

INTRODUCTION

This book is a copy taken with pride from our Grand Pops Diary which he wrote during World War 1.

Best Edwells War
James

THE WAR DIARY OF BERT EATWELL BEGINNING 1917

Thursday 3/1/1917

Today the boys have gone on a fatigue. I had to stay behind to go to a court of enquiry that was held on missing men. In the last Battle I was behind my corporal when he fell, seriously wounded and he was dying when I left him. He is now reported missing so I have told our headquarters all I saw.

Friday 4/1/1917

Today we have been on fatigue building stables etc. Last night Fritz came over and dropped many bombs about here. Last night Fritz shelled a camp not far from here where the 4th brigade are. He put a shell fair into the middle of a hut that our platoon were occupying a few weeks ago. Last night in the YMCA hut a lecture with lantern slides on Charles Dickens.

Saturday 5/1/1917

Today all those who have been inoculated against typhoid fever more than a year ago had to be done again today. I had to be done again. It did not hurt much but it is a little painful tonight. Tonight there was a band concert in the YMCA hut. Today our Batt. have had 200 reinforcements so we will be getting up to full strength again.

Sunday 6/1/1917

This morning two platoons of our company went away on fatigue, the other went to church parade and had a real neat sermon. Last night some of the boys in our hut had a jubilee so there was not much sleep until after midnight.

Monday 7/1/1917

This morning bathes this afternoon fatigues. This evening a band concert in the YMCA hut. This evening we had a N.Z mail but all we find there is about 3 weeks mail missing. I only had 2 letters and not one from home.

Monday 8/1/1917

This morning we got orders to pack up and go up the line, so we had to leave our happy home. I have been transferred to the stretcher bearers much against my wish. We left our camp by train at 3pm & had a ride about half way which was a big help. When we got off the train we could see that the road we had to go was being shelled but we had to go through it. Shells were bursting on both sides of us & pieces of iron flying about us, but luckily so far as we know there were no casualties. The

Monday 8/1/1917

whole Battalion had to pass this place that was being shelled of course always when in the danger zone we always go along in single file and each platoon a few chains from the other. It snowed this morning & froze over this afternoon making the duckwalks very slippery to walk on.

Wednesday 9/1/1917

Last night we were a long time getting in here. We arrived at 8.30pm & are now in some support trench that we were in before. Last night as we were changing over with the Rifle Brigade a shell landed in the trench here killing one of our platoon, wounded another and badly wounded a R.B. Coy so we stretcher bearers were soon on the job. Today two more of our Company were wounded. This trench has been very much improved since the last time we were here. There is enough dugouts for all now so we are able to keep a little warmer than we did the last we were here. We four stretcher bearers have fairly good dugouts & so long as our boys dodge the iron & bullets etc we will have a fairly good time. We do not carry rifle bayonet or ammunition & do not do any fatigues or Sentry.

Thursday 10 Jan 1917

Today usual shelling Fritze keeps sending a few shells over. He has the range of all our main pathways where our ration & fatigue parties are continually passing along and of course causing a few casualties. Today three of our coy. were wounded. Two were wounded whilst on fatigue & the other coy. wounded in the trench here not far from our bivy. Also a Battalion Signaler was seriously wounded up towards the front line which we had to go & carry out. Although badly wounded he was quite cheerful & happy to think he was getting out of it. Today the aeroplanes have been very active & both ours & Fritze were about in large numbers. Occasionally Aeroplanes were brought down by Anti aircraft, but we seldom see a good fight in the air.

Friday 11 Jan 1917

Today things have been fairly quiet in our trench. Tonight we change over from Reserve trench to the front line at 7pm. We were all ready to change over at dusk when Fritz seemed to have an idea that something was on; he opened out & shelled close to our trench & the main tracks, so we had to wait until he had quietened down a little. A piece of shell struck my haversack but fortunately it did not penetrate it. We started off, it was very dark. What an awful time we had getting here. We were continually falling into shell holes & walking up to our knees in mud & water. There was good thing Fritze kept quiet and allowed us to arrive without casualties.

Saturday 12 Jan 1917

Today things have been fairly quiet up here, but he has been shelling the reserve trenches. Last night I had a uncomfortable time. My mate and I squeezed into a tiny bivy, hardly big enough for one man to sit up in, but we squeezed in somehow, but oh the pains & aches we had to suffer and being so wet our feet were like a block of ice. Today we have been trying to enlarge our happy home, but we are not allowed to do much here in fear of drawing shell fire. So we stretcher bearers are not having a very strenuous time. Today a mail came for us & I got 11 N.Z. letters. This evidently is the mail we thought had been sunk.

Sunday 13 Jan 1917

Last night a few shells came very close. Owing to the enlargement of our home, our aches & groans were fewer last night, but it was fearfully cold. Things have been fairly quiet here in the front line today but there is seldom five minutes passes without shells flying overhead. The trenches here are very high so during the day we have to keep down as much as possible for snipers are always on the look out. This afternoon Fritz planes are flying very low about here & our boys were giving them a hot time with rifle & machine gun fire also the trench batteries were putting in a few shots.

Monday 14 Jan 1917

Today things were fairly quiet. There has been no casualties in our company, so we stretcher bearers had an easy time. It snowed last night and has frozen over today so has not been so muddy. This evening the Rifle brigade relieved us. With the exception of getting lost once, we had a fairly good trip out. The duckwalks were very slippery so there was the usual slipping & sliding. When we got lost we got into a trench and were knee deep in mud, so we landed out of there very wet & muddy. We walked out to this camp and reached here about 10pm wet and tired and were glad to get into a good dry hut and have a sleep. This is a new camp about 5 miles from the front line so we are well in reach of Fritzes heavy guns. The town of Ypres is quite close which he shells often.

Tuesday 15 Jan 1917

This morning much to our disgust & surprise they had us out at 5am & we were sent up the line on fatigue. We had to go within half a mile of the front line, it rained heavily & blew a gale all day. We reached here after dark wet through & tired out. It seems ridiculous sending us so far for the little work we do, for by the time we reach there we are tired out & only have time to do an hours work. If we could only stay up there for two days we could do as much work as we do in a week this way. We stretcher bearers have to go with the fatigue parties but do not have to work. The stretcher was wet through today and very heavy to carry. Fritz was very quiet today so there was no casualties.

Wednesday 16 Jan 1917

This morning reville at 5am and the Coy. were sent up the line on fatigue leaving here at 6am. More than half the coy were on sick parade this morning, but many of them were given medicine and sent up the line. I was lucky and landed Excused duty. It rained and snowed hard all day so the boys arrived home wet through.

Thursday 17 Jan 1917

The usual stunt again and usual large sick parade, but most of them were sent up the line. I started out but was so bad that our officer sent me back. Last night Fritze was dropping bombs but did not drop any near this camp. This evening we have had a N.Z. mail I scored 17 letters.

The following pages were missing untill...

Wednesday 30 May 1917

This morning we had a little physiscal drill and then were dismissed. We had a tight squeeze to get into our tents last night for we slept 15 in a tent. We left this afternoon with full packs up at 12am and marched about 4 miles through the town to the station. The part of Le Harve which we passed through was much better than the streets that we came through yesterday. We had to wait some time on the station. When we saw our train arrived we were rather surprised for our carriages were horse boxes & on the outside was written 8 horses or 40 men. They put 35 of us into a truck so by the time that we all got in with our gear it was a job to find sitting room. We passed through lovely country, every piece of it either under cultivation or growing good grass. I notice that there is very few fences. All the horses and cattle are teathered with fairly short ropes.

Thursday 31 May 1917

We reached our destination Bailleul at 1pm today and were very glad to get out of the dirty cramped horse trucks for we were 22 hours in the train. We were marched about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles out of Bailleul where we pitched camp & was glad to get settled down once again. Just before dark we saw our first hun Aeroplane come over us which our Arti aircraft guns were firing at. When the shells burst in the air it makes a little puff of smoke so one can see plainly how close the shots were going. At dark the huns attacked one of our ballons and after firing a few shots at it, brought it down. It was rather a pretty sight it went up in a big blaze and was gone in a few seconds. We thought the observer was burnt to death but luckily for him he left the balloon in a parachute before she was hit and got down safely. These balloon used for observation posts give valuable information for they overlook the Germans front line and so help to direct our Artillery fire.

Friday 1st June 1917

Today we have had a physical drill and bayonet fighting etc etc. The same old thing that we were sick of months ago. Fritze has been putting down a few shells over heads and landing them in Bailleul. Bailleul is a big railway centre which he would like to blow up for a good deal of ammunition is brought there and carried to different dumps. We have trouble getting a decent wash about here. We have to wash in the days in swamps and is getting stagnant. But for the water it is a lovely camping place. The grass is about one foot high & everything is nice & clean.

Saturday 2nd June 1917

Today we have had the usual drill. This evening we had to spruce ourselves up and was inspected by General Godley. Most of the N.Z ers were out of the trenches now and are in rest camps not far from here. We have me a good number of old friends who came down here in the evenings. They look a bit rough and before long Fritze sends over a shell occasionally but most of them go well over our heads and burst in the town. The tents about here are all painted all colours a Fritze aeroplane cannot see them. If one of his aeroplanes came over and saw a camp he would give the Artillery the range and shell would soon find its way there.

Sunday 3 June 1917

The open air service went off this morning. The Band played the hymns which sounded very nice. It has been very quiet in camp this afternoon for most of the boys have gone to the other N.Z. camps to look for their old friends. The YMCA have erected a big marquee. One end is used for reading & writing. The other end they have a canteen. Once a week we are issued two packets of cigarettes a packet of tobacco and a box of matches.

Monday 4 June 1917

Usual drill today. Old Fritze has been making things lively today this morning he put one in a house 200 yards from our camp, and blew the end of the house away, & scattered bricks and bits of shell everywhere. Two civilians were killed & one of our boys got a slight hit on the wrist. Out of the 18 shells he put over about 10 of them were duds.

Tuesday 5 June 1917

Today twenty of our platoon went on fatigue this morning. We had to unload 8 large timber trucks at a railway station. An enemy aeroplane came over today & dropped a bomb on a large ammunition train. He just happened to catch the end truck so it was about four hours before the last truck load blew up. It was said that 300 tons of ammunition went up. Everyday Fritze planes go over but always have to fly so high to keep out of range of the anti aircraft gun, to be able to see much. Our Artillery fire is heavier than usual tonight.

Wednesday 6 June 1917

We had the same old drill today. This afternoon I did a little dodging and instead of drill I sat under a hedge and wrote letters. This evening we had a heavy shower. We are shifting camp tomorrow and going closer to the firing line, so we have all been busy covering our tin hats with bits of sand bag. The idea is so that they do not show up when in the trenches & looks like sand bags. We have to give in our felt hats, so the old tin hat is the only one we have. They feel very heavy and uncomfortable at first, but I suppose we will soon get used to them. I went down town this evening and had a good feed of eggs for one never knows when he may get the chance to have another.

Thursday 7 June 1917

We shifted this morning leaving our camp at about 11am with full packs on. We found it fearfully hot marching with our heavy packs & tunic on. As we were having a spell about 200 German prisoners passed us. We have settled down in a nice place for a camping ground. We have not any tents to sleep in, we have made a big bivy with a tarpolium which was issued to each section. This morning the big advance started which has been much talked about lately. About 3am this morning our artillery opened fire and at the same time set their mines off and blew up the huns trenches. The infantry then advanced and drove the Germans back slaughtering them and taking a great many prisoners. The Artillery fire was fearful, the roar was deafening. About 9am the fire died down a little but they have kept up a steady fire all day. The guns are well hidden, one seldom sees any but for them firing one would never know there was any about.

Friday 8 June 1917

We have working on Masines road. We left this morning at 1am and went to where the front trenches were before the advance, a distance of about 3 miles from our camp. It was a great sensation going up in front of our guns for the first time. The sound was deafening and the Fritz was putting a few over which made it a little worse. We were put on road making repairing, an old road which was badly blown about. In this part of the line the Germans have held it for 2 years & when they first entrenched there it must have been a wood & now the trees have been cut off & blown about so as there is hardly a whole tree left standing. The trenches were empty with the exception of a little black kitten which must have been a pet. It was meowing so pitifully that I left off work & went & found it. I intended taking it back to camp with me but it bit my finger so I let him go again. After eight hours work we returned to camp & had breakfast & slept for the rest of the day. On the road where we were working, wounded were continually coming down, some walking others being carried on stretches.

Saturday 9 June 1917

We set out at the same time this morning & worked on the same road. As usual the shrapnel kept bursting about us. There were no casualties in our company, but another company had two wounded. Amongst the wounded that came past today was a German (Sergt. Major). He sat down on the side of the road where we were working and we could see that he was badly wounded. Some of us who were after souvenirs cut a button each off his uniform, we then put him on a transport wagon & sent him to a dressing station where he could have his wounds dressed. I must say I feel guilty every time I look at that poor fellows button. Where we were working there was a distraction every where one looked and also plenty of dead which were not buried, some of our boys and some of the enemy. Two of our boys were knocked down by a shell today but it did not hit them, it was only concussion that knocked them over. Fritze got two of our aeroplanes this morning, one came down like a cork screw. We had 8 hours work as before and then went back to camp tired & hungry and after breakfast most of us were soon asleep.

