

Isle of Wight Times 16th Sept 1915

LETTERS FROM LOCAL MEN

By kind permission of Mrs. Palmer, of 9 Argyll Place, we have taken a few extracts from letters written by her husband (Sergt. D. D. Palmer), of the 1/8 Batt. I.W. Rifles at the Dardanelles.

August 24th, 1915.

I felt disappointed at not getting a letter when the others got theirs, but perhaps I shall get one later on for it is the only thing one has to look forward to, and I have been wondering how you and the girls have been getting on. We have been in rather tight quarters, and have lost quite a lot, but I am still keeping well, and I am alright, I have not heard from the boy, but I think it was the very best thing that could have happened, for I feel sure he would never have stood the hardship of shortness of food and water, and only the Heavens to cover you. I am sure he has had every attention in hospital, and his wound not dangerous. Poor boy Searle, of Arthur Street, was killed and five others wounded just in front of me on the 22nd, and we have lost quite a lot of officers. There is no tidings of Capt. Ratsey or his brother, nor of Major Lewis. We are now only 450 strong, so you must judge for yourself. . . . No one knows, only those who are here—the strongest are feeling it—and if I am spared to come home I shall have lots to tell you, but there seems no end to it yet. It would seem a treat to have a wash and clean clothes, but must look to better times.

Remember me to all for I cannot write, everything had to be left at the base. I was fortunate enough to get some poor fellow's shirt, for I had only my vest and no pants. I had a change and felt more comfortable, but you must not worry for I have been able to cheer up the others who have been sick, and help the wounded. I am with Major Veasey who is in command.

On August 29th Sergeant Palmer wrote:

It is Sunday, and I thought you would like to have a line. I got your letter on Thursday, and I was glad to hear you and all were well at home. I hope you have heard from Charlie. I think he was sent to Alexandria, he was only here two days. I have been in the front trenches for a fortnight, and have got out of it alright, but we have left many behind. God only knows it is a pretty hot show here, what with shell and rifle fire and not much water. I have had my boots off once since we have been here and tried to wash, but never mind, better times in store some day if spared. We are shifting to-night further up, so you must pray for us to be spared, for there is only half left, and only 12 officers out of 30. We are hard hit, but we are gaining ground very slowly.

It is very hot day time and cold at night; it is alright, but shall be glad when it is all over. You must let me know when you hear from Charlie, but he is better off. I cannot tell you any plainer for we have got to have our letters examined and so not able to say where we are, but we are relieving the Australians, so you will be able to see by the papers where we are on the 2nd September. Shells have been bursting all day. I think now I have told you all . . .