

1974

P. Rogers. 208 Victoria Rd South Dunedin

Waileka St. back land No 2

Rec'd 20
8/11/50

I 4 Company in the Battalion.

P. Rogers/1

Percival Rogers. 14th Regt South Africa. To me little.
 The other companies were 1st Southland Regt, the Dunedin
 4th Regt, and North Cape company, numbering
 approx' 1200 men. of the 1st Cape Battalion.
 The voyage from Alexandria to Lemnos ^{10th}~~Harbour~~¹⁵.
 We were a day or two in Mudros Harbour.
 It was a grand scene for us who had never
 seen such a parade of navy and transports.
 The ship which we were on was called the
 Annaburg. A 600 ton Austrian ship captured by
 the British navy. The decks were steel, and
 all we had to sleep on was the rubber
 sheet each man had. It had carried some
 Indian troops and it was lousy with
 body lice. We used to call them Scott Greys.
 Leaving the ship we had to go down rope-
 ladders about fifteen feet or so to torpedo boats
 take man's clothes and equipment, besides
 a bandoleer of 303 cartridges weighing 70 lbs
 all told. also we were issued one small shovel,
 a pick and a tin of water between eight
 men, and also a bundle of kindling wood
 about two pounds. It was a bit of a job
 getting down the ladder. From the torpedo
 boat we had get into life boats, as soon as
 we were in too shallow water and afterwards
 get out and paddle in the water; there were
 planks just a part of the way, but we only
 slipped off them.

This the end of our trip
 to argue cool.

P. Gogel
8/11/50

2

On landing, our company had only one casualty. He was very lucky as they had stopped shelling. It was a dreadful scene, we were stepping over the wounded and the dead and there were quite a few more men among them than ^{more} there were of the crew who were in the life boats. One man to each boat, and a pinnace towed three - four boats, which, were tied together. Some of boats taking Australians across got caught with rifle fire a shells, they got carried away and drifted on the rocks, and those who did not get out of them lay'd there for many weeks, they were always under fire.

Our company was marched away to the left flank after got settled and all hands ashore. It seemed as if they were sending a company up where these boats were, as they called on the snipers in our company to go ahead and try to shift the enemy that was already firing on these boats but at the last minute they canceled the order. We then moved to the front line further to the right. We were in reserve for the time. Walkers ridge. ~~the name of the spot~~. The different sections of the line were named after the Australian leaders. Later on the batt was moved to a section named Courtney Post. On the right of us was Steele's Post, and that was the beginning of the Australian lines. Other sections were Quins Post, and Pope's Hill and so on. The morning after we landed, a few of us were put to carrying boxes of ammunitions. At two men to a box of cartridges. We had two hours of it as it was all up a ~~hill~~ steep hill.

P. Refers
8/1150

Foot of page 3

2nd of May. 14th Company.

It was midnight when we were to take a some ground which some of the Australians had taken the night before, but had to withdraw as they were getting infilade fire, though some of the Aussies going too far ahead of their flanks. To start with we had to pull ourselves up on a slope and scramble in the trench the Aussies held. It was a starry night and we did not know where we going were going. it was just follow the lead. We were told nothing as we left the trench and had form. To form a line at best we could. Rifle fire was coming fast.

It was just a scramble in the dark. We were crawling on our bellies, and over dead men. We didn't know where our objective was. We were halted, finally, and told to dig in, we didn't get as far as the Aussies had gone. We kept digging until it was day light. It was then that we capped it. It was infilade fire from their machine guns. There was no shelter in the trench they were on & knee deep we had no room from our front as they would be only sheltering us. The guns out at sea were firing. They had to stop it, as the shells were exploding out in front of us; Lyddite Shells!

It was a hot night for the Glago Battalion (my brother Fred was in the 7th South Lancs Coy they capped it more than us). He came through alright, but was later gassed out of it as they were isolated. He watched a company of Marines coming up a gully to reinforce us, and the Turks moved the down something awful. The poor fellows running about not knowing where they were. The officer got them together again and they got it again. It was no use though, he watched them going

P. Logie
8/11/50

34

down the gully again taking the wounded, and leaving the dead; the fellows were carrying all their equipment and full pack. They should have left their tracks behind. When the men feel it was hard to get the pack off them. When going into action the pack is left at the base, only the mobile equipment with your ammunition, hand sack - water bottle rifle & bayonet. Their mistake was, they marched up in close formation, instead they should have gone up in extended formation after me saw these men cut to pieces, and one bullet would quite easily have two or three casualties. He used to withdraw to the trench we had hopped out of the night before.

I could write a story of what happened to myself and another fellow when we got back into the trench. The order was to stand fast with the Aussies but it would mean too much of my time writing. If I have the time I would put it together and send it to you. There was an officer with us and his name was Little. He was badly wounded and died soon after. The other fellow I spoke about is still alive and kicking I am 33, and he is a year younger.

We went into camp on the 14th Aug 1914. He is in Christchurch. I have written to him so he will be able attend while you are there. Dan McEachern and as Irish as the pigs of Dorothy. I was the oldest of three of us at the landing of Gallipoli.

Fred T. Southland Reg. Clarence 11th company Wellington Batt
We are Australians

P. Rogers H
8/11/50

5

The Sikhs and their guns.

There was plenty of time to watch these men and the donkeys with their guns.

To see them strap their guns on the donkey, take them off again, put the parts together, load and fire in a couple of minutes. The donkeys stood quite still and never made a move, and the Sikh never moved an inch. There were two guns to a battery. There was no talking with them - they were very good on steep country and it was just about standing on where we were. The Turks were very close to us and it was hard for the 25 field gun to get a target without hitting men in the front trenches. Whereas the mountain gun could get closer without danger of the snow. They would pop over three or four shells and then move away so as they would not be a shot for the Turk. The Sikhs were very silent men, and went about the job without any fuss. The Turks had a small mortaring gun and it was shelling us. Rifle fire was no use to quieting it and the field gun would only be a danger as their gun was very close to us and is at the same level. The Sikhs suggested digging a big hole in the trench deep enough to get a gun in. Two of us (Bob Bunge) got to work and within a couple of hours it had the job done. We left enough dirt on the top of the hole so as

P. Rogers
5/1150

6

to keep the gun under cover. They brought one of their guns in with just enough space to move in. The ground was sloping down quite a bit, and it allowed us to knock a hole near top to let them take the barrel of their gun through.

He left them to carry on the work and within ten minutes (they had fired four shells) he went back to help them to remove their gun and shell. It had done the work it had but the tank gun cut alright. He never had any more shelling. They shook hands with Gole and me. Just now I haven't the time to write more than a couple of other things I remember of the August stuff and something what happened at Cape a hand landing.

I will conclude now and do not finish my writing, for not used to holding a pen. I am more handy with a pick and shovel.

P. Rogers