Sunday 10 June 1917

This morning at 1am we set out as usual and all thought that we were going on fatigue roadmaking. After going about 2 miles to our surprise we turned about and came back to camp. We had the day off untill 7pm and then set off for the trenches & when within 2 miles of the front-line, we began to get it pretty hot, shrapnel & shells were flying all around us luckily no one got hit just then. We had about one mile of bush to go through and only a narrow rough track so the process was very slow. We were all very glad when we reached the support trenches and were told off into dugouts. We were inside for about 5 minutes when we heard a burst of shrapnel and then the call for stretcher bearers. The burst caught three of our signalers who were mending a broken wire. Two were wounded & one killed. I was one of the eight of our coy. to be picked out to go down the line 3 miles and carry up rations. We set off at 1am and fell in line behind some Tommies who were just going out and offered to show us the way. We had not gone far when Fritze opened out shrapnel fire on us. Two Tommie officers were wounded one getting his arm badly broken and the other got hit in his face. We all took cover as best we could & stay there for a few minutes. We then set out again, but it got so hot that we had to take cover again. While we were lying there one H.E (High Explosive) burst a few yards from where I was lying & sent a shower of dirt all over me but luckily no one was hit. We started off again and were not troubled very much until about 2 miles from our first mishap old Fritze sent a dozen gas shells just over our heads, so we had to get down into the trench, & put our gas helmets on, but as the wind was blowing away from us the gas soon cleared away. We reached the food dump safely. It is in a village where it is blown to pieces, there being only one sound house left which is being used as a dump. It was daylight when we started off back with our load of rations. We were strolling along when all of a sudden a shell burst half a chain ahead of us. We left the road not thinking that old Fritze could see us & ran across an open

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paddock, he then started bursting shrapnel around us, everytime we heard it coming if one was not lucky enough to get into a shell hole he would lay flat in the open & await the result. One time 3 of us landed in the one shell hole. There was a mix up rations and men all mixed together. After running under fire for half a mile we reached a dugout, where we stayed for some time. Fortunately nobody was hit, we had a marvellous escape. When we were having another spell in the trenches a bullet hit the bank close by which must have come from a sniper. We reached our dugout safely & were glad when we got safely into our dugouts. The fatigue party was shifted today two miles behind the firing line & I must say we were very comfortable here in the dugouts, although every now and then Fritz drops a few shells here. But it would take a direct hit to shift our burrow. Tonight we left for the dump at 9.30 & brought the food to our dugouts and had a sleep until 3am when we set off again but nothing of importance happened. We got a bit of shelling while going through

Sunday 10 June 1917

bush, but took cover, so was quite safe. We arrived back at our dugouts tired & hungry. There is an old farmhouse close by with a supply of good water, so we are able to boil water and make tea.

Monday's writing included in Sunday's.

Tuesday 12 June 1917

Tonight 200 of us left at 10pm for the dump. We reached there safely and nothin exciting happened untill we were half way up to the front line, then the fun commenced. Old Fritz opened out on the trenches which we were passing through & for about 20 chains it was perfect hell. Sometimes we were lying flat, sometimes crawling along the trench untill at last we got out of the fire & luckily no one was hit. In one place one H.E. exploded about 1½ chains in front of us & blew the trench in. A party passed us and one of them had been hit in the leg and was limping along. We were very glad when we reached our quarters & got rid of our loads for they were very heavy. On the way back we had to pass through the same trench. We were strolling along when suddenly a heavy shrapnel fire started, we dodged it for a while until one burst over our heads. Four were hit & five of us knocked down, two were hit in the shoulder, one in the wrist and the last of all poor F Briggs (Tapawera) hit in the spine. The stretcher bearers were sent for & we dressed the wounded as best we could. Briggs was carried away and the others we able to walk to the dressing station.

Wednesday 13 June 1917

A special fatigue was called for to carry down killed & wounded men's guns from headquarters. We were also told that we were all

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going to out of the trenches for a spell. On arriving in the cook house four of us were told off to take tea & stew up into the front trench. The Germans had evacuated theirs & our boys were occupying it so we had a very rough trip for everything is blown to . All was quiet when we arrived, but we had not been there for long before Fritz opened fire on us and gave us a pretty hot fire we all four crawled into a little dugout and stayed there until things quietened down a little. We made a bolt for it across what was known as "No Mans Land" & I must admit I have never ran so hard in all my life. Shrapnel was bursting all around us, but we got through safely. That line we came out of the line and are now camped a few miles behind the line. It is grand to get away from the big guns & not having to dodge shells & shrapnel.

Thursday 14 June 1917

Today we had a quiet time. We have not any tents to sleep in, so most of us are making little bivys to sleep in. Three of us managed to get some old scrim from an old farmhouse close by, so with a little trouble we have fixed up quite a nice little place. The name of this place is Point Dehieppe and where we was in the trenches was Ploegsteert Wood.

Friday 15 June 1917

This morning we were taken for a bath & to get a change of clothing. We marched for about four miles and found the bathes had been blown up, so we marched to another bath when about a mile from it four of us dropped behind and when the others were well out of sight we set off back and had a lovely bathe in a canal that was $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile from here. This afternoon we were given a short lecture on things in general. Fritz sends a shell over every few minutes. It is great in the towns where the soldiers have taken possession & they make themselves at home. There are a few civilians still about but the majority have gone.

Saturday 16 June 1917

Today we have had one hours drill, we are suppose to have half an hour in the morning & afternoon just to keep us up to the mark. It is fearfully hot here now & water is very scarce in these parts but we are lucky enough to be near a good well and pump. There is a few familiar faces missing, we had about 20 casualties in 12th Nelson Coy. Three killed & the rest wounded. Last night one poor old lady here thought the shells were coming rather close so she decided to shift. She was just getting the last of her things away when a shell came and killed her. The old buildings are much in use at present. The sheds are used for Boot makers, Orderly room, Band practise, & for sleeping in, & the house is used for Officers quarters. The occupants of the house carry on with their work & do not take any notice of us.

Sunday 17 June 1917

This morning an open air service was held, the band playing the hymns which sounded very nice. This afternoon swimming sports was held in the canal. The canal flows past here, it is about 1½ chains wide & very deep. Old fritz has been sending over some shrapnel today & a good number of them landing rather close to our camp. Bits of shrapnel kept dropping amongst us. Some bits would weigh 1 lb & red hot. Three of us were writing in our little bivy & one landed on each side of us. We went away for dinner & when we returned we found that one piece had dropped inside, it dented a tin & smashed the handle of a knife. This evening I was one of the picket to go to Peippe. The town is full of soilders. They have taken possession of it as we marched through. There were colonials looking out of nearly every window.

Monday 18 June 1917

This morning we had gas & rifle drill for two hours & before dinner some of us went for a swim in the canal. This afternoon we were to have one hour drill, but at fall in time, a thunder storm came over and our cosy little bivy did not prove to be waterproof. In some ponds about here there are some lovely water lilies out in full flower.

When we were working on the road at Masines we saw a good number of tanks & one day saw one working. We saw one that was brought in from what was called "No Mans Land". The ground was very rough. It had to cross trenches & shell holes. Sometimes the front would be up in the air & then she would roll sideways. We quite expected see it to tip over but it kept going smashing it's way through barbed wire entanglements & any other obstacle that might be in the way.

Tuesday 19 June 1917

This morning instead of 2 hours drill I was put on cooks fatigue peeling potatoes & onions. It has been showery today. This afternoon at 1-30pm we broke up our happy homes and started out with full packs up & marched here to Peippe, a fair size town with a few civilans still living in it. We are all billeted in houses, it is quite home like. Our platoon is occupying a large room in the top of a two storey brick house. I have just been looking around & I see we have a very nice garden with strawberry & raspberries just getting ripe, so I guess we are in for a good time. Since I wrote in here this evening we had orders to shift into another house a few chains up the street, it is a better place but we haven't got a garden here. Our platoon have four rooms upstairs, so we can hear them talking & the kids crying; it does sound funny.

Wednesday 20 June 1917

This morning our Coy. was paraded for a bath. The bathes are $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from here. The bathes are 4'6" & hold about a dozen at once. It was lovely to get a good hot disinfectant bath & if one like he can get a complete change of underclothing. This afternoon we witnessed a very daring enemy aeroplane raid upon one of our observation posts (Ballons). He hit one balloons & in a few seconds it was all gone in smoke. He went straight at the second & fired it and turned his machine gun at the observers who left the balloon, in a parachute, but they reached the ground safely. He dropped a bomb amongst our horses and killed three. He then flew away & reached his own line unharmed. Of course all the time during the raid our Anti Aircraft guns were blazing away at him, but unfortunately he hit none. This evening a shell landed in the street a few chains from here & killed one of our boys & wounded two. Tonight our platoon is ordered up the line on fatigue, so we will have to face the shells & shrapnel again

Thursday 21 June 1917

We have had a quiet day today. This morning most of our platoon have been sleeping. This afternoon we paraded for 2 hours & done a little drill and got payed. About half the boys have been broke for some time so they are having a great jubilee tonight. I'm afraid there will be a good many sore heads in the morning. Last night nothing really very exciting happened. We left here at 7pm and marched for about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles & stopped at a village. Fritz was bursting plenty of shrapnel about but none very close to us until about 10.30pm, he started putting them very close, so we all took cover in a cellar. It was a tight pack but we all got in. The engineers that we were supposed to work with did not turn up owing to heavy shrapnel fire which was bursting on the road that they had come along. At 12 o'clock we started back and arrived here safely. I have just spent this evening with old friends who have just come out of the big Masiners Battle.

Friday 22 June 1917

We left here this morning at 6am & marched 4 mile up to the trenches which are being prepared for the winter. We worked until 12.15 & then set off back to our town home. This afternoon to our disappointment we were given orders to pack up for we were shifting at 8.30 tonight. It was a happy noisy lot that left town tonight. We have been shifted $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles and are now billeted in a shed along side a farm house. I had discovered a cherry tree with plenty of cherries in a deserted garden, so before leaving I picked a bag full, so I am looking forward to stewed cherries for tea tonight.

Saturday 23 June 1917

We set out at the same time this morning & went up the line on fatigue. Our platoon was on carry timber, iron & wire up to where we were making a new communication trench. It has been

Saturday 23 June 1917

hard work for we had two miles of trenches to go through. My foot gave out on the way home and had a job to get along. Old Fritz put a few H.E. shells over today; one piece of shrapnel hit me on the shoulder, it did not go in but stung. This afternoon, two Hun Aeroplanes came over & brought down three of our balloons. There were 7 balloons up fairly close together & two observers in each. When they saw the enemy Aeroplane coming towards them, they all came down in parachutes. It was a great sight seeing them coming down. Two landed not far from us, so we had a great view of them. This evening another Aeroplane attacked one of our balloons but our Anti aircraft guns were too smart for him. The third shot he was hit fair & came down like a stone.

Sunday 24 June 1917

This morning the boys left here at 6am as usual & went on fatigue up the trenches. My foot was very sore & stiff so I paraded sick. There has been fellows going sick for the least thing, so this morning those who were not too bad were sent off to our units who were about 4 miles away. We set out but the others had to go very slow on account of me for I could hardly hobble along. We arrived at our destination, sat down for an hour & then set back with the other boys. This afternoon volunteers were called for, one out of each section for Machine gunners & bombers to go to a school for awhile. I put in for bombing. We left with full packs up at 6pm and are now in a camp between Peippe and Port Neippe near the canal. We are camped in little huts which hold 16 men. There is not many of us & we have good officers with us so we think we are in for a nice time.

Monday 25 June 1917

Today we have had bomb throwing & lectures on bomb & rifle grenades. To tell the truth we spent a good part of the day sitting down, quite a change from what we have been doing. Fritz has been sending some H.E. (high explosive) over & a few pieces landed rather close to us. Our drill hours are fall in at 7.45 until 11am, from 1pm to 4pm. When we were working on fatigue up the trenches we had to pass a train that was run off the rails. In the early days of the war a Frenchman engine driver was taking a train load of Germans up to their front line. When he got close, he dashed over the boarder with this trainload of troops who were all taken prisoner. tonight the Aeroplanes have been about very thick so they must have something on. While I was watching them manoeuvring round Fritz started firing at them and brought one down. Tonight there is a bombardment going on, on the front line a few miles from here.

Tuesday 26 June 1917

Today has been one of the quietest days for some time. Both sides seem to have had a day off. This evening the Aeroplanes have been about as usual. Last night it rained very hard and we

Tuesday 26 June 1917

found that our roof was far from being waterproof. I have been put on gas guard last night worse luck.

Wednesday 27 June 1917

Today we have had a fairly lively time for old fritze has been sending over H.E all day. We left our paraded ground at 11am & about 11.30am our paraded ground was shelled & bits of iron came all around our camp. The gas guard was very quiet. I only had one hour to do from 5am to 6am. It was very interesting watching the aeroplanes this morning. They flew right along his line, he firing at them all the time. Tonight another of our Balloons was brought down. I have been put on gas guard again tonight for having the sights of my rifle up to 300 yards instead of 200 yds.

Thursday 28 June 1917

This morning it rained so hard that we had to take shelter in a shed all morning. This afternoon we have been practising raiding parties in an old trench a short distance from here. The Colonel of our Battalion payed us a visit today & we all had to set to and tidy up. Our Aeroplanes have been making a raid on the fritze. He has fired about 100 shots but still the fly calmly on all the time getting a good view of Fritze front line & will be getting valuable information for our Artillery.

Friday 29 June 1917

Today has been rather wet. Today we have had the usual lectures & drill. A dinnertime our squad was paraded to the bathes for a wash. The bathes are about half a mile from here, so we haven't far to go.

