

The DIARY
OF AN
AUSTRALIAN
SOLDIER

CAPT. K. J. BARRETT

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of an Australian Soldier

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(Captain K. J. Barrett)

The Lothian Book Publishing Co. Pty. Ltd.
Melbourne and Sydney

1921

PREFACE

THE publication of the diary of my elder son, who fell in France, April 16th, 1917, has been undertaken for two sets of reasons. I am desirous of doing whatever may be possible to place on record the services rendered by one who played the game of life so loyally and so well. The personal side of the matter has, however, been dealt with in a manner which I can admire, but cannot hope to emulate, by my old friend, Mr. H. G. Turner, and the memorial booklet written by him contains all that can be said on that aspect of the matter. The diary, which was submitted to him and by his advice deferred for publication until after the conclusion of the war, furnishes much of the data on which he based his conclusions.

Apart from the personal interest, the diary to me is of profound educational significance, and as such I present it to those who are interested in following so remarkable a human development.

Keith Barrett as a boy showed little sign of scholastic ability. Possessed of an affectionate and sunny nature, he passed through his school days at the Melbourne Grammar School without showing any remarkable ability, or indeed any great interest in his work until he began to study physical science. During the whole of this school period, however, he was keenly interested in what is generally known as nature study, and acquired a fairly full knowledge of the wild life of the Australian continent, as well as an intimate knowledge of the biological characteristics of certain domesticated animals, especially old English game fowls. He entered the Melbourne University, and in due course obtained the degree of Bachelor of Agricultural Science. At the University his work again was not remarkable from the ordinary academic standpoint. During this course, however, he obtained a good working knowledge of the theory of Mendel, and began to apply it to a series of experiments in the breeding of fowls, which became more and more comprehensive. In the intervals of the

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military campaign he kept sending home directions for the conduct of experimental work, which unfortunately was never completed. Owing to the pressure of military work he never had time to set out comprehensively the results he was seeking. At the end of the agricultural course he went to Queensland to get an experience of station life before embarking on a career of his own. Whilst in Queensland war was declared, and he volunteered at once, becoming a private in the 2nd Field Ambulance. He encamped at Broadmeadows, and left Australia with the first contingent on the S.S. "Wiltshire" on October 18th, 1914.

I saw him in Egypt on my own arrival there in 1915, during which year he received a commission in the Imperial Army. I again saw much of him in the winter of 1915-16, when I was invalided to England from Egypt, and he was invalided from the Dardanelles. He kept up a full correspondence with me until the end.

I suppose there must have been many such instances during the war, but his development in character and grasp under military necessity was amazing.

The agricultural curriculum at the Melbourne University has been much criticized, but the diary furnishes convincing evidence of the value of the scientific outlook given by that training. Lieut.-General Sir J. Monash has voiced the opinion of all sound observers that the university-trained man almost invariably rose to the top. And the reason is easy to comprehend. Students have been taught how a problem should be attacked, they have been taught what scientific evidence really means, and above all they have been taught from the intellectual no less than from the moral point of view that there is only one policy which pays: downright unflinching honesty. Those who read this diary will note the systematic way in which all problems are attacked; they will be able to see the question continually put to himself by the writer: What is it we have to do? What are the data of the subject? What are the principles involved and how are they to be applied?

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The diary itself was kept for the purpose of giving an indication to his family of what was actually occurring. It was never written for publication, and it is absolutely unconscious in its frankness. It was kept only during actual military operations; during sickness, or when wounded, or on leave the diary is interrupted. He has, however, left behind him numerous notebooks, filled with studies on bombing, on infantry attack, on artillery work, on aeroplane reconnaissance, essays on discipline, on the art of making men comfortable and contented, on the military efforts of various countries, and a large number of other technical subjects. These essays incidentally furnish to the non-combatant soldier evidence of the soundness and thoroughness of training in the officers' schools in the British army. Indeed, some of the instructions issued relating to causes of military failure are classics and force the reader to fully understand why that improvised army ultimately succeeded.

Like many other people, a survey of such a record forces on me the reflection that if Australians, in common with other British people, could develop in this extraordinary way under military necessity, why cannot we pull together, create a parallel civil organization and do great things in civil life? This, to me, is the final lesson to be drawn from such a record. I commend its perusal to those friends who will appreciate it for personal reasons, and to the serious-minded who are interested in educational matters and who will realize its significance to the full.

Readers of this diary will find in it an accurate and faithful record of the events experienced by thousands of men during four and a half years of war, and of the manner in which they faced the daily difficulty with courage and intelligence.

