



South Australians at war – transcript – D 4010/2 (L)

Letter to T.B. Wemyss

Letter written by Sgt W.F. Spencer, Fourth Imperial Bushmen's Contingent, 24 January 1901 on active service

Transcription of full text

Transcribed by Susie van der Sluys, August 2002

Transvaal

Wolverdiend

September 6 1900

Dear Sir,

I now take the pencil in hand to write you a few lines to let you know that I am well. I am at Wolverdiend now we have been on the March ever since we landed until about a week ago we are having a rest here for a while there are only about 40 of us here the rest have gone on to Pretoria we are going there shortly. we have had a pretty hard time since we have been out here we haven't had a bit of bread since we landed only hard biscuits. We have had Seventeen Engagements since we came out we have had five men killed and thirteen wounded out of the fourth Contingent one of them is going to be buried today Trooper E Mitchel he was shot dead while on a patrol they ran right into the Boers before they saw them and they opened fire on them there was only five of our men and there was fifteen Boers so they had to retire and they shot him dead they didn't hit any one else they can't shoot much they are better at a long range than a short one I have had the dust knocked in my face from the bullets they have gone jolly close to me at times I had my horse shot from under me War isn't a very nice game there are better games than war but still I don't mind it I like it alright I could shoot Boers all day it's good sport. there is some talk about us going to England after the War I hope they do take us there I might go home if they don't take us I would like to go to England before I go back. we haven't had a letter since we landed I am longing to get some news our Contingent is terribly scattered now we had three men killed in one day it was a big battle we had that day that was the day my horse was shot we were nearly captured about 30 of us they tried to cut us off they got



within a hundred yards of us. I have got a very good horse now. I have been in every engagement so far the bullets has hit all around me they have gone within a few inches of me but they cant hit me they are bad shots. remember me to Elle tell her I will come and see her when I get back if the Boers dont kill me before then. I wouldnt mind going to China for a while to fight the chows it would be better than fighting the Boers. We had to go out last night and search all the houses for about six miles out to see if there was any boers in them we had to search every corner and under the beds and every little place we started out at eleven Oclock and got back at five oclock in the morning but we didnt catch any of them. the Boers dont like the Australians at all they call them all sorts of names they say they would sooner fight two Englishmen than one Australian you must excuse the paper being dirty it is the only envelope I have left this is all the news this time remember me to all.

I am yours truly

Trooper E. H. Magor

South Africa.

Adress

Trooper E. H. Magor

South Australian bushmens Imperial Contingent

South Africa