Saturday 30 June 1917

We are now occupying the trenches which the huns have just left. They keep gradually retreating all the time. It is through our victory at Masines that they have to retreat here. The idea was to drive the enemy back from Masines & surrounded the sector where we are & capture the huns, but they have been too cunning. They have seen what was coming & have retreated or are retreating now. We are occupying their dugouts, but the doors are facing the wrong way for us. Before leaving these trenches the huns have not forgotten to leave some traps for us, such as putting bombs in a position that when we went to pick them up they would have exploded. Our engineers were up to their dodges & came in first to upset all their traps & so made it safe for us. Today we were told that we were going into the trenches tonight. We had usual lectures & drill this afternoon. At 6am to our sorrow we left our happy home and marched 2 miles to where we joined our unit & then set out for the trenches a distance of four miles to

Saturday 30 June 1917

relieve the Otago boys who had been holding this part of the line for 8 days. We arrived here at settled down in dugouts at about 11.30pm. Old Fritze put a good few H.E over our heads when we were coming up the trenches, a few were very close, but we all arrived here safely. The last mile we came it rained very heavily & by the time we reached here we were fairly wet. So we did not put in a very comfortable night for we only posses the clothes that we stand in. There is plenty of mud & water in the trenches, most of us arrived here mud up to our knees.

Sunday 1 July 1917

During the night a good number of shells landed about here but did not harm anyone. One came very close to our dugout and shook dirt all over it. From 3am untill 4am we had to stand to. Standing to at daybreak is the usual thing in trenches for that is when the enemy usually attacks. At stand to, every man gets out of his dugout into trenches with rifle loaded and baynets fixed & waits for orders. If every thing is all right when the hour is up the order comes round to stand down & everyone returns to their dugouts. Things have been fairly quiet today in the front & support lines, but a little way back for about an hour the shrapnel fire was very heavy. Two of us were down there on fatigue and couldn't get back for quiet a while. We crouched down in a trench and waited

Sunday 1 July 1917

untill the fire steadied down a little. I think what the fritze was firing at was an observation post in an old shattered building, which his observer had seen.

Monday 2nd July 1917

Today the weather had quite cleared up & it has been a lovely sunshine day, so we have been able to dry out our clothes. Every now and then Fritze sends a few H.E over, some land in the trenches but most of them are harmless, as long as one gets down in the trench when you hear them coming. I don't mean to say that a fellow can hear them coming for about a minute & has plenty of time to get down; one soon gets into the habit of dropped flat, whenever he hears the first sound of shrapnel. The high explosive shrapnel shell that the fritze uses a good deal have been named Wise Bangs by the tommies for these are very fast. This morning at stand to time, one of our machine gun boys was wounded by shrapnel which burst in front of his dugout door. Fortunately for them the others who were occupying the dugout were outside. Another one of our company was wounded this morning while out on patrol in no mans land. The stretcher bearers went out & carried him into the dressing station. It was 4 hours from the time he got wounded until he got to the dressing station.

Tuesday 3 July 1917

It has been very hot today but turns very cold at night. We haven't a blanket, just our oilsheets and overcoats. Things have been fairly quiet in the front line today but down the communication trench where the engineers have been working, he has been putting a good number over. There was 7 hit, 1 killed & 6 wounded. A fellow in the 13th Coy was shot here last night through his own carelessness. He was walking along a trench when a sentry tried to halt him, he would not halt, so the sentry shot him. There are very few men in the front line, what men are there are mostly machine gunners of course there are a good many of us in the supports about 100 yards from the front line. Fritze sweeps his machine gun over our trenches every now and then so one has to keep his head down or he may stop one any time. Today I was standing outside our dugout when suddenly two bullets hit into the parapet. It does not pay for a fellow to be too inquisitive in these parts.

Wednesday 4 July 1917

Today it has been cloudy & we had a shower this morning enough to make the trenches sticky again. There has been a good number of bullets flying about again but the guns have been fairly quiet. Last night we had a hot time about midnight. Fritze began putting shells & shrapnel over our trenches. The dugout I was in was good enough to keep off bullets & stray bits of iron, but we knew that a direct hit would finish us. We lay there & listened to the shells coming all around when suddenly one came & sent the dirt down on us. We got out and made for safer place where we spent the remainder of the night. A machine gunners dugout was partly blown in. Luckily the fellows inside were not hit but it shook their nerves considerably & one of them got shell shock. Our boys who are out on No Mans Land on patrol must be having an exciting time. One of them was guard when suddenly a hun looked over the parapet at him. I think they were both too surprised to hurt one another. Tonight we shifted about a mile down the trench.

Thursday 5 July 1917

Untill today July 23rd my hand has been too stiff to write. I am now going to start & state as far as I can remember the happenings since I was wounded.

Last night when we were standing too Fritze started to drop a few rather close to us. He was sending over a number of gas & HE shrapnel. We were told to get inside our dugouts, but before we could get in one seem to burst a few yards from me. As luck would have it my mate & I were the only two hit. I got a piece through my arm and a small piece in the leg, & he got pieces in the elbow & hip. The concussion was so great that it knocked all the senses out of me for a while. Marfell did not bleed much but the blood poured out of my arm. After having our wounds dressed with our field dressings we walked to the dressing station which was not far. There our wounds were dressed again. The Doctor thought my arm was fractured so he put a splint on. He had a

Thursday 5 July 1917

good nip of brandy & the parson made us some cocoa. So with the brandy & the hopes of getting to England we left the dressing station quite happy & walked out to the nearest ambulance car. By that time our wounds were getting very painful. I know my arm felt as big as my body. We had to wait some time before the car was ready. The first mile we had a bumpy ride for Fritz had been shelling the road. Once the car landed in a shell hole and it was some time before they could get it out. Our next stop was at a dressing station, where we had an injection against poison. We were put into a much comfortabler car & set off again. The next stop was at a hospital. We had it dressed again and then put into a decent bed. My arm did not stop bleeding until this last dressing, the jar of the car kept it bleeding. The next morning at 7am Marfell went under an operation & had both pieces of shrapnel taken out. At 8am we were put on a red cross train with

Friday 6 July 1917

about 500 more sick & wounded. I saw Marfell carried on a stretcher & put on the train. I spoke to him but he did not recognise me for he had not come around properly then. After a long tiresome journey of 11 hours we arrived at Bolongue where we were put into motor cars and taken to different hospitals. After a journey of 5 miles our car stopped at the 54th London General Hospital a new hospital that had only been opened a few days. Waiting about for some time we were eventually told off into different wards. A sister showed me my bed & told me to wait a few minutes for I had to have a bath before going to bed. After waiting about half an hour she coolly said I may go to bed.

Saturday 7 July 1917

I had a x-ray put on my arm the Doctor said the arm was not fractured, but the main piece had gone right through grazing the bone & leaving a small piece lying on the bone. I was a little disappointed on hearing this for I then knew there was not so much chance of getting to England. I was to go under an operation one morning to have the piece taken out, but the doctor decided to leave it in. I was kept in bed for 3 days which I did not mind at all for I had a chance of catching up my lost sleep. It was grand to get away from the guns & bursting shells, it is all so quiet & peaceful here. Until one gets away from it, he does not realise what a hell it is up there. We were a great looking crowd that night we landed on Bolongue station. Some covered in mud, others half their clothes torn off, some blood from head to foot. I had one armsleeve cut off, my trousers cut about a yard in front & my clothes covered in blood. The hospital is near to the sea and on a clear day we could see England quite plainly.

Sunday 8th July 1917

The change of sea air gave us good appetites so we were always hungry for the supply of food was very scanty. We were treated

Sunday 8th July 1917

more like criminals than wounded soldiers. There was always two or three police walking about the hospital grounds. There was a barbed wire fence around the hospital and we were not allowed outside it, we were only allowed to smoke between 2pm & 5pm. I hope if I get hit again I get into a Colonial hospital. There were only about a dozen of us NZers amongst about 1000.

Saturday 21st July 1917

Today when the doctor came around on his usual inspection he marked my card convalescent camp. He everyone either Con camp or England. They were cleaning out the hospital preparing for the big push that is supposed to be coming off. It was disgraceful the fellows he marked con camp, some of them could hardly walk from the wounds they had. My arm is nearly better as far as the wound is concerned but it is so stiff that I can hardly bend my fingers & have a job to get my coat on, but still with all our troubles most of us will be glad to get out of here.

Sunday 22nd July 1917

This morning I drew a uniform & the few things that a soldier needs. At 2pm all who were going to Con. camp were paraded and were put in 24 motor buses & to no. 7 con. camp a distance of 5 miles. It was a lovely ride after being shut up for so long. On arriving at camp we were paraded before the doctor & he gave us a ticket saying if we were fit for light duty. We were taken to marquees where there were spring beds. While giving our names when paraded before Doctor, an Australian who had been badly wounded in the hip fainted. He afterwards told me he had been in bed until yesterday & he got up today & been sent straight away. This is a fine place quite a home, there are lovely flower gardens about & vegetable gardens everywhere which convalescent boys have made.

Monday 23 July 1917

Today we have had a little physical drill & sports anything to pass away the time & get us fit, of course there are very few who can do much. There is a great mixture of soldiers here. Tonight the New Zealanders challenged all comers for a game of football, they won (N.Z.) by 12 points to nil. We get very good food here & have lettuce to eat which is grown here.

Tuesday 24 July 1917

Today I have been on fatigue cleaning out the bath house, this afternoon I was helping sort letters in the post office. There is all sorts of jobs about these camps as they are continually improving them. Making fresh roads, paths, gardens & buildings etc. They have too many men here so this evening 200 of us have been told off to go to another con. camp tomorrow, a distance of

Tuesday 24 July 1917

7 miles. It is the same old cry, a fellow no sooner gets settled down than he has to shift again.

Wednesday 25 July 1917

It rained very hard all this morning. We who were told off to go to another camp paraded at 8am. There was a row of motor buses waiting for us & they were covered in so we did not get wet. We went through Boulogne & after winding about for some time arrived at no 10 camp in Ecault. After the usual waiting around we were told off 5 in a tent. The camp is on top of a hill & is very sandy desolate looking place. Just about here is the poorest land I have seen in England or France. The surrounding country is undulating from here we can look away out to sea. It is not the home the other camp is, but I suppose we will have to make the best of it. This afternoon we were inspected by the Doctor & he ordered me to get my arm dressed right away, so I am troubled with a bandage again.

Thursday 26 July 1917

Today we had a little drill & another inspection by the doctor. This evening there is a football & hockey match. A concert is being held in the red cross building. A brass band from another camp is here and is giving us some music, so everything is lively. They had a bugle fife & dram band but they did not come up to good old brass band. This morning I had my name taken for not having my hair cut short enough. I was told to parade at the orderly room at 5.30pm. I thought I was in for trouble but the O.C. dismissed me. The men who run this camp are mostly old and Imperial soldiers & they are strict on parade & treat a fellow like a dog. We are not allowed in our tents between 9am & 5pm, not allowed to smoke in tents & not allowed outside the camp.

Friday 27 July 1917

Today we have had games & two hours drill. There is some blacks here and they come from Jamacia. They seem to be well educated & speak good English. I was talking to one of them tonight & he was very interesting. He has been telling me how they work their Bananas, how they live & told me that a poor man can not afford a cow to milk, milks sheep & goats. A Japanese soldier here has made a model Japanese home and surroundings. It is pretty, everything looks so real, it must have taken him a good deal of thinking out.

Saturday 28 July 1917

This morning we had an hours drill & then had the rest of the day off. This afternoon we had sports. The blacks came out in shorts & went in for most of the events but did not get a win but they did not care they thought it was great fun. A NZ'er won all

Saturday 28 July 1917

the running. There is a good concert on tonight & by the noise going on it must be much appreciated. There is a reserve along side of this camp, it is low sandy hills with patches of bush over it. On this reserve there is plenty of game such as rabbits, hares & pheasants etc. The rabbits seem to be very plentiful, from the camp here we can see them playing about. Of course the reserve is out of bounds & game keepers are always roaming around on the lookouts.

Sunday 29 July 1917

This morning owing to a healthy Thunderstorm, we did not have a service or parade. It cleared up afternoon we were marched down to the sea a distance of 1 mile from here where we spent the afternoon.

Sunday 8 July 1917

We had two bands with us a whistle & bugle band so we had plenty of music. The french women were down there as usual selling fruit & chocolate etc. They never miss an opportunity of doing business. They rob the soldier right & left but they are actually encouraged by the heads our Commanding Officer has built a small marque here. Three of these French women bring there goods here every day for sale.

Monday 30 July 1917

This morning we had physical drill as usual. This evening there was to be an open air concert but as it was raining it had to be postponed. The concerts are usually held in the red cross building which seats 600. They sometimes start early & have the concerts twice in the one evening so as to give most of the men a chance to hear it. I think there are about 1500 in the camp. Our daily routine is reveille at 6am breakfast 7.15am, parade 9.15am until 10am dinner 12 md. parade 2pm until 4pm tea 4.15pm. Canteen closed during parade hours.

Tuesday 31 July 1917

This morning we fell in for parade & were then dismissed owing to the rain. This afternoon it cleared up for awhile so we were taken for a route march wearing our overcoats which made it hot for walking of course most of the boys wounded in the legs are excused from marching.

Wednesday 1 August 1917

Today has been the most miserable day we have had for a long time. It has been raining hard all day so there is plenty of mud & water about. It pay week this week a group got paid daily so the canteen & the French women do a good trade.