Those who were fortunate enough to survive and who owe their existence to the men who fell cannot but keep before them for all time the dignified words officially addressed to surviving relatives:

“He whom this scroll commemorates was numbered among those who, at the call of King and Country, left all that was dear to them,”

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“endured hardness, faced danger, and finally passed out of the sight of men by the path of duty and self-sacrifice, giving up their own lives that others might live in freedom.”

“Let those who come after see to it that his name be not forgotten.”

JAMES W. BARRETT.

November, 1920.

KEITH BARRETT

- October 10th, 1891. Born at Kensington Rd., S. Yarra, Melbourne.
1901. Entered Preparatory Church of England Grammar School, Melbourne.
- 1904-1909. Senior C. of E. Grammar School, Melbourne.
- 1910-1912. Ormond College, University of Melbourne. Agricultural Course. Honours.
1913. Dookie Agricultural College and Sparrowvale. Graduated Bachelor Agricultural Science, 1914.
1914. Gained his Half-Blue for Boxing.
1914. Queensland.
- August, 1914. Broadmeadows. Private 2nd Field Ambulance. A.I.F.
- October 18th, 1914. Boarded S.S. "Wiltshire."
- December 10th, 1914. Reached Alexandria. Mena Camp.
1915. Recommended for a commission in the Imperial Army by G.O.C. Australian Force, and joined the 2nd Royal Fusiliers, 86th Brigade, 29th Division, in July. Trained in Egypt.
- August 17th, 1915. Left for Dardanelles. Reached Suvla Bay August 24th.
- September 18th. Contracted typhoid. Sent to Hospital at Malta.
- December 15th, 1915. Arrived Wandsworth Hospital, London.
- January 10th, 1916. Discharged from Hospital, two months' leave. Light duties, Falmouth.
- June 9th, 1916. France.
- June 30th, 1916. Wounded in shoulder in attack on Beaumont-Hamel. Invalided to England again.
- Sept. 16th, 1916. Joined 4th Royal Fusiliers in France.
- Xmas Eve, 1916. Promoted to Captain (temporary).
- January 4th, 1917. Mentioned in despatches.
- March, 1917. Recommended for Military Cross.

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- May 21st, 1917. Mentioned in despatches (second occasion).
- April 9th, 1917. Helped in capturing "The Harp" in Arras fighting and recommended for D.S.O.
- April 13th, 1917. Mortally wounded in fighting at Guemappe, France.
- April 16th, 1917. Died in hospital at Camieres.
- April 17th, 1917. Buried at Etaples.
- December 14th, 1917. Mentioned in despatches for third time.

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October 18th, 1914. Left Broadmeadows and boarded "Wiltshire." Same afternoon we anchored about a mile off Port Melbourne pier. Another troopship there too, A20.

Monday, October 19th. Cleared Heads about 11 a.m. Other troopship following but soon left behind.

Saturday, October 24th. Arrived in Albany Harbour about 10 a.m. after a wonderfully calm trip. Passed some ships on route almost every day, one said to be a cruiser. One troopship already in, more coming.

Sunday, October 25th. Now 14 troopships in harbour. One cruiser outside Heads.

Wednesday, Albany, October 28th. There are now about 30 troopships in the Bay, inclusive of nine New Zealanders which arrived this morning: they are painted grey. Four cruisers came with them, including one Japanese, I believe. We are expecting to be joined by two West Australian boats soon.

Sunday, November 1st. Left Albany Heads at 7 a.m. Our speed averages about 10 miles per hour. We travelled along the coast.

Monday, November 2nd. Said to have passed Leeuwin 2 a.m. In morning our course was N.W. Heard that a wireless had come through to the effect that Great Britain had declared war on Turkey. At 3 p.m. I

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observed that our course was nearly due N. In evening it went to about N.N.W.

Tuesday, November 3rd. Our course is now N. 20° to 30°, W. Wireless come through saying that Great Britain has lost a big cruiser in the Straits of Dover ("Hermes"). At about 4 p.m. we picked up the West Australians; they fell into line immediately in rear of us. One cruiser came with them. We have now "Minotaur" in front, "Sydney" on port side, Jap. to starboard, and "Melbourne" astern.

Sunday, November 8th. We have been steering N. 20° W. Now have been going fairly close to the mail route. The "Osterley" came through our lines one day last week, *via* Colombo. We had a couple of fairly rough days shortly after leaving Albany (westerly weather), but have since had wonderfully calm seas. We are very close to Cocos Islands, where it is said we are to pick up two French transports and two cruisers. Talk of fleet splitting up, etc. We were inoculated against typhoid. First injection about a fortnight ago. Second one on Saturday. Arm sore. Received news of a naval engagement off Valparaiso in which the "Monmouth" was said to be sunk. This morning the "Minotaur" sped off in a westerly direction, the "Melbourne" taking her place in front. Three British cruisers, the "Good Hope," the "Monmouth," and another are said to have engaged five Germans—the "Scharnhorst," "Gneisau," and "Leipzig," and two others off Valparaiso.

