must ring off. With very Kind Regards & best wishes to you all from
Len Hussey.

[Appended is a matching envelope postmarked and addressed as follows]

[Illegible but presumably] AUSTLN IMP. FORCES BASE POST OFFICE

A SP 10 18

O. A. S.

M^r W. J. Dodd
Port Elliot
South Australia

[A separate newspaper clipping from "The World" featuring a cartoon of three German soldiers retreating on crutches, with the caption]

THE REFUGEES.



[New letter]

[Letterhead featuring the Rising Sun insignia at top of six separate sheets]

13.5.18

No 1 A A Hosp
Harefield
Middlesex
England



My dear Wally

I have to answer quite a number of letters from you, it is really very good of you to write so often, but I almost feel ashamed now that I have a good job in England but but I have been congratulated by all ranks from officers to privates & they all acknowledge that I deserve the change & I can be of use to the poor old wounded boys here, whereas if they kept me over there much longer I dont think you would have had the pleasure of welcoming me back to dear old Port Elliot, for if Fritz did not get me conditions would have, as one would be just as bad as the other anyhow if I do have to go back now it will be for hospital work & I will not have to carry ninety pounds weight of equipment about. I got a bundle of letters on Saturday amongst them

[Page number in Roman numerals] II

from you Feb 13 much earlier than others that I had got weeks ago. they evidently have been chasing me around. in it was a photo of W.J.D & his motor. I think the record to Waterport was wonderful. I wonder if you would like to come to London with me tomorrow we could parade the Strand in great style. I say Wal please excuse this writing I am not drunk but got a B of a pen. beast of a pen you know. what sort. My word fancy you boiling over there in February & we were nearly crying with the cold, but we have been getting some lovely days lately something like October days in Aussie. I am writing this in the afternoon here & if you are a good boy you must be comfy in bed for it would be about 11.30 PM with you. Thanks very much for Letterette of P.E. views it took my mind

[Page number in Roman numerals] III

back to the dear old days & place I would love to wheel you around by Green Bay at this moment. I am very pleased to have a time in England it will be something to talk about to you all when I get back, for really Wal it is simply beautiful here & the flowers & birds make everything so bright, no guns to disturb. We seldom saw many birds in France w/h/ere we were for they were mostly frightened away except crows & they were there for no good but of here the Cuckoos & thrushes & other birds are beautiful & the wild flowers are fine also the gardens. It does seem a great pity that there are so many fellows in Australia who will not come over & lend a hand but you are doing your bit old boy dont worry if you did nothing else but just write a few letters occasionally

[overleaf—no page number]

to those who are there you would be surprised how they are appreciated but you have done far more. Alfie must be getting along wonderfully well I am very pleased for you all it must be a great comfort \to/ you & M^{rs} Dodd. Is he going to get into the P.O. Department? he must have been proud of his first salary. I am so glad that you are able to manipulate your tricycle so well you must feel quite independent I do hope you will keep well during the winter. I would like to have sat down to that rooster with you we would have made it look silly, they are a luxury over



here old hens for killing 17/6 each eggs 5/- per doz & rabbits 10/6 each. Isn't it frightful Well I am not a big eater but I had to go to three places in London to get a feed & when I had finished my meal it cost me 3/7. one place I

[Page number in Roman numerals] IV

I got about an ounce of cold meat & some pickles at another, two small sausages with an egg. at the last one sausage & egg, had some stewed fruit & custard equal to one good dinner when my dear old mother was alive, but fancy 3/7. One cannot buy what they one/ likes, only what one is allowed. I got a ¼^{lb} of Chocolates the other day as a favour because I was a soldier 10^d per Quarter, the woman told me she was only allowed to sell ten Quarters per day. & one cannot get sugar for love nor money. It is very funny to see the people who have sugar tickets they go out to afternoon tea & when it is served they pull their little tin of sugar out of their pockets & put a tiny bit in their tea. If you want bread you have to ask for it & it is charged extra

[Page number in Roman numerals] V

at the rate of about 1/8 per loaf but you are only allowed one fair slice which is 2^d. So you can just imagine what living is like in England. Well Wal old boy I must close now. Hope you will see my general letter to P.E. friends about Harefield & my work. I always tell George to let you see them. I think it is a better way than writing the same to all. Please remember me very Kindly to M^{rs} Dodd & Alfie, also your father & mother & other dear old friends. Accept best wishes dear old Chap & many thanks for letters &c Did Alfie get a book that I sent him from London? Your old pal
Len Hussey

[Appended is a printed sepia coloured envelope, postmarked and addressed as follows]

[Crown Copyright Reserved.]

ACTIVE SERVICE

This envelope must not be used for coin or valuables. It cannot be accepted for registration.

NOTE:-

Correspondence in this envelope need not be censored Regimentally. The contents are liable to examination at the Base.

The following Certificate must be signed by the writer:-

I certify on my honour that the contents of this envelope refer to nothing but private and family matters.

Signature}

Name only} L Hussey

[Several letters may be forwarded in this Cover, but these must all be from the same writer. The Cover should be addressed in such case to the Base Censor.]

FIELD POST OFFICE I.Y B NO 6 17

M^r W. J. Dodd
Port Elliot
South Australia