

AD3/208

1/1 Worcestershire Yeomanry  
2<sup>nd</sup> Mounted Division.  
Base Egypt.  
Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> 1915.

My Dear Mabel

I got your letter yesterday (posted Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>), also A's & M's letters (Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>). I was very glad to get them. I don't know what has happened to the mails. These were the first letters I've had for 3 weeks. Biddey's letters have all gone astray. No parcels have arrived yet. I expect they will take a hell of a time. Thank you very much for them all the same. One never knows where one may find oneself at a few hours notice. Most of these little punitive expeditions against native tribes turn out to be bigger things than one at first supposed. I think we shall have another show at Suez one of these days. Thank God I am not on the Peninsular now. The weather is killing them off like flies. I met Tompser in Cairo a few days ago. He is in the Herefords. They ~~was~~ had a thunderstorm about a month ago which filled their trench with 5 feet of water & then it froze towards

morning.  $\frac{3}{4}$  of their rifles were washed  
away + most of their baggage etc.  
He stuck it for 4 or 5 days + then was  
brought away in a hospital ship, having lost  
every stitch of kit. He didn't know  
Frank Hutton, so I got no news of him.  
Later information says that the Salt Lake  
froze over in one night! Some frost!!  
I am almost sorry I came on this  
course of signalling to Zentorn. One has  
 $2\frac{1}{2}$  weeks in which to learn to read  
Morse on the telephone buzzer at 8 words  
a minute, + the same on the flag.  
Semaphore with flags at 10 words + heliograph  
+ lamp at 6 words a minute. Considering  
I didn't know the alphabet when I  
came, + it usually takes 2 or 3 months  
to work up to 8 words, I am afraid I  
am being made a fool of. Most of the  
other men are in the same box. I also  
find my rusty old brain is not particularly  
quick. It is a long time since I had  
to learn anything. It is splendid  
that you are able to take on the hay-baling  
job. Marjorie seems very keen on nursing  
I should think she would make a  
comfy looking sort of nurse!  
It is real useful work nowadays, + so

are many other jobs for that matter -

I am damned glad to see that conscription is being enforced under the title ~~of~~ of "scheme". That is what I always thought would happen. It is the name "conscription" that frightens the plebs. I shall enjoy your Xmas pudding when it comes. The mess here is the worst in Egypt I should think. Perfectly disgusting. I've already shown my wholehearted disapproval to the seniors but the improvement has been very slight. However they woke ~~up~~ up yesterday when they found Kerosene in their whiskey! I am going into Cairo for Xmas Eve & Xmas Day to have a few decent meals - I have put my name down for another 3 weeks course to follow this one. Cable-laying & telephones etc. It is much more useful than this present course, as a Signalling <sup>Officer</sup> doesn't need to be a very skilled operator, he has well trained men under him for that purpose, but he must be able to understand the different instruments & methods of arranging stations & general management etc. I should like to see your portraits in the Mirror, send me a cutting if you have got one to

Spare - I don't suppose we shall  
get any of your hay - All ours is foreign  
or native stuff here - I should think  
Douglas wedding party must have made  
a handsome group! Jeffrey seems  
to have done the thing in great style  
My wedding only cost me about £5, ring  
included! I hope this war won't  
going to run on for many more years -  
I want to see the end of it.

Don't tell Biddy there is any risk in  
my going to the Canal - I don't think  
the Turks are ready to attack us there  
for some time yet - Our people have  
come back safely from the Senussi scrap -  
They were badly outnumbered & had to retire.  
It is hellish country for horses - sudden  
caves & precipices which can't be seen until  
one is right on top of them - several yeomen  
broke their necks in this way - A Sikh  
regiment put up a good fight but were  
shelled by our own batteries! The Berke's Yeos  
charged gallantly through the enemy & back  
again (led by one of our officers) & an Australian  
regiment refused to take part against such  
large numbers. The bloody quitters.

No news. Hope you are all keeping well  
much love to you all & Best of Wishes for  
the New Year. - Mrs Brian