

Overseas Base Camp
Izmir, Cairo
6 Feb. '16.

My dear Hazel,

I have just arrived here last night from Alexandria, so I missed your letter, which I suppose arrived at Ras-el-Tin yesterday. The letters are censored here, so I will use a green envelope, and will not tell you what little I know about the movements of troops. I have no idea how long I will be here, but not longer than a fortnight, I should think. It is only a small camp - that is the New Zealand section - but it is pretty full at present: I should say there are two hundred men here, belonging to all different N.Z. units. It is a bit rough after hospitals, but a very good place as camps go. There is no drill, but a good many guards and pickets to supply, and endless parades and roll-calls for classification etc. There are various formalities to be gone through before you are gradually drafted out to rejoin your unit. I am fit to go back tomorrow, but will not object to a few days here, with opportunities of getting to Cairo.

I am enclosing a photo as promised. It is only a flash-light post-card, but the photographers are a poor lot in this country, and do a post-card just as well, or badly, as a more expensive photo.

I had practically unlimited leave in Alex. last week, and had some good outings, mostly exploring the suburbs. I did not improve my opinion of the town as a whole, but the last day I discovered San Stefano, which is a really beautiful residential quarter.

We left yesterday via Mustapha intermediate base, and reached Cairo at 3 p.m., after an interesting journey of three hours. It was the first time I had done the trip in daylight. The fertility and beauty of the country is amazing. Our troubles began at Cairo station, where we were misdirected to go to Zeitoun, and we had many wanderings before we reached here at 8 p.m. However I had the luck to see Bill Summers and another Imanus friend, so did not mind the trouble so much. I hope to get to Zeitoun this afternoon again to see some of them. This camp is on the bank of the Nile, just across the river on the way to the Pyramids. The mess-room where I am writing is just a few yards from the water, and there is a grand view across half-a-mile of sunny water to the town, and an island covered with lovely gardens. I am pleased to get back to Cairo: I have quite an affection for the place.

I hope to get my mail sent on here in a few days, and will write a better letter next week.

With much love to you, darling
from Cecil.