

The War Diaries of Captain Oswald Felix Baerlein (MC)

10th August 1914 to 19th November 1918

With the kind permission of Jane Hunter

Please Note:

- {} indicates clarification
- (?) Word added but with some doubt as difficult to read
- xxxx(?) word of approximately " letters but unclear
- Axxcxxx(?) word probable letters and approx. number of letter but unclear
- 1/pxx indicates diary number/page

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I

War Diary

10/8/1914 – 17/5/1916

ARMY BOOK 136

Note original diary & diary page number/Transcription page number

Original & Annotated Here	Here	Movement
I/p1	4	Left Woolwich – Arrive Rouen – Left Rouen
I/p2	4	Arrived Amiens
I/p7	6	Left Amiens - Arrive Rouen
I/p9	7	Left Rouen – Arrived Le Mans
I/p14	8	Left Le Mans
I/p19	9	Arrived Villeneuve
I/p23	10	Left Villeneuve – Arrived at Le Mans
I/p32	14	Left le Mans
I/p33	14	Arrived Bailleul
I/p37	16	Left Bailleul
I/p38	16	Arrived Le Mans - Left le Mans - Arrived Hinges
I/p39	16	Left Hinges
I/p40	17	Arrived Le Mans
I/p42	18	Left Le Mans - Arrived England - Left London - Arrived Manchester - Left Manchester
I/p43	18	Arrived Fleet - Left Fleet - Arrived Trowbridge
I/p45	19	Left Trowbridge - Arrived Le Havre
I/p46	19	Left Le Havre - Arrived Miannay
I/p54	22	Left Miannay - Arrived Long - Left Long - Arrived Argoeuvres
I/p56	23	Left Argoeuvres - Arrived Bussy-lès-Daours
I/p62	26	Left Bussy-lès-Daours - Arrived Belloy-sur-Somme
I/p66	27	Left Belloy-sur-Somme - Arrived Abbeville
I/p67	27	Left Abbeville - Arrived Valery-sur-Somme
I/p69	28	Left Valery-sur-Somme - Arrived Verquin
I/p71	29	Left Verquin - Arrived Raimbert
I/p73	30	Left Raimbert - Arrived Enquin-St. Julien [poss. just St. Julien now] - Left Enquin-St. Julien - Arrived Raimbert
I/p74	30	Left Raimbert - Arrived Noeux-les-Mines
I/p86	35	Left Noeux-les-Mines
I/p87	35	Arrived Boulogne - Left Boulogne - Arrived Manchester - Arrived Folkestone
I/p88	36	Left Folkestone - Arrived Boulogne - Left Boulogne - Arrived Lillers
I/p89	36	Left Lillers - Arrived Estrée-Blanche - Left Estrée-Blanche - Arrived Lillers
I/p92	37	Left Lillers - Arrived Fouquières

War Diary

2/Lt. O. F. Baerlein A.S.C. (S.R.)

Lt. O. F. Baerlein A.S.C. (S.R.)

1. Advanced H.T. Depot
2. 15th Reserve Park
3. 15th Divisional Train

I/p1

4/8/14. Mobilised with Adv. H.T. Depot.

10/8/14. Had orders to leave Woolwich. Destination unknown.

11/8/14. Arrived Southampton 1pm. Left Southampton 2am on board ship. Held up off Isle of Wight. Left Isle of Wight 5am, destination unknown. Arrived Havre {Le Havre} 11am. Proceeded up river to Rouen amidst great excitement. Arrived Rouen 4.30pm. Disembarked and proceeded to quarters amidst immense enthusiasm. Everything works smoothly. Have not received horses or equipment as yet, i.e. wagons, harness, etc.

12/8/14. An easy day.

13/8/14. Have taken charge of Officers' Mess and Canteen. This necessitates frequent visits to the town. Am struck by French amity, but after a time it becomes a nuisance. Great interest taken in one's personal appearance. Reason for England declaring war doubtless appeals to French temperament.

14/8/14. At 8am told would probably move tomorrow. At 12 noon told would probably move at 5pm today. At 1pm told would probably move to Amiens at 3pm today. Still no horses or transport to look after. Up till now have seen nothing of "ravages of war", except the lack of young men about, especially in the fields, where the harvest remains ungathered or uncut, left just as it is on order of mobilisation coming out. Today Q.M.S. fallen sick.

Later Departed Rouen 6.-5pm {6.05pm?}, en route for Amiens. Evidently news of train arriving passed by telegraph from station to station as at every station were crowds on the platform. At Serqueux got wonderful reception. Large platform packed to suffocation. Children mounted on stools sang special verses to the tune of the Marseillaise and chores proper taken up by whole multitude. Effect magnificent. Showered with bouquets and signed P.C.s [poss. postcards], with messages on them in English.

I/p2

15/8/14. Slept this morning in school. Struck by French insanitary arrangements. Company billeted late by the "Hippodrome" racecourse. Went out buying beer etc, all day.

I/p3

16/8/14. At a moment's notice, sent to Hd.Qrs. and made local Transport Officer. This entails much work owing to lack of transport. Sgt. Gibbon detailed as my Sgt. Attended to transport of Mech. Trs. Depot. Tonight am dossing down in office. Tomorrow hope to get billets.

17/8/14. Requisition for removal of 150 tons of baggage for 7th General HospitF72al received. Given 1 hired motor lorry, 5 French military double-horse wagons, 7 civilian double-horse wagons, 1 civilian single-horse wagon, 1 military (English) double-horse wagon. Ordered to be ready at 5.30. All ready. Owing to delay on the part of Medical service, received no instructions as to where lorries to go to, although medical baggage party ready. At 11 o'clock, after Staff Colonel had spoken strongly to C.O. medicals, instructions came down. One load taken before dejeuner. At work all rest of day on this job.

I/p4

18/8/14. Job finished by 10.45am, in excellent time, since two days had been allotted for it. French military wagons dismissed and likewise English military wagon. French civilian wagons kept on. Hired motor lorry not used today.

Wagons kept busy with medical movements. Ordered to parade every day at 7am, and remained 'til 6pm, until further notice. One wagon to be present always during meal times. After dejeuner, only a few employed on odd jobs. Rest have nothing to do. Motor lorry used all night.

19/8/14. Only a few wagons used on odd jobs throughout the day. Not much to do. Motor lorry not used at P.O. all night but used to meet ambulance train. Special cart detailed to P.O. for a period of four days. French arrangements to be made then.

I/p5

20/8/14. Very slack day today. Everything seems to be on sound footing and little need apparently for an Officer to take charge now. Hope to get shifted onto another job. Contract with civilian wagons expires today. Four to be retained. Two wagons necessary to parade at Ration stand every morning in addition to motor lorry.

Later. All civilian transport cancelled. M.T. of 4th Div. Supply Column to be used in place of it until further notice. P.O. insisted on having motor wagon for night, much to our inconvenience, since cart specially ordered. In the end, never used motor. Transport required to meet 2.44 and 2.54 Ambulance trains. Stayed up for this. They arrived. .

21/8/14. after 5am. Cleared by 6am. Under instructions, were sorted in goods yard, instead of at hospital. Particularly futile, since delays transport and terrible for sufferers to wait on a cold morning for a whole hour at the station. Everything so far worked smoothly as far as we are concerned though likely to be a nasty mess amongst R.A.M.C. if a battle takes place immediately, or many sick arrive, since stationary clearing houses not yet set up, though sent two days ago to Busigny. Now ordered elsewhere.

I/p6

22/8/14. A lot of small jobs all day, but nothing much except that.

23/8/14. A Stationary Hospital arriving today at St. Roch station. 4th Divisional Supply Col. going to attend to it. Other jobs later in the day but expected that 4th Divisional Supply Col. will not be available owing to its concentration preparatory to moving off. Hence quest for transport.

24/8/14. First of our wounded and German wounded arrive today. Germans hissed by populace. Today have 16 horse transport allotted to us. All busy. Somewhat of a muddle in getting more transport, but believe can call upon two lots of M.T..

I/p7

25/8/14. A quiet day without much incident. Have taken over a considerable number of transport (civilian).

26/8/14. Certain amount of panic in the town. Crowded out with refugees. Gloomy outlook.

Later

Have orders to move at any minute. Outlook appears very bad. Great anxiety noticeable in faces of the population.

27/8/14. Up at 4.30 to attend to transport of baggage of troops leaving Amiens. All to be out by 10am and a French Army Corps to come in. Ordered to parade at 8am at station. Left Amiens 12 noon! Arrived Rouen 7.30pm. Detrained and went to old quarters. Stayed at station to remove baggage. Staff Officer said would get transport as soon as possible. At 8.15pm saw him again and he repeated his remark. At 9.15 pm saw other Staff Officer who gave me some assistance and arranged that I should take first lorry to come in. This would have been arranged much earlier. At 10pm got away.

I/p8.

28/8/14. After excitement and fatigue of past few days, great relief to get back to the peace of Rouen. Expect to get into billets tonight. Have resumed old duties of "mess president". Town crowded with Belgians. Much more hopeful outlook, as looks as if Germans will be hemmed in between Belgians on one side and British and French on the other. Have felt rather wretched today with a cold on my chest.

29/8/14. Felt alright again today. Orderly officer for the day. Day passed without incident. Should mention that on night 28/29^(th), about 70 men came in who had escaped from the Germans, nearly all A.S.C.. At about 11.30pm a Staff Officer came in and told me we would have to move off tomorrow, and should hold ourselves in readiness. Also had to temporarily take charge of the A.S.C. "refugees".

30/8/14. Have given orders at 6.15am to the Q.M.S. to be ready to move and also informed the C..O.

Later. Have now received definite instructions that we are to move tonight. Destination unknown. Did not move after all tonight, but ordered to catch 8am train tomorrow. Got this information about 10pm, and had been more or less standing by since 6am!

I/p9

31/8/14. Got down to station at 8am. Informed going to Le Mans. Entrained 9am. Train departed 11am. Got first class carriage and took 7 days' rations with us. Arrived Le Mans 4.30am. Owing to number of refugees, some difficulty apparently in getting us away. Men and selves breakfasted in station.

1/9/14. Left station 9am and marched to Barracks. Uncertain whether had to remain, so stood by 'til 3pm. Then told would not move 'til next day.

2/9/14. Ordered to get up at 5.30am. Received no instructions 'til 10am when Capt. Lucas ordered to go and find out re billets himself. At 11am returned. The Colonel and Lts. Gale and Birch, with W.O. and other men doing transport work in town. Capt. Lucas went off to billets with baggage party and I moved men off, and marched them to billets in a school. First time I took command of company.

School small and none too sanitary, owing to latrines being in the middle of the small place, within 10 yards of cookhouse, and of men's quarters. School square also covered with sandy dust. Latrines were in a bad state, but sanitary squad did excellent work on them. However, hope we will not have to stay here for long, otherwise fear illness. No open ground near and men more or less confined to barracks.

I/p10

3/9/14. Capt. Lucas ordered into the town and I left in charge. Expect this will happen a good deal. In the afternoon, on the suggestion of C.S.M. Lockelt, decided that men should be given semaphore drill. Found large fields almost opposite school. Marched them off for an hour's drill at 5pm and divided them into sections under competent instructors.

4/9/14. Order came down from C.O. that I was to go on night duty at the local Transport Office in the station. In the morning, marched men off for an hour's drill in the field. Capt. Lucas and myself bought footballs, etc to keep men busy, as most of them still have nothing to do.

I/p11

5/9/14. Slept all morning after night duty. Wrote [to] Capt. Coke to see if I could join him on another job. This job very footling and irregular.

6/9/14. Was with the company all afternoon. In the morning was on duty at L.T.O..

7/9/14. On duty all morning at L.T.O.. Informed that Gale, Birch and myself are to do this duty in turn and Lucas is coming in to take his turn at night.

Arranged a football match this afternoon. No. 14 Coy. A.S.C. v R.E. Director of Works Troop. We won 3/1.

8/9/14. Am on duty tonight. Am getting fed to the teeth with this kind of life, with no chance of getting any distinction, and am longing to get to the front.

I/p12

9/9/14. Am once again happy, as I believe our camp is going to start and that I am to be at the camp instead of an LTO. Six horses came in last night (draught horses) and are now picketed in the field. This is a start. Received instructions to bring up 40 R.F.A. to do fatigue work in the camp, which I have done. [These turned out to be the famous 'L' Battery.] The site of the camp is chosen, and is in course of preparation. We are, apparently, going to have many artillery men first reinforcements, and stragglers, to join us in the camp. A few wagons have been brought in from Maroc.

10/9/14. Capt. Lucas at Maroc all day, leaving me with the company. Very busy day. Have drawn nucleus of wagons for Depot, forage for horses, etc. Personally arranged where to place wagons and ground for horses also arranged. All going on smoothly.

Later. Col. came in late at night and said would probably have to move in a few days. Hence all surplus wagons have to be sent back tomorrow, leaving three only, as we have only six horses.

I/p13

11/9/14. Still carrying on with arrangements in case remain, though surplus wagons sent back in case go. Have had 50 H.T. details in today, to join us.

12/9/14. In morning, sent down to Col. Boyce to do control work. Since I could not ride motor bike, returned. Gale went instead.

Quiet afternoon.

At about 6pm, warned by Col. Armstrong to get ready to move off at once with small advance party to Villeneuve, where new Base is to be formed. Lieut. Gale to go too, but to go by motor car, and meet me with party at Villeneuve. Took 2 Sgts, one **Farr(?)** Sgt., one Sadd Cpl., one **Whxxxx(?)**. Cpl., one L/Cpl., 20 men (of which 2 are batmen). Told by Col. Armstrong that Gale will probably run L.T., while I will find fields for camp for Depot, squat there, and make arrangements re billets, latrines, washing, etc; fix up a few horse lines and lay out ground for depot, so that when he comes on with Coy. in a few days, all will be ready.

At 7.30pm received orders to be at station at 9.45pm, train to leave at 10.12 pm, and to draw 4 days' rations.

Sent Sgt. Gibbon with baggage party to draw rations at 8.45pm. Followed shortly after with party. Arrived all complete at 10pm. [Should here mention that detachment was to be a self-contained unit. Hence taken cooking materials, billeting materials, etc, etc.]

I/p14

13/9/14. Train left 12 midnight. Arrived Versailles 8am, detrained, as have to change for Villeneuve. Told train would leave for Villeneuve at 12.40pm, unless could get onto a supply train. Under these circumstances, **Div(?)** ordered the party not to leave a certain area and ordered breakfast etc to be got ready.

Later in the morning I asked the sous-officier of the French guard to instruct all his men at the station gates to let none of our men out into the town. I should mention that there was another party of 50 A.S.C. men going to the same destination as ourselves, under ²Lieut. King. He reported to me

that they had looked like giving trouble, so he and I joined in together. At about 10.30 we went for a stroll in the town. We saw three of our men, but they successfully bolted. We then realised that some of our men had got out into the town. On the way back I caught two of my men and put them in arrest (Campbell and Reardon). Meantime Lieut. King had separated from me. He caught another of my men in the town (Harvey). I had him put in arrest too. I then ordered Sgt. Gibbon to fall the men in. Meantime I went into the town and caught many of Lieut. King's men and handed them over to him. We searched the cafés by the station. We then spoke to the officer c/o {care of} French guard, and gave him to understand that none of our men were to be let out into the town.

I returned and had the roll called. Three men (Walsh M, Fitzpatrick, and Cranny) were reported absent. I then addressed the men and confined them to a certain portion of the platform, putting a guard at each end to prevent them roaming. I then returned to the town and found the other three men in a café. I ordered them back and had them put under arrest too.

Fitzpatrick asked leave to go to the latrines. Leave was given him. Meanwhile I told Lieut. King what I was doing with my men. He found Fitzpatrick at the far end of the platform talking to some girls. The latrines were, as he knew, at the very near end, only a few yards from where we were. Lieut. King reported to me that he had ordered Fitzpatrick to return, and he had refused. I had Fitzpatrick put under close arrest. Lieut. King wrote on a piece of paper that he had found Fitzpatrick had broken his arrest and that on being commanded by him to return, he refused. Fitzpatrick asked what he would be charged with and I told him:

- 1) Being found outside the station without leave
- 2) Breaking his arrest
- 3) Refusing to obey an order

The men looked as though they would become troublesome, and likewise Lieut. King's party. However, the train came in and we got away. We had to change again at Juvigny. We arrived there about 2.0pm and were told we would leave at 3.24pm. I had my men confined in a small place and a guard at each end. Cranny had been somewhat troublesome.

I had reason to suspect that the men had alcohol in their water bottles. I had an inspection and found alcohol in most. I thought it advisable to have this emptied out. Cranny was troublesome and on speaking to him he did not seem to understand what was said to him, was confused in his talking, and was behaving in such a way that it was obvious he was drunk. He was very troublesome. I consulted my Sgts. who both said he was undoubtedly drunk. I had him placed under close arrest and said he would be charged with being drunk. This seemed to have a good effect on the men, as they realised there was to be no nonsense. Under all circumstances I thought it would be advisable to let the other men off who were under arrest as there were extenuating circumstances and I really had my hands full with the others, and I felt I must make every effort to get all my men along alright. I therefore told these four that if their conduct was exemplary until we got into billets I would reconsider the question of letting them off with a caution.

We arrived at Villeneuve at about 4.15pm. I immediately went off to report myself and gave the Sgts. instructions to keep the men in a certain part of the platform. On my return I was told that one man, Griffiths, was absent. He had asked leave to go to the latrines and had never returned. A Cpl. was sent to find him but he had completely disappeared.

I found Lieut. Gale in the town and he had gone off to look for billets. Shortly after this a Frenchman came to conduct me to the billets. Meantime I had received instructions from a Staff

Officer to send on Lieut. King's detachment to the other station. This I sent with Sgt. Gibbon. He stayed all night with the detachment and returned next morning.

I reported the missing man to the Sgt M.P. When we got into billets I had to two men in close arrest trussed up for the night by the M.P. and let off the men in open arrest.

I/p20

14/9/14. Parade at 9am. Addressed the men on the occurrences of yesterday. Shortly after, Griffiths brought in by M.P., having been found in a café – and handcuffed. I found a small cell for the prisoners. Had all three placed in it under an armed guard.

Reported the charges to Lieut. Gale, who went off to consult a Colonel. On his return the three men were brought before him. Fitzpatrick sentenced to 7 days F.P.'s No 2, Griffiths to 14 days No 1, and Cranny to Field Court Martial. Owing to A.P.M. going away, have to punish men myself. Three men to remain in cell as part of punishment for two men sentenced and because no other place to keep him for man awaiting C.M. The F.P. men to do all fatigues, and Griffiths in addition to be tied to a post for two hours daily.

Informed that will probably move out of this town shortly.

At night informed by Lieut. Gale that owing to difficulty getting together a C.M., Cranny would probably be sentenced by a Staff Officer. Had to supply a picquet of one N.C.O. and 6 men for M.T. Park. Thus all men engaged on guard picquet or police duty.

I/p21

15/9/14. Easy morning. Received instructions from Lt. Gale to have Cranny sent down to be dealt with by the C.O.. Cpl. Carmen and Dr Curtis sent down to Le Mans with him, as escort. Easy afternoon. In evening a lot of refugees turned up in my men's billets. I went to see the mayor about them, but he said he would do nothing and if we didn't like it we must move. We accordingly moved to another cinema theatre at about 7pm.

I/p22

16/9/14. New Billets not up to much, as men live in a dark hall. Have obtained permission for them to play in an adjoining court if they desire it. Proprietor of theatre most kind. Gave the men a cinema show and his wife cooks for the Sgt's. mess.

17/9/14. Told by Lieut. Gale that we might after all have to stay here, and found (sic find) depot, so I am running round after a suitable site. Capt. Lucas arrived here today. Has been ordered up to the front, to relieve another Captain there, who is to come down to take charge of No. 14 Company.

Later. Have up to present found no suitable place for depot.

I/p23

18/9/14. Told no chance of advanced base coming up here.

An easy day. Nothing to report. One N.C.O. and 6 men for the M.T. Park.

19/9/14. At 8.15am Lieut. Gale told me I would have to return to Le Mans by motor car in half an hour.

At 8.30am met Col. Boyce, who told me that he had brought me up to Villeneuve thinking that we should remain there for 48 hours, but that as our stay was indefinite I should return to help Col. Armstrong and come up later.

Arrived Le Mans 5.30pm. Reported to Col. Armstrong. He is the only A.S.C. Officer with the Depot, as Lieut. Birch is L.T.O., and Capt. Lucas has not yet been replaced. Col. Armstrong told me I would have to take Capt. Lucas' place until the relief arrives, attend to the interior economy and discipline of the Coy., etc. Also to resume old duties of Mess President and to represent the Col. when he is not here.

I/p24

20/9/14. In the morning, went down to pick horses at the Remount Depot. Busy with routine in the afternoon.

21/9/14. Captain Alleyne arrived. In the morning was at the Remount Depot. In the afternoon and evening was busy leading to train, and entraining 26 men, 25 wagons, 50 horses, for 1st Reserve Park.

22/9/14. A slackish day. Attended all stables as usual. Avoiled myself of French hospitality in the evening, and dined in my billets. Many horses came in about 4.30pm and were fitted out.

23/9/14. Had a parade of the horses in their harness this morning. Afterwards took them for a trial march. Rest of day filled in with stables, etc.

24/9/14. Capt. Alleyne dividing up Depot into sections, and putting it on methodical basis. I am in charge of "B" section, Hd. Qrs. Company, i.e. original No. 14 Coy A.S.C. of artificers. I am, of course, orderly officer indefinitely and hence attend all stables and inspect camp at 10.30am daily.

I/p25

25/9/14. In the morning, fitting of harness, etc. In the afternoon, ordinary work. Job has now become similar to garrison town work and is somewhat irksome, i.e. too cut and dried for active service. Hope to get off to the front. Found 3 guard absent.

26/9/14. Enquiry to be made into three of the guard being absent.

Later. Three men of picquet absent remanded to be dealt with by C.O.. Otherwise an ordinary day of routine.

27/9/14. Three men of picquet remanded by C.O. for G.F.C.M.. Inspection by C.O. at 3pm of all men, wagons and horses. More horses drawn today (I think yesterday).

28/9/14. Three men of picquet tried by G.F.C.M.. All pleaded guilty.

In the evening, 21 1st reinforcements turned up. Today I went under canvas.

I/p26

29/9/14. A customary morning. In the afternoon, I disembarked 11 men, wagons, and 22 horses sent complete from the Base. Absent picquets sentenced to 3 months No 1 F.P..

