

A 7364652 Cpl R. J. Heddings

137 Field Ambulance  
c/o Army Post Office.

my dearest mother,

I got your letters this morning - eight letters all told - two from you, two from ~~the~~ sister Kathleen Mary, ~~two~~ one from big brother Henry, one from sister Myrtle, one from Kathleen Fielder, and one from Alan Bloche. It was the first mail for three weeks. I grabbed my letters first as I was setting out for a bath (we do bathe - occasionally). I walked down the hill in the sunshine tearing open the first letter - one of yours - and I had a big lump in my throat, I was so happy. The sun never shone so brightly, bless you. Some other soldiers passing by, shouted "Do she still love you?" and I replied "yes, they all ~~do~~ <sup>do</sup>" which was, I hope, the literal truth.

I am setting down for half-an-

low, although I am quite busy, to  
reply to your letters. Let me first of all  
say ~~that~~ that if you realise from  
what I have just said, how precious  
letters from home are to me, or to all of us,  
you will write often, if

I am well and happy.

If you listened in to the BBC  
news the other day you will have  
heard the 49th Division mentioned,  
but I hope you don't start doing  
any unnecessary worrying. ~~I~~

~~I~~ I have written to Frank. ~~He~~

I did not know he had officially  
taken to the air. I think there  
is going to be lots of work for  
him and his colleagues, so more  
power to his elbow.

I hear that Alan Blake is  
now in the Army - PRAC, so Kathleen  
Fielden says.

You certainly look like having a busy summer with ~~to~~ your infants and their attachments & I, of course, would be the unlucky one & it isn't enough that I was the only deficiency at Christmas. Still, they won't love the pleasure of going home to look forward to.

I intend to write as many letters ~~to you all~~ as my job will permit, so you may owe all of the people who appear to be clamouring for letters that I ain't forgotten &

Prunoces — prunoces, & you would remind me of England.

I have made several vows, since

I have been here, including one never to complain about Sundays being dull. I would give a good deal for a ~~peaceful Sunday afternoon~~ peaceful Sunday afternoon walk. ~~walk would be for me~~

~~I~~ ~~Smiles~~ Smiles alive, don't  
tell me that Papa is worrying, my  
faith in human nature would be  
shattered. Listen, if he spent four  
years seeking glory and medals  
(unless they ~~took~~ the down things  
on him) and then lived through  
to enjoy a ripe old age, don't  
think that a shy violet like  
your second son is going to walk  
into trouble. I shall turn up  
like a bad penny, and an  
English penny, ~~at that~~ not a Norwegian  
one (I say that because coins  
in Norway all have a hole  
in 'em).

As for your insistence that  
I should write for anything I  
want you have no need to  
worry, because I certainly will.

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If this war goes on for any length of time, I am going to be worth quite a lot of money, as I shan't spend much here, I think.

~~But~~ I am ~~so~~ sorry & disappointed you but I am afraid there will be no third stripe for this child. The third class's stripe has been awarded to Ridge (you know, the school teacher one of the boys) ~~and~~ and I ~~am~~ am very glad of it. Not only is he my senior, but he is a good clerk and a very good friend of mine, ~~and~~ In fact he fathers the whole of we office people.

It appears, however, that I am to remain as H.Q. clerk and I am pleased about that, too, because it gives more scope.

So that's that, ~~my~~ Please

convey my apologies to Serge, wedding  
Serge and Serge, wedding, junior & ~~the~~  
for my failure to maintain the family  
tradition! ~~the~~ ~~the~~

~~#~~ I don't like to waste  
any of this paper, because it is  
beautiful stuff to write on, but am  
now empty of news, ~~the~~ (Don't  
worry about the heavy ~~writing~~ - out), it's not  
the same, it's just me, Remember that  
I always made a letter look like  
a battlefield &)

Goodnight, and Bless you all,  
Love ~~to~~ to Aunties and  
cousins and such, and love to  
John, and to Dad, and Maggie,  
and Kitty, and to you.

# your loving son,  
Jesse.

P.S. Some "stamps" for the  
Aunties. You will make