

Trentham.

11.5.43.

Dear Auntie Nance + Mardie.

I got the parcel yesterday I was very pleased to get it. I had some of the buns for supper + I will be having some for morning tea. They were in good condition only one or two being broken. Thanks also for the cake of chocolate, it came in very handy. I was on guard last night and a bit of chocolate to chew was very nice. I had to sleep with all my web on my boots as well. I have only two more hours of sentry duty to do. I was up to see Auntie Jessie on Saturday afternoon I told her I most likely would not get another leave before we sail. I hope you are both well and that the weather

you are haveing is as good as
what we have here today.

As I have not any more to
write I will close with love
to everyone at home and your-
selves.

John.

My overseas address.

438027

Pte J. W. M. Bathgate

No. 2. Company

Southern Infantry

2nd. N.Z. E.F.

N. Z. A. P. O. 1000

By the time you get this
letter you will need to use
my new address.



NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FUND BOARD

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

10. 9. 43.

Dear Mother,

I am not much good at buying presents but there is one for you. There is a scarf for Beth. A white handkerchief for Dad + one each for George + Donald. I did not know what to buy but I was looking round a shop + I thought I had better make up my mind and buy something, so what you see in the parcel is the result. I had been in + out of about a dozen shops + I was getting tired of walking. Well I will say cheerio for the time being
Love from John.



NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FUND BOARD

438027

ON ACTIVE SERVICE 3/10/43.

Pte. J. M. Bathgate

D Coy 23 Batt. 2 N. 3. E. F M. E. F.

Dear Mardie,

I was very pleased when I received your letter on Friday afternoon. I had been out on man^ouvres for a few days and had arrived back on Friday. While I was out I thought there might be some mail for me when I got back. There was also a letter from Mum. Last Sunday night I received an airgraph from Mum, it was written on the 15. 8. 43. A couple of weeks before that I received two air mail letters from home. I reckon I have done very well this month for mail. On Friday we were given a patriotic parcel each, also five packets of kapstan cigarettes. The cigarettes are not much use to me, sometimes I trade a packet of cigarettes for a news paper but I usually give them away. When there is an issue of beer there is usually two or three after my bottle. Just now there are ten of us in the section and all in the



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ON ACTIVE SERVICE

same tent, this last time or so the one who bought my bottle sent it round the tent so they all had a mouthfull. Bill B. is also in the same section so that the boys get his cigarettes & beer as well. Up to the present time we have been issued fifty cigarettes a week.

The parcel was a very nice one. There was a small fruit cake, a tin of peaches, a tin of peas, a tin of fish, a tin of fruit salts and a tin of gibbs tooth paste, also a tooth brush, a cake of soap, four packets of P.K. a handkerchief and some aspirin. I was lucky to get the tooth paste as I ran out of it a few days before the parcel came and I have not been able to get any.

Yesterday was about the dustiest day there has been since I have been here. In the afternoon there was a bit of thunder and a shower of rain. I was at the beach having a dip in



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the sea at the time, and the parts of my clothes that were uppermost were quite wet. There was not enough rain to lay the dust. There has been a lot of wind lately, it's a good thing in a way otherwise it would be pretty hot. The weather is getting cooler now I am not sorry to say, it is just nice for going about without a shirt. I am just starting to get a bit of a tan.

A couple of weeks ago to night the crowd I am with so started out on a hundred mile march. We started at six o'clock & walked for twelve mile. My feet were a bit tender after the first night, but the next five nights I felt the muscles of my legs very stiff. Altogether we walked a bit over eighty mile in six days. All the marching was done between six and twelve at night. We had two men bivvies to sleep in and to keep the sun off us during the day. Every night when we reached our bivouac



NATIONAL PATRIOTIC FUND BOARD

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

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area after the march, the cooks had a slice of bread and a mug of tea ready for us. It was usually about twelve by the time we got our tea. I was always ready for it as we had tea at half past four. We did not have breakfast till half past eight.

It is just a little after three and I am waiting for Bill to come with my mug of tea it is his turn to fill the mugs. I still like my morning and afternoon tea. Well Mardie I hope you are keeping well and Auntie Nance as well. As I have no more news I will close with love to Auntie Nance everyone at home and peeps to yourself.

John.