30/9/14. In the early morning, 25 G.S. wagons, 50 horses, 25 men sent to the front. Most of our light draught horses taken by the Artillery. Heard today that although the big guns which were so much needed at the front had arrived, they were found to be without sights!

1/10/14. A lot of fresh horses came in today. Very busy with ordinary routine of camp.

2/10/14. Busy all morning with routine work. Ditto afternoon.

3/10/14. A day of routine.

4/10/14. Heard today that would soon have a large consignment of different kinds of carts to be fitted up for blanket "trains". Likewise heard that Govt. were buying 200 French vehicles, completely fitted with horses and we had to store 100 of these here.

I/p27

5/10/14. The first consignment of "blanket carts" arrived today from Havre [Le Havre], over 100 strong. Busy all afternoon in getting them up from Epau. Sent off 25 more G.S. wagons complete this evening. Had to leave some of the carts from Havre by the platform, to be fetched tomorrow.

6/10/14. Brought the last of the first detachment of carts up. Next to arrive today, and last tomorrow. Capt. Shilton sent with small party to Rouen to receive other 100 French vehicles and horses. Quiet afternoon. In evening second detachment of carts arrived.

7/10/14. Cleared 2nd detachment of carts this morning. This afternoon 3rd and last detachment has arrived. Cleared immediately.

8/10/14. Morning of routine. Afternoon ditto. Evening got inoculated against enteric.

I/p28

9/10/14. Morning of routine. Felt rather ill, and very sore in my left arm where I had been pricked. Slept in the afternoon.

10/10/14. Day of ordinary routine.

11/10/14. Ditto.

12/10/14. The Blanket party arrived – Lt. Hearne with 154 horses and half that number of men, and Lt. Collins with 150 men. Latter to take over French carts and horses (150 former, 250 latter).

13/10/14. French carts and horses begin to arrive. Poor lot. All harness of Lt. Hearne's lot taken away yesterday for Indian troops, and hence left stranded with no harness, and thus delivery of blanket carts delayed indefinitely.

14/10/14. An ordinary day of routine.

15/10/14. Took over entire charge of Sects. 1, 2, 3, and 4, 160 men and 140 horses. Only 2 Sgts. and 1 L/Cpl. as N.C.O.s.

16/10/14. An ordinary day of routine.

I/p29

17/10/14. An ordinary day of routine. 26½ hrs(?) 1st line transport ready to go to front with 1st line vehicles at any minute. Lieut. Hearne to go back to Havre, and Lieut. Birch to come up from L.T. Office to take over his detachment.

18/10/14. Sent away 26½ pairs 1st line transport. Was inoculated for second time.

At night, before 12 midnight, Lt. Birch's section "raided" by about 6 civilians. Latter escaped. One was fired on but missed being hit. Enquiry instituted.

19/10/14. A bit seedy today. Rode round for three hours paying isolated detachments.

20/10/14. In the morning had a parade and fetched wagons from Maroc. In afternoon, drove over to Maroc in Campbell's car.

21/10/14. A bit of a cold on my chest today (22nd). Parade of 1st line vehicles in morning (23½ pairs). All went evening.

I/p30

22/10/14. Member of Board to decide whether hay and bran at station is fit for issue. Decided. Have a slight cold on my chest. Lieut. Collins ordered up to front. Delay applied for. If unsuccessful, will have to take over French Blanket section.

Later. Unsuccessful. Will take over French Blanket section tomorrow. This is the first French transport ever purchased by British army – and I trust the last.

23/10/14. Took over French Blanket section this morning – consisting of 166 men and 248 horses. Lieut. Collins left for the front in the evening. See possibility of getting up to the front with this section.

Should have mentioned that yesterday inspection of Depot made by General Langdon. Heard today that we are to be moved in a week.

I/p31

24/10/14. Practically all pairs in No. 1 Camp (Hd. Qrs.) harnessed up ready to leave with 1st line vehicles. A day of routine in my camp.

25/10/14. A day of ordinary routine. In afternoon, a "suspect" detained and reported to me. I reported to C.O.. Suspect has home here, whither he was taken, but the French authorities are to be communicated with.

26/10/14. _A day of ordinary routine. Orderly officer from tomorrow. One of my horses died today when on command at S.V.H.

27/10/14. _Got covers for all carts and turns-out reported complete by tomorrow.

28/10/14. _A pouring wet day all day, and cold – the first real soaker we have had. Three mares in my camp slipped foals today – a record. Capt. Lucas is to rejoin at once – likewise 2/Lieut. Boscall. 2/Lieut. Knight brought up 100 reinforcements from Havre, but returns tomorrow.

I/p32

29/10/14. _This afternoon paid out my men.

30/10/14. _A day “sans incident”.

31/10/14. _Ditto.

1/11/14. _I might note that my commando is the first lot of “troops” of Kitchener’s Army to be sent to this country.

2/11/14. _Suggested that perhaps my lot will be turned into hay carts.

3/11/14. _At 11am told by C.O. that 60 carts, 60 men and 96 horses would have to proceed at once to the front. Myself ordered to take convoy to railhead. This is at least a two days’ journey. Ordered to entrain my men in two portions, first at 3.30pm, second at 5.30pm. 30 carts in for 1st Corps, other 30 for Indian troops.

Left Le Mans 10.12pm. Accompanied to Boulogne by Censor.

4/11/14. _At dawn arrived Lisieux. There two men missed the train. Arrived Rouen 11.30pm. No-one appeared, and did not dare to leave the train. At 1.30pm found an R.T.O., who told me train would leave 3.05pm. First portion of train was for Indian Corps, second for 2nd Corps. Asked where train would split, but this was not known by R.T.O.

At 3pm train moved off without any notice. Found we had split in half, and as no notice was given, was unable to give parting instructions to N.C.O. i/c Indian “Corps”. Train halted a short way out. Curiously enough at this instant train arrived from Lisieux with my men on board, who rejoined. Had a great fright. I had already wired Lisieux to send them on to Railhead 2nd Corps.

Proceed now to Railhead 2nd Corps, 3rd and 5th Divisions.

I/p33

5/11/14. _Arrived St. Omer 6am, via Boulogne and Calais. Sent on to Hazebrouck, where arrived 5am. Aeroplanes flying about continuously.

12.30pm: Still awaiting at Hazebrouck for orders of Staff.

1.15pm: Received orders from R.T.O. to disentrain here and at once proceed by road with carts, dropping half at Méteren for 3rd Div. and half at Bailleul for 5th Div.

2.30pm: Train shunted into siding and R.T.O. took charge of disembarkation. Attention attracted by German aeroplane over French aviation camp. This fired at by quick fires and volleys, and French aeroplane went in pursuit. Interesting chase in mid-air. This aeroplane brought down, and I believe at Bailleul, and found to be British pilot in disguised machine. Owing to haste in disembarkation on part of R.T.O., one horse fell out of truck, but fortunately was pulled out without much damage being done.

Was just able to form up column in correct order, and make out feeds for horses and men before dusk. Started on way in the dark. Much handicapped owing to having no horse and hence being around Bde(?) and N.C.O. likewise, and not very trustworthy. Proceeded very slowly, and continually halted, and passed word down to N.C.O. in rear if all right and got reply in the affirmation. At 8pm halted to water and feed horses. Counted wagons and found two missing. Appeared that contrary to my express instructions, two drivers in station had dismounted to help a motor lorry. When column moved were late in starting and took wrong turning. After, other carts following directed rightly by bystander and shouted to two wrong carts whom, they thought, heard and joined on in rear. When N.C.O. in rear arrived carts out of sight, and hence incorrect reports of "all correct". Mistake occurred solely through negligence of drivers. Carts labelled. Left messages along route in case carts proceeded. Arrived Méteren 11pm and handed over section (two missing). Reported loss and message sent to Hazebrouck. Convoy particularly difficult owing to thick mist that had settled. Arrived Bailleul 12 midnight. Searched for 5th Div. train without success. Found all 5th Div. Staff asleep. Horses and men done and hence halted in lane, unharnessed and attached horses to carts and fed, and placed picquet. By this time 1am.

I/p35

6/11/14. About 3am went round picquet and discovered V. Corps man who knew where 5th Div. train was situated. I therefore went to see this place and at 5am had the horses harnessed up and marched in. Am now awaiting orders when to return. There is heavy firing going on all day. I went this morning to IIIrd Div. Hd. Qrs. to enquire re two carts which, I was told, were being forwarded on from Hazebrouck. Later enquiry came re these carts from 2nd Corps and was answered.

At Rouen on previous day, train was divided without my knowledge. Absurd to give instructions (written) as (according to my written instructions), I would go to Railhead and return with xxxx(?) and L/Cpl. Wiggins (though he had verbal ones).

This morning tried to wire through to O.C. Lahors Div. train to send back the Cpl. at once to Le Mans but I was told that wires were much too busy to be occupied with wiring about a single Corporal and I would have to wait 'til I got to Le Mans and he would have to take his chance.

Still no orders from Adjutant, though told to wait on. This afternoon went to see Adjutant who told me to go – as wire to be sent from Div. Staff as he had had no reply. Gathered there had been complications. Got wire sent off. Later went to Staff and asked if I could beg written instructions from C.O. They replied if I received no further instructions 'til morning, I could return, but thought there might be complications.

I/p37

7/11/14. At 8am got on motor lorry at refilling point, to go to Railhead. Arrived 11am. Tried to wire Indian Div. re Cpl. Wiggins, but again told wires too busy. Had wished to wire him to join train at Hazebrouck, i.e. if he had not been sent back sooner. Told he would doubtless have been wired about already between Indian Div. and Le Mans if any difficulty. Left Railhead 5pm. (Verbal instructions to Cpl. Wiggins were that he was to go to Railhead with me, and then return Le Mans, but according to my instructions Railhead was the same for both). Passed numbers of graves on way to Railhead. Passed many new graves, entrenched villages, and shelled buildings on way to Railhead.

8/11/14.

Returning Rouen via Amiens, and then big detour via Montdidier, Beauvais – Serqueux, so as to escape broken viaduct on direct line. Pass many French transport parks en route. Arrived Sotteville-lès-Rouen 11pm. Went to R.T.O. and found that if went to Le Mans by goods train would take 48 hours and that quickest way was via Paris. Therefore got ticket via Paris.

I/p38

9/11/14.

Left Sotteville 5am. Arrived St. Lazaire 9.30am. Left Montparnasse 11.30am and arrived Le Mans 7.30pm. Was fed all along this line by generosity of inhabitants.

10/11/14.

Had just nicely settled down again when ordered at short notice to take up another train of French vehicles for same destination. This time am conducting Indian section personally. Lizzie all right again and I rode her up to the entrainment. Left Le Mans 5.45pm.

11/11/14.

We did not go into Rouen station today, but went straight through via Sotteville. Had an hour's wait there, and left at 8.30am.

12/11/14.

This N.E. France is a delightful country. Struck by peasants' three-wheeled carts. All the roads are cobbled in the centre and very bad. Inns here called "Estaminets". Arrived Hazebrouck 8am. Left Hazebrouck 8.40am en route for Chocques, with Indian contingent. II A.C. contingent left at Hazebrouck. Arrived Chocques 10.30am. Detrained 2.30pm, but detrainment took long time owing to limited accommodation. Ordered by R.T.O. to take on detachments to Meerut and Lahore divisions. Capt. arrived to take over Meerut detachment. Meerut was at Hinges, Lahore at Estaires. Hinges about 2½ miles – Estaires 12 and Hinges on way. Hence went with whole detachment to Hinges. Arrived there 6pm. Owing to darkness and distance to go, decided to stay night.

I/p39

13/11/14. Proceeded at 7.30am. Arrived Estaires 11am where handed over and proceeded by M.T. straight back to Chocques. Arrived 12.30pm and boarded empty Supply Train. Left Chocques 7.30pm. Should mention that on journey to Estaires, passed one village almost destroyed by shell fire. Also passed trenches cut ready for use by Béthune. Nearly all churches on route had been shelled.

14/11/14. Going to Orleans via Boulogne, Creil, etc. Had long stop at Amiens, where had tea and dinner. Here found Cpl. Clarke, and L/Cpl. Gardner, who had lost their train.

I/p40

15/11/14. Arrived La Chapelle 5.30am. Did not leave 'til 9.30am. Arrived Austerlitz 11am. Train to leave 2.40pm. About 2.30pm found could not get to Le Mans before midday tomorrow if went on to Orleans. Accordingly changed over Montparnasse and caught 5.23pm to Le Mans.

16/11/14. Arrived Le Mans 1.30am. Left men at station 'til dawn and walked up to billets. This morning ordered to take over old Hd. Qrs. section, as French Camp nearly closed. Have two subalterns under me.

17/11/14. One of the Subalterns (Gilmour) arrived today. Day of routine. Hauled over the coals for being up later than 6am. Today a Sgt. reduced to the ranks for drunkenness. Had stripes cut off before whole depot.

18/11/14. A day of ordinary routine.

19/11/14. A day of ordinary routine.

20/11/14. A day of ordinary routine.

21/11/14. A day of ordinary routine.

22/11/14. A day of ordinary routine.

23/11/14. Orderly Officer today under new system. This afternoon was suddenly informed that I had been "selected" to return to England "for duty with the new formations".

I/p41

24/11/14. A day of ordinary routine.

25/11/14. A day of ordinary routine.

26/11/14. A day of ordinary routine. Gilmour left for Havre duty today.

27/11/14. Today the Colonel left to inspect ground at Abbeville, whether depot is to move.

28/11/14. A day of ordinary routine.

29/11/14. Heard today that I am to proceed to England for duty with the new formations on December 6th. Further wire came in to effect that after relinquishing my duty here I must make my own arrangements for reporting to Base Commdt. Boulogne on Dec 6th en route for London, where I am to report to the War Office.

30/11/14. A day of ordinary routine.

1/12/14. A day of ordinary routine.

2/12/14. Out to and from Maroc all day to fetch wagons.

3/12/14. Out to and from Maroc all day to fetch wagons. Due to leave this depot tomorrow.

I/p42

4/12/14. Left Depot for Paris, departing Le Mans 3.25pm. Arrived Paris 7.30 pm and stayed in Hotel Terminus du Nord. Went to Olympia and Maxim's.

5/12/14. Left Paris 7.30am en route for Boulogne, when due 2pm. Arrived Abbeville 11.30am, but there held up as accident further down the line. Discovered accident due to a collision of goods trains. Eventually left Abbeville 6pm. Arrived Boulogne 10.30pm, after passing accident, which was of interest. Stayed night in basement of hotel by the docks.

6/12/14. Embarked this morning on passenger boat at 10.45 am. Due to leave 11.30am. Found that in all 100 A.S.C. officers are to return for new army, a good lot of men. Arrived Folkestone 1pm, was nearly ill. Great pleasure to be back in England. Proceeded to Town and reported at War Office. Given leave 'til 11th. Stayed at N.L.C.

7/12/14. Proceeded home 'til 10/12/1. Left Manchester by 2.10 train. Ordered to proceed to 15th Reserve Park, Fleet on 11th. Spent evening at N.L.C. with Arthur and Coke.

I/p43

11/12/14. Left Waterloo at 11.20am. Arrived Fleet 12.45pm. Reserve Park under Captain Nunn as O.C., with three other subalterns (1 full) – all temporary, and a month old. All men only trained for a month, with no rifles, as yet and practically no horses.

12/12/14. Given charge of No 4 Section. Men I find extremely smart considering. Shall have to train them from almost the beginning.

13/12/14. Sunday. Nothing to do.

14/12/14. General Landon came down to inspect Park. According to Capt. he was satisfied with what he saw.

15/12/14 – 23/12/14. Nothing of note.

23/12 – 28/12/14. Leave.

28/12/14 – 22/2/15. Nothing of note, except new C.O. 27/1/15 – Major O'Flynn.

23/2/15. Left Fleet with Advance Party for Trowbridge.

2/4/15. Have taken more or less entire control of equipment and clothing of this Park. Go frequently over to Tidworth to draw stores – sometimes go by road, more frequently by train. Stay the night usually bivouacked. Once went to Ludgershall for night. Expect to get out to the War again in mid-May.

I/p44

7/5/15. Promoted to temporary Lieutenant. Hurrah.

18/5/15. Promoted to permanent rank of Lieutenant in S.R.

4/7/15. 'Phone message came today that "embarkation starts for France Wednesday". Presume this refers to us, and not Division as such. Mobilization begun.

27/7/15. Heard definitely today that we are to go any time after August 1st.

28/7/15. Today got 92 new horses from 18th Reserve Park, to make up our establishment.

29/7/15. Loaded Studebaker wagons today, to be sent back to Ordnance. Probable date of our departure 2/8/15.

I/p45

30/7/15. Got rid of 28 more H.D. today.

Later. We are due out Sunday - Monday night and morning. My train is to leave 1.55am Monday. Preparations 'til then.

1/8/15. Left Trowbridge Barracks 11.15pm. Small crowd gave us send off.

2/8/15. Left Trowbridge 1.30am. Arrived Southampton at dawn. Proceeded on board **Ruthelan(?)**. Left Southampton 4.30pm.

3/8/15. After rough voyage, arrived Havre at dawn. Disembarked at 7am and proceeded to No 2 Rest Camp, arriving midday. Forgot to mention that we came over in two ships, second one under Capt. Hanson. Latter did not get in 'til afternoon and Hanson turned up about 6pm.

4/8/15. Morning in camp, finding out deficiencies. Afternoon drew same from Ordnance at Docks. Am struck by one or two changes in the French since last year. The soldiers are now marching in step and have given up their red breeches for a light blue suiting. The feeling between British and French seems to be one of sufferance on both sides. "Allies are enemies united by a common danger". However, I don't desire to harp on this aspect.

In evening got orders to take command of No 2 Train for proceeding north.

I/p46

5/8/15. Left camp at **Samou(?)** at 7am. Went straight to Supply Depot, and got wagons loaded, with their freight. Arrived No 5 Camp about midday. Was busy all afternoon and evening receiving the sections. Had Reveillé 11.30pm.

6/8/15. Left No 5 camp and 3am. Went to Gare des Marchandises, and entrained, and left Havre 8am. Arrived Abbeville 7pm. Disentraining very difficult. Had finished 12 midnight and moved out of station yard.

7/8/15. Had wagon in ditch on way to Rendezvous but extricated it without any damage. Left Rendezvous 4am for Lambercourt camp at Miannay and arrived there after 9½ kilo. trek at 7am.

Had then to water and feed all horses, made extra-long by C.O. sending for a fatigue party of 50 men, and then being induced to send them back again, having no real need of them. Then fixed up tents. All finished by about midday, men being dead beat.

I/p47

8/8/15. Camp is very small. Miannay is a tiny place with no cafés worthy of the name, or shops either. This to be our H.Q. and if wanted will work from here, otherwise God help us.

Find nearly all my friends in the Corps are in Abbeville, including Coke and old Company. C.O. won't let me go in, on pretext of might have something for me to do here. Informed that D.D.T. knows of the deadliness of existence for us, and if we do well when required has promised recognition for all of us.

Today have been appointed "President of the Games Fund".

I/p48

9/8/15. Went into Abbeville and visited old Horse Transport Depot, now stationed there. Saw Stanley, and the elder Edgington – also Hamilton of Tennis acquaintance. Took 80 francs off Stanley in ¼ hour. Hope to be able to pay him back Sunday, when he may visit here.

10/8/15. Went on horse exercise round the country. Quite pretty, but wholly agricultural. Rather weary this evening as get up 5 o'clock every morning.

11/8/15. Took out wagons today and did not experience any difficulties. Country distinctly tedious – pretty, but much of a muchness.

Heard from Mme. Turquet that British troops were again in Le Mans. Hope there is no truth in this rumour. Outlook at present far from satisfactory.

12/8/15. Went into Abbeville. Came across Gale, who is now a Capt. with the Military Cross. Also came across Chief Clerk at Base Commandant's Office, the last of the old crush left. Asked Gale if any chance of a move (he is assistant to D.D.T), and he said that there was a tremendous amount of shifting at present, and did not expect I would have a prolonged stay here.

I/p49

13/8/15. A Veterinary officer arrived today, a Canadian by name MacDonald. He is staying with us but is V.O. to 14th Park also.

14/8/15. Today brought out the "Lambercourt" tail-board supports. Fear nothing will come of it, though.

15/8/15. A day of rest – literally – Sunday.

16/8/15. Went into Abbeville today. Took on bet with Hanson 5/3 against any of our A.S.C. officers being transferred within the next three weeks, and 3/1 against the Major in particular. Fully expect to lose both bets.

17/8/15. A day of routine – unrelieved.

18/8/15. Today was on a Board of Inquiry at Abbeville to enquire into the unfitness of supplies of various kinds to be issued.

I/p50

19/8/15. Wagons “drill” in morning. Slept in afternoon.

20/8/15. Went into Abbeville today. Goldney, O.C. neighbouring Park, is getting a transfer. Wonder if same for our man is due.

21/8/15. Today two of our men were absent from evening stables and were later arrested by the R.M.P. drunk in the street. First trouble since landing in this country.

22/8/15. Sunday.

23/8/15. Went into Abbeville today.

24/8/15. Wagon “drill”. In the evening told would have to prosecute tomorrow in case of Dodds [sic Dobbs] and Marsden.

25/8/15. Found that Stanley was President of F.C.M. Have taken over entire supervision of men’s feeding. Bought section goat today.

26/8/15. Went into Abbeville today. Lunched A.H.T.D. Goat a great success. Dobbs and Marsden 28 days’ No. 1.

I/p51

27/8/15. Aeroplane dropped a bomb near A.H.T.D. today, without doing any damage. Sgt. Groom returned drunk off Convoy in afternoon, when i/c of same. Fear he will get severe sentence.

28/8/15. Went into Abbeville today. Very hot. Wretched cold in my head.

29/8/15. Cold better today – Sunday.

30/8/15. ABBEVILLE to-day. Met Palmer today. Sgt. Groom remanded F.G.C.M.

31/8/15. ABBEVILLE again. Told on return am junior member of F.C.M. tomorrow and Finch is to prosecute.

1/9/15. F.C.M. on Groom today. My first, as member of Court.

2/9/15. Hanson on F.C.M. to-day. Armstrong came round in afternoon – also Dodgson.

3/9/15. Into Abbeville today. A pouring wet day. Do not expect to remain here much longer, as ground quite unfit for horses – dug soil, and a severe slope. Consequence after rain horses slipping down all over the place.

I/p52

4/9/15. A wet day of no interest.

5/9/15. Sunday – Walked to Le Montant.

6/9/15. ABBEVILLE today.

7/9/15. ABBEVILLE today. Return to be rendered monthly of temporary officers considered fit by O.C.s for promotion. Where do we come in?

