

W.D. 13/12/40

Dear Jim,

Another note to tell you we missed the bus - had no share in the really brilliant victory that has cleaned Gaggiani out of Egypt - the whole Camps Bureau - the only Bureau up - and on Wednesday thought we were certain to be used as for awhile Sidi Barrani held out stoutly, but the bastards collapsed & so did our hopes. Jim Barrani, my 2 ife is up with the Bede transports taking up nations & helping to bring in prisoners & that's all the share we are getting. It's the most bitter disappointment of my life and I'll say no more about it.

It really has been a brilliant victory, good planning, good well trained troops accustomed to the desert (though not a whit better or more seasoned than us) some "infantry" tanks which the Italian AT. weapons couldn't stop - and SURPRISE.

Roughly it went this way.

The Italians had the 1st & 2nd Libyan Divs, 1st Blackshirt Divn, Malitta's Group - 5 bus plus odd tanks & Libyan Armoured Group forward in a line of staggered camps. Echeloned back, right back to the frontier, were the 62nd & 63rd Metropolitan Divs & the 2nd Blackshirt (I think) plus more AFV formations. We had the