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Monday, November 9th. The "Sydney" has cleared out in a south-westerly direction this morning. The "Southern" is our slowest ship, about $10\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour. There is now talk that we might leave her at Colombo, taking the men on the other ships; highly improbable.

About 10 a.m. The "Melbourne" is now steaming S.W., too. Ship's alarm rung, and our stern-guns (4.7) cleared for action; also the Japanese cruiser is going full speed across our bows from starboard to port. Rumours afloat about intercepted German wireless.

Later. Reliable information to the effect that "Sydney" and "Minotaur" are in action to westward. At 11.25 a.m. word received that enemy beached on Cocos Island to save sinking. Said that it was "Emden" and an armed collier.

Tuesday, November 10th. The last we have heard about yesterday's action is that the "Emden" surrendered and beached, and that the collier's crew was taken off and the vessel sunk (why sink her?). The "Sydney" is said to have done all the fighting and lost two men killed and thirteen wounded.

Wednesday, November 11th. We have now the "Melbourne" and the Japanese cruiser with us. It is said that the "Minotaur" has returned to Australia. The "Sydney" has not come back yet. I might mention that we passed the Cocos Islands about 30 miles to our left—the wrong side. We could not raise their wireless

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station, and it is supposed that the "Emden" destroyed it and then lay in wait for us. It is stated that the presence of the "Emden" was discovered either by intercepted wireless messages or by interference with our own messages. There are rumours (unconfirmed) that another German cruiser, the "Konigsberg," is in the vicinity. The rumour is, however, more or less discredited. We are now right in the tropics, not far south of the line. It is very hot, and our troop-deck (down below where we eat and sleep) is an inferno. We have our meals in almost aboriginal fashion, stripped to the waist. They permit us to sleep on deck. This is a great improvement. Our parade-deck, where we are expected to sleep, is, of course, between decks and protected from rain. This is good, but the deck is unfortunately hosed down at 5 a.m.; this is bad. We don't have to drill until 6.30. To escape from this early rising many sleep on hatchways and other exposed parts. This commonly results in some slight activity about 2 a.m., when down comes a tropical shower (light or heavy), and if one can find any spare space on the parade-deck good; if not, one takes one's hammock with one to hell—or, rather, the troop-deck.

Just as I write orders have come out that we must wear singlet and trousers at mess. At times we are entertained by the ship's alarm when every man has to rush to an allotted post—fire stations, etc., etc. This is sometimes done at night. I think it very essential. There are some very ugly rumours *re* deaths. When

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a ship wishes to bury someone it falls out of line and slows up and stops. This has been done many times by different boats, unhappily. On one boat, the "Euripides," it is said three deaths have occurred, one from lockjaw and two from diphtheria. The worst news of all is that there are over 100 cases of typhoid on the "Orvieto." We have had measles on this boat ever since we left, and there are now ten cases in the isolation hospital. A more serious outbreak is feared, I understand, as the inoculation period is about fourteen days.

Thursday, November 12th. This morning the "Melbourne" sent us a message saying that she was ordered on service elsewhere and wished us "God speed," etc. She made off about N.W., that is ahead of us. We have now only the Jap. with us, unless, indeed, the "Pyramus" is to the rear, which is exceedingly unlikely as she cannot and has not been seen by us. This afternoon a big three-funnelled boat appeared on our starboard bow. The Jap. rushed to meet her. She turned out to be the auxiliary cruiser "Empress of Asia," a large vessel painted grey going at a high speed, to repair wireless at Cocos which German landing party destroyed. This party got clear away in a schooner.

I forgot to mention that at daybreak the "Orvieto" was right away ahead with the "Melbourne." One man says he saw a rocket go up. Both ships were lying to so we soon came up with them, and passed

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them to starboard. Later the "Orvieto" regained her position and the "Melbourne" said "good-bye" and was off. The Jap. is very formidable looking and belches forth a tremendous quantity of smoke when going at full speed. There are rumours about the "Minotaur" having met the "Konigsberg" and being on her heels.

Friday, November 13th. We are told that we crossed the line about 7 o'clock this morning. At daybreak we observed a new cruiser in the lead—the "Hampshire," also the New Zealanders were coming up between our lines. Finally the New Zealanders and three of our ships ("Anglo-Egyptian," "Karoo," and another) steamed ahead of us under escort of the "Hampshire."