8/9/15. Raced Joe against Tony today, with Hanson up. Lost, though Joe made good effort, but other too big for him.

9/9/15. Ryder and Appleton got dead drunk today, with cognac I believe.

10/9/15. Wagon “drill”. .

11/9/15. Abbeville – shall probably be stationed for winter alone in Lambercourt.

12/9/15. Sunday.

13/9/15. Decided that I am to billet with my section alone, completed as a unit, at Lambercourt. Remainder of Company going to Cambron.

I/p53

14/9/15. Heard that Major Stanley was going to take command of a new Blanket section. Went to see him and he said he would be very pleased to have me, and I should put in application through C.O. Saw Gale, who told me might be a chance. Wrote out application, but C.O. refused to forward it. Was going to see Stanley when message arrived from Base Commdt. to say Park would have to move into 3rd Army area at short notice. Decided to let matter drop, therefore. Understand will probably go to Doullens. Hurrah!

15/9/15. Today Major went on leave. Heard of Nunn’s “resigning” his commission.

16/9/15. Abbeville.

17/9/15. Heard this morning that on Sunday we are to leave for Argoeuves, close to Amiens, by road – stopping at Long for the night.

I/p54

18/9/15.

Major came back off leave today. My section is to lead Park tomorrow. Got tents away and slept in my clothes in the open.

19/9/15. Left Lambercourt 7am, too late in my opinion. Arrived Long, where we halted for the night, at 4.30 pm. Owing to road being perfectly level, rather unexpectedly had no stops. Found the road quite simple to make out.

20/9/15. Left Long 7am. Arrive Argoeuves 4pm. Again road was flat, and had no difficulties. This trip was more interesting. Passed over a bridge which was only temporary, the other one having been blown up by the French in their retreat. Passed through Indian Cavalry Corps – reminded me of my experiences in Flanders. Found way rather difficult to make out.

Wagons are “billeted” in a wood, to hide them from aeroplanes! Men are sleeping in ten tents and under the wagons. Five of us are billeted in a big empty house. Fruit plentiful in the garden. Rather curious being in a furnished house again though furniture is distinctly poor and all carpets are up. Proprietors of house fled during retreat, leaving old man and wife as caretakers, and have not returned. Cobs have beautiful pucker stable.

About 7pm heard unofficially we are moving in a couple of days.

I/p55

21/9/15. Slept like a top in a bed. We can get no hay, and tried to purchase some in village, but are cleared out. Heard definitely that we were going to Bussy-lès-Daours tomorrow. Eventually had to requisition hay, much to the people’s annoyance. The Mayor seemed to me to be making a corner in hay, and then trying to hide it, so took 1000 lbs out of him as a lesson. He was very annoyed.

Went into neighbouring village and found French transport there. Tried to get hold of officer, whom I was eventually led to and found playing cards with his sergeant and corporal!

I/p56

22/9/15. Left Argoeuves 6am. Arrived Bussy-lès-Daours about 11am. After lunch went into Corbie to see about getting rations and also completing our iron rations etc. We were directed to Querrieu, where Xth Corps supply column was. Rode over – terribly hot – and found had to draw own rations from Méricourt-l'Abbé (Xth Corps railhead) and probably had to draw iron rations from canal transport in Corbie. Rode over on motor bike to Méricourt, and fixed to draw rations tomorrow morning. Arrived back about 8.30pm. A heavy day.

23/9/15. Took convoy to Méricourt for rations. Saw nothing exciting. The French are building a new line of trenches there. On returning, heard there had been two air fights over our camp. Men are all billeted in barns. Dropped gold stopping out of tooth, so shall have to go to Amiens to get it put back.

I/p57

24/9/15. Went into Amiens today to have a tooth stopped. Was sorry I could only stay for an hour or two. Nice to get into a town again.

25/9/15. A day “sans incident”.

26/9/15. Good news of advance elsewhere along the line – Sunday.

27/9/15. Good news continues. Heard rumour tonight that we are to move Wednesday.

28/9/15. Rumour of yesterday unconfirmed. A day “sans incident”.

29/9/15. Nothing doing.

30/9/15. 2/Lieut. Curteis joined the Park today, so some officer will be going. Wonder who it will be!

1/10/15. No news.

2/10/15. Nothing doing.

3/10/15. Sunday.

4/10/15. Nothing doing.

5/10/15. Nothing doing.

I/p58

6/10/15. 22 today!

7/10/15. Heard today that the C.O. is to go to No. 2 (G.H.Q.) Ammunition Park. Shall be glad to see the last of him.

8/10/15. No incident, except that the Major intends to go on Monday.

9/10/15. Went into Amiens today to fix the Major's train. Was sorry not to be able to stay. It is a nice little town.

10/10/15. Sunday.

11/10/15. Hanson is C.O. today, as Major goes. I am now "Adjutant" and am taking over H.Q. Section, and handing No. 2 Section over to Curteis.

12/10/15. New duties most interesting.

13/10/15. Nothing doing. Heard rumour that we are to move South for the winter.

14/10/15. Nothing doing.

15/10/15. Ditto.

16/10/15. Ditto. S.S.M., C.S.M and two Sgts. late on Parade. Ran 'em all up to C.O. In evening found a Farrier rowing drunk in the street and had to put a Farrier N.C.O. in arrest.

I/p59

17/10/15. Sunday. Nothing doing.

18/10/15. Nothing doing.

19/10/15. Received instructions to reconnoitre Belloy-sur-Somme and Yzeux with a view to billeting our Park in one of these places, and to see if a Park could also be billeted in the other

place. Went over on motor bike, and decided that 70% of a Park only could be billeted in former and 30% only in the latter place.

20/10/15. Result of reconnoitre sent through to D.D.S.&T.

21/10/15. Nothing doing.

22/10/15. When I saw C.O. first thing, was shown two wires from D.D.S.&T., first saying 13,000 Iron Rations were to be delivered today at Longueau, and locality had to be reconnoitred in advance. Second wire, which arrived at same time as first, but was despatched twenty minutes later, said that Rations had to be delivered tomorrow instead of today and that car was being sent to show officer locality – of a place 6½ miles away!

In afternoon wire came from O.i/c Supply Barge Corbie, asking for ten G.S. wagons tomorrow for transport work. C.O. immediately wrote that six only were available. Shortly after, wire came from D.D.S.& T. that ten wagons were to be sent to Corbie and actually put in wire that route and place should be ascertained from O.C. 14th R.P. C.O. immediately sent motor cyclist to Corbie to say ten wagons would be sent – made full arrangements, which necessitated dumping two wagon loads. In evening, wire came cancelling Iron ration business and Corbie transport! Was ever such a muddle-headed H.Q. ever known!

Heard that we were giving up all our line of trenches, taking over from French this summer, to French again. If this is true, might have a chance of going to Servia!

1/p61

23/10/15. Nothing doing.

24/10/15. Sunday.

25/10/15. Most of 12th Corps gone to Servia. Their part of the line taken over by French.

King and Queen passed through Querrieu today. Gen. Munro [sic Monro], our late Corps commander, now Commander-in-Chief in Dardanelles, vice Sir Ian Hamilton.

26/10/15. Nothing doing.

27/10/15. Received orders to move into Belloy and Yzeux on the 29th. Went straight over to fix up billets. Arranged for all except a few horses.

At Belloy fixed up for officers at Comtesse de Rochefoucauld. She refused to give us a Mess room although she had just the thing, which was unused – but we were not Generals!

Motor bike broke down. Pushed it half way to Yzeux. No-one came to rescue, so left it by road and went on foot. Met with greatest kindness and assistance from Mayor of Yzeux, who is a sportsman. Pushed bike 3 miles to Picquigny!!! There had to leave it with O.C. Lucknow Field Amb. as it had “seized”. No Supply Depot here, and will probably have to fetch everything from Longpré. O.C. Amb. {Ambulance} kind enough to run me in an Amb. to Amiens. There went to S.M.D. Cas. Clearing Hosp. to see if Amb. running into Corbie. None going, but was shown by M.O.s where I could hire a car, and ran in on this to Bussy.

28/10/15. Busy packing up today. Heard of our first death, that of Dr. Childs, who died without regaining consciousness from a fractured skull, caused by a horse's kick.

I/p62

29/10/15. Left Bussy 10am after taking two hours to pull wagons out of side of road. Halted at Argoeuves at 1pm for lunch. Arrived Belloy-sur-Somme 3.30pm. Finch with Section went on and billeted in Yzeux. We parked wagons in Square and camped horses for the night in a field and proceeded to billet the men. Latter well billeted, officers ditto. Latter scattered over village. Captain, Doctor, and myself billeted at Chateau of Comtesse de la Rochefoucauld.

I/p63

30/10/15. Billeted horses in town. Just got them in. Have not visited Yzeux yet. Called on Countess this afternoon. Queer old stick.

31/10/15. Went over to Yzeux today. No. 1 Section more comfortable there than we.

1/11/15. Found a suitable Officers Mess. Are now comfortably settled down and prepared to remain here 'til next spring.

2/11/15. A day of routine, but life is very pleasant and easy.

3/11/15. Nothing to note.

4/11/15. Went to Bovelles today to draw money. Found it right up in the hills, headquarters of the 27th Div.

I/p64

5/11/15. Paying out all day either to own men or to French from whom we had requisitioned.

6/11/15. A day of routine. Finch at Yzeux told Artillery were coming in. Wonders if he will have to move.

7/11/15. Staff Officer came with Finch to say that latter would have to move out of Yzeux, as this village allotted to 38th Division. C.O. refused to move without authority of D.D.S.&T. Both communicated with him. Went to Vignacourt today.

Supply Column and Div. Train trekked through Belloy back today.

8/11/15. Visit from D.D.S.&T. (Col. Long) today. Seemed pleased with all he saw. Told us 12th Corps had left Army and new Corps coming in. Said we would probably be moved further back to make room for these troops. To reconnoitre villages on other side of Somme. Finch to stay in Yzeux pro temp. Battalion of Princess Patricia L.I. marched through today en route to Abbeville.

I/p65

9/11/15. Reconnoitred Bourdon today. Found would easily hold a section. Also saw farm at St. Accart, but would not hold many.

10/11/15. Nothing occurred worth mentioning.

11/11/15. Ditto.

12/11/15. Ditto.

13/11/15. Lt. Anderson came to relieve the M.O. while he goes on leave.

14/11/15. Heard today we are to move to St. Valery on the L. of C. Am going to reconnoitre same tomorrow.

15/11/15. Reconnoitred St Valery and district. Found unsuitable for billeting a Reserve Park owing to billets being very scattered, and lack of good watering arrangements.

Left for St Valery in snowstorm, first snow of the year.

Found that Major L.H. Thornton was A.Q.M. at H.Q., I.G.C.!

I/p66

16/11/15. Left for Boismont on motorcycle in snowstorm, to meet representative of I.G.C., and V.O. there, as there were cases of strangles there. After Flixecourt up in the hills, snow was so deep that as there was no necessity to go to Boismont, decided to return.

Bateman went on leave today.

Got orders to proceed to Valery district on 18th.

17/11/15. Busy getting money from Querrieu, and paying out all day.

18/11/15. Park left Belloy about 9am in frost. Roads very difficult. Personally left Convoy at Flixecourt and proceeded on motor bike to Abbeville. Reported to H.Q., I.G.C. and received billeting instructions for Boismont and Pinchefalise. Also told that Lanchères would hold one section, and Pendé district another. Arranged for rations to be delivered on 19th by motor lorry, and also for H.Q. to be situated at Valery sur Somme. Proceeded on motor bike to Valery and told Mayor requirements. Slept night at Abbeville.

I/p67

19/11/15. Left Abbeville before dawn to billet Park in Valery district. Billeted H.Q. in Valery, No. 3S in Lanchères, No. 1S in Boismont and Pinchefalise. Arranged for billeting as much of No. 2S as possible in Pendé, remainder of horses to stay out for night. Met Park at Boismont about 3pm.

20/11/15. Went round billets of unit. All settling down nicely.

All settled down now over our area. To ride round is 25 kilometres, and the C.O. and I take all morning, and part of the afternoon to visit billets.

21/11/15. Lt. Col. Moore inspected today. Fairly satisfied.

22/11/15. Nothing of note occurred. Finch is being used as sort of Regulation Station. Ration wagons are sent in to him by Sections. He rehorses them and sends them to Abbeville to draw

supplies. On their return he divides out these supplies between Sections, and Section horses, which have been resting all day, hook in again and take wagons home.

I/p68

23/11/15. Nothing of note occurred.

24/11/15. Ditto.

25/11/15. Drew cash from Abbeville today.

26/11/15. Paid out Sections all day.

27/11/15. Bateman returned today. Came back as Captain!

28/11/15. Anderson went back to 97th Field Ambulance today. I motor-cycled to Belloy and Bussy to settle claims. Passed division on the trek between Abbeville and Flixecourt. Believe was 36th division.

29/11/15. A day of routine.

30/11/15. Moved out of hotel into Villa des Roses.

1/12/15. Today saw one of the most disgusting sights I have ever seen in France. A woman in a busy roadway relieved herself by the side of the road and as we rode up, wiped her bottom with her petticoat, got up, and began to redress herself. Probable outbreak of mange in the Park today!
2/Lieut. All day arrived this evening. Later orders received for me to go to XVth Div. Train. Am off tomorrow.

I/p69

2/12/15. Left St Valery 8am. Dreadfully sorry to leave everyone. Arrived Abbeville 10.30am. Told would not leave 'til 2.17am on 3rd. Got Movement Orders from Base Commandant. Trained to Etaples, reaching there 4pm. Got ticket from R.T.O. for Noeux-les-Mines. Arrived St. Pol 8pm. Remained in railway carriage for night.

3/12/15. Left St. Pol 4am, arriving Béthune 6.30am. Left Béthune in French "train de merchandise", and reached Noeux-les-Mines 7.30am. Went to Verquin on motor lorry, and reported to O.C. 15th Div. Train, who turned out to be Lieut. Col. Johnson. I have been "attached" to No. 5 Section of H.Q. Coy., and treated like an infant.

4/12/15. Went to Refilling Point today. Then visited Sailly-Labourse and went down main road to Noyelles, and saw number of shell holes. Later went into Béthune. Wonderful town, absolutely devoted to soldiers.

I/p70

5/12/15. Orderly Officer. Fairly miserable. Nothing to note.

6/12/15. This morning went to Philosophe and Mazingarbe. In former place gun went off quite close to me. Saw Vermelles a mass of ruins. Any amount of dug-outs etc. Most interesting morning.

In afternoon went to Béthune.

Baggage section in view. Admirable prospect!

7/12/15. Aeroplanes get continually shelled. Most interesting to watch. Men returning continually from trenches by motor bus. Also most interesting.

8/12/15. Nothing of note to report.

9/12/15. Went up to Noyelles with Stuart today. Curious meeting him. Guns firing continually close by. Shells could be heard whizzing through the air. Thirteen in the village yesterday and two twin boys being killed.

I/p71

10/12/15. Met Snow today, who recognised me. Dull day. Burlton posted to a Coy. Poor me left out in the cold.

11/12/15. Heard curious yarns about the 21st and 24th Divisions in “the advance”. Nothing to report.

12/12/15. Dull day.

13/12/15. Up in Vermelles today. Anti-aircraft busy at Philosophe – German aeroplanes overhead. Took Adjutant’s place this afternoon.

14/12/15. Dull day.

15/12/15. Nothing doing.

16/12/15. Trekked today back to Raimbert via Marles-les-Mines. Arrived Raimbert at dusk. Got two shell cases from “B” Battery, 70th Brigade.

17/12/15. Out all day with Straw convoy to Hesdigneul, and back via Burbure. Very wet.

I/p72

18/12/15. Detailed for Court-martial this afternoon.

19/12/15.

Nothing to report. Collard left on leave tonight, in the hopes of getting rid of his pyrrhoea [sic pyorrhoea], and not leaving Train. Took over his job of 2nd in Command of Coy., and P.M.C. Found good new Mess with electric light.

20/12/15. Nothing doing.

21/12/15. Went to Dentist in Lillers today, to get tooth stopped. Bustard(sic) went on leave.

22/12/15. Fairly busy doing nothing in particular.

23/12/15. Sat on F.G.C.M. today.

24/12/15. Nothing doing.

25/12/15. Xmas day. Feeding.

26/12/15. Heard confidentially I was to take on Adjutant's duties during the present one's absence on leave.

27/12/15. Nothing doing.

28/12/15. Ditto.

29/12/15. Rode to Labuissière for pay today and got tooth filled at Lillers. Capt. Collard not yet returned.

I/p73

30/12/15. Capt. Collard reported as Absentee. Took over Adjutant's job tonight, pending Capt. Abbott's leave.

31/12/15. Busy with Adjutant's duties.

1/1/16. Chiefly occupied with Remounts.

2/1/16. Very busy with routine.

3/1/16. More so - Preparing for trek on 5th.

4/1/16. Ditto.

5/1/16. Started off 8am. Landed at 9pm in Enquin-St-Julien. Trekked through Ecquedecques, Lières and Auchy-au-Bois. Fine weather.

6/1/16. Remained at Enquin-St-Julien all day.

7/1/16. Trekked back to Raimbert. Started about 9am. Rode on with C.O. after passing Auchy-au-Bois, and got in about 2pm.

8/1/16. Nothing of note. Busy all day in office.

9/1/16. Abbott has not turned up tonight.

I/p74

10/1/16.

Heard that Abbott has been given three weeks' extension of leave on account of dental trouble. Tasked by C.O. to take on job for another three weeks. Delighted. Heard that Collard was also given three weeks' extension of leave. We move to Noeux-les-Mines at end of week. Shall be glad to get up to front again.

11/1/16. Pretty busy. Nothing special to report.

12/1/16. C.O. told me today, much to my surprise, that he was going to make an application for my Captaincy.

13/1/16. First Company of Train moved up today.

14/1/16. Getting ready to go.

15/1/16. Left Raimbert about 10am and go to Noeux-les-Mines about 2pm. Had great trouble in getting Train Office owing to Colonel of 13th Scottish Rifles being disagreeable.

16/1/16. Very busy day.

17/1/16. Settling down. Nothing doing.

I/p75

18/1/16. Ditto.

19/1/16. Went up with C.O. to inspect 1st Line. Afterwards went up to Philosophe, and rode down Quality Street, 'til we came into the open this side of the ride, and saw lines and lines of trenches, but never a human. Weird and interesting. Returned through ruined Vermelles and Mazingarbe. In latter place got shelled with shrapnel(?). Two fell head of us, one I think wounding a man about twenty yards in front. One fell just behind. Then as we moved on three more fell where we had been, and after clearing the village another three in the same place. Most interesting.

20/1/16. Nothing of any note today.

21/1/16. Went into Mazingarbe again this afternoon to inspect 1st Line Transport. Saw it was being shelled before we went in, as could see the clouds of black smoke and hear the explosions. After we got in, two Jack Johnsons fell quite nearby. Three men were standing at crossroads 30 yds away, earth and bits of shell rained down on them. Casualty one sparrow. No more shells fortunately fell afterwards. Horses most pathetic. Shelling distinctly unpleasant.

I/p76

22/1/16. Colonel went on leave this morning.

23/1/16. Nothing to note.

24/1/16. A L/Cpl. of ours got killed in Mazingarbe yesterday.

25/1/16. A lot of German aeroplanes over Refilling today. Expect to get shelled there tomorrow.

26/1/16. Nothing of note. Abbott granted leave to 14/2/16.

27/1/16. Allan, the R.O. left the Train today. A good job too.

28/1/16. Shelled in our Billets today. Six!

Later. Ten came over altogether, but 4 were “duds”. No casualties. One shell nearly buried six people. Another smashed an outhouse and conservatory.

29/1/16. Nothing to note.

30/1/16. Met Bateman today. He is now R.O. to 7th Camerons. In the evening my recommendation for promotion was returned with note that S.R. only promoted according to seniority with regulars, and not by recommendation. Utter nonsense.

I/p77

31/1/16. Nothing to note.

1/2/16. C.O. came back today. Buzzed back my recommendation with appropriate comments.

2/2/16. Got bombed today. Was in the Orderly Room at the time. Only one shook Orderly Room.

3/2/16. Nothing to date.

4/2/16. **Grenside(?)** went sick today.

5/2/16. Collard came back today. Nothing else to note. Prosecuted in F.G.C.M.

6/2/16. Had most enjoyable ride this afternoon into French territory and right up to the only hill in the district. Pretty little toy railway along the ridge, going up to trenches. Heard magnificent band in Coupigny.

I/p78

7/2/16. My recommendation returned again on absurd grounds.

Later. Recommendation buzzed back by C.O.

8/2/16. Heard shrapnel for the first time today when I went with C.O. to Mazingarbe and they were shelling Le Brebis. Mazingarbe has been made an awful mess of since I last saw it.

9/2/16. Aeroplanes over Noeux again today. Will get our shelling, I expect. Grenside returned today.

10/2/16. Nothing of particular interest.

11/2/16. Present craze is “Gas attacks”. We and the local inhabitants are making all sorts of preparations. At present we are “Gas alert”.

12/2/16. Hewitt went on leave today.

13/2/16. Nothing to note.

14/2/16. Allen struck off strength today, as invalided to England.

15/2/16. Went up to trenches this evening with C.O., Arnold, and Robertson. Went up by car to Victoria Station. Walked with trolleys past old British line and a few graves, and many shell holes to Posen Station. There trolley rail stops, and rations are taken along trenches by hand. Went into trenches, and visited support line. On the way back, guide told us might as well get out of trenches, which we did and got sniped accordingly, one bullet passing just in front of us, one falling about 5 yards in rear of me. Then guide lost his way! After getting caught up in wire a little, got back to Posen Station, and returned sans incident. Car broke down just before end of trip, owing to rear axle breaking.

I/p79

16/2/16. Fearful wind today. Two chimneys fell down just in front of Train Office. One of our G.S. wagons blown over at refilling. Driver unhurt, but wagon broken.

I/p80

17/2/16. Nothing of interest to note. C.O. on G.C.M.

18/2/16. Nothing to note.

19/2/16. Abbott returned today. Much to my surprise he was made R.O. and I was made ^a/Adjt.

20/2/16. C.O. out at Musketry today.

21/2/16. Was prosecuting a F.G.C.M. today. Awkward case. This afternoon our guns were heavily bombarding the German line. Jecks to go home.

22/2/16. Another F.G.C.M. today. N.C.O. found guilty of disobedience and sentenced to a Severe Reprimand! Jecks went today.

23/2/16. C.O. told me tonight I could go on leave in two days. Hanna to take my place. Woolton came today.

