



Pte. CECIL ALLEN.

Another Lutonian on board was Pte. Walter Cecil Allen, son of Mr. W. Allen, the mineral water manufacturer, of 173, Castle-street. He is very well known in the town as a sign-writer and decorator, at which business he is very clever, and his home is at 15, Rothesay-road, Luton. He was some years ago in the 12th Lancers, but left the Army and joined the Beds Yeomanry, in which he attained the rank of sergeant. When war broke out he enlisted in the 1/5th Beds Regiment, in which he speedily gained a stripe, but this he soon relinquished in order to join the Quartermaster's staff. When the 1/5th Battalion left for foreign service he remained behind with Divisional Quartermaster Kiddle to complete the details incidental to the departure, and eventually sailed on the ill-fated vessel. Aboard, his knowledge of horses stood him in good stead, and he was requested to undertake the groom's duties for Col. Macdonald, whilst Lieut. Spurway, of the Somerset Light Infantry, also desired his services, so that he was kept pretty busy.

When a "News" representative called at 15, Rothesay-road yesterday morning he found Mrs. Allen and her three bonny children still in the first transports of delight that "Daddy is safe." Mrs. Allen received the following cablegram on Tuesday morning from Alexandria:—"Safe, Allen." An hour or two later she heard the newsboys calling the dreadful news, and it was then only that the real import of the message became apparent and she realised that he had escaped.

Last Monday she received a letter from her husband, addressed from "Royal Edward, Somewhere on the High Seas."

At the date of writing they had been at sea five days, and said how much he was enjoying the voyage. There were many interesting scenes he would have liked to describe but for the Censor. He had been fortunate in securing a first-class berth, and added that his "governor" had been awfully queer with sea sickness. He also added that the Colonel's man had suffered considerably, but he had not personally felt any ill-effects. They did not then know their destination, but hoped to ascertain on reaching Malta. He said that the vessel was taking a zig-zag course in order to avoid submarines or torpedoes, and, eulogising the vessel, he said it was 11,000 tons burden, had a working crew of 250, and there were 1,500 troops aboard.