It has been raining all day and for the third time our parade deck is being used to exercise the horses, so that we have nowhere to go practically. At sunset the New Zealanders are still visible on the sky-line. They have gone on, to save time at Colombo. Latest news is bad: "Good Hope" was sunk, "Monmouth" beached, but "Glasgow" escaped in the Valparaiso action; Germans unscathed. Also statement that the "Konigsberg" has been located (where?) and her crew is entrenched ashore and being shelled by the "Chatham." Position in France unaltered.

Monday, November 16th. We arrived at Colombo about 1.30 p.m. Sunday. Early in the morning, the "Sydney" and the "Empress of Russia" (with German prisoners and 150 wounded). The "Empress of

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Russia" is sister ship of "Empress of Asia." 20,000 ton and 25 knots, one year old. Only merchant ships with three funnels and cruiser sterns, four propellers. Word received that in action with "Emden" Jap. cruiser signalled, "I want to go." "Melbourne" replied, "You can't go." Jap, "But I want to go." Reply, "You can't go." Also said that, one night when Jap. sole convoy, "Orvieto" left all her lights burning. Jap signalled, "Are you a troopship or a moving picture palace?"

Lots of ships here in port. Curious five-funnelled Russian cruiser, "Askold." Reports *re* Valparaiso action conflicting. Russians said to be in Eastern Prussia.

Wednesday, November 18th. The centre and the port lines and the New Zealanders left Colombo about 11.30 a.m. yesterday. We are accompanied by the "Hampshire." At present she is keeping just a little ahead of us. The "Euripides" and her following were to leave later accompanied by the "Yarmouth."

Friday, November 20th. Still steaming towards Aden. Calm weather. This morning at daybreak another cruiser was seen to the rear; looks like Jap. Towards evening more ships of the third division were seen catching us up. The "Euripides," etc., also four New Zealand ships, went ahead with the "Ascanius." (Pay day again, another 14s.) The Jap. cruiser also went ahead.

Sunday, November 22nd. On Saturday morning, before daybreak ships of the third division were seen

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lying to on our port side; there were about seven life-buoy lights seen in the water. The "Ascanius" was also there. The "Hampshire" used searchlights and came across from the starboard side and used her lights among the buoys. It appears that the "Shropshire" and "Ascanius" had collided, and it was thought that men had fallen overboard; this, however, was found to be a mistake (rumour). Shortly the third division and the "Ascanius" then steamed ahead again and out of sight. They must have first passed us in the night.

There are 24 troopships now in our fleet. It is said that the "Orvieto" is carrying German prisoners. We have lost twelve horses to date.

Tuesday, November 24th. On Monday we steamed past Socotra, spent most of the day passing. Splendid rugged scenery. In the afternoon Captain Shaw left us and went on board the "Orvieto" (or warship). This morning the "Orvieto" left us, going for Aden. We are now in between the two lines of ships.

Saturday, November 28th. On Wednesday evening we arrived at Aden, where the other ships of our fleet were lying at anchor. There were many ships in the harbour, and many were numbered, evidently troopships, perhaps returning for more Indians. We did not get any stores, etc., and all weighed anchor at 6 a.m. Thursday. The same evening we passed through the Straits. The "Ascanius" is now tenth ship of the starboard line. We have the "Hampshire" still with us. The New Zealanders have gone ahead again. We have

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passed many ships since Aden; many have been troopships.

Yesterday we had to pull bags of rotten potatoes from No. 5 hatch to be sorted on forward skid deck. The stench was fearful and many bags boiling hot. It is a scandalous waste; a few days ago we had to throw overboard bags of rotten onions and swedes from the stern room. Ship's staff might have saved nearly all. I asked Capt. Morley yesterday if he would like an assistant ashore at Port Said in getting stores. He said he would remember it, and I believe I will have the good fortune to go ashore. The latest news is that we are to go to Cairo to relieve the Territorial Garrison there. This afternoon the "Orvieto" went ahead again.

Tuesday, December 1st. We arrived at Suez at 12 noon to-day. The first part of the Red Sea trip was hot with a following wind, the latter part was cool with a strong head wind. We heard to-day that the "Orvieto" was sniped at going through the Canal, also learnt that a Turkish army is marching on Egypt. Spent an interesting morning at Suez. Boats doing barter. At about 7 p.m. this evening we weighed anchor and steamed into the Canal. We have an armed guard on deck. Many of the troopships have preceded us.