24/2/16. Arranged that I could go on leave today.

Later. All leave cancelled!

25/2/16. Seems to be plenty going on at present. Great fight, I believe, around Verdun. Said to be Germany's last effort. 2nd Division has today moved into French territory immediately on our right, and 7th also, I think. 1/4th Suffolks are to leave us in two days' time.

I/p81

26/2/16. Cold - nothing doing.

27/2/16. 7th Division has not moved up here.

28/2/16. F.G.C.M. on Sgt. Curtiss. Shelled this afternoon. Only heard one whizzing, but believe others came.

29/2/16. Rode over to see Musketry at Gosnay. Saw many air fights. On returning met 12th Division, which is supporting us in rear, I believe. On getting back to Noeux saw live anti-aircraft shell which had fallen and partially embedded itself in the pavé and had not exploded. It could not be got out, but I believe was eventually without casualty. Heard today that a big gun had moved up and taken position behind our lines. If this is true we are in for some shelling.

While at Gosnay I saw a German chased by three of our machines. After a fight he glided downwards. Heard later that he was in fact brought down in our lines.

I/p82

1/3/16. Today heard we are to be transferred from 4th Corps to 1st Corps, but that it will make no difference to our position. We are to form Corps with 1st, 12th and 16th Divisions. 47th Division are thus dropping out. We probably go to rest at Raimbert about 20th. A day "sans incident".

2/3/16. Beginning of Boxing Tournament.

3/3/16. Good fun in Boxing Show.

4/3/16. Great night at Boxing Tournament, finishing up. Sat with General's Staff.

I/p83

5/3/16. Heard not for rest for some time.

6/3/16. Nothing doing.

7/3/16. Ditto.

8/3/16. Like a bolt from the blue, Col. Parker came down this afternoon with a Captain who had been working at Army Headquarters, and said he was to be our S.S.O. Arnold had already been appointed in Jeck's place. Also this Officer, Burtenshaw, was junior to him. Neither the C.O. nor the Division had been consulted. For pure effrontery this is the limit! C.O. furious, and Division taking the matter up. Meantime Arnold carries on.

Later. Freer has been granted 3 months' sick leave and is struck off the strength. Perhaps solution of difficulty will be for Burtenshaw to be S.O. of Div. Troops Group.

9/3/16. My recommendation for promotion came back today. It had been reforwarded by Gen. MacCracken to 4th Corps, asking for decision of 1st Army. 4th Corps forwarded it "as 15th Division are not satisfied with the ruling of this office". Replied held up on return, pending amendment to orders on this subject by which S.R. officers of Supplementary List can be recommended for promotion (temporary) with temporary officers (i.e. monthly). So that's that.

Thing came through about Burtenshaw today, with as "Senior Supply Officer" erased. Parker's little game didn't work. Did it quite on his own without Gibb's authority! Burtenshaw is to get next S.S.O. job in Army, and no more appointments to S.S.O. in future without Parker's permission.

Heard we are to be moved "for tactical reasons" from here, probably to Vaudricourt.

I/p84

10/3/16. Started Refilling at rail today.

I/p85

11/3/16. Heard today we are to be relieved by 16th Division on 21st.

12/3/16. Today was exciting after its kind. We got bombed by aeroplanes at Refilling at about 11.30am. Only one bomb fell anywhere near. I went back for lunch, and just when I had finished, at about 1pm, we had another attack. One bomb fell about a hundred yards away, and fairly shook the place where I was having lunch. This bomb made a mess of a couple of houses, and wounded four men, one Scottie mortally, two of our men severely and one of our men slightly. I helped to get 'em off to hospital. Rather bloody business.

Heard Abbott was to leave us, going to 2nd Reserve Park.

13/3/16. 2/Lieut. C.E. Clarke joined today from 4th Reserve Park, to which Abbott is going not 2nd. Went to Marzingarbe today where they were dropping shells like hot bricks though none were very near. All this business makes one feel a bit jumpy when one is cooped up in an office most of the day. Heard definitely we are to go on the 21st to make way for 16th Div. coming in. A good job too! We are going to leave our guns behind.

I/p86

14/3/16. Went to Marzingarbe this morning. They were shelling all round Marzingarbe, but fortunately not in it while I was there.

Our move postponed till 25th.

15/3/16. Four bombs dropped by the station this evening. What a life!

16/3/16. Nothing to note.

17/3/16. Ditto.

18/3/16. Got leave quite suddenly and went on leave at 4pm. Bosche's aeroplanes bid us goodbye. Dined at Hazebrouck.

I/p87

19/3/16. Arrived Boulogne after midnight. After a sleep, went and got shaved. Boarded our boat about 10am, and left at 10.30am. We all had to put life belts on. Met Agnew on board, now A.D.C to Genrl. Allenby. Lord Northcliffe crossed on our boat, returned from Verdun. Escorted across by Destroyer which kept changing over to either flank, and also by two airships. Leave is to begin in a few days. Arrived Folkestone about 12.30pm and went on to London where arrived about 3pm. Wired home and went and had a Turkish bath. Left London 6pm. Reached home 11pm.

26/3/16. Reached Folkestone about 4pm and boarded steamer. Five minutes before boat sailed, all turned off, as boat was not to go, owing to mines in the channel. Stayed at the Pavilion Hotel for night. Folkestone is nice little town.

I/p88

27/3/16. After lunch, were shaken by a mine explosion at sea. Went out and found a small steamer probably a mine-sweeper whistling hard. Do not know if it was hit but it steamed to Dover. Did not expect to go in view of this, but we went all right and landed sans incident at Boulogne, where I stayed the night as there was no train before 12.50pm next day.

28/3/16. Left Boulogne at 1.30pm. Arrived Lillers 6.30 pm. Found Hd.Qrs. of Train there. C.O. and I mess alone, and live alone. One Company is on the other side of Lillers, two in Raimbert and Hd. Qr. Coy. with all officers in Noeux still, Artillery having been left behind. Billets are exceptionally comfortable.

29/3/16. Nothing much doing.

I/p89

30/3/16. Very busy with returns, as I do them all now.

31/3/16. Nothing much doing, but wholly delightful place.

1/4/16. Rumours of a mysterious "move".

2/4/16. Nothing doing.

3/4/16. Ditto.

4/4/16. We are to have a Divisional Exercise on the 7th, 8th and 9th. Joy! Our Pioneers and 2 Coys. of R.E. are going into the line with other Divisions. Looks like business!

5/4/16. Very busy for Div. Exercise.

6/4/16. Ditto.

7/4/16. Left Lillers on Div. Exercise, and trekked to Estrée-Blanche. Nothing of note occurred.

8/4/16. Spent day in Estrée-Blanche.

9/4/16. Trekked back to Lillers. Heard that Noeux had had a bad shelling near where the Train Office had been, cutting up the main road so much as to make it impassable for motors, and doing a lot of damage. 60 8" shells plugged us in one day round about Fosse de Bracquemont. 2 Men of the 1st Div. Train killed.

I/p90

10/4/16. Went to see Hewitt at Vaudricourt today, where they are well-lodged.

They seem to be giving Noeux a bad time. Heard the Huns had dropped a note from an aeroplane yesterday that the whole town would be razed to the ground by the 20th April. Rather a tall order!

11/4/16. Nothing much doing.

12/4/16. C.O. went on leave this morning.

13/4/16. Wire came through that all had to be recalled off leave by 18th inst. Had to recall the C.O.

14/4/16. Today heard suddenly all our gunners were coming back on 15th and 16th. Very busy making preparations. Believe there is chance of a “push”. Went over to Vaudricourt to settle about H.Q. Coy. coming back.

I/p91

15/4/16. Quiet but busy day.

16/4/16. H.Q. Coy. came back to Ferfay. Got big scheme re “G.H.Q. Reserve”, in which we are ‘til 21st.

17/4/16. Today find we are to relieve 12th Div. as previously arranged, starting on 25th. 73rd and 74th R.E. and Pioneers returned to Div.

18/4/16. Went over to see 12th Div. Train billets today. Very good – in Fouquières.

19/4/16. Nothing doing of note.

20/4/16. Ditto.

21/4/16. Ditto.

22/4/16. Settled that we go to Fouquières, and 2nd Coy. to Verquigneul.

23/4/16. Had a Train Competition for Turnout today. Wonderful show.

I/p92

24/4/16.

Very busy. 4 Coy. moved to Fouquières today.

25/4/16. Ditto. 2 Coy. moved to Verquigneul today.

26/4/16. We are to move to Fouquières tomorrow.

27/4/16. There was a gas attack along our front just now. Believe Verquin is full of gas. Good thing we’re not in Noeux. Just got a whiff myself.

Left Lillers midday, and arrived Fouquières about 3pm. Glorious ride in glorious weather. Found Clark left Verquigneul and in Fouquereuil. He had a bad time with gas, though no-one injured. All people here had gas cloud. No damage.

Gas alarm at 10pm. Later cancelled.

28/4/16. Gas alarm at 4.30am. Later cancelled. Heard afterwards 9th Black Watch had a bad time.

Fouquières is a very nice little country place, much appreciated after Noeux, and Lillers, which were both busy towns, and we situated on the highway too.

Rode over to Sailly-Labourse today. Good ride. Frantic chase after empty 2-gallon petrol tins for liquid for vermores sprayers. None to be got.

I/p93

29/4/16. Nothing of note.

30/4/16. Got inoculated this evening.

1/5/16. Felt very seedy all day. In the morning went into Béthune, and the mare fell on the pavé and I got rather shaken up after my inoculation. No material damage done except a broken stirrup iron. Lucky escape. In the afternoon, slept and in the evening went to bed early.

2/5/16. Feel better today.

I/p94

3/5/16. A day of peace. Burtenshaw is, however, going tomorrow as S.S.O. 16th Division. Lund, who arrived on 1st, is going today to 16th Division also. Burtenshaw is a great loss.

4/5/16. Heavy guns were very busy yesterday afternoon, and at it again this morning. Wonder what all the trouble's about.

5/5/16. Nothing doing today.

6/5/16. Carlyon was invalided sick today. Went to a lecture by A.P.M. I Corps at Sailly-Labourse on Traffic Control.

Lorries are all as far as possible to be laid up, and horse transport substituted. A good thing too as it is silly to let horses eat their heads off and do nothing, and lorries use up a lot of unnecessary petrol.

7/5/16. Heard today from Taylor that he had been instructed where to report in case of "fighting" taking place. Bow-wow!

I/p95

8/5/16.

Saw "Winnie" today at the head of his Battalion, the 6th R.S.F.! The 6th R.S.F. and 8th Gordons have joined the Division, for amalgamation to the 7th R.S.F. and 10th Gordons respectively. The 8th Gordons are a fine body of men.

9/5/16. Nothing of note today. Went out billeting for some Gunners who are coming to Fouquereuil (86th Siege Battery). They are bringing a Battery of 12" to Les Brebis.

Heard today we are to lose the Cavalry and Cyclists on 12th – going to XI Corps.

10/5/16. Had a game of tennis today on a hard court. What a luxury!

11/5/16. 44th Bde. went up this evening suddenly after had (sic having) only just got back. Evidently something on.

12/5/16. The Bosches made an attack last night in the region of the Hohenzollern on our front. We lost a few trenches, and 300 casualties. One of our drivers was wounded in Vermelles.

I/p96

13/5/16. The 10th and 11th H.L.I. are to join us tomorrow.

14/5/16. There must have been some strafing today as the Cyclists and Bombing School were suddenly ordered up the line – a bad sign.

15/5/16. Heard we made two unsuccessful attacks last night. The unfortunate K.O.S.B. suffered.

16/5/16. Heard that with the O.C. of the 13th Royal Scots who was killed, there were also killed the two Majors and the M.O., and that Francis, the Adjutant, was badly wounded. It was said they were all in a dug-out, when a shell actually entered the dug-out and exploded inside. A man was said to have been just coming out when the shell whizzed in past him, doing no damage except burning all the hair off his body, and him also a little.

II
War Diary
17/5/1916 – 16/9/1917
ARMY BOOK 136

Original & Annotated here	Here	Movement
II/p107	46	Left Fouquières - Arrived Béthune
II/p114	48	Left Béthune - Arrived Fouquières
II/p118	49	Left Fouquières
II/p119	49	Arrived Antigneul Chateau - Left Antigneul Chateau - Arrived Flers - Left Flers - Arrived Frohen-le-Grand - Left Frohen-le-Grand - Arrived Bernaville
II/p121	50	Left Bernaville - Arrived Vignacourt
II/p122	50	Left Vignacourt - Arrived St Gratien - Left St Gratien - Arrived Bresle Wood
II/p125	51	Left Bresle Wood - Arrived Albert
II/p145	57	Left Albert - Arrived Bresle Wood - Left Bresle Wood - Arrived Behencourt
II/p146	57	Left Behencourt - Arrived Paris
II/p147	58	Left Paris - Arrived Behencourt - Left Behencourt – Arrived Becourt
II/p153	60	Left Becourt - Arrived Baizieux
II/p155	61	Left Baizieux - Arrived Albert - Left Albert – Arrived Rouen - Left Rouen for Blighty - -Left Blighty for Havre - Left Harve
II/p156	61	Arrived Albert
II/p160	63	Left Albert for Blighty - Arrive Albert from Blighty - Left Albert - Arrived Baizieux
II/p161	64	Left Baizieux - Arrived Beauval
II/p162	64	Left Beauval - Arrived Bouquemaison - Left Bouquemaison - Arrived Maizieres
II/p165	66	Left Maizieres - Arrived Duisans
II/p169	68	Left Duisans - Arrived Arras
II/p171	68	Left Arras - Arrived Warlus - Left Warlus - Arrived Paris - Left Paris
II/p173	69	Arrived Le Cauroy
II/p175	70	Left Le Cauroy – Arrived Wail
II/p176	70	Left Wail - Arrived Paris
II/p177	71	Left Paris - Arrived Aix-Les-Bains - Left Aix-Les-Bains - Arrived Brandhoek
II/p184	74	Left Brandhoek - Arrived Looe Hoek - Left Looe Hoek - Arrived Belgian Battery Corner (Ypres)
II/p186	75	Left Belgian Battery Corner (Ypres) - Arrived Brandhoek
II/p189	75	Left Brandhoek - Arrived Zermezele - Left Zermezele - Arrived Arras
II/p190	76	Left Arras - Arrived Duisans - Left Duisans - Arrived St. Nicholas -
II/p191	76	Left St. Nicholas - Arrived Fampoux
II/p192	76	Left Fampoux - Arrived Arras

War Diary

Lieut. O. F. Baerlein A.S.C. (S.R.)

Lieut. (T (Temporary) Capt.) O. F. Baerlein A.S.C. (S.R.)

15th Divisional Train

II/p97

17/5/16. Nothing to report today.

18/5/16. Nothing doing.

19/5/16. Same.

20/5/16. Yet again!

21/5/16. To my great joy, saw I was promoted to rank of Capt., dated 30/4/16. Hurrah! Went out to Verquigneul today, and then on to Noeux. Saw all the mess that had been made after the heavy shelling of Fosse de Bracquemont. Most interesting. All the shells seem to have dropped in an area of 200 square yards, and razed many houses to the ground. After this we went onto the ridge to the east of Noeux, from where we had a view way over Marzingarbe and Les Brebis way. It was a stretch of about 3 miles, shimmering in the sun, scattered with houses. It was getting heavily shelled with shrapnel and H.E., and it was most interesting to watch.

On our way back through Noeux everything went uneventfully. We stopped at "Mimi's" for a drink, and had only gone about 50 yards past the Monument when whiz, a shell went into the house next door but one to Mimi's and about 50 yards behind us. Fortunately, it was a dud. As we went along towards the church, whiz, whiz, and two shells passed over us and fell some little way away, both duds. As we got out of the town, whiz-bang, and a shell fell by the church near where we had been. It must have done some damage as it seemed to be almost in the main street and there was some shouting and all the dogs in the neighbourhood began barking. As we got on the ridge towards Verquin, two more shells exploded over the town, in the air, letting over black smoke. They were not shrapnel and must have been the new shells which explode either in the air or on percussion.

II/p99

22/5/16. R.S.M. Smith went to Noeux this afternoon. Saw the damage done by the shelling. While we were there, policeman on point duty caught a **rider(?)** which was loose near by house I saw struck. House facing this at corner of square R.S.M. said was razed and this policeman was killed, together with nine other men. This shell must have come in after we left. Windows of Mairie were also broken. We were only just out in time. Two houses hit were within 10 yards of Mimi's where we had our drink.

23/5/16. Quiet day.

24/5/16. There has been a lot of fighting last night on our right. Heard later that it was the 47th Division who were in action.

25/5/16. Nothing of note.

II/p100

26/5/16. Felt pretty rotten today. In the afternoon, went up with the C.O. to Annequin. Fortunately, we were stopped there, and told we could go no further except by trench. I had gone quite far enough to my liking. Our guns were firing from quite near to us.

On our way back, an aeroplane flew near us. The Bosches started shelling it with shrapnel and as the 'plane was flying low, it was uncomfortable, as we could hear the shrapnel falling as it was so low, although the aeroplane was not then very near, it was making in our direction. Fortunately, it sheered off.

27/5/16. Nuffink doin'.

28/5/16. Suddenly heard this morning that E(?) /62 of the 12th Div. were going to be attached to us today. All rumours point to the Bosches making a big attack on this front very soon. Later in the day, had sudden orders to billet a Battalion in Fouquereuil. This Battn. turned out to be the Queens of 33rd Div. Later I saw Prater with convoy of Artillery Supply wagons of 12th Div. He told me all 62nd Bde. were moving up, most Batteries going to reinforce 16th Div.

In the middle of night was pulled out of bed with message from Div. saying large bodies of Germans were moving up on Douvrin-Haisnes road, and 46th Bde. was to move up at once, also Cyclists.

II/p101

29/5/16. Heard today that the 40th and 61st Divs. had just come out from England, and were disentraining at Lillers and Arques, and that the 12th Div. had moved forward to Chocques. H.Q. and A, B, and C of 64th Bde. R.F.A. joined Division.

30/5/16.

Heavy bombardment of our line. Was up in Sailly-Labourse, and could see about 8 Sausages (German) pushed right forward. Believe the big German offensive is coming off. They dropped some shrapnel by the Tone(?) fairly near D. H.Q. Rather unnerving watching it.

II/p102

31/5/16. Nothing doing.

1/6/16. Ditto.

2/6/16. Saw Turbett today in Béthune though he did not see me. Apparently has been transferred to 33rd Division, probably in place of Brooke-Alder who is coming from that Train here.

3/6/16. Found today that date of my promotion had been post-dated to 2/4/16. with the other S.R. promotions. Joy!

Brooke-Alder joined Train today. He is a Captain and quite an ancient old man.

4/6/16. Nothing doing.

II/p103

5/6/16. Nothing doing, except a visit to Vermelles, which looks more battered than ever.

6/6/16. After an extremely laudatory little speech, the C.O. was good enough to say he was forwarding an application to have me gazetted as Adjutant. Loud cheers!

7/6/16. Today got the news that Kitchener was drowned. It is terrible hard luck on him after his stirring life and a great loss to the Nation.

8/6/16. Very busy with changes. 40th Div. coming up here to relieve 12th, I believe.

9/6/16. 1/2 Battn. 40th Div. came into Fouquières last night, where they are billeted. It is nice to see men fresh from England. All were singing away (a thing one doesn't hear much) and seemed **V(?) {very}** excited. Later they will get silent and unexcitable, like most people here after a time.

II/p104

10/6/16. Curious thunder storms with no heat.

11/6/16. This evening the C.O. took me to dinner in Béthune and a very nice dinner he gave me too, at the Hotel du France.

12/6/16. A nice-looking young subaltern named Simpson joined the Train today.

13/6/16. Rumours of our great push coming off in about 6 weeks' time in 3rd and 4th Army areas. Hope this is true. Fear we will have nothing to do.

14/6/16. Nothing doing. Beastly weather. Later heard we may have to move out of here.

15/6/16. Told today we have to move into Béthune on the 19th to make way for some of the 33rd Div. here. A pity! This is the best spot we have struck for some time. Was confirmed in my Adjutancy today by the Corps.

II/p105

16/6/16.

The C.O. had arranged for a Train Parade at 6pm tonight. At 5pm a telephone message came through from D.H.Q. that they wanted "Col. Johnson and his Adjutant to report at D.H.Q. at 6.30 pm prompt". The C.O. had this postponed 'til 7pm. On arrival we were informed we are going to use gas. Convoys of 20 wagons on nights of 17/18. and 18/19 were to be detached, and 10 wagons on night of 19/20. Wagons to be loaded with "Loos Wallers" at **Minsc(?)** at 6.30pm and proceed by a certain route to Vermelles. They would be pushed up in convoys of 5 to the Railway crossing beyond Mansion House where they have to be sent singly at 8-minute interval to a dump down the Hulluch road. Hewitt is to push them off from the Railway crossing. One Officer to go with each 6 wagons. The C.O. and I went up to Vermelles to the Railway crossing, which is as far as we can go by daylight, and looked down the Hulluch road and could see Hulluch in the distance. The whole

place weird. Muddy, silent men walking about, and the whole place desolate and grim. Could hear the maxims going like fury. Shelled one of our aeroplanes with shrapnel over us.

II/p106

17/6/16. A Bosche aeroplane came over Fouquières this morning, and got shelled for its trouble.

A lot of talk about the great “push”. Two Battalions of the 35th Division (18th and 20th Lancs. Fusiliers) suddenly billeted in Fouquières and Fouquereuil yesterday. Yesterday evening received **passing(?)** message to certify everyone in possession of iron rations. Bow wow!!

II/p107

18/6/16. Everything went off well last night. Quiet night. No casualties.

Today received a message that an officer had to go to Vermelles to select cellars for storage of 20,000 iron rations. Looks like the real thing!

19/6/16. After sad farewells, we left Fouquières this morning and trekked in to Béthune, where we are very comfortably established in a chateau of M. Outrebon – and very nice too.

The “L.W.s” went up all right yesterday. Maxims were searching a bit and all our people were lucky to get off without a hit.

II/p108

20/6/16. “L.W.s” went up without casualty last night though some bullets struck one of the wagons.

We are established in a good chateau.

Today have to send 9,000 iron rations to Vermelles and supply guard to sit on ‘em.

21/6/16. Nothing doing.

22/6/16. Ditto.

23/6/16. Heard today we are to refill at Noeux-les-Mines from 25th inst. inclusive.

24/6/16. Nothing doing.

25/6/16. Started refilling at Noeux-les-Mines today. Saw damage done by the shelling when we were there last. “True” rumour that the “push” had already begun on the south of our line.

