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12th. Jan., 1942.

19088
Pte. R.T. Street,
I. Section,
Headquarters Company,
26th. Battalion,
2nd. N.Z.E.F.
Middle East Forces.

Dear Mum,

Here I am again. I am sitting in my dug-out, having not long come back from tea. Less than an hour ago, a chap came walking down the steps into our room carrying a parcel for me. It was your cake at last. He also had a Xmas. Greetings telegram from the Suttons for me. Well, the cake tin had a few dents in it, but was otherwise intact. I opened it from the bottom with a tin opener, gave the top one or two taps and came the cake - a beauty. Ralph & I have just had a piece & it is first rate. Frank didn't have any. He has been in bed today with gastric

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flu & a temperature. Thank you Mum for the cake, & for the trouble of putting on the outside cover. We usually feel hungry about bed time, although we have a good hot meal at 5 P.M. so for a while at least, we shall be able to eat a piece of cake, all the way from Sunny Nelson. Poor Oscar, the tame mouse, is dead, so I needn't be too careful about where I keep the cake. Oscar became a bit of a nuisance, so last night we hit him on the head. He would keep us awake at night with his rattling the tins & things we have in benzine boxes on our shelves above our beds.

I suppose, though, there will be others to take his place.

I haven't received any mail this week. I expect the air-mail service has had to be modified or even cancelled. We

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haven't heard anything, officially, yet as to whether the air mail has been "washed-out" or not, so we are still sending our letters by air-mail until we are notified.

Rumour has it that the air services between N. Z. & here have been abandoned, for a time at least, & under prevailing conditions we realize it may well be on the cards.

I haven't much news to relate this week. Mum. The weather has been windy as usual with the exception of one day during the week & Sunday afternoon. The winds are so chilly too. That chap who wrote the song, "Till the Sands of the Desert grow cold -" certainly never lived out in these parts.

All last week I was on a special course. Three of us from our section were chosen to have instruction in a certain essential part of our job, & after three days of this,

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4/ I was chosen to have another three days
on a further course, this one much harder.
We were taken by truck each morning
after breakfast to another unit where we
received this instruction, have our lunch
there & were brought back again in time for
tea. While there I met a chap I
knew years ago at Varsity in Wellington -
Pat Kane whose Dad, "Tommy" Kane
Dad used to know.

We had Church parade on Sunday
morning, the band accompanying us with
the hymns. In the afternoon Ralph & I
set out soon after lunch, for a swim.
We found a sandy cove, stripped off
& in we went. The water was on the
cold side & we didn't stay in long.
I scrubbed Ralph's back & he scrubbed
mine. As we came back, we
came across several heaps of shells

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57 among the rocks - sea-shells. they weren't
very big, but beautifully made & coloured,
so we collected fifty or more. Ralph is
sending his to a little & niece, & I will
send mine to Pamela Margaret. She
won't find any on Caroline Bay.

Well Mum, news is very scarce this
week so you must please excuse such a
short letter. However, I thought I would
write to thank you for the cake, & this
will let you know that I am fit &
well. I hope you are all well
in person.

Cheerio.

Love from your son,
Reari.