Thursday 2 August 1917

Today has been very wet again so there has been no parade. Things are getting rather dreary with so much wet for we are not to have any sport or concerts. 400 more convalescent men came here today, so I expect they will be shifting some of us out.

Friday 3 August 1917

This morning we went on parade but owing to the rain we were dismissed. It rained hard all day so there was nothing much doing except pay parade. It is surprising to see the French people. There is a lady who brings her cows around about the outskirts of the camp to feed them & there she stops with them all day rain or shine. Today it was pouring with rain & I saw an old man out in his garden with no coat on digging potatoes.

Saturday 4 August 1917

This morning rain but this afternoon it cleared up a little but there was no parade today. We were supposed to be paid at 10.30am but the pay master did not arrive until 5.30pm so we were waiting about all day. We were payed 20 Franks. They allow 10 per cent leave Sat & Sunday from 2pm - 9pm. I put in for leave tonight for tomorrow afternoon I have not been free for 7 weeks so I am rather hoping to get leave.

Sunday 5 August 1917

Today the weather looks a little more settled this morning we had church service in the red cross hut. The service went off particularly well. We had some good old Hymns & the singing went off good. My leave pass was granted for this afternoon, I left for Boulogne at 2pm & arrived back in camp at 8.30pm I had walked 3 miles to where the tram cars come to & then had a 4 mile ride into Boulogne. Their soldiers & sailors of many nationalities in the town. A number of German soldiers arrived in Boulogne while I was there also a large number of Tommies from England.

Monday 6 August 1917

The weather has cleared up & the mud is drying up fast. This morning 500 men from here were sent to another convalescent camp. There is only two of us left in our tent so things are very quiet.

Tuesday 7 August 1917

This morning we had recruits drill such as saluting big numbers & turning by numbers etc. It was practically the same as we learnt the first fortnight we were in camp at Trentham. This afternoon we had physical drill. This morning after parade we had a

Tuesday 7 August 1917

Medical inspection & the Doctor said he did not like the look of my arm & said I will have it x-ray again & perhaps have to go under an operation & have the piece of shrapnel taken out that is still in there. After seeing the Doctor I was taken before the Major & he marked my papers Temporary Base.

Wednesday 8 August 1917

This morning I was told to parade with all my belongings as I was going to be shifted to Base Details about 300 arrived at the con camp this morning & we were taken away in the same cars. We had a very nice ride, a distance of 8 miles & arrived here at Base Detail camp at 11am. The camp is situated on the outskirts of Boulogne, so it is rather lively compared to the place we have just come from. We are not allowed down town without a pass and they are hard to get for only 5 per cent a night is allowed on leave. This evening an order came out that all Colonials who wanted to pay could parade & be marched down town to our pay offices to get payed and marched back. We marched down but broke off in town and spent the evening there & came back as we liked.

Thursday 9 August 1917

This morning all we new comers were paraded by ourselves at 7am & to our surprise we were marched to another camp & put on fatigue all day cleaning out the water ditches around tents. It was quite a surprise for me for I thought I have been sent to this camp to go before a Medical Board to see if my arm had to be operated on.

Friday 10 August 1917

I have somehow got a day behind so I will have to skip Friday.

Saturday 11 August 1917

This morning I decided I would not go on Fatigue so I paraded sick to let the doctor see my arm, & he marked me No 3 Canadian Hospital which is close along side No 13 camp. I came here this morning & got signed up again, had a bath & got into blue hospital clothes once again. It is a lovely building where I am & looks as though it has been a Theatre. I am guaranteed up in the dress circle, so I am well up in the air. There is a convoy just arrived & most of the cases are gas. Two wounded boys in this ward have their mothers to see them & I think most of us are envying those boys.

Sunday 12 August 1917

We have had a very quiet day here today. This morning I have had my arm x rayed, I layed my arm on the table, a glass plate was put

Sunday 12 August 1917

over my arm & the thing set going I could see the piece of shrapnel in my arm quite plainly. This evening we had a very nice service in a red cross hut. There were 15 nurses present so there was quite a choir of ladies voices. Our daily routine here is reveille at 6am, breakfast at 7am, dinner 11am, tea 4pm, supper 7pm & lights out at 9pm.

Monday 13 August 1917

This morning I went under the operation & had the piece of shrapnel taken out. I had gas, it was a queer sensation going off & coming around again. It was 2 hours before I came to again, When I found myself lying in my bed back in my ward again. My arm has been very painful & I have felt a little sick, but this evening I was able to walk upstairs to my old bed.

Tuesday 14 August 1917

Today a lot of the boys have gone to England, all that went away were stretcher cases. It has been showering today.

Wednesday 15 August 1917

Today rather cloudy & boistrous. A number of our boys were sent out today, some going to other hospitals & some going to convalescent camps. It is very quiet here tonight, for there is only about 12 of us patients left. Tonight a band gave a concert in the red cross hut. The concert was very good, the only trouble was the building was not large enough to accommodate all. There were a number of French civilians present.

Thursday 16 Aug 1917

Today has been rather quiet, there has been no fresh patients in. The phonograph gets a rough time, some of us always have it going. It is about the only thing we have to amuse ourselves with. Today a number of good fresh records have been brought in, so we have been busy playing them over. This afternoon we were given a small bag from the Canadian gift fund; each contains a book, writing pad & envelopes, pencil, cigarettes & chocolate.

Friday 17 Aug 1917

Today a large number of wounded from Ypres arrived here so this ward is full up again. They all seem very tired & pleased to get into a nice bed. Tonight after lights out we had a good feed of pears. There is a pear tree just outside of a window, we could not reach them from the window or from the ground. We got a crutch & leaned out the window & knocked them down.

Saturday 18 Aug 1917

Today a good many of this ward were sent to England so it is half empty again.

Sunday 19 Aug 1917

There has been two church services in the red cross hut today, one this morning & one this evening. This evening after church three of us broke bounds. We climbed over the stone wall & went for a walk, one gets tired of being shut up in one piece of ground for so long.

Monday 20 Aug 1917

Today has been rather quiet. This afternoon an officer came around with a block which had the name of missing soldiers from a certain date & he showed us the names of the missing & ask us if we knew any of them or could give any information. This morning I had two stitches taken out of my arm.

Tuesday 21 Aug 1917

Today they had a general clearing out of the ward & I was one to go to convalescent camp I had to get into Khaki again. I am now in No 7 con camp again. The same camp as I came when discharged from hospital before. When we arrived here we were paraded before the Doctor to see what drill we were fit for. I have been marked no physical drill & route marches only.

Wednesday 22 August 1917

Today I dodged all parades there did not happen to be a roll call so I got off all right. Amongst the new chaps that came into camp from hospitals, were two Portuguese, they seem quite lost amongst us for they cannot speak English, so it is rather awkward for them.

Thursday 23 Aug 1917

There was no parade this morning on account of heavy rain. There was a heavy thunderstorm last night & the lightning was very strong. This afternoon we were taken for a route march headed by our band, before we had gone far we had a fair crowd of them following along.

Friday 24 Aug 1917

This morning we had a little drill & went for a route march. This afternoon I dodged parade. There was a good concert tonight. There is only 5 per cent leave granted during the week leave from 4.30pm to 9pm. Saturday & Sundays 10 per cent leave is granted from 2pm to 9pm. I have put in for a pass to Boulogne

Friday 24 Aug 1917

for tomorrow afternoon.

Saturday 25 Aug 1917

This morning we had a little squad drill & then went for a short route march. There were four Portugese on squad drill this morning & it was very funny to watch them. I got a pass this afternoon & went to Boulogne & had a very good time. I went to the Canadian Hospital that I was in & saw some of the boys.

Sunday 26 Aug 1917

Today has been showery. This morning voluntary services were held in the dining halls. The wet weather is playing up with the crops. Some crops are going black they have been cut & stook for so long.

Monday 27 Aug 1917

Today a very wet boisterous day & there has not been any parade.

Tuesday 28 Aug 1917

It rained & blew very hard last night & has been blowing a gale all day. It has made a mess of this camp, a few marquees have been blown down, others are torn into ribbions. Our tent started to go but we managed to peg it down & keep it from blowing down. The weather does not look life changing yet it is still blowing & raining. The electric wires are broken about so we cannot have any lights now. We have been thinking what a rough time the boys in the trenches will be having, it is bad enough here. There is plenty of money flying about for the Tommies have been payed. They were only payed 10 Francs but they were very glad to get it for some had not had any pay for about 6 weeks, so there very few of them who had any money left.

Wednesday 29 Aug 1917

Owing to the rain & wind there was no parade today. It was pay day for us N.Z'ers & Australians today. This evening they called for volunteers to go to 7 con camp Ecault. So I put my name in to go, for Ecault is not a bad place. This afternoon I got a pleasant surprise when the mail came, there was 28 letters for me. It took me all afternoon to read them. It was lovely to hear some news.

Thursday 30 Aug 1917

This morning about 150 of us lined up with all our belongings to leave for no 7 con camp. The cars were waiting for us so

Thursday 30 Aug 1917

we did the trip in style. We arrived here at 9am and were told off into different companies. This afternoon I was put on Fatigue carrying blankets. The weather is a little calmer now, but it is showery.

Friday 31 Aug 1917

This morning we had physical drill. This afternoon it came on to rain so we had no parade. This evening I played in a hockey match & we lost by one goal. It is the hardest work I have done for some time & I guess I will be stiff tomorrow.

Saturday 1 September 1917

This morning we had the usual parade, but there was no parade in the afternoon owing to the rain. This evening there was a concert in the red cross hut. It only seats 100 at once so they decided to have it over twice. The first lot came out & we second lot started to go in, some of them started pushing & just then the major came along & saw them. He made them stop the concert so we had to be disappointed.

Sunday 2nd Sept 1917

This morning we had church service. This afternoon my name was called out for evacuation, there was about 150 of us left for Boulogne railway station, at 3.30pm in motor cars. We then got aboard a red cross train that was waiting for us & set off at 6pm. We passed through some lovely country & saw some very pretty scenery, but we could not get the full benefit of the trip as we were travelling at night. We arrived at Trouville at 8.30am & those who could not walk were taken to a new con camp in cars, but the majority had to walk. I felt lazy so I fell out with those that could not walk. After a two mile ride we arrived here at no 13 con camp had breakfast, were put into different Coy. & did not do anything for the rest of the day.

Monday 3 Sept 1917

There are very few tents here, there are mostly huts, they are much more comfortable than the tents. This camp is situated on top of a hill so we have a good view of the sea & surrounding districts. It is the prettiest place I have seen in France yet. They have English girls driving the ambulance cars about here.

Tuesday 4 Sept 1917

This morning we had a physical drill & this afternoon a Medical inspection. This is a new camp & not finished yet. It is quite a busy place, buildings going up in all directions. There is a number of civilians from England working about here. There are plenty of Germans about here for there is a Prisoner of War Camp

Tuesday 4 Sept 1917

alongside of this camp, & they have them working here doing all kinds of work. There is now about 5,000 men here in this camp but when it is finished it will hold 20,000 men.

Wednesday 5 Sept 1917

Today we had 1 hour drill this morning & had the rest of the day off. It is a very easy camp & a real holiday. All the boys say it is the best place they have been in, in France.

Thursday 6 Sept 1917

This morning we were marched through the town & down to the beach where we were dismissed for an hour. Two of us got into conversation with a French Officer who could speak English we had quite a long conversation with him, he told us if we came down again to look out for him. This evening we went for a walk & a kiddie brought us out a basket of ripe pears. The soldiers get a good hearing with the civilians here for this is a new camp & soldiers in this district have not become stale yet. This place is where moneyed people come from Paris & England to spend their holidays so most of the people about here seem to understand English language & can speak it fairly well.

Friday 7 Sept 1917

We had a physical drill as usual. We are having good weather now so I expect things will be busy up at the Front. Old Fritz has been over bombing some of the Convalescent camps.

Saturday 8 Sept 1917

We had rather an exciting day today. For a while this morning & this evening I was on fatigue washing up at the officers mess. There was boxing competition on this afternoon & there was about 100 French civilians here so we kept very busy at the officers mess for the officers brought a good many of the civilians into afternoon tea. We payed 10 Francs this morning, in this camp we Colonials are payed the same as the Tommies. I think we find it rather hard to have to make 10 Francs last a fortnight.

Sunday 9 Sept 1917

This morning there was an open air service. This afternoon my Australian mate & I went on leave to Trouville and had a very good time.

Monday 10 Sept 1917

Today there has not been any parade. This morning bathes & a change of clothing

Tuesday 11 Sept 1917

This morning I was not feeling well so paraded sick, my temperature was taken & it was nearly 100 so I was sent here to a temporary Hospital.

Nothing written until...

Saturday 15 Sept 1917

Today they have had sports here so there has been a good many French people about & we have had a number of visitors in to see us, so I guess the temperatures will be high tonight for these French people are terrors to talk & make a noise.

Nothing written until...

Wednesday 16 Sept 1917

I am still sick in my bed my temperature running from 102 to 103. I have been feeling too bad to bother about anything. Yesterday the Doctor said as I was not getting any better he is sending me to a more comfortable hospital in Le Harve.

Thursday 17 Sept 1917

Yesterday afternoon I was sent here to Le Harve as a sitting case & I never want another trip like it. I was first taken to the boat in a car, got on the boat & there was no accommodation for sick, so I lay down on the floor. It was a short trip to Le Harve, it took about 3/4 hour from the boat into an ambulance car & a short ride to Hospital here. This place has been a French hotel.