II/p109

26/6/16. Judging by the papers, the preliminaries of the strafe have begun. As the Bosches are now within 3 miles of Verdun it seems about time.

27/6/16. Damnable weather. Apart from this, nothing to note.

28/6/16. Went out to dinner in Béthune with the C.O. this evening. Heard today there were about 40 German prisoners in Béthune today, captured by the 11th Argylls last night. Hear we let off our gas last night. Result not yet known. Plenty of raids nowadays.

29/6/16. The C.O. got shelled on the way back from Noeux this morning, on the road running between Noeux and Verquigneul. The Bosches were trying for the sausage.

In the evening got a long report about {the} feeding of the civil population in case of an advance in the area left by the Bosches, before supplies could get sent up in the "civilian" way.

II/p110

30/6/16. Have to send up a party to the trenches tonight for fatigue work. Saw Bateman this afternoon. He had had a fairly hot time in his tour in the trenches.

In the evening there was a loud explosion. I heard no "whistling" and hence do not know if it was a bomb.

1/7/16. Got up at 6.30 this morning to go to Chocques to draw Remounts. When I got outside, heard and saw a terrific lot of anti-aircraft firing. Almost immediately a large number of aeroplanes appeared. The firing nearby ceased and up above we saw a number of our planes and Bosche's planes. Presently the rattle of machine gun fire began, and our fellows gave fight. One aeroplane was hit and dived down, turning towards the German lines. I believe it was a Bosche's. The fight went on overhead, one of our planes being tremendously fast, and making rings around a German into which it poured machine gun fire, apparently without result. A magnificent fight, the best I've ever seen. Probably the Bosche's planes were out to bomb Béthune, but were driven off. One, I believe, dropped a bomb near Dowty's camp.

Heard one of our best drivers, Dr James of H.Q. Coy. was wounded in the party that went up last night. Got a bullet through his thigh as he was pushing a trolley up.

Rode over to Chocques, and dejeuner in a café in which I was last in November 1914 when I went up with transport for the Indian Corps! Breakfast was good. I heard a lot of wounded came down today.

I believe we are now preparing, by all these numerous trench raids, for the big advance! Heard later that two of our planes had been brought down in the fight, one driven by a young pilot who was shot through the head.

Rumours of great success down south.

II/p112

2/7/16. Not much doing today. Heard my appointment as Adjutant had been included in the G.O.C.-in-C.'s list.

II/p113

3/7/16. Great battle rages in South.

4/7/16. Nothing of note. A great deal of firing this evening.

5/7/16. We have to send up a fatigue party of 30 men to work in the trenches every night.

This evening a pigeon was caught, which had a little aluminium cylinder on its leg, doubtless containing a message. I 'phoned to A.P.M. Béthune for instructions as to disposal. He 'phoned to A.P.M. 11th Corps. A cyclist soon arrived with orders to take it to Intelligence, 11th Corps. Wonder if it contained anything of news and whether it was German, French or British.

Heard the H.L.I. made a raid last night. Hence the noise. Result not known.

Burlton went off to England for training as a pilot in the R.F.C.

6/7/16. Our fatigue party this night got shelled with lachrymatory shells.

1st Division went south today.

II/p114

7/7/16. 33rd Division is, I believe, going South, and 35th, they say, already gone. What terrible pens I'm getting! Soon there will be no-one left here.

8/7/16. We are to go to Fouquières on the 10th. Rumours that we may go South to replace broken Divisions, who will come up here.

9/7/16. Not much of news today.

10/7/16. Moved back to Fouquières today. New and excellent Train office, and new bedroom for me. Mess the same.

Heard that 8th and 31st Divisions had come to this Army in replacement of 1st, 33rd and 35th. Doesn't seem much chance of our going yet awhile.

II/p115

11/7/16. One of our men who went to the trenches for fatigue work got wounded last night with a bullet which grazed all one side of his head.

Heard that poor old Rupert Sternberg has died of wounds.

Heard that an aeroplane dropped some bombs early this morning down the road, killing one man and wounding another, by the 39th S.C. Park. Never heard 'em. This later turned out to be quite true.

II/p116

12/7/16. We have to bring back the empty L.W.s on 12/13, 13/14 and 14/15 nights.

Saw Major O'Flynn today. Great surprise. He is in command of the 8th D.S.C., and has travelled about much since I last saw him. Is looking much fitter. 8th Division has joined this Corps vice 1st.

13/7/16. Nothing much doing today. Was out 'til late drawing Remounts.

14/7/16. Heard today our cavalry had got into action. Wonder if it's true. Apparently, we are doing well in the south. Very strong rumour that we are to go there.

15/7/16. The 8th Div. seem to be going into the line on our left. Heard we might be relieved by the 29th Division.

II/p117

16/7/16. Went up the Hulluch road tonight to see how our convoys were getting on. The guns all round and, especially from Vermelles, were going hard, as there was to be a raid later, and the shells were fairly whizzing by. After passing the level crossing {at} Vermelles the C.O. and I walked down the Hulluch road. A few bullets whizzed past. At "A" dump to which we went, and reached after walking for about 20 minutes, it was pretty warm and the bullets were continually whistling past, most of them rather high, and some of them passing with a crack as though they exploded. It's a great life! The horses were all very jumpy.

Some I Corps troops are to be attached to us forthwith for feeding purposes, as a practice in case we advance on this front. Hear the 4th Army are going strong.

II/p118

17/7/16. Nothing of note to record. Fresh rumours of a move for this Division, possibly an advance!

18/7/16. Heard definitely today we are going south in two or three days. Hope this will be so.

19/7/16. Expect we shall go soon, but no signs at present of relieving Division.

20/7/16. Heard we are to start by 4 Coy. going tomorrow.

21/7/16. Very busy. 4 Coy. gone. We go tomorrow to Antigneul Chateau.

22/7/16. We left Fouquières today and trekked to Antigneul Chateau via Brouay, where we arrived about 4pm. Jolly glad to leave our old "well-treked" area. Although it is only about 15 miles distant, the country is quite different, and we are now in agricultural district, more like the south. Don't know where we are going next. We are quartered in a big chateau with very limited accommodation. I sleep in the office and we mess in the open.

II/p119

23/7/16. Refilling was on the Pernes-Valhuon road. Rode there this morning through pretty country. Rest of day quiet. Heard we may march south on the 27th.

24/7/16. Nothing much doing. We are to march to an area N.E. of Frévent on the 26th.

II/p120

25/7/16. Quiet day.

26/7/16. Left Antigneul Chateau in the morning and marched to Flers. Getting into quite agricultural country. On the road, passed the 9th Division going north. Flers is a small uninteresting village.

27/7/16. Left Flers in the morning and rode to Frohen-le-Grand via Frévent. Between Croisette and Frohen were plagued with horse flies. Was bitten by one for the first time. Heard before starting we were to have a rest tomorrow, but now we have to push on to Bernaville.

28/7/16. Hear we are to join 5th Army in Reserve. Left Frohen-le-Grand de bonne heure. Not much of a place. Arrived in Bernaville in the afternoon. This is a good spot. Hear(sic) we are to proceed on to 4th Army area.

II/p121

29/7/16. Hear we're for 4th Army in a couple of days. Got dragged out of bed and kept up for a couple of hours over some rations. What a life. This country most delightful after the Béthune district. The people here are exceptionally nice.

30/7/16. Nothing much of note.

31/7/16. Left Bernaville today, and trekked to Vignacourt via Fienvillers, Montrelet and Canaples. Heard we will probably not move 'til 2nd August. Passed through billeting area of an Australian Division. They look a rough lot.

II/p122

1/8/16. Hear today we shall probably not move from here 'til the 3rd August. The longer we stay, the better!

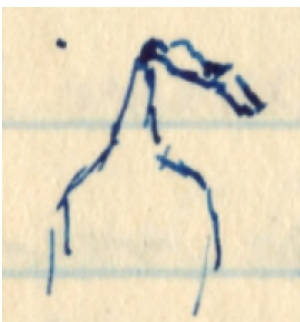
Hear the Gunners are to relieve those of the 19th Division, and to march east tomorrow. Our Infantry are, I believe, to relieve those of the 23rd Division.

2/8/16. H.Q. Coy. trekked east today. 3 Coy. to go tomorrow. Nothing much doing.

3/8/16. Nothing of note.

4/8/16. We trekked to St. Gratien today where I arrived de bonne heure. Found 33rd Reserve Park there with whom I breakfasted. Quite like old times being in a Park!

5/8/16. Trekked to Bresle Wood today. We are all fixed up in **shanties(?)** in the wood, with horse lines on the outskirts. Drive thro' Albert and up to Fricourt in a car. Most interesting. Passed a gang of German prisoners on the road, road-mending. Albert is a terribly shell-swept town. The golden virgin at the top of the church is leaning over at an angle like this



[Rough sketch of spire and statue of the Virgin Mary leaning almost horizontal due to shelling]

and yet does not fall. The church is badly smashed about. East of Albert are Artillery lines and we could see numbers of shells of all kinds falling on ground on our left. We

passed thro' Becourt – ruined – and a Field Ambulance, outside which was a man in agony in an ambulance. We then passed our heavy guns which are quite in the open – one was firing – and on to this side of Fricourt, passed our and the Bosche's old line – where we turned. Indescribable mess of the ground. On our way back, we passed the German prisoners sitting on the side of the road with several Tommies sitting by their sides and chatting. One guard had left his bayonet up by a tree and was quite happily leaning nearby.

There was a continuous roar of gun fire during the night, and one heard it all the greater sleeping on the ground.

We are bivouacked in a nice wood – horse lines on the outskirts.

II/p124

6/8/16. Division is going into the line on the 7th and 8th. I could hear the Bosche's shells exploding in Albert last night. Our guns were making a big noise too. Things are going none too well and it looks like a stalemate here.

7/8/16. Pole went up to Becourt Wood today, where he's going to be **xx(?)** transport of water cart etc which go to Contalmaison etc. A tricky job.

II/p125

8/8/16. Pole had a shell just by his dugout last night.

We moved from Bresle Wood to land just this side of Albert, where we are bivouacked out in the open.

This is a wonderful place, as we are right on a hill overlooking Albert and the ground beyond. We are by the side of the main road (Albert – Amiens) so see all that goes up and comes down. We overlook Albert, and can see the famous virgin quite close by. She had her foundations hit by a bit of a shell yesterday, and is now lower down still, *comme ça*

[Rough sketch of spire and statue of the Virgin Mary leaning almost horizontal due to shelling]



We have a great 12" gun about 200 yds away, and whenever it goes off it makes the hell of a row, and lets off a cloud of smoke.

We overlook our and the Bosche's old lines and on the hill facing all manner of shells are falling continuously, which we can see quite distinctly. The whole sight is wonderful. The valley surrounding us is crowded with troops and tents, quite like the good old days one sees portrayed in cinema films. It's very jolly for us but not so for the poor infantry. The news is good and it looks as though we might get Thiepval.

II/p126

9/8/16. We can't even get eggs now! We haven't been able to get anything except eggs since we were in Bresle – no papers, beer, etc. Now we can get a “nobbut” and have to go two kilometres for water. Old “Lizzie” nearby makes hell's own row when she barks, fairly shakes one up.

I got a souvenir of the case of a German field shell and a clip of cartridges from a dump where things were brought down from the front.

Probably get some eggs in Albert this evening.

II/p127

10/8/16. Saw Big Lizzie on the line this morning. She is an immense gun with a whole train to herself, the engine of which has always got steam up.

Bateman came in to dinner tonight. I'm going to dine with him with 7th Camerons tomorrow.

Saw the house in which the Art. Staff Captain had been laid out. One side of house completely removed.

Hell of a bombardment tonight. All the sky lit up with flashes of guns and bursting shrapnel. Wonder what was on!

Heard a few shells dropping in Albert today.

11/8/16. Nothing of great note. Went up to Becourt Wood and saw Pole. He has an interesting time going up to Contalmaison with tank wagons.

Passed Fd. Amb. where a man was standing with tunic soaked in blood and bleeding freely from a wound in the arm.

Dined with Bateman with 7th Camerons.

II/p128

12/8/16. Went to Querrieu today and saw D.A.D.T. Passed plenty of Bosche's prisoners working on the roads.

13/8/16. Plenty of shelling behind our lines today, and a good few into Albert, which we can hear distinctly.

Yesterday evening two Brigades made an attack. The 45th were successful, but I believe the 46th were not, and lost pretty badly. The attack was on the “Switch”.

We had one of our own Drivers and one attached Driver (with tank wagon) wounded yesterday. The tank wagon people have a wretched time.

14/8/16. I received orders to go with Brooke-Alder and reconnoitre a number of roads beyond Contalmaison, including the Pozières-Bazentin road. We went up to Brigade H.Q. at Contalmaison in a car and told the Brigadier of our errand. He said it was a mad game, as beyond the old German

lines there were now no roads. We were consoled with by the Brigade Major before setting out. There had been operations a couple of hours before, and there was a continuous barrage on the ridge. We passed the lulling, and went up between Mametz Wood and Bazentin Wood. Both were being shelled at the time. We passed an old German sign board with **Vorwärts (poss Vorwärts "Forward"?)**, or something like that, on it. We then went up the Martinpuich road to near the Villa de Contalmaison, and then struck across country. The ground was all ploughed up with shell holes and crowds of dud shells and other remnants lying all about. We passed two guns (German) captured by the 1st Black Watch, 1st Division and marked by them, which had not yet been removed. This was by the Contalmaison- Pozières road. Just here a dead Tommy was carried past. There was a continuous barrage the whole time in front of us, and we could go and walk close behind it and be quite safe, as there were practically no stray shells.

On our return to Contalmaison we passed a dead horse partially buried in a shell hole in the road, and left lying there. I picked up a fine German pack in Contalmaison and numerous small articles in the open in front. The row all the time was tremendous.

After getting back, and our report being made, Col. Taylor sent us a message of thanks saying we had brought him just what he wanted to know. He had been told about our being up there by, I believe, Bde. H.Q. We passed several wounded.

II/p132

15/8/16. Nothing of note today – thank the Lord.

16/8/16. Bosche's aeroplane was shelled overhead just as I got up.

Nothing of note today. Went in a car to Corbie. It is half taken over by French troops and is now a beastly place.

17/8/16. Nothing of note.

18/8/16. Poor Hardman got killed in the Camerons attack yesterday. A lot of gunfire today. A number of shells fell in the fields nearby searching for our guns. Most of 'em were duds.

19/8/16. Nothing much doing. Rode over to Henencourt to draw some cash.

II/p133

20/8/16. Refilled from Albert station today. Waited up all night with Annorsly at Mericourt for Remounts.

Shells continually fell between us and Albert or in Albert. Can always hear them whistling and can distinguish easily between those going out.

21/8/16. Albert was shelled frequently yesterday. Saw some of our aeroplanes directing Artillery fire by dropping smoke bombs. Yesterday saw a sausage (German) near Thiepval brought down by our aeroplanes. Half the sausage was destroyed, but the remaining half seemed in a chamber by itself and intact and the basket appeared to be constructed. It was afterwards lowered.

II/p134

22/8/16. Went to St. Gratien today on duty. Hear that the bombs dropped here on the 20th when I was asleep laid out over fifty men.

23/8/16. Today I went to Becourt for a F.G.C.M. The ridges round were being heavily shelled and one heard the shells coming and exploding quite distinctly. Saw an aeroplane flying home with one of its upper planes {wings} partly shattered by shell fire.

24/8/16. In the afternoon there was a huge barrage on the Thiepval ridge.

At about 7pm a shell came over and fell within 200 yds of the Train Office. Mud and stuff came flying over all round the office. A minute or two later another came and fell short. Then a third within 50 yds (actually about 30 yds) from the Train Office. Bits of shell fell all round. One bit, which I still have, was picked up red hot by my feet. We thought it was time to quit, and the C.O. and I went onto the bank about 100 yds away. Another shell came and covered us with debris. We moved on a bit. Then a shell flew over us and burst in the middle of 3 Coy.'s camp just by a wagon – about 100 yds from us. A man, who was standing by the wagon was stunned, but fortunately no further damage was done beyond breaking one of the wagon raves. The order was given to take the horses out of the way. As they were filing off, one fell right in the middle of them. It knocked a couple of men over, and a few horses got loose, but were quickly caught. How it failed to wound men or horses is a marvel. By now we got all the horses clear, and a few more fell by the road. Later in the evening we returned to camp and up 'til the present have had no more, but I think we are sure to get some. They say they are trying for the road. Unfortunately, we are just in the way.

II/p136

25/8/16. More shells over this afternoon. Most fell clear of the camp, but some in. We got our men and horses away without casualties. Have now bits of shell in general use as letter weights.

26/8/16. Nothing much to note. Expected to be shelled, and fortunately didn't get it. We are getting a Brigade of the 34th Division, detraining at Longueau today, to reinforce us.

II/p137

27/8/16. Nothing of note.

28/8/16. Nothing of note. Wet weather. A good number of men going sick. Believe a big strafe will be on soon.

29/8/16. Two of our men have been awarded the Military Medal for bravery and devotion to duty when on convoy duty at Contalmaison when they lost a horse – Dr. Stolt (who was one of the men granted the Medal) was slightly wounded. The N.C.O. ^c/₂ (Sgt. Coulson) also received the Medal.

Col. Taylor left for home today for an A.D.S.T. Western Command.

Carter is to go to M.T. School of Instruction forthwith.

About 5 shells at intervals dropped near the camp during the night. We got the horses clear and there was no damage.

30/8/16. Spent the afternoon in Amiens. Passed a Canadian Division joining up. On my return, found the Guards Company opposite had been shelled, and some men laid out; our horses had been moved to another place down the hill.

II/p138

31/8/16. Moved our camp about ½ mile today to a safer locality.

Watched an exhibition of incendiary trench mortar throwing today.

1/9/16. Nothing much doing.

2/9/16. G.O.C. was much upset because of our camp being brightly illuminated, as he feared this would bring about shelling – and D.H.Q. is just across the road. We have to turn all our tents round facing away from the enemy, and shade our lamps.

3/9/16. A tremendous lot of gunfire this morning. Sounds like operations once again.

The Australians have attacked Thiepval, unfortunately unsuccessfully. On the other side, however, Ginchy and Guillemont have been taken, and perhaps Clary by the French.

A considerable number of shells fell in this area last night. Heard them and felt the explosion.

II/p139

4/9/16. Our old camp and environs were fairly heavily shelled yesterday. After the first shelling I was just going to have a look at things when they started again, and put many more in. One of the shells had evidently hit the road, as one could distinctly hear the twang of the bits of shell flying off the surface. Found they had put one in the middle of 2 Coy.'s old camp, one in the middle of H.Q. Coy.'s, two near the Train Office, one on refilling point, one by the side of the road, one in the middle of the road opposite the entrance to the old camp. They put several amongst the Gordons and D.A.D.O.S. I went over to 4 Coy. 34th Div. Train, and found they had put some near them in the valley and saw a baggage wagon and water cart which had been blown up. Casualties in men were very few.

The C.O. is lying up tonight with diarrhoea – a popular complaint at present.

II/p140

5/9/16. Tremendous gunfire all night – and part of day.

6/9/16. French seem to be doing very well. Gunfire still continues unabated.

7/9/16. Was up early this morning. Next valley had evidently been shelled with gas shells during the night, as many people complained. Felt slight watering of the eyes personally but nothing else. The diarrhoea epidemic is rather bad, but fortunately not serious. The C.O. is nearly all right. I haven't had my touch yet. Expect it'll come!

II/p141

8/9/16. They are shelling the valley about ¼ mile away rather heavily. So far about 20 shells have fallen since 11.30am. It is now 1pm. I believe they caught some unfortunate horses and men with

the first few. The horses are now scattered all over the place. Hope they don't lengthen their range. One can hear the gun going off distinctly before one hears the shell.

9/9/16. Hear(sic) there was considerable shelling round about during the night. Slept through it all.

A strafe on this afternoon. Later, an aeroplane came low over our camp, buzzing a sort of buzzer. It was signalled to from D.H.Q. by shaking out a white sheet on the ground, and it then dropped a message at D.H.Q. It flew once again round, getting higher, and then went off to the line. About an hour later it returned and went through the same performance. A quick way of acquainting D.H.Q. with how fares the battle.

II/p142

10/9/16. A little shelling over the ridge. Nothing else. The C.O. is much better.

11/9/16. Intermittent shelling over the ridge, too close to be pleasant, between 12 noon and 12 midnight. Our old camp is now pitted with shell holes. A good thing we didn't stay!

12/9/16. Heard today some wonderful armoured caterpillars, some containing 6 machine guns, and other heavier guns, have come up, and are to be used in the great attack rumoured to be on the 15th.

Later. All this confirmed by Operation Order. These caterpillars are to go in advance of the Infantry, and work in pairs, and advance at a rate of 15 yards a minute.

II/p143

13/9/16. The Gunner camp across the way was heavily shelled for about ½ hour this morning.

The whole place is crowded with troops for the push. The French have started very well.

14/9/16. Heavy shelling all round us today. Should "the push" be successful, we will move up to Contalmaison.

15/9/16. The great battle has begun in glorious weather.

Later. The push has so far had considerable success. Reported that we have taken Martinpuich, Flers, Lesboeuifs, Morval and advanced to Gueudecourt.

II/p144

16/9/16. Apparently have taken Martinpuich, Flers and Courcellette. The Division took Martinpuich, and also about 700 prisoners. Success of "tanks" is doubtful and statements are very conflicting, and rumours wild. This evening there was apparently a gas attack and gas could be seen coming right along the line. The valley nearby was pretty heavily shelled in the evening.

17/9/16. General Rawlinson has congratulated the 15th Div. on its performance in capturing Martinpuich after being 5 weeks in the front line.

We move into rest on the 19th!

II/p145

18/9/16. A day of rain, rain, rain.

19/9/16. Left Albert in rain and arrived once again at Bresle wood.

20/9/16. Left Bresle Wood and arrived Behencourt. It is really rather a dirty little village, but it's like heaven after Albert, and we can get fruit.

21/9/16. In rest. Sent Vargele to try to get a bottle of good wine. Up early to draw Remounts from Méricourt.

22/9/16. Very pleasant being in rest. Nothing much of note.

23/9/16. Went into Amiens today. Heard that 2 days after we left Albert a shell fell exactly where the Train Office stood. Bustard, who was left behind, wrote this in.

24/9/16. Wright transferred to England today for R.F.A.

II/p146

25/9/16. Some Bosche's aeroplanes over today. Bits of anti-aircraft fell all over the village. Even here!

