

Alfred Westbrook
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Australian AIF
3002

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Dearest Cynthia,

Thank You for the package of goodies you sent for my birthday. Your letter and kind thoughts have cheered me up immensely. To be honest I have been feeling awful since one of my mates was killed by an exploding shell a couple of weeks ago.

Aside from a few minor wounds and trench-foot a couple of times I am fortunate enough to have survived the past eighteen months in these horrid trenches.

We are 'holding the line' a few miles south of Belgian town called Ypres. We are posted in the forward trenches for a week at a time. If the Jerries stop their artillery bombardments long enough, we grab a couple of hours of sleep. It's freezing cold and the trenches are filled with water. When we are relieved, we are usually billeted in modest accommodation, usually farm houses or barns away from enemy fire.

For rest and relaxation we spend a week in Paris every three months, it is such a beautiful city. The food is excellent, the wine similar to our Barossa's finest and the people most hospitable. The food in the trenches is deplorable bully beef, dry biscuits and tinned cheese that tastes like soap. Thankfully I only have to carry out small night raids and deliver messages when the telephone cables are damaged. I'm a runner. Don't worry I'll keep my head down and pray we will be together soon.

Yours forever,

Alfred

Xxx