

Brookenhurst  
8 November

My dear Hazel,

I have been waiting a day or two to see if I could get a New Zealand mail, which has been overdue since Monday. It is over a fortnight now since we had a mail, and it seems longer when one has nothing to do but wait for it. In France it was just a case of "expect it when you see it", and one hardly gave it a thought, but here it ought to be regular, and I feel aggrieved because it is not. I have had a parcel from you though, at least it was sent by your mother,

and a nice letter with it, dated August 14<sup>th</sup>.

I have had quite a good time the last week. Much to my surprise the doctor gave me leave to get up some days ago, so I have been getting round in a perambulator, and experimenting with crutches. I can get round to any part of the building now, so I am able to visit my friends. Stan is still lying strapped in a frame arrangement, with his feet tipped up in the air, but he is mending nicely now, and looks well enough. I have not been outside yet, except to lie in the sun for an hour one day. The weather is simply

awful. When it isn't actually raining it is probably just going to, and it is not worth while venturing out. But they say the present weather is quite unseasonable, and there ought to be plenty of fine days yet. I hope to get ~~of~~ some motor-rides before long, and am looking forward to seeing this district, which everyone says is lovely. Those who are able to get about get trips to Bournemouth and Southampton, either for picnics or matinees, and even to the Isle of Wight.

My foot is doing so well that I don't think the final operation will amount to much. It was lucky I left Rouen

when I did, for they would certainly have taken the whole foot off there.

A man belonging to the 13<sup>th</sup> company has just come in from France. He went right through the Somme, so was able to give me some news. It seems there were twenty-five survivors of our company, and only two of my platoon. Yet there are rumours that they are to go back to the Somme before long. It is certainly a cruel war, and I am almost glad to be out of it. I am enjoying the restful atmosphere of this place, and my thoughts of the future are good company.

With fondest love to you, my Hazel,  
from  
Becil.