26/9/16. News from the front today is excellent. We seem to have taken Thiepval at last and Combles has fallen.

Dined with Bateman at Franvillers today.

27/9/16. Nothing of note.

28/9/16. Dined with C.O. in Amiens. Put in for Paris leave.

29/9/16. 46th Bde. going up to Albert tomorrow. Expect we shall soon be up in the line.

30/9/16. Granted leave to Paris from tomorrow.

1/10/16. Left for Paris.

2/10/16. In Paris.

3/10/16. Ditto.

II/p147

4/10/16. Returned to Behencourt.

5/10/16. Found the M.T. Park were at Warloy. Rode over and saw Hanson and my old Section and many well-known faces.

6/10/16.

Hear we are to go up the line in two or three days.

7/10/16. Nothing much doing.

8/10/16. We are off tomorrow to the other side of Albert. Joy!

9/10/16. Left Behencourt and arrived Becourt. A terrible pock-marked place E. of Albert. Was told they shelled in the vicinity of the camp yesterday, and I think it's a damned silly camp right in the sky line and by the main Albert-Becourt road marked for registration purposes by *traces(?)*. Still, it can't be helped. The line has advanced a lot since we left, the only portion being unpleasantly near being the North. Camps have been up all over the place where one hardly dared show one's face before.

Shelling in environs this side of Albert most of the night.

II/p148

10/10/16. A quiet day. Operations seem suspended. Went up to the bleak old No Man's Land. There was a wooden cross erected on the ground to mark a "grave" of certain men who had fallen there on 1st July. Two of them were "unknown".

11/10/16. The only incident yesterday was that of a Canadian in an adjoining Gunner camp who picked up a dud shell and threw it a few yards. It exploded with a big bang and a large bit flew into Collard's camp. No casualties.

12/10/16. Considerable shelling in the early night near the camp. During the night, was told 40 or 50 aeroplane bombs were dropped fairly near, but I did not wake up.

II/p149

13/10/16. Nothing much to report. Went up to Contalmaison this afternoon. Very different to what it was when I was there before!

14/10/16. A day sans beaucoup interest.

15/10/16. Et le même chose.

16/10/16. Saw Bateman today. After missing his last train from Paris, he and Lumley obtained a car from the French War 1/11 Office, and drove straight through to Franvillers!

Went inside a "male" tank. Curious beast. Armed with two six-pounder guns. Ammunition galore inside.

Heard of some curious gas shells which, when they fell, sounded like duds, and no-one took any notice of them – but they were filled with some gas which has a delayed action on the heart, and several men died of heart failure within twenty-four hours.

II/p150

17/10/16. Nothing much to note except that I saw the in *xxxx(?)* La Boisselle crater.

18/10/16. Went again to see the La Boisselle crater and La Boisselle. Hundreds of men are buried round the crater with just a thin covering of earth over them.

19/10/16. Nothing of note.

20/10/16. C.O. went on leave today.

21/10/16. Nothing of note.

22/10/16. Went down to new Camp with Annersley, when it was arranged that Canadians would go at once, and we would mark out ground tomorrow, and enter on 2-4 inst.

23/10/16. Canadians aren't going, so we can't – thank the Lord.

24/10/16. Nothing of note.

II/p151

25/10/16. Albert is a most extraordinary town at present. The “shops” consist of tables containing all sorts of xxxxxxxx(?) in a house(?). The counter consists of the window. The men buy from the outside. One restaurant has been started – consisting, I believe, of one room, and tinned food only to(?) eat.

A new very heavy gun started shelling several miles behind us today. It sounded like a heavy How {Howitzer}. One first heard the gun, then after a considerable interval the wail of the shell high overhead, then a pause, and then a terrific explosion several (one, 2 or 3) miles behind. I believe the shells were falling near Mericourt. They must have been enormous ones.

26/10/16. Read in the Intelligence Summary today that the “How” mentioned above is a new kind of 24 cm. Naval Gun. It fired from about Frémicourt – about 10 to 12 miles from here! It has a new kind of fuse in the shell. Over 90% detonated.

II/p152

27/10/16. Nothing to note.

28/10/16. Nothing to note.

29/10/16. C.O. came back from leave yesterday.

30/10/16. C.O. was good enough to eulogise me on my work during his absence, and said Annersley had spoken very well of me.

31/10/16. Albert and environs shelled. An aeroplane dropped a bomb in vicinity at night.

1/11/16. The Divisional Infantry are coming out of the line, and settling down in Becourt, Albert and Millencourt. We remain here.

2/11/16. We shall, apparently, get out of here in a few days.

II/p153

3/11/16. Nothing much doing. Went over to Millencourt in the morning for a F.G.C.M.. In the afternoon Fricourt was heavily shelled.

4/11/16. Nothing much doing.

5/11/16.

Left Becourt and arrived at Baizieux today, where we are comfortably settled.

Hanna ordered away to 34th Train.

6/11/16. Looked up Hanson today and the Doc(?). The latter was ill with fever. Hanna left for 34th Train.

7/11/16. Nothing to note.

8/11/16. Ditto.

9/11/16. Went into Amiens today.

10/11/16. Nothing doing.

11/11/16. Nothing doing.

12/11/16. Heavy bombardment over last few days and fighting in store. A little fighting already.

II/p154

13/11/16. Nothing to note.

14/11/16. Ditto.

15/11/16. About 1am had some bombs dropped from aeroplanes in vicinity and one opened fire with M.G {machine gun}.

16/11/16. Nothing to note.

17/11/16. Ditto. Bloody cold.

18/11/16. Ditto.

19/11/16. Nothing of note.

20/11/16. Went into Amiens today.

21/11/16. Nothing to note.

22/11/16. Ditto.

23/11/16. Ditto.

24/11/16. Ditto.

25/11/16. Ditto.

26/11/16. Ditto.

27/11/16. I have been promised leave on 2nd December. Hoorah! We are to go up to Albert on 30th inst. Damn!

II/p155

28/11/16. Nothing to note.

29/11/16. Ditto.

30/11/16. Left Baizieux and arrived Albert today. Are settled and tented on Albert-Becordel road.

1/12/16. Left on leave today. Spent night in Rouen.

2/12/16. Arrived and left Havre en route for Blighty. Leave very nice.

13/12/16. Left Blighty after excellent leave, and arrived Havre.

14/12/16. Spent night in beastly Rest Camp at Havre.

15/12/16. Travelled in overcrowded 2nd class carriage on leave train all night. Had one stop at Beugny when we got food and drink. From Havre to Amiens took 17 hours. Travelled by curious route in to drop people in various localities.

II/p156

16/12/16.

Arrived back in old camp in Albert. Noticed Albert had been shelled a bit, and the church again hit, also the Virgin's tower. The Virgin still as before.

17/12/16. C.O. got "flu" today, and is in bed.

18/12/16. Nothing to note.

19/12/16. C.O. better. Nothing else to note.

20/12/16. C.O. up again. Nothing else to note.

21/12/16. Nothing doing.

22/12/16. Ditto.

23/12/16. Ditto.

24/12/16. Ditto.

25/12/16. Ditto, except going round Messes.

26/12/16. Ditto.

27/12/16. Ditto.

28/12/16. Moved to 112 rue de Bapaume, Albert today. A much-shelled locality!

This is, the 48th Train told us, a much shelled locality. Shelling usually begins at dusk, and carries on intermittently throughout the night. Joy! The house we are in was hit 4 times while they were in it – I'm in a room in front on the top floor! They go for some big works just across the road, which are now pretty completely smashed up. Numerous shells have landed nearby during the past week – one about 200 yds away consisting of a 13" armour piercing. Joy!

II/p157

29/12/16. Went for a ride today right through the forest of Aveluy. Got to the other side, and could see the extraordinary country surrounding Thiepval. Most difficult country. Rode as far as I could. Bois d'Authuille was weirdly cut up by trenches, and the bank of the hill opposite looks like a huge rabbit borough [sic. burrow]. Bois d'Aveluy full of "heavies".

II/p158

30/12/16. Had a bath in Rue d'Illieux [sic. Rue des Illieux?] today. Otherwise, nothing of note occurred.

31/12/16. Nothing much doing. Had a little of the heart trouble. Saw the Doc., who suggested my going to Lady Michelham's in the S. of France for a month. Will try and do so in a few weeks, when things have settled down.

1/1/17. A few shells fell by the station and church this evening.

2/1/17. C.O. and Arnold both got D.S.O. in New Year's Honours.

C.O. made me a most undeservedly eulogistic speech, and talked cock about his not getting it if the office had not been run well, etc, etc.

II/p159

3/1/17. Nothing of note.

4/1/17. Ditto.

5/1/17. Ditto.

6/1/17. Ditto.

7/1/17. A good many heavy shells fell in the environs of Albert during the early hours. Couldn't quite place them.

8/1/17. Orders came today for Arnold to go home.

9/1/17. Nothing doing.

10/1/17. Arnold left for England. Robertson appointed S.S.O. vice. At present in TP {Transport?}.

11/1/17. Like a B.F. I lost over 700(?)00 francs at **Maison(?)** tonight.

12/1/17. Nothing to note.

II/p160

13/1/17. Heard today that Father is dangerously ill and Mother very ill.

14/1/17. Nothing to note.

15/1/17. A good many shells fell in the environs during the night.

16/1/17. Went into Amiens today and had a jolly good time.

17/1/17. Nothing of note.

18/1/17. Hear we're going S. of the Somme about end of month.

19/1/17. Nothing to note.

20/1/17. Granted Special Leave to go and see Father tomorrow.

22/1/17. Left for Blighty on Special Leave.

2/2/17. Returned to Albert from leave. All as usual. Heard they had plenty of bombs and shells in Albert since I was away.

3/2/17. Left Albert and arrived Baizieux today.

4/2/17. Nothing much to note.

II/p161

5/2/17. C.O. went on leave today.

6/2/17. Nothing to note.

7/2/17. Ditto.

8/2/17. Told we are going to march up to Arras about 14th inst. Going to join VI Corps of Third Army.

9/2/17. Nothing of note.

10/2/17. Ditto.

11/2/17. Ditto.

12/2/17. Received a wire from Harold today that poor old Father has died.

13/2/17. Nothing to note.

14/2/17. Left Baizieux and arrived Beauval en route for near St. Pol.

15/2/17. Remained at St. Pol.

By the way, when Collard returned from leave, the boat in front of him, the Marguerite, was shot at by a submarine. She was a paddle steamer and in swinging round to get head on to the submarine, had the good fortune to hit the submarine with one of her paddles, and sank her.

II/p162

16/2/17. Left Beauval and arrived Bouquemaision, coming via Doullens. Troops busy building railways, and a lot of Cavalry about. Looks like business. Beauval was a top hole little town and we had a good time there. Billets in Bouquemaision are awful.

17/2/17. Left Bouquemaision, and arrived Maizieres – a nice spot. Very well billeted.

Heard from Arthur today that he intends to get married shortly in Bethune, and wants me to be best man. This was written before he heard of Father's death, so wonder how that will affect matters.

18/2/17. Nothing to report.

19/2/17. Ditto.

20/2/17. Ditto.

II/p163

21/2/17. Ditto.

22/2/17. C.O. returned from leave today.

23/2/17. Nothing of import.

24/2/17. Ditto.

25/2/17. Ditto.

26/2/17. Rumours of a Bosche's retirement on Somme front.

27/2/17. Rumours confirmed. Bapaume rumoured to have been evacuated.

28/2/17. Possibilities of a Bosche's retreat to a new line.

1/3/17. Nothing doing.

2/3/17. Ditto.

3/3/17. Don't think Bosche's retreat will ~~xxxxx~~(?) much.

4/3/17. Think we'll have "Push" soon on this front.

5/3/17. Ditto.

6/3/17. Ditto. Played and got beaten by 15th D.S.C. today in 2nd round of Div. Football.

II/p164

7/3/17. Nothing to note.

8/3/17. Looks as though the Bosches intend giving up Bapaume.

9/3/17. Tout va bien.

10/3/17. Nothing much doing.

11/3/17. Ditto.

12/3/17. Heard today that Baghdad had fallen.

13/3/17. Nothing much doing.

14/3/17. Ditto.

15/3/17. Ditto.

16/3/17. Ditto.

17/3/17. Hear rumours of Czar's abdication, and food riots in Russia.

Also rumours of Company in 12th Div. (Suffolks) in front line trenches surprised last night near Arras by Bosche raiders and all scuppered or taken prisoners.

Bapaume fallen at last, and Bosche's retreat continues.

II/p165

18/3/17. Bosche retirement continues.

19/3/17. Bosche's retirement still continues. Said to be retiring to "Hindenburg line", i.e. direct line from Arras to Craonne through Laon.

Rumoured that we are to go to Ypres.

20/3/17. Not much doing.

21/3/17. Ditto.

22/3/17. Are now furiously preparing for a “push” here shortly.

23/3/17. Took over duties of acting Town Major during Pollock’s absence. Quelle vie!

24/3/17. Nothing much doing.

25/3/17. Ditto.

26/3/17. Ditto.

27/3/17. Yet again, Ditto.

28/3/17. Moved to Duisans today. Accommodated in **huts(?)**. Passed on the road one of our aeroplanes smashed to blazes. One of our airmen had come down about ½ hour before, and terribly mutilated.

II/p166

29/3/17. Nothing to note.

30/3/17. Ditto.

31/3/17. Ditto. Preparing for the Push.

1/4/17. Ditto.

2/4/17. Push imminent. Terribly wintry weather still.

3/4/17. Very busy preparing.

4/4/17. V day today. Bombardment begins. Hutchesson wounded in Arras.

5/4/17. Nothing to note.

6/4/17. A number of shells fell round about the camp. Very unpleasant.

7/4/17. Saw an extraordinary sight today. Just looked up in time to see a Bosche aeroplane diving at incredible speed at one of our sausages nearby. When apparently within a few yards of it, he let fly with his machine gun. Immediately, the two “airmen” came down in two parachutes which worked splendidly. The Bosche flew away unharmed. After a considerable interval, the balloon, which was very high up, burst into flames, and came down burning, nearly catching one of the parachutes en route. A fine spectacle, but a rotten sight.

At dusk Duisans was shelled, one shell falling within 30 yards of my bivvy. No **bonne(?)**.

During the night, Duisans was again shelled. Very unpleasant. Some casualties occurred in the village and our Doctor was sent for.

II/p167

8/4/17. Nothing to note.

9/4/17. "Push" began this morning, I believe with some success. This afternoon I went up to the prisoners' cage. It was crowded with Bosches, and fresh prisoners kept continually arriving. A good number of officers. The scene was like a fair, large numbers of troops and civilians all looking in and watching the prisoners.

It is rumoured that the Bosches have pushed with some success round about Ypres. Hear the Push on this front was a great success, but no details yet to hand. Expect to go forward soon.

10/4/17. No news today.

11/4/17. Rather nervous. We have to wait for the paper from England to know what happens within a few miles of oneself! Saw in today's paper what happened in the Battle on our front. Great success – over 11,000 prisoners taken, and Vimy ridge carried. Our Division was wonderfully successful.

Later. Our Division badly cut up in taking Monchy, which the 37th Div. failed to hold (probably because the country was so bad that the guns couldn't be got up).

12/4/17. Our Division withdrawn to Arras to refit, and we remain here pro.tem. Weather awful, snow falling thickly. Messed up the offensive horribly. Our Division done top worke.

13/4/17. Nothing much doing.

II/p168

14/4/17. Ditto.

15/4/17. Bosche retaining a little up north, and certain to give up Lens. Reported recaptured Monchy today.

II/p169

16/4/17. Nothing much doing. Beastly stormy weather. Report re fall of Monchy not confirmed, am glad to say.

17/4/17. Nothing to note.

18/4/17. Went to prospect for new camp just west of Arras. Found likely spot. French push seems to be in full swing. Not many particulars yet to hand.

19/4/17. Heard from Arthur on 'phone today. Hope to see him shortly.

20/4/17.

Arthur came over today with Burlton. Started to try and fly over, but crashed and broke up the machine. Then came in a tender.

21/4/17. Left Duisans and arrived at Arras – bivouacked quite close to and west of the Baudimont Gate, by “Dead Man’s Corner”. Must have been a very hot place before the “Push”. Ground covered with old shell holes.

II/p170

22/4/17. Had a day in Arras looking for Train H.Q. accommodation. Very unsatisfactory owing to place being crowded out with troops. *Vargele(?)* arranged to look at a house, and the Garde Civile arrived and broke into it. It had not been opened since the beginning of the war. It was in a poor quarter, and everything was filthy to a degree. Clothes and other things were all left lying about as the civilians had left it. The newspapers, calendars, etc were all 1914!

Arras is an interesting old town, and in parts, especially by the Cathedral has been raised to the ground. There were a good number of shells dropping about when I was in. Several shops still open, and open all through the war, one particularly noticeable being a butcher’s with quite good meat in it, and, plenty. Quite a lot of civil inhabitants about, and new one quite well-dressed and decent looking lady.

II/p171

23/4/17. Plenty of shells flying about today, as it is the day of the great Push. News none too good, but rather vague.

24/4/17. Plenty of aerial activity today. Many fights. One sausage almost overhead attacked, and occupants took to parachutes. Plenty of shelling round about and a little shrapnel over Arras. Arras wonderful old town. Hear that we have suffered severe casualties. Poor old “Blotto” and W.G. Stuart killed.

25/4/17. The Division did not do so well. It is grossly overworked and has had no time to get its new drafts since 9th into shape. The Colonel was awarded Croix de Chevalier du Mérite Agricole today.

26/4/17. Nothing much doing, but saw another sausage brought down quite near. Fortunately, no-one was in it. Apparently, these sausages are brought down by a captured ‘plane, which has the Iron Cross painted inside the Bull’s eye, and hence is only noticed when it actually opens out with its M.G. on the sausage. Expect to move shortly.

II/p172

27/4/17. Nothing much to note. Due to go back to Duisans on 29th inst.

28/4/17. Nothing much doing.

29/4/17. Left our camp and arrived Warlus. Companies (Bde.) went to Duisans and we went to Warlus. Nice village. D.H.Q. here.

30/4/17.

Nothing much doing. Expect to go back to the line about 5th May.

1/5/17. Have put in for leave to Paris tomorrow, but whether I get it is une autre chose.

2/5/17. Waiting all day for leave.

3/5/17. Approval at last came, I trotted off to Paris. Met Bateman at Amiens, and we travelled down and stayed together.

8/5/17. Left Paris, and on arriving at Doullens, found that Train had moved to Le Cauroy, to which place I **hoboed(?)**, to find "main" H.Q. just marching in.

II/p173

9/5/17. Find Le Cauroy a delightful little village. Very pretty and jolly.

10/5/17. Heard today that poor Arthur was missing.

11/5/17. Went over to see Arthur's C.O. but could get little information. He went flying with a pilot named **Wischer**, and never came back. It was a misty morning, and they were going out on contact patrol work.

12/5/17. Horse Show tomorrow. Everyone talking about it, and nothing else. Have entered the Pony in all possible events.

13/5/17. Had our Horse Show today. A great success. Train did quite well, obtaining **4(?)** firsts, 2 seconds and 2 thirds. My Pony put up rather a poor show. The massed band of pipers was magnificent. Sir Douglas Haig was present, and said "good afternoon" to me after I had jumped. Cinematographer also present. Hewitt won the Rider's Jumping and Scurry.

II/p174

14/5/17. Went out to dinner with Collard tonight.

15/5/17. Nothing to note.

16/5/17. Ditto.

17/5/17. Ditto.

18/5/17. Major Luard arrived today, apparently to replace S.S.O.

C.O. asked me if I was still fed up. Replied that I was. Asked me if I wanted to transfer into anything. Replied nothing in particular. There is, of course, no opening in this job, and I've been doing it for so long that it's become pure routine.

19/5/17.

We move on 21st inst. to XIXth Corps Area, and then North, I believe.

II/p175

20/5/17. Nothing to note.

21/5/17. Moved to Wail today. Delightful village.

22/5/17. Very nice and quiet here.

23/5/17. Ditto.

24/5/17. Ditto.

25/5/17. Ditto.

26/5/17. Ditto.

27/5/17. Ditto.

28/5/17. Decided to have Train Sports on 2nd June.

29/5/17. Nothing to note.

30/5/17. Ditto.

31/5/17. Ditto.

1/6/17. Ditto.

2/6/17. Our Train Sports were held today. A great success. Hewitt and Sgt. Holmes did particularly well **Had(?)** a **T/L(?)** running.

3/6/17. Nothing to note.

Ilp176

4/6/17. All being well, we are going to have a Divisional Race Meeting on 10th inst.

5/6/17. Race meeting cancelled by Third Army.

6/6/17. C.O. came back from leave today. Had a long talk about myself and a change. Result unsettled.

7/6/17. C.O. has ruled that owing to shortage of leave vacancies, only men can proceed to UK at present as some have been out so long without leave. Hence I put in for leave in France.

8/6/17. Owing to possible movements, don't think I can now go on leave.

9/6/17. Nothing to note.

10/6/17. My leave stopped owing to movements.

Later. Movements cancelled, leave authorised and going tomorrow morning.

11/6/17. to 22/6/17 *mid(?)*:

Left and arrived Paris evening of 11th. Left Paris evening of 12th and travelled all night to Aix-Les-Bains. Had a top hole time at Aix, and left for Paris 20th, arriving 21st. Left Paris 21st for Frévent – on arrival found Division had moved, and joined up Train H.Q. in the evening at Brandhoek near Vlamertinge, having “hoboed” the whole way from Amiens.

II/p177

23/6/17. This seems a nasty place for shelling as shells are continually passing overhead. Saw 2 sausages brought down this afternoon, and an attack on a 3rd – ours, worst luck. Went into Poperinghe and saw Percy Rothband installed as O.C. Canteen of 55th Division. He invited me to dinner tomorrow.

Whisper(?) came round today that a number of A.S.C. Officers under 30 are to be withdrawn to the Infantry during the next few months. Cheerful outlook!

II/p178

24/6/17. Went to dinner with Percy at Poperinghe. A number of aeroplanes over the camp in the morning.

25/6/17. A Bosche ‘plane flew very low over the camp about 9.30pm today, only a few hundred feet up. One piece of anti-aircraft shrapnel came through the roof of our Mess, and nearly got us. Shelling during night in vicinity of camp pretty heavy.

26/6/17. Nothing particular to note. Dined with 55th Train today.

27/6/17. Considerable shelling tonight.

28/6/17. Have now, with all other Officers in the Train under 30, to be medically examined as to fitness for joining Infantry.

29/6/17. Nothing much to note. Shelling heavy round about tonight.