Friday 21 Sept 1917

This afternoon I was told I could get up. I got up but felt as though I wanted to go back to bed again.

Saturday 22 Sept 1917

This afternoon a Band of the Royal Marines played to us all the afternoon. We want something here to cheer us up a little for we are shut up here. We are right in the centre of the town & not allowed outside the place & no matter which way one looks you can see nothing but buildings.

Sunday 23 Sept 1917

This morning I was marked for convalescent camp. I am far from fit yet & am still feel very weak & miserable, But it is no use

Sunday 23 Sept 1917

saying anything. I am sick of this place all ready & will be glad to get rid of it.

Monday 24 Sept 1917

This afternoon I had to go into Kahaki again. Left the hospital at 4pm & was brought here to a con camp in an ambulance car. This camp is almost in the town of Le Harve. It is only a small camp but very nicely laid out & quite home like with its flower gardens. We are quite comfortable here we are cramped in marquees & have a hard mattress to sleep on & a pillow so one cannot grumble.

Tuesday 25 Sept 1917

This morning physiscal drill for an hour & then we were marched to a field to watch a football match on between the Australians & All comers. The match was played about 2 miles from here. The Australians won by 40 runs.

Wednesday 26 Sept 1917

Today usual drill. The daily routine here is reveille 6am, Roll Call 6.30am breakfast 7.30am parade 8.45am to 10am parade 10.45 am to 12am dinner 12.30 pm parade 1.45pm to 3.30pm tea 4pm supper 6pm lights out 10pm. There is a Y.M.C.A & an Expeditionary Force Canteen & every night there is either pictures or concerts.

Thursday 27 Sept 1917

Usual Parades this afternoon while on route march we passed the camp where we spent our first two nights in France. The camp is being occupied by the Americans and I think is being used as an Officers Training Camp.

Friday 28 Sept 1917

Usual parades today. Last night there was a concert in aid of the British & French red cross fund in the Grand Theature in the town. All those who had brought tickets got special passes to go to the concert. I had a pass & went down & spent a very enjoyable evening. After the concert we were formed up & marched back to the camp, arrived back at 12 o'clock. While forming up outside of the theatre we saw the Kahi Girls formed up & marched off.

Saturday 29 Sept 1917

This morning parades. This afternoon we had half holiday. Today I had a mail of 11 letters.

Sunday 30 Sept 1917

This morning there was Church parades, I went to the Church of England service & we had a very good service. This afternoon there was a football match between a French team & a team formed from this camp. Most of the boys went so things have been very quiet here. The French won their match by 4 goals.

Monday 1 October 1917

Usual parades this morning. This afternoon the Australians played all comers football. They lost by 4 goals. We were allowed to go & watch the match.

Tuesday 2 October 1917

This morning we had Squad drill & a lecture by the Colonel. This afternoon we were marched down to the sea, & some of us had a decent swim in the sea. They have bathing sheds & every convenience for bathing.

Wednesday 3 October 1917

This morning usual drill, this afternoon a route march. There are a good many boys have just come into the camp from different hospitals.

Thursday 4 Oct 1917

Today usual drill. I was to go before the medical board today to see if I were fit enough to go back to my unit again, but the medical board has been postponed until Monday. Every man who has been in this camp a fortnight has to go before the doctors, if they think that he is fit, he is sent to his base, where he gets equipped, trained & sent back to his unit.

Friday 5 Oct 1917

The fine weather that we have been having for so long has unfortunately broken. Last night there was heavy showers & today has been a cold showery boisterous day. We were not able to have the usual parades, so we had doubling up & down the road. This evening a lecture on "What part am I truly playing in the war". It was really good & would not have missed it for anything. The lecture had just come from the Italian front.

Saturday 6 Oct 1917

The weather still very boisterous & has turned quite cold. This morning owing to the rain we had only a short route march.

Sunday 7 Oct 1917

Weather still very bad. Church parade this morning Voluntary services this evening.

Monday 8 Oct 1917

This morning a good number of us went befor the Medical Board. I was marked active so I will be sent to the base any time. Some poor chaps who were marked active have only been out of hospital 7 days & are not at all well yet. This afternoon it rained so there was no parade. This evening there was a very interesting lecture given by an Australian of the Y.M.C.A. The lecture was on Britian & her Colonies. Germany & the war.

Tuesday 9 Oct 1917

It has been showery today. Our Company has been on fatigue all day. This evening there was pictures at the Y.M.C.A. A number who were marked active went to their base today.

Wednesday 10 Oct 1917

Usual parade today. This evening we who were waiting to go to our bases at Etapes were warned to be ready by 7.15pm.

Thursday 11 Oct 1917

We left no 4 con depot last night at 9pm & after a few miles march arrived at the railway station, where we entrained. We had to get into cattle trucks & were packed in like sardines. We left about 10pm & after a nights agony arrived at Rouen at 7am. Were marched a short distance to a rest place where we stayed most of the day & were allowed to roam about a little distance. The French came about with all sorts of good they were trying to sell to us. We were camped along side a canal & it was a very busy place with the barges going up & down. Rouen is a large town & to look at much more inviting than Le Harve. At 4pm we marched to a station & entrained again in old trucks & packed in very tight. Before we left motor ambulances brought a number of Indian Lancers it was very interesting to see the way the English officers managed them.

Friday 12 Oct 1917

At the place where we spent the day there were a number of Kaffirs from South Africa. We left at 6pm last night & after another night of agony arrived at Etapes this morning at 6am & after a good deal of waiting about were brought here & here I am at the N.Z base. No doubt it is not a very cheerful looking place, it has been raining very hard this afternoon & is very cold. Untill todays dinner we had not had anything to eat since yesterdays dinner. The evening we had to draw blankets from the

Friday 12 Oct 1917

store & go before Colonal Fearless for medical inspection. The Colonal gave me three days light duty.

Saturday 13 Oct 1917

Today owing to heavy rain there has been very little doing. This evening I went down to Etaples town & spent the evening. It is not a large town, but rather lively as there are so many soldiers go there to spend the evening. It is grand to get amongst our own boys again. I have all ready met quite a number of old friends. Part of the 27th Reinf have gone up the line, a few are here & the remainder are expected to arrive any time now.

Sunday 14 October 1917

It has been a lovely day today. I was put on fatigue this morning so could not go to church parade. I could hear the Band playing the hymns & sounded lovely. This afternoon I got a pass & W Steer & I went to Paris-Plague a little town on the sea front about 7 miles from here. The town was crowded with soldiers.

Monday 15 Oct 1917

Today I have been on 2.M.O. fatigue. This afternoon we had a band cart & took the concert parties Band to a hospital a few miles from here.

Tuesday 16 Oct 1917

Today I was transported from details lines to active lines & had to parade with full pack & rifle. It is the first pack I have had on for 3½ months. We what transferred today have been given two days light duty. The late reinforcements keep coming in a few hundred at a time. They give them a solid time but anyone who has been up the line has an easy time.

Wednesday 17 Oct 1917

Today I had a very easy time. The weather is still very unsettled. Tonight there was a ladies concert party entertained us for the evening.

Thursday 18 Oct 1917

This morning we had a bath parade & this afternoon the Dentist did not have time to see me, so he made my appointment for next Monday so I will miss the next draft for the front.

Friday 19 Oct 1917

This morning the draft for the line was told off & I was not in it but they were short of men so I with a few more were told this evening that we would have to go in the morning. This evening I went to Paris Plaque.

Saturday 20 Oct 1917

This morning reveille at 3.30am roll call at 4am. My mate & I had not got anything ready & we did have a rush to get ready. We marched out of camp at 6.30am to the railway station where we got into the old trucks again. We passed through Boulogne & arrived at Hazlebrook at 5pm. We marched a mile & finally got settled down in a N.Z. camp. Most of our boys are in the big push at Ypres but a number has been kept back here in reserve.

Sunday 21 Oct 1917

This morning when looking around this camp to my surprise I met quite a number of old mates who I thought were in the trenches. This afternoon two of us went to Morbecque a small town about a mile from here. This evening we went to Hazlebrook & spent the evening.

Sunday 21 Oct 1917

Old fritz has been over in his planes so the anti-aircraft guns have been busy. Today I met an old friend who I thought had been killed months ago.

Monday 22 Oct 1917

This morning we went for a long route march it was hard work after having such an easy time for so long. This afternoon we marched to the parade ground a short distance from here & watched a football match.

Tuesday 23 Oct 1917

This morning we marched some distance to bathes to have a bath, but arriving there we found the Australians had it for the day. This afternoon parade was a washout owing to the rain. There is plenty of mud here, one had a job to keep dry we are sleeping on the ground & it is very damp & cold. This evening us details & the reinforcements that are here had orders that we will be shifting from here in the morning to go & join up our Battalians.

Wednesday 24 Oct 1917

This morning reveille at 5.30am at 7.30am we left for the railway station. There after a long wait we finally left by train at

Wednesday 24 Oct 1917

11am. The officers usually have carriages to travel in but this morning much to our delight they had to get into the old battle trucks & share the hard floor with us. There was some mistake about where we were to stop & we went straight past our destination & on to within 3 miles of Boulogne.

Thursday 25 Oct 1917

This morning we found ourselves 3 miles from Boulogne. Nobody had any food & my mate & I had not chanced missing the train we would not had any food but we heard that there was a Canteen some distance away & went to it & got in a good stock of food. At 11am we started on the return journey & finally arrived at Lotington at 3pm. We went to a detail camp & after waiting about for 2½ hours in the wet & cold we sorted out & taken to a different Batt. that we had been drafted to. My mate & I arrived here & are joining up with 1st Battalion - 12th Nelson Coy.

Friday 26 October 1917

Today has been very wet. This morning two of us were sent here to 12 Platoon. We billeted at a farm & slept in the sheds.

Saturday 27 Oct 1917

This morning a little drill & route march. This afternoon ½ day off. Today is the first fine day for some time. Our boys have just come from Ypres & they have had a rough time, the platoons are very small & have had heavy casualties. In one Battalion of 1000 men that went into the push at Ypres only 96 came out sound. Some of the boys here have been gassed & it has affected their speech & a few cannot speak above a whisper.

Sunday 28 Oct 1917

The morning our Battalion had church parade in a field about 3 miles from here. This afternoon I walked about 5 mile to where the 2nd 12th Nelson are billeted & spent the afternoon with old friends.

Monday 29 Oct 1917

This morning our Batt was inspected by General Braithwaite. This afternoon we went for a route march headed by our band.

Tuesday 30 Oct 1917

This morning it rained heavily so there was no parade. This afternoon we had bathes & change of underclothing.

Wednesday 31 Oct 1917

Today we have been on fatigue at the railway station we have been shifting ammunition from one train to another. Some of the shells were that heavy that we could hardly lift them. We took our lunch & had the easiest day we have had.

Thursday 1 November 1917

This morning we marched some distance and had our Gas Helmets inspected by the Battalion Gas Officer. This afternoon we paraded with full packs up & had a long march. This evening I took a job as Batman for an officer so I will miss the morning parades.

Friday 2 Nov 1917

Today parades a washout owing to rain. Most of the boys have spent all their pay so things have quietened down.

Saturday 3 Nov 1917

This morning parade with full packs up this afternoon half day off. We are all getting quite settled down here now & sorry to leave, it is very quiet here the village is composed of about 6 houses so there is no where to go in the evenings but still we are quite contented here for Old Fritze is leaving us alone. We have not seen a hun plane since we have been here.

Sunday 4 Nov 1917

This afternoon it was fine, so church parade was held in a field. The cold is much better so the singing went off well. This afternoon Bible Class was held in the Y.M.C.A tent, out of the Whole Battalion that are here there was only about a dozen there. After class we had invitation out to tea, I could not go for I had work to do for my officer.

Monday 5 Nov 1917

Today usual parades for a wonder there were a few hours sunshine. Today my officer told me I did not have to go on parade so I am in for an easy time.

Tuesday 6 Nov 1917

This morning it rained heavily. This afternoon we were payed so things will be lively for a few days. Money does not last some of the boys long what with gambling & drinking it soon goes. This evening we had a Brotherhood meeting in the Y.M.C.A tent. Some boys came over from the 2nd Battalion, after the meeting supper was provided, & we had a very pleasant evening. At supper every one in turn had to get up & introduce himself.

Wednesday 7 Nov 1917

This morning those who had just joined up in the Coy. had to go to Divisional Headquarters for gas instruction. After walking about 5 miles our Officer found out we were not wanted today, so we had a long walk for nothing.

Thursday 8 Nov 1917

This morning extended order work this afternoon bath parade. Things were lively here last night there was no sleep for us until after midnight. I think it will be a good thing for some of the boys when they are broke.

Friday 9 Nov 1917

Today usual training. It has come out in orders that all steel helmets must be covered with sand bags so it looks as though we are off to the firing line again.

Saturday 10 Nov 1917

This morning shooting competition this afternoon there was a football match. The players came home smothered in mud. This evening heavy rain is settling in. Today some of the 29th Reinforcements joined this Company, they seem to be very much against this sort of life. This afternoon I had mail of 30 letters.

Sunday 11 Nov 1917

This morning there was no church parade owing to rain. All of the small creeks are flooded & it is a job to get down the road without getting a wet foot.

Monday 12 Nov 1917

Usual parades today. This evening orders have come that we are moving in the morning at 9am so we are busy packing up. We are all so comfortable & settled down here that we are all quite sorry to leave.