30/6/17. Ditto. Medical (sic) examined for Infantry today. Believe shall be reported on as not quite fit but available if urgently required.

II/p179

1/7/17. Nothing to note.

2/7/17. Ditto.

3/7/17. D.A.D.R.S. doubtful if I’m fit, referred me to Lieut. Col. Worthington, who has passed me as fit for the Infantry.

4/7/17. Nothing special to note. Usual shelling in vicinity.

5/7/17. Nothing particular to note.

6/7/17. Ditto.

7/7/17. Ditto.

8/7/17. Ditto.

9/7/17. Ditto.

10/7/17. Ditto.

11/7/17. Three sausages brought down by one Bosche 'plane today. At night a bit of shelling in vicinity, also dump near went up, and gas reported about. Latter found to be false alarm.

II/p180

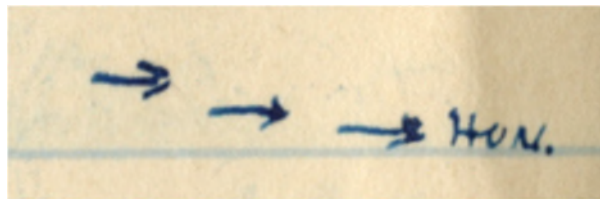
12/7/17. Tonight we had two aeroplanes at intervals over the camp. One fired his machine down on people round about, and fired tracer bullets. At night they looked just like very bright and small shooting stars.

13/7/17. Nothing much to note. Shelling in close vicinity at night.

14/7/17. Shelling this morning very close. One piece of shell fell with a crash on office roof above my head, but fortunately roof strong enough to prevent it coming through. I went back to the Mess and a shell fell within 60 yds. Very unpleasant.

15/7/17. One of our sausages just above the camp was brought down by the Bosche by shrapnel fire today. Marvellous shooting!

16/7/17. A Bosche aeroplane came over today and brought down one of our sausages. He was promptly attacked by one of our airmen. Another airman, coming up from the other flank, also went for him. As it afterwards transpired, the Hun was flying a new Albatross, and had two machine guns, both of which jammed. There was only a pilot. Our airman drove him down and soon he came flying right over our camp only about 200 ft. up with our two planes chasing him in echelon hanging over his tail, thus {see sketch}:



It was a fine sight. He came down about a mile away, and we could see our 'planes hovering about overhead to see that all was well.

II/p181

17/7/17.

Find that one of our Sergeants, Sgt Arnold, was missing in Ypres since last night, when some shells fell in his vicinity and he was seen to fall from his horse. 7 of our men with him gassed.

II/p182

18/7/17. Cannot trace Sgt. Arnold at all.

19/7/17. Nothing to note.

20/7/17. Ditto.

21/7/17. Ditto.

22/7/17. Ditto.

23/7/17. Ditto.

24/7/17. 12th H.L.I. carried out a most successful daylight raid today, capturing 68 unwounded prisoners, who came down through our camp.

I applied for transfer to Heavy Branch of M.G. Coy. today.

25/7/17. Nothing to note today.

26/7/17. Ditto.

27/7/17. Ditto.

28/7/17. First of the old Officers in replacement of younger Officers for Infantry arrived today. Looks a hearty old bird.

29/7/17. Division made another successful raid last night, capturing over sixty prisoners. Saw them in the cage today.

II/p183

30/7/17. Nothing to note.

31/7/17. Great attack began at 3.50am with terrific bombardment which wakened us all up. As a result of today's work, hear that we captured Green line. Also 55th Div. on our left. 8th Div. on our right failed to get further than Black line and 55th Div. were driven back to Black line leaving our flanks exposed. Hence, we had to withdraw to line about 1,000 yds in advance of Black line. Black line was 2nd, and Green line 3rd objective. The Corps captured about 1,300 prisoners, nearly half by 55th Div. and remainder by ourselves. Consisted almost entirely of 255th German Div. opposite 55th Div. and 38th Div. opposite ourselves. Our prisoners were an indifferent lot but comparatively few 1918 Class. Rained incessantly this evening.

II/p184

1/8/17. Rained hard all day, putting an end to all hope of further operations at present.

2/8/17. Believe our casualties on 31st were about 3,000.

3/8/17. Nothing to note. Beastly weather.

4/8/17. Today we left Brandhoek and came to Droglandt, where we are excellently billeted. A great relief.

5/8/17. Nothing to note.

6/8/17. Ditto.

7/8/17. Ditto.

8/8/17. Told by Colonel that he had seen Trench and latter expected to attach me to a Brigade for Staff instructional course in a few days.

9/8/17. Nothing to note.

10/8/17. Ditto.

11/8/17. Ditto.

12/8/17. Ditto.

II/p185

13/8/17. Heard today that I am to go to 46th Bde. tomorrow for a course of instruction in Staff work.

14/8/17. Left Droglandt and arrived Looge Hoek, where I joined up with 46th Bde. H.Q. Messing is excellent and Staff seem very nice.

15/8/17. Left Looge Hoek in the afternoon in charge of Bde. advanced parties, and took over new partially made camp at Belgian Battery lines near Ypres. As soon as we arrived, a 'plane came down in the cap and had the misfortune to strike a dug out and crash. Pilot slightly injured.

16/8/17. Spent a bad night in a Nissen hut. A 12" How and two 6" Naval guns were firing just over our heads all the night. Quite impossible to sleep. At dawn there came a terrific bombardment for 16th Div. attack, which later turned out to be a failure. I detrained troops at the Asylum this morning. Our camp was shelled from 7.30am to 10.30 am, evidently searching for the guns I mentioned before. As soon as the 10th Scottish Rifles arrived they had 2 shells right in the middle of them, laying out 90 men!

II/p186

17/8/17.

Today the Brigade moved up the line, and left me behind. I came back to St. Lawrence camp near Poperinghe, where I had the good luck to find Allan, who gave me accommodation. Before and on arrival 'planes were dropping bombs all over the show round about. One 'plane was fired on by M.G. with phosphorescent bullets. This gave the line to the searchlights, one of which got it and followed it all along, showing it up most clearly.

II/p187

18/8/17. Moved up to Brandhoek.

I forgot to mention that while waiting for a train at Ypres on 16th, there was a 12" How. firing on a flank about 200 yds away, and owing, I presume to peculiar atmospheric conditions, one could see the shell quite clearly after leaving the gun and watch it with ease 'til it disappeared in the distance.

19/8/17.

Had the Colonel and Doc. in to dinner. A few bombs dropped in vicinity.

II/p188

20/8/17. Saw a plane shot down today – believe a Hun – and fell end on in neighbourhood of Ypres. Busy arranging camps for our people who are coming out of the line today. Changed our own camp across the road. Went up to Ypres to see guides, and got strafed going through Vlamertinge.

21/8/17. One of the men in the 10th S.R. sentenced to be shot. Saw confirmed proceedings today with Haig's signature. Man to be shot tomorrow.

Hospital here heavily shelled all day. Think they were trying for the crossroads and railways. One nurse killed. Wounded, who were all bad abdominal cases, moved to Remy.

II/p189

22/8/17. Nothing particular to note, except that for the first time our Div. were unable to take their objective.

23/8/17. Nothing to note.

24/8/17. Ditto.

25/8/17. Ditto.

26/8/17.

Hear we are to go to a new area on 1st.

27/8/17. Nothing to note.

28/8/17. Ditto.

29/8/17. Hear(sic) we are to go to Arras again!

30/8/17. Left Brandhoek with Advance party of Brigade and arrived Zermezele where the Bde. H.Q. is coming tomorrow. Remainder of Bde. billeted all round.

31/8/17. Brigade arrived. Go off by train tomorrow to Arras.

1/9/17. Have been made Brigade detraining officer with Major Cunningham. Travelled by first train from Cassel station, and arrived Arras about 9.30pm. Arranged reliefs with Major Cunningham. Am on duty all night, and off all day.

II/p190

2/9/17. Fed and slept (a little) at Officers' Club. Arras quite changed. Not at all shelled, and hardly anyone in it. Civilians coming back slowly. After detraining 9pm train, rejoined Bde. H.Q. in old 2 Coy. camp at Duisans.

3/9/17. Very well fixed in good billet. Nothing more to note.

4/9/17. Nothing to note, except C.O. is going on leave and wants me to rejoin Train on 14th inst. as Maude is then going to Div.. Told me Trench helped to let more come to Div. by end of month.

5/9/17. Nothing to note.

6/9/17. Left Duisans and arrived St. Nicholas, a suburb of Arras, where we are fixed up in Logan Camp, our old front line. Am going up to the trenches tomorrow.

II/p191

7/9/17. Left Logan Camp and came up to Fampoux, where our Headquarters are situated in dugouts in **Lancer(?)** Lane. Line here is extraordinarily quiet. Part of our accommodation consists of old Hun gun emplacements. One smashed up How. is still in situ.

8/9/17. Find continual candle light and musty smell of dugouts rather trying. Trenches are swarming with little frogs.

9/9/17. An O.P. within a few yards of Lancer Lane gives an excellent view right over the Hun lines to Jigsaw Wood and Bois du Sart. One can see the spire of Plouvain or Biaches church over the hill. Very interesting.

II/p192

10/9/17. Nothing particular to note.

11/9/17. Ditto.

12/9/17. Shelling rather more severe all round today. House nearly hit. Get wonderful view from Bde. O.P. over enemy lines and can watch all the gunner strafing.

13/9/17. One of our planes brought down by direct A.A. hit near chemical works. Man seen to fall out. Poor beggar.

14/9/17. Rejoined the Train today on termination of course. General kindly said he would do what he could for me. Found the Train just west of Arras.

15/9/17. Nothing to note.

16/9/17. Went for a most interesting drive today to Bapaume and then to Albert. Passed on the way to Bapaume from Arras many of the villages. .

Continues in next book. III/p193

III

War Diary

16/9/17 – 19/11/18.

ARMY BOOK 136

Original & Annotated here	Here	Movement
III/p194	78	Left Arras – Arrived Blighty
III/p195	78	Left Blighty - Arrived Arras - Left Arras - Arrived St. Nicholas
III/p197	79	Left St. Nicholas - Arrived Arras
III/p198	79	Left Arras - Arrived St. Laurent Blangy
III/p200	80	Left St. Laurent Blangy - Arrived “Happy Valley”
III/p201	80	Left “Happy Valley” - Arrived Arras
III/p202	80	Left Arras - Arrived Paris
III/p205	82	Left Paris - Arrived Arras
III/p208	83	Left Arras - Arrived Boulogne - Left Boulogne - Arrived England - Left England - Arrived Boulogne - Left Boulogne - Left Rouen - Arrived Arras
III/p216	87	Left Arras - Arrived Dainville - Left Dainville - Arrived Berneville
III/p217	87	Left Berneville - Arrived Agnez-lès-Duisans
III/p220	88	Left Agnez-lès-Duisans - Arrived Auchel - Left Auchel - Arrived Agnez-lès-Duisans
III/p226	91	Left Agnez-lès-Duisans - Arrived Mingoal - Left Mingoal
III/p227	92	Arrived Paris - Left Paris - Arrived Liancourt - Left Liancourt - Arrived Cuise-la-Motte - Left Cuise-la-Motte - Arrived Coeuvres
III/p231	93	Left Coeuvres - Arrived Vivières - Left Vivières - Arrived Liancourt
III/p232	94	Left Liancourt - Arrived Paris Plage - Left Paris Plage - Arrived Le Cauroy
III/p234	94	Left Le Cauroy – on Leave UK – Arrived Coupigny – Left Coupigny – Arrived Hersin
III/p235	95	Left Hersin – Arrived Barlin
III/p236	95	Left Barlin – Arrived Nouux-les-Mines
III/p238	96	Left Noeux-les-Mines – Arrived Philosophe - Left Arrived Philosophe – Arrived Carvin
III/p239	96	Left Carvin – Arrived Thomeries
III/p240	96	Left Thomeries – Arrived Cappelle – Left Cappelle – Arrived Genech – Left Genech – Arrived La Glanerie
III/p242	97	Left La Glanerie – Arrived Wez Velvain - Left Wez Velvain – Arrived Velon – Left Velon – Arrived Tourpes
III/p243	98	Left Tourpes – Arrived Quenoy

III/p193

16/9/17. (continued)

. . evacuated by the Huns. I was much struck by the wanton destruction of **trees** and houses, for a microscopical military gain. In Bapaume a lot of the houses had their fronts deliberately blown down, and it looked most curious to see the remaining three walls standing, so unlike a demolition by shell fire. Saw the base from which the statue had been taken of the former liberator of Bapaume from the Hun. Then we drove to Albert passed Warlencourt, Le Sars, etc. Saw the famous Butte de Warlencourt where so many men had died. Also Loupart Wood on the right. Saw numerous broken down tanks, one in front of Courcellette, all of course the original pattern with wheels behind. The whole battlefield was covered with innumerable graves. So we went past our old quarters into Albert, now an Army Headquarters, with numbers of its old inhabitants back again! We had tea in the Officers' Club by the station that we knew so well under such different circumstances.

III/p194

17/9/17. Hear now that owing to blowing up of horses, troops were much hampered as building material had to be brought up in beastly weather from a long way in rear over bad holes before troops could get cover. This killed a large number of horses and a good many men suffered from exposure. As regards trees, those cut down were only those blocking the view of the Hun. Hence this seems excusable.

18/9/17. Nothing to note.

19/9/17. Ditto.

20/9/17. Am to go on leave on 22nd inst.

21/9/17. Nothing to note.

22/9/17. Went on leave. Travelled down to Boulogne by car. Had an excellent leave. Was present in London during raid on 1st October. Very little to note about it, and seemed a very trivial affair, but people seemed extraordinarily frightened. Very small attendance at the Theatre, and a lot of theatres gave no show. A lot of crowding into the Tubes, which seems more dangerous than staying out as numerous people have thereby been **engaged(?)**.

III/p195

3/10/17. Rejoined Train at Arras, and told I am to go to Division tomorrow as a learner.

4/10/17. Joined D.H.Q. at St. Nicholas. All very nice. People very jolly, and food excellent. Am attached to "A" Branch under Trench.

5/10/17. Nothing to note. Very happy.

6/10/17. Our troops seem to be doing excellently in the North.

7/10/17. Nothing stirring to note.

III/p196

8/10/17. Nothing special to note.

9/10/17. The "Jocks" pierrot troupe is exceedingly good. It is extraordinary now-a-days to see how each Division runs its own Band and Theatre, realising the necessity of ministering to the mentality of the troops as well as their mere physical needs.

10/10/17. Nothing to note.

11/10/17. Find that I have been recommended for appointment as Staff Captain, but as I am 7th on the Divisional list, likely to take a long, long time.

An American Divisional Commander, his Chief of Staff, and A.D.C. are coming tomorrow to be attached here for ten days.

Got a new Divisional Commander today, name of Reed, the Colenso V.C. Thuillier has gone to take up appointment in England as President of the Chemical Warfare Committee.

III/p197

12/10/17. All goes well.

13/10/17. Moved into good quarters in Arras today. Saw the American General and staff. Their uniform is not imposing, and apparently intends to be as inconspicuous as possible.

Shortly after moving in, there was an outbreak of fire in the roof of the G.O.C.'s house. The Fire Brigade were 'phoned for, and duly rolled up – consisting of a hose and 4 P.B. men. It was most amusing. The fire was soon put out.

Rather a remarkable thing occurred the other day. One of our advanced posts was lost, and nothing was heard of it until a Hun message was picked up on the listening set informing their people of the upturn of the men in this post.

Saw today for the first time a pukka aerial dart which had at one time apparently been dropped from a Hun plane. It consists of a pointed iron head, and feathers on the top to keep it upright.

III/p198

14/10/17. Horsley's father is dying, and he has to go on leave tomorrow. I am to function for him.

15/10/17. Very busy all day.

16/10/17. Ditto.

17/10/17. Nothing to note.

18/10/17. Horsley came back today.

19/10/17. Nothing to note.

20/10/17. Ditto.

21/10/17. Am to go tomorrow to 74th Fd. Coy. R.E. for a ten days' attachment.

22/10/17. Left Arras and arrived in R.E. Camp at the railway triangle, by St. Laurent-Blangy. This was one of the most famous and difficult objectives in the Arras push 6 months ago.

III/p199

23/10/17. Quiet day nothing doin'.

24/10/17. Went all round the right Brigade line this morning. There was a little strafing only. Front line very muddy. Sentries deeply concentrated on their periscopes. Passed one corpse on way back getting carried down on stretcher.

25/10/17. Up and round the trenches again today. Heard that the poor fellow we passed yesterday was shot through the heart in our front line by a Hun sniper yesterday. Made me keep low going round today!

26/10/17. Spent today in Arras. Going up to Happy Valley for three days on 28th. French have had a most successful small push.

27/10/17. Nothing to note today.

28/10/17. A lot of aerial activity this morning.

In the afternoon I came up to "Happy Valley", near Monchy-le-Preux, where we live in dugouts. Everything beastly damp. A machine gun just by us keeps pooping off after dark.

III/p200

29/10/17. Went round the front line with Major Evans. In some parts went up to our knees in water and mud. Passed one place where the Hun were shelling and had just killed a poor fellow. There was blood on either side of the trench, and he lay huddled up at the bottom with a sack thrown over his face. In the afternoon, took the Colonel round the line. Watched the Hun trying to hit one of our aeroplanes which had come down east of Orange Hill, well within their sight. Shooting indifferent, and did not see them hit it, though they expended a lot of shell.

30/10/17. Came down to D.H.Q. today to see about my next course. Was told that Trench is going on leave on 1st, and I am to act for him, and stay down here now. Hence am doing so, and getting Thomas xxxix(?) down tonight.

III/p201

31/10/17. Nothing to note.

1/11/17. Trench on leave. Busy functioning.

2/11/17. Nothing special to note.

3/11/17. Ditto.

4/11/17. Got a horrid shock today. An official order came in that, owing to number of inexperienced and untrained Officers being now sent to Trains, it was essential for Adjutants to be with their Trains. They would not, therefore, be transferred to the Infantry and all Adjutants away from their Trains, e.g. on Staff courses, must rejoin at once. Fear there is no way out of it except to go back. Damn.

5/11/17. Nothing to note.

III/p202

6/11/17. Ditto.

7/11/17. Put in application to resign my Adjutancy in order to continue as Staff Learner.

8/11/17. Nothing to note.

9/11/17. General Marshall is to go, and be succeeded by a Canadian General. This shows quite a new policy.

10/11/17. Nothing to note.

11/11/17. Ditto.

12/11/17. Ditto.

13/11/17. Ditto.

14/11/17. Ditto.

15/11/17. Trench came back today.

16/11/17. I put in for a week's leave to Paris from 18th inst.

17/11/17. And got it! Off tomorrow.

18/11/17. - 22/11/17.

In Paris! Had a great time.

Owing to success of Cambrai operations, thought I had better return, as things might be moving here.

III/p203

23/11/17. Returned to Arras, but found everything quiet. Might have as well stayed my leave out in Paris. Am still at D.H.Q.

24/11/17. Nothing to note.

25/11/17. Ditto.

26/11/17. Ditto.

27/11/17. Colonel Johnson is pressing for my return to the Train. Fear I shall have to go.

28/11/17. Nothing to note.

29/11/17. Huns are bombarding Arras slightly today. Have just blown up a house within 50 yards of us, and the street is covered with red dust from the bricks. Another shell has just fallen in the street also about 50 yds. Away. Very unpleasant. Fell where a cart and two horses were standing about 5 minutes before.

III/p204

30/11/17. As Hanna is going today, have been ordered back to Train until my case has been decided.

Poor old Thomson and Wilson were both killed today with a direct hit by a Hun .77.

1/12/17. Nothing much to note.

2/12/17. Went to Thomson's and Wilson's funeral today. There is much too much show in a military funeral to make it impressive – it's too much like a performance.

3/12/17. Nothing special to note, except that Train played and beat 225 M.G. Coy. in first round Div. Football.

4/12/17. Nothing to note.

5/12/17. Ditto.

6/12/17. Ditto.

7/12/17. Hear there is a job going of assistant to Snow at the Army. Just what I should like. Fear this Adjutant business will stop me, though I am being put up for it.

III/p205

8/12/17. Nothing to note.

9/12/17. Ditto.

10/12/17. Ditto.

11/12/17. Am told that Berkely has given me a good recommendation to Snow for vacancy as his assistant, but that Snow could not reply definitely owing to the number of recommendations received for the job. Fear there is very little chance.

12/12/17. Nothing to note.

13/12/17. Ditto.

14/12/17. Ditto.

15/12/17. Told Snow has a man coming out from England as his assistant. Hence that is off. Withdrew application to resign Adjutancy owing to indefinite time could have to wait before getting a job on the Staff.

III/p206

16/12/17. Nothing to note.

17/12/17. Ditto.

18/12/17. Ditto.

19/12/17. Ditto.

20/12/17. Ditto.

21/12/17. The Colonel went on leave today.

22/12/17. Nothing to note.

23/12/17. Ditto.

24/12/17. Ten of us went to Pantomime today in the theatre, where the Jocks gave an excellent show entitled "Robinson Crusoe!" and afterwards we went and had a really good dinner at the Univers.

25/12/17. Busy Xmasing.

26/12/17. Nothing to note.

27/12/17. Was asked to defend a Gunner Officer in a G.C.M. tomorrow. Have taken up the case.

28/12/17. Gunner got off. Very pleased.

III/p207

29/12/17. Nothing to note.

30/12/17. Ditto.

31/12/17. A.D.M.S. came round to me this afternoon and told me that Pearson had gone to him this morning and made rambling statements, amongst them that there were a lot of spies about him who were "trying to do him in". A.D.M.S. asked me whether I thought Pearson was really wrong, or just trying to get away from the front. I told him that I had noticed Pearson behaving in a very peculiar manner. He often did not understand remarks addressed to him, and also could not keep up a conversation for any time on one subject. I had thought that this was deafness, but now considered that it was due to inability to concentrate. A.D.M.S. then said he had better go straight into hospital, as he might otherwise do himself, or someone else, in, so we packed him off.

III/p208

2/1/18. Luard has got the D.S.O.

Am to go on leave on 5th.

3/1/18. Nothing to note.

4/1/18. Ditto.

5/1/18. Went on leave, by car to Boulogne. Slept night at Boulogne, where met C.O., then.

6/1/18. To England, 'til.

20/1/18. Landed at Boulogne from leave. Slept night at Boulogne, and on.

21/1/18. Went to Rouen.

22/1/18. Visited A.S.C. Section. Called on Col. Raconsley, and had the run of the place. Quite interesting. Huge numbers of clerks employed.