Tuesday 13 Nov 1917

This morning we left at 9am & after a 4 hour march arrived at a village where we spent the night, we slept in sheds. Today we had a steep hill to climb over & we found it very hard. This evening much to my surprise I met an old friend of mine who I thought was killed.

Wednesday 14 November 1917

This morning we left the village at 4am & marched to a railway station got aboard train after riding some distance we got off again & marched here a distance of 4 miles. We arrived here at 6pm tired & hungry. The guns were making a big noise but I think most of us slept through it.

Thursday 15 Nov 1917

We have had an easy day today. Most of us are very stiff & sore today. The guns have been going all day but either bombs or shells have landed any where near us.

Friday 16 Nov 1917

This morning at 9am we started out again & after 4 hours heavy walking we arrived at our destination behind the line at Ypres. The roads are very muddy & there is so much traffic that it keeps getting block. There is one continual stream of A.S.C wagons, guns etc passing up & down. The guns they bring down here have been damaged & go to the repair shops. There is plenty of mud here, the whole place is one bog but still men & horses flounder through it. There is a heavy bombardment going on we are camped just behind the guns, it is like fireworks on a very large scale tonight. The Canadians are fighting hard for Pachteale they went over the top this morning.

Saturday 17 Nov 1917

Last night our Blankets did not arrive until 11pm. We had a good deal of fun getting through the mud with our blankets. Some are living in tents, others in huts, & dugouts. The bombardment continued until this morning, but quietened down during the day. We are so close to the line yet do not know how they are getting on up there but we hope the old Fritz is getting a rough time. He is making a big stand on this sector, but I think he will soon have to give it up. We are not doing much here, just a few fatigues about the camp. I think that we are waiting here in reserve in case we are wanted.

Sunday 18 Nov 1917

Last night but for a few guns firing things was fairly quiet. This morning we had a little excitement Fritz came over in an aeroplane & brought down one of our observation balloons. Fritz fired at it & set it ablaze. The observers jumped out & came down in parachutes. Our anti-aircraft guns gave him a warm time, but he flew away unharmed. The morning church service was held out in the mud. This evening we had a bible class in the Chaplains tent.

Monday 19 Nov 1917

Last night the guns kept hammering away all night. Fritze was putting a few shells over but none of them landed very close to us, we have been expecting him to shell us or drop a few bombs here but so far he has left us alone. We have very little to do here, we sometimes wonder what we are here for. This evening I was one picked out to go to a school for training, they are picking out so many from each Company. I will have to give up my job as Officers orderly, but I am pleased to have the chance of leaving the job.

Tuesday 20 Nov 1917

This morning those for school left at 9am & marched here headed by our band a distance of 3 miles. This camp is like most other camps, plenty of mud, but we have huts to live in so we should be fairly comfortable. This afternoon we have been on fatigue digging drains etc. This afternoon our aeroplanes & fritzes had a good fight not far from here.

Wednesday 21 Nov 1917

Today was wet so there were no parades, we put in the time cleaning our equipment etc. Everything here has to be up to the mark boots, all brass & rifles has to be cleaned.

Thursday 22 Nov 1917

This morning we went for a route march, this afternoon we were on fatigue draining the camp etc. We were payed this evening so we will be able to live well for a while. We have not been getting to go out lately. There is boundaries to this camp & we are not allowed out without passes. Everything is very quiet now the bombardment has died down, & but for a shot now and again one would hardly know there was a war on.

Friday 23 Nov 1917

This morning usual drill this afternoon we went for a route march. This afternoon fritze aeroplanes have been over so our planes & anti-aircraft guns have been busy. Our guns fired a great many shots at the enemy planes but as far as we could see they flew away unharmed. This evening I had a parcel from home sent on 5th June.

Saturday 24 Nov 1917

This morning we were on fatigue shifting old buildings. This afternoon we went for bathes. The baths were 3 miles from here, so we had a good walk. There is so much traffic on these roads at times it is a job to get along. We got smothered in mud from the heavy cars, they throw the mud about so. Last night Fritze came over & dropped a few bombs but fortunately he did not

Saturday 24 Nov 1917

trouble us. This evening I went to the pictures. Not far from here the Tommies have a picture show & have pictures every night.

Sunday 25 Nov 1917

This morning there was no church parade so we had to get our clothes fumigated. This evening three of us walked to the village of Reninghelst about a mile from here & went to church. This evening I had another parcel from home that was sent for my birthday 26th May.

Monday 26 Nov 1917

This morning we started our training. We have had a general course today, much the same as we went through at Sling camp, we even had turning by numbers. There was a concert in the Y.M.C.A hut this evening. Some of us went to the pictures but they could not get the Engine to start so we were disappointed.

Tuesday 27 Nov 1917

This morning it was to wet to parade so we spent the morning fixing up the hut to make it more comfortable. At dinner time we got a big shock when an order came out that we first Battalion were to be ready to go back to our Batt. at 2pm. At 3.30pm we left camp & after 1½ hours march arrived at our destination & were put into huts very crowded but comfortable.

Wednesday 28 Nov 1917

This morning we went on parade, were lined & told that we were going in a Battle in a few days. We have to take 500 yards a strong point held by the Germans which is a very important place. Our officers tell us that although the enemy has a very strong hold on this place they think that we will take it fairly easily & without a great loss of life. It appears this place that we are after has been taken twice before, once by the Canadians & once by the Tommies but on both occasions not being able to hold it, so we are going to try our luck. We have practising the stunt today & have been divided up into sections, in a platoon there are a machine gun team, 8 men 6 bombers 6 rifle Grenadiers & rifleman. I am in the rifle Grenadiers.

Thursday 29 Nov 1917

Today we have been practising the stunt. It is quite interesting practising it but I expect the real thing will not be to nice. I am on the moping up party close behind the first wave. Our job is to finish up any Germans that may be left after the first wave passes over. Fritze has been shelling us with his navel gun last night he dropped three shells close to our huts.

Friday 30 Nov 1917

Today usual practising of stunt. Things were more real today we had two of our aeroplanes practising with us & Fritze landed quite a few shells about so it was quiet lively. This evening a shell landed in a camp but luckily it did not explode.

Saturday 1 December 1917

We had a little fire last night, the sergeants mess caught fire & was burned down. This morning everybody is getting ready for the stunt. This afternoon two of our Platoons left for the firing line. We are about 9 Miles from the front line trenches but we are going up a certain distance in cars.

Sunday 2nd December 1917

This morning the remainder got our full fighting kit issued & I find it not too light. My load besides Web equipment 180 rounds of ammunition, 6 rifle grenades & 2 bombs & a pick. It is surprising how happy everyone is for we know that many will never come out again. We left this afternoon & were taken about 6 miles in cars of course packed like sardines. From the cars to the front line trench we were shelled a little but had no casualties. A fair size piece of shrapnel hit my hat & gave my head a nasty knock. We reached our destination at 6pm, an old trench that we had to improve a great deal to make it a little safe. The track that we came up this evening was enough to give one the creeps what with dead men & horses lying about.

Monday 3 Dec 1917

Last night things were fairly quiet. I had a close shave, two machine gun bullets grazed my tin hat. It was fearfully cold last night we were all shivering all night. We stayed in the trench until 12 noon & then the fatal moment came our burage opened, the shells falling 50 yards in front of our trench &

50 yards every 5 minutes. We no soner got over the top of our trench than Fritze opened out on us with machine guns & Artillery. It was hell, the fire was terrific, but we kept pushing ahead running from shell hole to shell hole. We finally had to dig ourselves in what was left of us. The snipers were busy & accounted for a lot of our men but the Hun suffered more heavily than we did. Out of our section of 6, 3 of us reach our objective. Nearly all night we were digging ourselves in & when we was not digging we had to go on sentry in turns & had to keep a sharp watch for we expected him to counter attack. It was an exciting time but nothing happened. In the advance one of our boys rushed ahead & single handed captured a machine gun & crew, for which our Officers is recommending him for the V.C.

Tuesday 4 Dec 1917

This afternoon Fritze opened out on us & for a while gave us a hot time. We have been sniping away at the Huns all day &

Tuesday 4 Dec 1917

have accounted for a number of huns. The cold last night was fearful we were wet above the knees & have no overcoats. This evening much to delight we were relieved & went back a few hundred yards in support trenches.

Wednesday 5 Dec 1917

Last night we dug ourselves in as best we could but had no overcoats to keep us warm, it was an awful night that we spent. I lay down exhausted & am sure had it not been for my mate going out amongst the dead & getting some clothing I would have died from exposure. This morning we had a very quiet time but at 1pm Fritze opened out on us & kept it up all afternoon. I am sure most of us never expected to see the afternoon out. We had quite a number of casualties. This evening the Tomies relieved us, we were thankful to get out of it. We were very thirsty, for we had very little to drink, the first shell hole we came to was covered in ice & not very clean but we picked up a piece of ice and made short work of it. After walking on the duck walks for 2 miles we reached the road & got on to a ligh railway

Thursday 6 December 1917

which brought us to this camp. We were put into huts fires were going & hot tea ready for us so we were soon happy. No one needed rocky last night we were all exhausted & no-one stired untill 11am this morning. Many of the boys are suffering from trench & a number have been sent to hospital today. It is lovely to be able to get a little comfort again & to be away from the guns & bursting shells. Many faces are missing we have suffered heavily our Company have about 50 left, Otago Coy can only muster 30 men.

Friday 7 Dec 1917

Today we went for bathes & done a few fatigues about the camp. We expected to be left alone for a few days but no luck, we are kept going at odd jobs. This evening just after dark Fritze came over & bombed us, he dropped 2 bombs about $\frac{1}{2}$ chain from our hut & sent a shower of dirt & iron about but luckily no-one was hit. The Anti-Aircraft guns got busy & shot the aeroplane down for which we were very glad.

Saturday 8 Dec 1917

Today we have been on Fatigue draining the camp etc as if we haven't been in enough mud & water lately. We have been a very down hearted lot are cheering up a little now. We are getting extra good food & plenty of it & had three parcels from Lady Liverpool Fund containing goods which we are much appreciating & besides my mate has had two other parcels. Today I had N.Z mail of 9 letters.

Sunday 9 Dec 1917

This morning church parade. This afternoon we are all very down hearted when we are told to pack up & go back to the trenches. The road we had to go up is all strewn with smashed up guns, transport wagons & dead horses & the ground is chewed up with shells. The smell of dead & the look of distruction is enough to give one the horrors. Fritze was throwing shells about but we got in safely & dug ourselves in about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile behind the front line we dug all night it was to cold to think about sleep.

Monday 10 Dec 1917

We stayed in the trench all day it has been a dull day so Fritze could not see our new trench so has not settled us. It is very cold & wet in the trenches, one is shivering day & night & our feet get quite dead. Our cooks have come up with us so we get stew in the morning & tea at night which we much look forward to. This place is so churned up, what with shell holes & barbed wire. When we moving about have to keep to the tracks & Fritze knows the exact range of them & keeps shelling them. The ration parties have to pass up & down them, so we are constantly having casualties. This place where we are has been one of the finest race courses in the World, but now there is no sign of it. Where the grandstand was is on a rise & is now Headquarters, there is deep dugouts all through & quite safe from shells.

Tuesday 11 Dec 1917

Last night at dark we were all ordered out of the trench with our gear & dug a new trench, some distance from the other one. We did not need any telling to dig hard, for shells were bursting about & machine gun bullets flying so we dug for our lives & were glad when we got down a little. It was so cold that we kept doing a little digging all night to keep us warm. It has been cloudy today so Fritze has not spotted our new trench yet so we have had a quiet day. I went to Headquarters today to help carry water & there was a few dead lying in the track.

Wednesday 12 Dec 1917

Today Fritze spotted our trench & shelled us, he blew the trench in, in several places but luckily only one man was wounded. We saw an air fight today & one aeroplane came down in flames. Five Gothers flew over us evidently they were off on a bombing excursion. Our trench is filling up with places which makes it very bad for our feet. We get rum once a day & it is the only thing that keeps us alive. Our officers often have more than their share & are often very merry, but thank goodness we do not have to depened on them altogether to lead us, for we have some splendid N.C.O's.

Thursday 13 Dec 1917

Last night at dusk we left our support trenches for the front line & after wandering about over very rough ground & through machine gun bullets we finally arrived there & took over our post; 4 of us were on the bombing post & were the left hand post of our company. Otago is on our left hand it is some 50 yards from our post to their first post, so we have to keep a good look out for Fritze could get in behind us. Our trench is not very strong & our dugout is just big enough for 2 of us to crawl into. The trench is not high enough in places to protect our heads from bullets & there is often bullets sweeping over top of trenches. Today things have been fairly quiet but he has been putting many shells behind our line evident he has been shelling our support lines & ration parties etc.

Friday 14 Dec 1917

Last night we had a very cold night, one of our post had to go out wiring so we were short handed & had more shifts to do. We take it in turns 1 hour at a time, looking over the top of the parapet & one has to be along side of the sentry. We have rifles loaded, bayonets fixed & plenty of bombs ready so we will give old fritze a warm reception if he comes over. Today old fritze shelled us for a while & our Artillery opened out but some of the shells were dropping short & one gun was dropping shells about 1 chain in front of our post. In one part of this trench one of our shells dropped short & killed two sergeant.

Saturday 15 Dec 1917

Last night we had a lively time. Fritze had shifted his machine gun posts all night at intervals was putting bullets into parapet & over our heads. Today things have been fairly quiet here, but he is giving our boys behind us a rough time for we can hear the shells continually whizzing overhead. The 3rd Battalion are relieving us this evening & we are all looking forward to getting back into huts again for a few days for we have had scarcely any sleep since coming here.

Saturday 15 Dec 1917

The worst part is we have a very dangerous track out & will be luck if we all get out safely. Before we came into this sector we were told that it was fairly quiet but the old hands admit that for just holding the line it is the hottest place they have ever struck.

Sunday 16 Dec 1917

Last night we were relieved at 6am & our platoon got out safely, we had all the cooking gear to carry to the dump. The boys that relieved us had a few casualties getting in, three being killed another of our platoons had two wounded but Otago was relieved in daylight & the poor beggars they were cut up & had many casualties. We were a tired & worn out lot that came out & we had to walk all the way to these huts a distance of 6 miles, we did not march home but straggled along in groups. Some reached here at 10pm others kept straggling in all night & the last of our Company arrived here this morning at 9am. This morning most of us layed in bed until 11am & got up for breakfast but got back into bed again. When the roll was called today 6 of headquarters men were missing including the doctor so our chaplain has gone back up the line to see if he can find them.

Monday 17 Dec 1917

They had us out early this morning & we have been on fatigues all day, tired as we were they cannot seem to leave us alone. The reports have come through about the missing men, the chaplain found most of them killed & some were wounded. Our doctor was amongst those killed, we are all very sorry to loose him he used to give us a fair deal when we were sick. We have heard that last night a shell caused 50 casualties amongst the Rheune Company 4th Brigade. There is one thing for certain if they don't soon take us back for a spell & reorganise us there will be none of us left. One platoon in this Coy has only 10 men in it.

Tuesday 18 Dec 1917

Today usual fatigues, my mate & I have been on cook house fatigue all day so we have had a good many nice cups of tea. The ice about is very thick we are having very heavy frosts, it is fearfully cold back here. I can't understand how we live at all in those wet trenches.

Wednesday 19 Dec 1917

Today usual fatigues. It is freezing day & night & the mist is so thick that one can not see any more than a few chains. If we break the ice it soon freezes over again. We have fires in the huts but have a job to find wood & when we do get it we have to chop it up with entrenching tools picks or bayonets. We find our bayonets more useful for chopping the wood than killing the

Wednesday 19 Dec 1917

hun. The afternoon we had 25 reinforcements join us so we are a little stronger now.

Thursday 20 Dec 1917

This morning we left our old camp with full packs up & shifted into huts about a mile nearer the line. We had to come up a plank road & it was a job to get along. We were slipping & sliding & falling over. The horses have a worse time than we do, the cars are the most serviceable things in this weather. We have been on fatigue here today building dirt around the huts.

Friday 21 Dec 1917

Today the boys have been on fatigue. I was sick this morning, so the Doctor gave me the day off. Fritze is sending a few shells over, so as we won't forget him I suppose. It has been very cold & misty today, we haven't seen the sun for a few days now.

Saturday 22 Dec 1917

This morning much to our surprise the Battalian Parade & we had physical drill etc & bathes. The bathes are in the town Ypres & not far from here Fritze has been shelling around the bathes & last night a shell landed just outside & sent splinters of shell right through the bathes & while we were having our bath a shell landed very close sending dirt & fragments of shell over the building our bath was cut very short & it wasn't long before we were all out of it. This afternoon we left for the trenches at dusk & had we left for the trenches $\frac{1}{2}$ hour before we would have had a hot time for Fritze shelled the road we had to go along for about a mile. We got most of the way up here without any trouble but when nearing here he started shelling the track, & we had to take cover for awhile & finally circled around & got passed the bursting shells.

Sunday 23 Dec 1917

We are in supports, it was fearfully cold last night & to make it worse Fritze shelled us on & off all night. Today we have had a fairly quiet time & have nothing much to do during the day. We do a little every now & then to keep warm, such as patching up the trenches ect. At night we have to go on guard or Sentry. There are a few dugouts in the trenches, but not enough to accomodate us all. My mate & I lay down in the trench together & try to sleep when off duty but it is so cold that one can not lay down for long or he would freeze.

Monday 24 Dec 1917

Things were fairly quiet last night & this morning but Fritze opened out & shelled us all the afternoon. We had a miserable

Monday 24 Dec 1917

time, crouched down in the trench expecting every minute that it would land in the trench. But we were lucky they were bursting just behind us & in front of us, they sometimes seem to skin the trench by a few feet. One dugout was blown in & one of the boys got partly buried but no-one hurt, another shell landed in the trench but luckily did not explode. To make matters worse it came on to snow. This morning a fatigue party brought some iron & material to make a dugout, so this morning we have been working hard to get it finished, so as to have a shelter from the snow & front. These dugouts or bivies as we call them are built big enough for four men to squeeze in. They are bullet proof & stop stray bits of shell, but a direct hit with a shell would blow them up.

Tuesday 25 Dec 1917

We finished our bivy last night four of us got on top to throw some dirt on it. The machine gun bullets were whizzing about but the job had to be done so we worked away until I paused for a spell & put my shovel behind my leg & blast came from a machine gun a bullet came direct for my leg but the shovel glided it (worse luck) & went through my puttie. Christmas Day what a miserable day we have spent. It has been snowing hard all day & blowing a gale. Our platoon have been on fatigue all day so what with the snow & sleet we are all wet through. We have been carrying duckboards & sandbags from a dump & Fritze was dropping shells around the dump so made things very unpleasant. Our Xmas dinner was a slice of bread & jam.

Wednesday 26 Dec 1917

Last night orders came to shift up the front line so we packed up & left at dusk. Each one of us had to carry a heavy load such as woodwork to patch up trenches. Our platoon did not go right into the front line but are in a short support trench. It is a very poor trench & the bivies are very poor we are cramped up & haven't enough room to lie down. Our platoon is supplying two patrols of 4 men in each to patrol our companies front during the night. Last night I went out on patrol & we had a little excitement we dressed up in white suits had white covers for our steel helmets so we could not be seen so well in the snow. We got into No Mans Land & after wandering about for some time suddenly a hun jumped up not far from us & ran to where they had a machine gun post then the fun commenced they started sniping

Thursday 27 Dec 1917

at us. We were in a position that we could easily be cut off & we saw four huns run around an old trench as though they were going to surround us, so we started crawling through the snow back to our own trenches they were snipping at us one bullet came very close but we crawled on at last came to an old trench leading into our own line so got in safely we reported to our

Thursday 27 Dec 1917

Captain he gave us a good nip of rum & so we were soon feeling quite happy. It is a full moon now & it is murder to send a patrol out but we have to obey orders. Thursday, this afternoon Fritze opened his artillery & shelled our trenches we had a hot time & thought the hun was attacking us our artillery opened up & stopped him the hun got as far as one of our advancement posts but they drove him back. We all expected a hand to hand fight & were all waiting with bombs & rifles & bayonets fixed. This evening much to our delight we were told to get ready to move.

Friday 28 Dec 1917

The 4th Brigade relieved us last night but before we left fritze caught the otago patrol, one was killed another taken prisoner & an officer got back to our own lines. Poor fellows we heard the bombs giong off and our boys singing but we were unable to help them. Coming out last night for a wonder we never had a shell near us a few bullets rather close. We had an awful trip out, the duck walks were like walking on glass & we dare not get off the track for the ground is full of shell holes & filled up with snow. Some had a terrible job to get out & were falling down every few yards. We walked for 3 miles & expected to get on the train but had to walk another 3 miles. We were strung along the road & reached here exhausted. Today we have had an easy time, a foot & rifle inspection. A few of the boys feet are so bad that they cannot get out of bed. We have a good fire going & are all comfortable & hoping we will not have to go into the trenches again for awhile.

Saturday 29 December 1917

This morning they had us out early & our company was sent down to Ypres on fatigue. I run some barbed wire into my hand when up the line & it has swelled up & got very painfull, the Doctor says that it is poisoned so I have to get it attended to three times a day. Our company were lucky this time in the line we only had two casualties other companies suffered 13 Company had 40 casualties.

Sunday 30 Dec 1917

Today we expected Church Parade & a quiet day, but no they had us out early & sent the Coy away on fatigue. I have had light duty so stayed at home & cleaned up the hut ect.

Monday 31 Dec 1917

Today fatigues about camp so I got light duty again today. There is a Y.M.C.A being built here & is now nearly completed. They were shorthanded so all we boys that were on light duty were sent over to assist. I spent the day painting & cleaning windows. To

Monday 31 Dec 1917

show how cold it is I would rub a wet rag over the windows & before I could dry it, it would be frozen over. Tonight a Tommy concert party gave a concert in the Y.M.C.A & it was very good. Fritze was sending over a few bombs but he left us alone.

Tuesday 1st January 1918

Today our battalian had a dinner in the YMCA hut we had 76 turkeys to put away which was no hard task besides vegetable duff & sauce.

1st & 2nd companys had their meal at midday & we 12th & 13th Coys had our at 5.30. The Band played while dinner was on & then the day finished with a concert. It was a very good spread we had most of us admit it is the best feed we have had since we left NZ. I had cleaned up & was looking forward to the coming evening when at 3pm our sergent came in & said 4 of our platoon had to go on guard at once. We drew for it & I was one of the unlucky ones it was very disappointing but still the cooks sent us a fair share of the Turkey & Duff ect.

Wednesday 2 January 1918

Today on guard we were relieved at 4pm. Last night the camp was lively many of the boys were celebrating the New Year & kept it up until late. This morning they had breakfast at 4.30am & went away up the line on the train before daylight. The town of Ypres is not far from here & there are a good number of troops there, it is out of range of most of fritzes guns but he has a few long ranged guns that he keeps shelling it with.

Saturday February 2 1918

Leave to England started Jan 25th to Feb 8th. Had to gay a time to write up all details. So just writing down a few of the main places of interest I went to. Left Calias (France) for Dover 9am 25/1/18. We had a good trip across the channel it only taking us 1½ hours to cross. Caught the

Sunday February 3

train for London at 11am & arrived at Victoria station London at 12"30. We were a very mixed lot Tommies Canadians Australians & New Zealanders. How excited we all were especially those boys whos homes were in England. Some where covered in mud just as they had come out,

Monday, February 4, 1918

the trenches, but to meet the same boys the next day one would hardly know them. The majority of the boys turn out very neatly dressed, our N.Z Maories can hold their own with any of the boys for style. The first day I spent in London with a touring party from our hut we had a conveyance & two

Tuesday February 5

horse & a lady guide & had a very pleasant day. We went to the Tower Bridge, Westminster Abbey, St Pauls Cathedral, House of Parliament & Commons & Kings Stables. The next day Sunday I spent with my Tommie friends people & had a very pleasant day. That night my mate and I left for Scotland by the 10pm train

Wednesday, February 6, 1918

& arrived in Edinborough at 8am 27th. In the afternoon we hired a Taxi & asked the driver to take us to the most interesting parts of the town. We went to many places of interest & were taken to a Dance at night. The next day we took the train out to the great bridge across the Firth of Fourth River said to be the finest bridge in the world. Wed morning left Edinburgh at 9am arrived in Glasgow at 10"30am spent the day looking around the town & went the

Thursday February 7

the barge shipping Docks on the Clyde where the Lusitania was built. The next day went to Lock Lomond 22 miles out. Returned to Edinburgh that evening spent evening with friends. Left Edinburgh Sat 12pm train arrived in London 10am spent Sunday with my friends again. Monday left London 11am for Swindon (Wilts) arrived there at 12"30pm found relations alright & had a real good

Friday, February 8, 1918

time, left for London 7th spent the night there & left London for Dover 8"30am. Left Dover at 5pm & arrived in Calais 6"30 we were a down hearted lot it is very nice going on leave but a terror coming back again to this rough life after the lovely times we have been having. The French people look so dirty & untidy after our own clean people. We stayed the night in Calais.

Saturday February 9

This morning we left Calais by train at 12am & arrived in Poperinge at 4pm & came here to the Reinforcement camp where all N.Z from leave or hospital report to & from there are sent on to their units. We stayed the night at Reinf's camp & this morning were all sent to our units.

Sunday February 10 1918

Today when I reached our transport lines to my disgust I found out that our boys have just gone into the line for 12 days. I was told I would have to leave for the line at 2pm but at the last minute much to my delight was given a job as a runner from our Battalion Hdq at transport line to Divisional Hdq.

Monday February 11

about 3 miles away.

This afternoon a chit came down from line saying sent up every available man so my luck is out this time for I have to leave for the line tomorrow morning at 2am. This evening I went to our Cinema & there was a very good program our boys have a very good show & a real good orchestra. Today I had a mail of 8 letters & one parcel.

Tuesday February 12 1918

This morning I was up at 2pm & left for the line on the light railway which was bringing the rations up, & arrived here in the front line at 7am. One of our boys has taken my place as stretcher bearer & is going to carry on with the job untill we go out of the line again, for the time being I am attached

Wednesday, February 13

to a machine gun Section. We are having wet weather so the trenches are in the usual state mud up to our knees. The Artillery has been very active on both sides but apart from that things are not so bad. There is 8 of us on our machine gun during the night 4 are on duty at a time.

Thursday, February 14, 1918

Last night is one of the quietest nights we have had on this sector. Fritzes machine guns hardly fired a shot & he did not even put up a flare. At night we can hear fritzes transport wagons & his trains quite distinctly. Today artillery on both sides very active. It is very miserable here our overcoats are wet through & it is very cold at night.