23/1/18. Dined with M. Lion.

24/1/18. Left Rouen and returned to Arras.

25/1/18. Very busy all day picking up threads.

III/p209

26/1/18. Nothing to note.

27/1/18. Ditto.

28/1/18. Ditto.

29/1/18. Ditto.

30/1/18. In Div. Tug of War, were defeated by 8/10th Gordons, eventual winners, in semi-final.

31/1/18. Final of Div. Football match ended in draw.

1/2/18. Saw Div. Cross-country Race final. Royle came in first of the Train Competitors, 20th.

2/2/18. 9th Gordons defeated 13th R. Scots in replay of Div. Football Championship.

3/2/18. Brigades are being cut down to 3 Battns. 10/11th H.L.I. left us on 1st and 12th H.L.I. today.

4/2/18. Nothing to note.

5/2/18. Div. H.Q. returned here.

III/p210

6/2/18. Nothing to note.

7/2/18. Ditto.

8/2/18. Ditto.

9/2/18. Ditto.

10/2/18. Ditto.

11/2/18. Ditto.

12/2/18. Ditto.

13/2/18. Ditto.

14/2/18. Ditto.

15/2/18. Our loaders have been drastically cut down, and now we are to have our detail increased, and furnish men for fatigue parties in the line. Things have come to a great shortage, thanks to Labour at home.

Had a great dinner, all the Train Officers, at the Univers tonight.

16/2/18. Nothing to note.

17/2/18. Commencing today, have to send up a fatigue party to work nightly in vicinity of 44th Bde. H.Q. 50 men to be sent nightly. Went to see 'em at work tonight, and then went to La Bergere to see our R.E. parties at work. Rotten job.

III/p211

18/2/18. Today had two bits of A.A., one within 20 yds and the other 50. Not pleasant. Went up again to see our fatigue party at work. Were shrapnelling the other road.

19/2/18. Nothing to note.

20/2/18. Our Companies are to move to Achicourt, commencing with one Company today.

21/2/18. Nothing to note.

22/2/18. Ditto.

23/2/18. Ditto.

24/2/18. About 6 car loads of Munition workers pass through here every day on a joy ride. Such is war coming to.

III/p212

25/2/18. Saw President Clemenceau today, passing through here to use the sights.

26/2/18. Nothing to note.

27/2/18. Exceptionally busy today.

28/2/18. Ditto.

1/3/18. Ditto.

2/3/18. Nothing to note.

3/3/18. Ditto.

4/3/18. Rumours of leave being stopped on 8th.

5/3/18. Heard today that Hun attack is expected very shortly on this sector, and to the South.

6/3/18. Put up 1914 Star ribbon today.

7/3/18. Nothing to note.

8/3/18. Ditto.

9/3/18. Ginger was killed this morning in futile raid.

10/3/18. Nothing to note.

11/3/18. Div. quite windy. Gordons coming back here today to give place to Inf. Battn.

III/p213

12/3/18. Wind right up! Almost erect!

13/3/18. After our harassing bombardment during night, nothing happened.

14/3/18. Am to act as S.S.O. while S.S.O. is on leave.

15/3/18. Nothing to note.

16/3/18. Very busy taking over from S.S.O.

17/3/18. Very busy as S.S.O. and Adjt.

18/3/18. Ditto.

19/3/18. Ditto.

20/3/18. Dined at D.H.Q. tonight.

21/3/18. Bombardment started at dawn today, and a good many shells passed over, none near us. At 7.30am received message that Railhead was being shelled and our line to Coys. cut, as shells were dropping all along the road. I went out in a car to Companies to stop wagons, and from railhead to Companies passed numerous shell holes by the side of the road, the latter being littered with debris. When at Companies, heard a number of shells had dropped in Achicourt. On way back dropped a shell near us, and then another, the debris of which just missed the car. On returning found from Div. that Huns were said to have attacked to the South. One of Cashel's wagons was blown to bits. Later loaded from rail under trying conditions. On return to Bde. Refilling Point one silent heavy shell fell quite near. The concussion seemed as though an immensely strong person had hold of one's head and body, and was twisting one's neck. Hear the Huns have attacked to the South and taken Buellecourt, *Écoust(?)* and Noreuil.

III/p214

22/3/18.

Could not get by straight road to Achicourt today, owing to straight road being cut up by numbers of shells. On returning to Arras went to bridge by Rivage where poor *Woods* was blown up in April 1917, and found several big shells had dropped around about there during the night, one having blown in an estaminet. They were still removing the dead when I got there.

Poor old Livingstone, who took over from me yesterday evening when returning through Achicourt was very badly wounded, the billet next to Coy's office being blown up. Livingstone who was by the car got a bit of shell in his abdomen. Clark, the car driver, was wounded in the head, and Brown badly shaken. The car was damaged.

In the estaminet referred to above, heard that out of 14 men killed, 5 had leave warrants in their pockets, and were hanging about Arras for train today as train did not come up yesterday. One man is reported to have been dug out this morning who simply shook himself and walked off.

Just heard that Livingstone died of wounds.

At 10.30pm got orders to move at once to Dainville.

III/p216

23/3/18.

Arrived about 3am. Had about 2 hours sleep last night. All civilians within 15 kilos. of front being moved back. Something akin to consternation here. Poor devils are putting on their best clothes and trekking along with the few necessaries they can carry, old women wheeling along enormous rolls.

As the parish priest left this morning, he gave me a most cheery smile. Felt very touched.

The house opposite us was blown in a couple of days ago, and the late occupants were wandering about getting valuables from the cellar etc.

24/3/18.

Better news today that out of 80 Hun Divisions 60 have already been employed, and only 20 left to fight. Thus French reserves may be liberated to help us.

Moved to train Coys. at Berneville.

III/p217

25/3/18.

Worse news tonight that Huns have reached Martinpuich. Rumoured that Paris has been shelled from 75 miles away.

26/3/18.

Poor young **Godley(?)** and one attached driver were killed today by a Hun flying one of our planes who came down to within 200 ft. before losing his bombs. 3 H.D. also killed. Damned swine.

This afternoon Hun armoured cars were about in the vicinity. A **hawser(?)** and squad of men with a machine gun were stationed across the road here, but eventually an Officer came up and said "they've been collared", and the party then moved off.

Received orders to move to Agnez-lès-Duisans.

27/3/18. Moved to Agnez-lès-Duisans.

28/3/18. Heavy fighting all day east of Arras but up to the present, Huns believed to be held. If not, we would have to go pretty quick. Packed up ready to move all night, but nothing happened. Weather turned into a gale.

III/p218

29/3/18. A quiet day.

30/3/18. Ditto.

31/3/18. Ditto.

1/4/18. Huns said to be massing to the North.

2/4/18. Nothing to note.

3/4/18. Ditto.

4/4/18. Ditto.

5/4/18. Ditto.

6/4/18. Ditto.

7/4/18. Ditto.

8/4/18. An American Battalion is at Wanquetin. Said to be for us.

9/4/18. Number of tanks going South. Considerable shelling of back areas round about, but none here yet.

10/4/18. A few shells fell at Agnez railhead today, making a beastly row. They must have been big ones – perhaps trying for the big gun on the line.

Huns seem to have pushed up North with some success, worst luck.

III/p219

11/4/18. One of the shell holes by the station was made by an enormous shell. A whole tree was uprooted and thrown about 10 yards and split right up.

12/4/18. Nothing to note.

13/4/18. Ditto.

14/4/18. Ditto.

15/4/18. Ditto.

16/4/18. Ditto.

17/4/18. Hear we may move shortly.

18/4/18. Nothing to note.

19/4/18. Ditto.

20/4/18. Warning order for move received.

21/4/18. Nothing to note.

III/p220

22/4/18. Received sudden orders tonight that Division less Artillery would move commencing tomorrow to Bruay area.

23/4/18. Busy all day

24/4/18. Ditto.

25/4/18. Moved to Auchel today. Very nice to get back to **minor(?)** civilisation.

26/4/18. Fillers station where we load from rail is not an over nice spot now.

27/4/18. A few shells dropped here tonight but I peacefully slept through it all.

28/4/18. Nothing to note.

29/4/18. 3 and 4 Coys. started trekking back to XVII corps but were stopped on the way and sent back.

30/4/18. 1 Coy. join us 1st May.

1/5/18. 1 Coy. not to join us.

2/5/18. We are to go back to Agnez.

3/5/18. Aerodrome near us shelled pretty heavily.

4/5/18. Returned to Agnez.

III/p221

5/5/18. Had several shrapnel shells at railhead, one of which wounded Burke. One threw bullets round me.

6/5/18. Nothing to note.

7/5/18. Ditto.

8/5/18. Ditto.

9/5/18. Ditto.

10/5/18. Ditto.

11/5/18. Ditto.

12/5/18. Fine weather set in.

13/5/18. Ditto.

14/5/18. Ditto.

15/5/18. Ditto.

16/5/18. Ditto.

17/5/18. Rumours of show here shortly. Considerable activity.

18/5/18. Nothing to note.

19/5/18. Ditto.

20/5/18. Rumour show will begin 25th inst.

III/p222

21/5/18. Two of our men were killed tonight going up for R.E. Stores. A shell fell on the road and killed driver and horses of leading wagon and driver of second wagon – also one man on wagon, wounding the two loaders. Hard lines.

22/5/18. Nothing to note.

23/5/18. Ditto.

24/5/18. Luard rejoined from TP. today.

25/5/18. Nothing to note.

26/5/18. Ditto.

27/5/18. Ditto.

28/5/18. Heavy fighting between Reims and Soissons.

29/5/18. Huns unfortunately making some progress.

30/5/18. Ditto.

31/5/18. Nothing to note.

1/6/18. Ditto.

2/6/18. Ditto.

3/6/18. Ditto.

III/p223

4/6/18. Nothing to note.

5/6/18. Much to my surprise, found today I had been awarded M.C. in Birthday Honours list.

6/6/18. Hewitt left train today.

7/6/18. Had great dinner tonight.

8/6/18. Nothing to note.

9/6/18. Ditto.

10/6/18. Ditto.

11/6/18. Ditto.

12/6/18. The Colonel came down to breakfast as usual. Shortly afterwards I went out. At 11.30am Brooke-Alder told me that he had an appointment with him, and thought he was unwell as he had

taken a pill last night. I went up to his room, and found him in bed, leaning over the side with a basin under his head. Thought he was asleep, as I could not see his head, and went away. Shortly after Horne came to me looking absolutely green, and said that he could not awaken the Colonel, and something was seriously wrong. I went up and found the Colonel dead, looking terrible. I went for a Doctor. Later, after Court of Enquiry, Doctors decided he had died from cerebral haemorrhage. He went to his room about 10am, and was partially undressed in bed, so must have died quickly. Poor old chap.

Terribly busy looking after effects and arranging funeral.

III/p224

13/6/18. Funeral at Duisans. Hewitt and I chief mourners. Beautiful coffin made and over 100 men and numbers of officers marched to Duisans with limber on which coffin laid. G.O.C. Division and numbers of officers at funeral.

14/6/18. Sent off kit of the Colonel.

III/p225

15/6/18. Nothing to note.

16/6/18. Ditto.

17/6/18. Influenza broke out rampant. 4 men today admitted [sic to] Hospital. Very serious.

18/6/18. Influenza continues. Luard back.

19/6/18. Borrowed some men from 1st line while influenza rampant. Started local Hospital.

20/6/18. 'Flu going strong.

21/6/18. Ditto.

22/6/18. Got 'flu. Feel seedy.

23/6/18. Feel worse today.

24/6/18. 'Flu thrown off, but left me weak.

25/6/18. Ditto.

26/6/18. Nothing to note.

27/6/18. Ditto.

28/6/18. Ditto.

29/6/18. Ditto.

30/6/18. Ditto.

III/p226

1/7/18. Col. Sanders arrived today. Seems a very nice man.

2/7/18. Busy taking Col. Sanders round.

3/7/18. Ditto.

4/7/18. Ditto.

5/7/18. Col. Sanders went on leave today.

6/7/18. Nothing to note.

7/7/18. Ditto.

8/7/18. Ditto.

9/7/18. Ditto.

10/7/18. Division to move north to rest.

11/7/18. Nothing to note.

12/7/18. Ditto.

13/7/18. Ditto.

14/7/18. Left Agnez and moved to Mingoal. Billets poor.

15/7/18. Hear we are to proceed to South tomorrow. Here push on.

16/7/18. Left Mingoal by car for Paris. About an 8 hours' run. Arrived about 8pm. Stayed at Edouard VII.

III/p227

17/7/18. Pushed off by car after lunch and arrived Liancourt. We are now in French area, attached to 3rd French Army, a Division on its own. Great fun.

18/7/18. Liancourt delightful place. Sort of summer resort. Very tired.

19/7/18. Left Liancourt and arrived Cuise-la-Motte. Travelled right through Forest of Compiègne. Beautiful drive. Transport coming on by road, taking two days.

20/7/18. Went round district. Saw old battery positions of a few days ago quite near. French seem to have advanced well. Hear the Americans are doing excellently. Orders received to move right up into dugouts tonight. Later cancelled. Expect to move tomorrow.

III/p228

21/7/18. Very interesting being with French. Cuise-la-Motte was evacuated hurriedly by civilians, but is undamaged. Dirty and plagued with flies. French use telephone much more than we, and telegraph hardly at all.

22/7/18. Today we left Cuise-la-Motte and came up to Coeuvres. There are great caves just west of Coeuvres, and there one saw an amazing sight just as one imagined was in the old days. A great

cave was filled with French, English and American officers – D.H.Q., telephones and typewriters going hard. On one side a spy in an American uniform with a sentry with fixed bayonet on guard over him. Outside a mass of cars, with the road crowded with transport. Coeuvres itself full of wounded, dying and dead. We bivouacked on the hill for the night.

III/p229

23/7/18. Moved into the caves today. This place was in possession of the Hun, and later became the French front line. Full of debris and filth.

24/7/18. Nothing of particular to note.

25/7/18.

Am much struck by the French. They seem so practical. Carry nothing like the mass of kit that we do, and always work on the obvious war principle of having lots of quickly made transport, etc which we should call “cheap”, but which can be thrown away without loss on a breakdown and replaced speedily, and also quickly repaired. We go in for beautifully-made and expensive transport etc. whose loss is real, and which cannot be easily replaced.

III/p230

26/7/18. Moved quarters into the main cave.

27/7/18. Nothing to note.

28/7/18. Div. had a highly successful push and got over 200 prisoners and reached all objectives. Unfortunately, French on right were held up and Hun counterattacked on exposed flank, and forced our people back.

29/7/18. Nothing to note.

30/7/18. Ditto.

31/7/18. Have to move out of these caves by 3rd.

1/8/18. Nothing to note.

2/8/18. Hun are retiring in front of us, and Division in full pursuit.

III/p231

3/8/18. Moved to Vivières today. Division being brought back in lorries from pursuit of Hun.

4/8/18. French are simply marvellous in the way they move. Find us very slow, and we find them very quick. We are much too solid and immobile and slow at getting off the mark. It is, I think, simply a matter of organisation.

Division going up north. French papers full of praise for us.

Came to Liancourt by car. Very busy.

5/8/18. Part of easy mobility of French is, I am convinced, due to their realising that spit and polish as far as harness and weapons are concerned, is worse than a waste of time. It makes them show up to aeroplane observation and prevents the horses being kept in bad condition because so much time has to be spent on spit and polish. It is like a man who is going to play football dressing in football

clothes (like the French) or in his Sunday best (like us). And yet our chiefs don't learn, and go on in the same old way.

III/p232

6/8/18. Left Liancourt and travelled to Paris by car where we spent the night.

7/8/18. Left Paris and arrive Le Cauroy. Back to the old spot.

8/8/18. Busy all day.

9/8/18. Nothing to note.

10/8/18. Ditto.

11/8/18. Received orders to go and report for duty of D. of T. at G.H.Q. Delighted.

12/8/18. Went down to Paris Plage. Am to work directly under Beddy who has no assistant and runs all the H.T. Magnificent opportunity.

At night told the whole thing was cancelled.

III/p233

13/8/18. Saw Boyce, who told me Sanders had said he could not do without me. Boyce was very sorry, but could do nothing. Furious. Beadon said he wanted to use me. Explained Sanders had said he had only Webb to act as Adjutant and could not spare him from 1 Coy. Was very sorry.

Returned by car. Cursed Sanders, who could not understand it! Said he would do all he could etc, but when I suggested telephoning, refused, but very unwillingly promised to go and see Beadon tomorrow.

14/8/18. Sanders refused to go, and sent a typed letter. Beadon replied had now filled the job and would try to give me a job later.

III/p234

15/8/18. Left on leave.

6/9/18. Returned from leave and rejoined Div. at Coupigny. Luard has gone.

7/9/18. Am rather uncomfortable bivouacked in wood.

8/9/18. Very busy.

9/9/18. Ditto.

10/9/18. Ditto. Looked for billets elsewhere.

11/9/18. Saw Perry at Houchin today.

12/9/18. Nothing to note.

13/9/18. Moved today to good billets in Hersin. Mess in Mairie, in front of which I remember seeing French band with Col. Johnson early in '16! This whole area was then occupied by French.

14/9/18. Nothing to note.

15/9/18. One x(?) killed and one H.D(?) wounded at Marzingarbe.

16/9/18. Brooke-Alder went home today.

III/p235

17/9/18. Nothing to note.

18/9/18. Ditto.

19/9/18. Colonel went on leave to Rouen. I carried on.

20/9/18. Have to move to Barlin shortly.

21/9/18.

Accommodation at Barlin very good.

22/9/18. Nothing to note.

23/9/18. Moved to Barlin today. Told by Erleigh that I am now dubbed "Lord Baerlein of Barlin"!

24/9/18. Nothing to note.

25/9/18. Colonel returned from leave.

26/9/18. Aeroplanes over from Hunland.

27/9/18. Nothing to note.

28/9/18. News generally excellent.

29/9/18. Ditto.

30/9/18. Went to Barlin Theatre and saw excellent show by "Rouge et Noir", First Army Troupe, run by Parker. The girls in particular were extraordinarily good. While at the show, armistice with Bulgaria was announced. The men cheered, but officers took the announcement without much.

III/p236

1/10/18. Nothing to note.

2/10/18. Hun retiring on our front.

3/10/18. Ditto.

4/10/18. Appallingly busy arranging for accommodation for train in Noeux-les-Mines, where we are to move tomorrow.

5/10/18. Moved to Bracquemont end of Noeux-les-Mines today.

6/10/18. Loading from rail at Noeux-les-Mines station, first time there for 2½ years. A huge slag heap by the station now quite gone – all used up for standings, etc.
Just heard an armistice has been asked for by the Central Powers. A suitable thing on my reaching the ¼ century.

III/p237

7/10/18. Nothing to note.

8/10/18. Ditto.

9/10/18.

One H.D.(?) killed, one wounded, one Driver wounded slightly on convoy at Wingles.

10/10/18. Nothing to note.

11/10/18. Ditto.

12/10/18. Was today recommended for acting Promotion to rank of Major.

13/10/18. Nothing to note.

14/10/18. Read in papers that Germany accepts Wilson's terms. Wonder if we shall now have an armistice.

Went into Lens today. Absolutely smashed. Had already got one line up to Lens. Incredibly difficult to build railways owing to the mess on the lines. Passed a water cart! 21st Division still left at Quality Street from "Loos" 1915. Loos must have been a pretty little village.

III/p238

15/10/18. Nothing to note.

16/10/18. Moved to Philosophe. Huns in retreat. Went on by car passed old line to canal beyond Wingles, where we get out into open country again.

17/10/18. Companies moved to Wingles.

18/10/18. Moved to Carvin, where we got out into open country again. Covered with Hun notices. Saw one interesting poster depicting: a) how not to camouflage and b) how to camouflage. Scene: Road – sun shining – tress and cottage at side of road. In a) Infantry marching in fours on right side of road – lorry on right side – group of soldiers sitting in front of cottage – wagon near tree with a few branches thrown over it. In b) Infantry marching in twos in shade on wrong side of road – lorry in shade travelling on wrong side of road – group of soldiers sitting under a tree – wagon parked right under tree.

Saw first groups of civilians. All very excited and pleased – all taking hats off to me.

III/p239

19/10/18. Moved on to Thumeries, in more or less undamaged country. Transport exceedingly difficult as Huns have hindered communication by blowing up bridges and huge craters in roads. Very busy. Spoke to civilians. Huns take over a house then allot one room or more to civilians as considered necessary. Remainder given over entirely to soldiers, who looted everything.

III/p240

20/10/18. Becoming rather weary. Moved to Cappelle. First troops arrived 36 hours ago. Civilians très, très content. Troops arrived in time to stop streets being mined.

21/10/18. Moved [sic to] Genech. A farm which was mined blew up and nearly killed Horsley. Am getting very little sleep.

22/10/18. Went into Belgium today. Rather quaint to see Belgian flag. Advance held up by Scheldt.

23/10/18. Nothing particular to note.

24/10/18. Ditto.

25/10/18. Moved to La Glanerie - Belgium at last. Civilians being evacuated from villages on Scheldt. When I arrived, came and asked me for all sorts of things – doctor, transport – even whether letters could be sent by post to the Belgian army.

III/p241

26/10/18. Nothing particular to note.

27/10/18. Ditto.

28/10/18. Ditto.

29/10/18. Ditto.

30/10/18. Armistice with Turkey.

31/10/18. Armistice with Austria. Peace prospects bright.

1/11/18. Considerable shelling in vicinity.

2/11/18. Strong rumours re Armistice with Germany.

3/11/18. Armistice rumour not true.

4/11/18. Nothing to note.

5/11/18. Ditto.

6/11/18. Ditto.

7/11/18. Wilson sent Armistice terms to Hun 5th inst. Hun sent representation to Paris to conclude terms on 6th inst!

III/p242

8/11/18. Waiting daily to hear result of offer to Hun is wearisome.

9/11/18. Moved hurriedly to Wez-Velvain. Terribly smashed.

10/11/18. Moved on to Verizon. Fearful day.

11/11/18. Moved to Tourpes. Heard 9am that Armistice had been declared with effect from 11am.

12/11/18. Heard from Middle Temple that my petition to be excused further exams had been granted.

We are to be Army of occupation. Start on 16th inst. en route by road to Germany.

13/11/18. Nothing to note.

14/11/18. Ditto.

15/11/18. Not yet going to Germany after all.

16/11/18. Nothing to note.

III/p243

17/11/18. Nothing to note.

18/11/18. Ditto

19/11/18. Moved to Chateau at Quenoy.

The War being over, this Diary now closes.