Friday, February 15

Last night word came round that Fritze was going to raid us, we got bombs ammunition & rifles out all ready waited watched & listened all night but he did not come. We expected to be relieved last night but were not. Today two of our boys raided one of fritzes advance posts held by 5 hunns the killed one another would not come so they shot him, & took the remaining three prisoners.

Saturday, February 16, 1918

Last night we were relieved & had an exciting time getting out, Fritze put over a good many gas shells, we had to go right through it so by the time we reached our huts many of us were feeling very sick. A number have gone away to hospital gassed. We have had an easy time today.

Sunday, February 17

This morning we expected church parade but revalle at 5"30 & left he at 6"30 to go up the line on fatigue. We were working making a trench about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the front line trenches. It has been a very bright clear day, things were fairly quiet the pioneers had a few casualties.

Monday February 18, 1918

This morning usual fatigue at 6"30 it was a very bright morning & fritze must have seen the many thousands of men who were working about, but still he was fairly quiet & did not shell us much. Since we have been working on this sector we have improved it very much & we can get up to the front line now not near the danger it used to be.

Tuesday, February 19

This morning usual fatigues at 6"30am fritze gassed a number of our boys last night & we passed many of them going out this morning some were quite blind. The number gassed last night is supposed to be about 100. This afternoon close to this camp one of our aeroplanes caught fire & came down in flames both pilots being killed.

Wednesday, February 20, 1918

Today we have been on fatigue at the railway dugouts not far from our camp. These dugouts are about 40 feet deep & built to accomodate over 1000 men. They are fitted up with eletric lights. Our heavy Artillery are about here & fritze often shells them but his shells do not effect these deep dugouts at all.

Thursday, February 21

This morning usual fatigues. This afternoon we shifted camp & left with full pack up we did come very far & are now settled down in another camp for the night. The packs were very heavy in addition to all of equiptment & belongings we had to carry 2 blankets. We were payed tonight so things are lively.

Friday, February 22, 1918

This morning our C.C. inspected us. This afternoon we left with full packs up & we streacher bearers had to carry our strechers so after 2 hours march we were glad to get to this camp where we are staying the night. Tonight some of the 30 Reps joined us up. Tonight I went to the pictures & there was a very good programe.

Saturday, February 23

Today we did not shift untill 3pm. There was two bands playing in our camp so things were quite lively. Tonight we arrived in Ypres at 5pm & after waiting in the Ypres square for 1 hour we entrained & arrived at Caestre about 10pm. After having tea & biscuits we set out on a 5 mile march & arrived here at 12pm.

Sunday, Feburary 24, 1918

This morning we did not rise untill about 10am. At 2pm we had church parade in a field, the band playing the hymns. In the evening we had a voluntary service in the Y.M.C.A. & had a good old sing song. There is a nice town close here where Sir Douglas Haigs Headquarters are. Many of our boys went up there

Monday, February 25

today, but it has now been put out of bounds. Today it rained very heavily so there was no parade we had to have a general clean up. Tonight we had a debate Town verses Country. It was a real good debate & while it lasted was exciting but when put to the vote Country won easily. Tonight I had a N.Z. mail of 11 letters.

Tuesday, February 26, 1918

This morning our C.C. inspected us with full marching order.

Tuesday, February 26, 1918

This afternoon we marched some distance to bathes & had a bath. There is an Aerodrome not far from here, so when we went past today we saw about 50 aeroplanes out in field where they fly off from so we see plenty of aeroplanes about here. We also saw a big stack of bombs.

Wednesday, February 27

This morning parade at 8am first of all we went on Company parade ground & was inspected very closely as number of our boys had their names taken for not being shone up enough. We then marched to Battalion parade ground where we had a good deal of ceremonial drill & then musketry drill physiscal drill ect.

Thursday, February 28, 1918

Today usual Battalion parade with full packs up 8am about 20 of our boy had their names taken for trifling things & had to parade this evening full packs for $\frac{1}{2}$ hours drill. Today we have had usual smartening up drill. This afternoon after parade we had a football match. We are very cormfortable in our billet it is a big improvement on the trenches.

Friday, March 1

This morning it snowed but we paraded as usual. This afternoon the weather was still dirty so parade was washed out. The people at this farm are very good to us, they give us free use of a room with a fire in it, so we are able to do our corresponding in comfort. Today I brought a pound of butter & it cost 4/7d.

Saturday, March 2, 1918

This morning usual parade, it was very cold & drizzllny with rain all the morning this afternoon the company football matches were played off this afternoon it snowed heavily & was very cold but they played the matches through it all. We were parade & marched to the football ground but not many stayed to see the final.

Sunday, March 3

This morning church parade. The service was held in the Y.M.C.A. tent. After church parade they gave us the day off but the only place worth going to Canseles a town close to hear is put out of bounds. This evening a voluntary service was held, but the boys turn out very poorly out of a Batt of men there was only about 20 men at service.

Monday, March 4, 1918

This morning we had to turn out extra smart. We were inspected by General Russel. He inspected us very closely & even made some of the boys empty their packs out to see if they had everything. All we stretcher bearers were in a section on our own & the Dr took charge of us. We had a march past the heads. It was very funny the Dr did not know what orders to give us & then his horse ran away with him.

Tuesday, March 5

Today usual training. This afternoon we stretcher bearers paraded to the Doctor for a lecture but he was ill so we had the afternoon off. It has been very cold today. This evening in Y.M.C.A. Marquee there was a concert.

Wednesday, March 6, 1918

This morning usual parades. This afternoon 2nd Battalion played 1st Batt football on our parade ground it was a real good game & there was some noise as there was 2 Battalions of men to barrack. 1st Batt won by a few points. This evening we were paid so we will have a lively time for a few days.

Thursday, March 7

This morning usual parade untill 11am after a hurried dinner we marched some distance to where 2nd Batt are billeted, the whole brigade met there & a company out of each Battalion had a cross country race Otago were the winners. We then marched to the football where our Batt team & Otago Batt played off the final. 1st O.I.B won by 3 points.

Friday, March 8, 1918

This morning at 8"30 our Batt left St Marra Chappel full marching order on a two day march to go to the Moule District to do our shooting. We arrived at our destination for tonight at 3"30pm tired & a little footsore. This village where we are is not very large but there are plenty of Estuminets here so the boys are having a lively time tonight.

Saturday, March 9

This morning at 10"30am we started again on the Long Trail. We passed through Arques & St Omer & other villages & finally at 4pm arrived at our destination. Haulle is a small town. We are billeted in sheds ect. almost in the town. We are very pleased the march is over for a few hours with the loads we have to carry is enough for anyone.

Sunday, March 10, 1918

This morning at 6am we set out for the range a distance of about 2 miles from here & was shooting untill 1pm we then came home & had the rest of the afternoon off. The Summertime started last night when all clocks had to be put forward 1 hour. We are having lovely spring weather now everything is so peaceful out here it is hard to believe the war is still raging so close.

Monday, March 11

This morning we had it easy dinner 10"30am then marched to the range, had a lecture on gas & had to go into a gas room wearing our helmets to test them, we then had the afternoon shooting.

Tuesday, March 12, 1918

Today shooting at range we also had a lecture on gas & had to march alone & go through real gas practising getting our helmets on quickly. The gas turned our buttons & brass work ect quite black. There are very deep shafts about the range where the French has been digging for chalk.

Wednesday, March 13

This morning we had a very good lecture on economy & we can all help to win the war. The position of the British army in 1914 & the position of Germany 1914 & the position we are both in today. After the lecture there was a football match. This afternoon shooting at the range. I struck a good job looking after our Captain's horse.

Thursday, March 14, 1918

This morning owing to rain parade was a washout. This afternoon we were practising extended order work.

Friday, March 15

This morning practising advancing in extended order ect. This afternoon the boys went up to the butts & have been practising an attack & using live ammunition. They had to wear steel helmets a few of us did not have them so have had the afternoon. Today a N.Z. mail arrived I landed 17 letters so have spent a pleasant afternoon reading them.

Saturday, March 16, 1918

This morning at 8am we started on the march back & came to the same billets where we stayed the night coming down. The weather is getting quite warm now & it is very hot in the middle of the day for marching.

Sunday, March 17

We left this morning at 9am had dinner on the way & arrived here at 4pm. We are back at the same billets as we were in before so it is quite like getting back home again.

Monday, March 18, 1918

Today we have had an easy time, this morning Kit inspection this afternoon baths.

Tuesday, March 19

This morning Battalion parade at 7"30am at 10am it came on to rain so parade was washed out. This evening a concert followed by pictures in Y.M.C.A. Marque.

Wednesday, March 20, 1918

This morning Batt parade. At 9"30am we strecher bearers had to fall out & go to the Doctors to have lectures on dressing wounds we also had to practise bandaging ect. it is very interesting work & many a mans life may be saved through us knowing just what to do & how to dress wounds.

Thursday, March 20

Today lectures & bandaging for we streacher bearers. Last night a very good Debate on Should women compete with men in labour after the war after debate pictures were shown. The guns have been going consistently since yesterday & it is said that the Hun has started his big push we are not allowed out of our billets tonight we have to stand by ready to move off at short notice. We were payed tonight too.

Friday, March 22, 1918

last night things were exciting we hear all sorts of rumours & at 2am orders came around to move off but the order was cancelled. This morning revalle at 5"30am we marched about 2½ miles. 2 Batt joined us & we spent the day carrying out an attack. Everything was carried out as though it was a real stunt. Men were told off to drop out as wounded & we had to bandage them up & carry some of them on stretcher to imaginary dressing station where the Doctor inspected our bandaging ect.

Saturday, March 23

Last night at 6"45pm much to our disgust we had to go out & do an attack with gas helmets on. This morning revalle at 5"30am & this morning we were practising an attack again. This afternoon Battalion sports.

Sunday, March 24, 1918

This morning orders came around to pack up & be ready for the road. This afternoon we left at 2³⁰pm battle order having our packs & blankets carried for us. After a 2½ hours march we entrained. Before leaving the Y.M.C.A. provided tea & biscuits orange & cigarettes per man. We have heard great rumours about the Hun advance & hope it is not true.

Monday, March 25

After about 13 hours in the rain packed like sardines in cattle trucks we arrived at Ailee where we detrained. We could see by the look of people that the news we heard about the 18 mile hun advance must be true. This evening at 4pm we left Ailee in Motor lorries leaving our blankets & packs behind. We passed through Amiens & were continually passing furniture vans many people seem to be moving.

Tuesday, March 26, 1918

Last night after a lively ride once we got stuck & had to push the lorry out. We passed a good many of our calvary who had been in action that day. We got settled down in a village at 11pm & this morning we left again at 3am the cooks had breakfast ready but we could not stop for it after marching through lovely country we rested for dinner at 12am, we could see people hurrying away with their stock & furniture ect. At 1pm we moved off & were told we were going straight into action. We were soon in the thick of it & took all of our objectives with fairly light casualties we had 3 killed &

Wednesday, March 27

10 wounded other companies suffered much the same. We are now entrenched close to the river Anere. Today casualties 4 killed 2 wounded. 1st Coy have had about 30 casualties. The artillery fire here is not much but fritz's snipers are very hot & our trenches very low. We stretcher bearers have been busy taking out wounded collecting personal belonging off our boys who have fallen to rise no more. This afternoon the huns attacked us but were repulsed.

Thursday, March 28, 1918

Today the casualties lighter, the Artillery on both sides getting hotter. We are on a ridge across the river Fritze is entrenched half way down the next ridge so both sides are continually watching for a chance to snipe one another so it pays one to keep his head down. Where we are now is where our old front line was before the big Somme push. There are ploughed fields & growing crops close around

Friday, March 29

here & in a small village close by the French people have had to desert their homes & have left fowls cattle & horses so our troops who are now in the village are living on fowl ect. Today one of our Officers one of the heaviest men in our Company was wounded & we had a terrible job to carry him out. We are almost starved here water to drink & 12 men to a loaf of bread for 24 hours ration. We have no overcoats or blankets or leather waistcoats & having frosty weather & most of the boys have very poor dugouts so things

Sunday, March 30, 1918

are not too good, but we seem to have checked the hun advance it seems to be the first check he has had for 12 miles. Today fritze has given us two good strafes with his artillery. Today 1st Brigade on our left (Wgton & Auckland Batt u/s) made a push captured 350 prisoners & 42 machine guns. Heavy rain last night & today so there is plenty of mud about. Tonight Otago Batt relieved us at 9"30pm much to our delight rations today 10 men to a loaf.

Sunday, March 31

Last night we arrived here tired & hungry our cooks had a good feed ready for us. We are living in small dugouts in an old trench. There is a village on either side of us which a week ago were occupied by French civilans but now all but two or three have gone leaving much behind to the mercy of troops. We are having a great time plenty of wine beer cider potatoes onions carrots & fowls ect ect.

Monday, April 1, 1918

Amongst other animals left to mercy of us was a nice spot calf which was soon making stew. Fritze is continually shelling these villages & this morning he has been giving us a lively time. Our own Artillery are here to back up so we have a little more confidence in holding old fritze up now. When we arrived here on this sectre there was only about 4 guns Tommie Artillery all the rest had either been captured or blown out. It was the same with the infantry out of 1000 men in one Batt there was only 63 left.

Tuesday, April 2

Today old fritze has been giving us a very warm time & nearly blew us out with several shells but luckily there was no casualties. Today the French police arrested some of our boys for looting. No doubt we are having a great time here some of the boys have not been sober since we came out of the front line. We have been getting plenty of potatoes so fried potatoes are the order now.