Thursday, December 3rd. We arrived at Port Said about 9 a.m. yesterday. About 1 a.m. in the night we

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passed an encampment of the 11th Gurkhas and the 9th Lancashire Regiment; guarding the Canal apparently. We coaled yesterday (and got more water?). Several English and French warships at Port Said. One British ship, the "Swiftsure," has 12 inch guns fore and aft. Last night some of the men got ashore. We had an extra guard of 80 men put on board.

This afternoon Indian troop fleet steamed away, probably for Europe. They had come through since our arrival, about 20 ships, I think; rumour says 27, a cruiser as escort. To-night at 8 p.m. we weighed anchor bound for Alexandria.

Thursday, December 10th. On Tuesday morning we arrived at Alexandria and have been at anchor since.

Leave was granted yesterday and I went ashore for the afternoon. This was a very enjoyable break, and it was good to feel the land under one's feet again. A great number of the men were ashore and all enjoyed the holiday. Alexandria is a place where one could spend a month exploring; picturesque though dirty like most other Egyptian towns.

Rumour is still rife as to troops arriving in Egypt from all parts, and it will be a good thing when our own departure is settled. News of this is likely to come along at any time.

Friday, December 11th. Last night we came alongside wharf. To-day was spent in getting off all the

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Light Horsemen, their horses, and nearly all equipment, only ten men remained.

On Saturday we got our equipment, etc., on train and finally left in evening by train for Cairo. Forty men as rearguard stayed behind to look after luggage. We arrived at Cairo about 10.30 and about 2 a.m. we left by tram for camp where we bivouacked on the sand for the rest of the night. Have been getting camp gradually into order ever since. We are now down to proper rations, which does not permit of gorging.

Hammit and self had a swim and wash at Mena House, and a meal, smoke, and chess at restaurant opposite.

About February 10th the 2nd Expeditionary Force arrived and encamped at Heliopolis.

About January 27th about half of the New Zealanders left for the Canal.

On February 3rd at about 10 a.m. the 7th and 8th Infantry Battalions also left for Ismalia. They returned on the 10th inst.

February 28th. Some days ago word was received that we might strike camp any day. Last night the 12th Battalion left, destination unknown. I sent in an application for a temporary commission in the British Army. Applications have been called for; about a month ago a number of names were sent forward, among them mine, but so far no word has been received. The New Zealanders have just returned from the Canal, where some of the companies were under fire.

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March 12th. The remainder of the 3rd Brigade left shortly after the 12th Battalion, and the whole sailed from Alexandria somewhere about the 2nd inst. General Birdwood left Cairo previous to the departure of the 3rd Brigade (where for?), but returned about a week ago.

On Monday, last, Father went to meet the 3rd Contingent: four troopships, Light Horsemen and Reinforcements. On Tuesday some of these came into our camp occupying the position of the 3rd Brigade. Col. Downes, Light Horse Field Ambulance, is with them.

On Wednesday I saw Stan. Barber at the head of some of the Engineers returning from the Canal.

There are all sorts of rumours about our departure, but little is certain, though it appears highly probable that we will be off very soon. From what information is obtainable it also appears probable that we will pursue the "Wily Ottoman" and not the "Insouciant Teuton."

The last few days in camp have been very unpleasant owing to a violent westerly wind. Yesterday this reached its climax and every one was sand and dust from head to foot. Unfortunately these periodical disturbances seriously affect the social customs of the soldiers, e.g.: it is an unwritten rule that the private performs an entire ablution once every month, whether he needs it or not. Latterly, due to aforesaid circumstances, he has had to increase his efforts in this direction, which is a case of much hardship.

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Much has been said about the behaviour of the Australian soldiers : to my mind there is little doubt that that percentage of wasters spoken of by Capt. Bean is very much in evidence. There is also no doubt, however, that the great majority are fine men, and if not so amenable to discipline as the English soldiers, are probably more responsive to an appeal to reason. They are, however, much sloppier in appearance than Terriers, and this is only partly accounted for by their less spruce uniforms. The Australian is inclined to lean up against the shop windows, etc., etc. There is a further difficulty which arises out of two qualities, a good and a bad—Australians always stick together. The rotter does something contemptible, a row starts, perhaps with the natives; the better stamp of soldier sees the trouble, asks no questions, but assists the rotter, who escapes when the row is at its height.

The food on the whole has been very good. We get rations which in themselves would be meagre enough, supplemented by a 6d. a day allowance.

March 15th. Last night Father went off to Port Said again to meet two more troopships. He has been made consulting oculist to the forces in Egypt; more work for him I suppose. I hear Stan. Barber is now first lieutenant.

* My old friend, Mr. Arboo, has fallen on evil days. Alas! For some considerable time past he has been laundryman to our corps. His trusting soul and methodical business arrangements enabled some of the infantry

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to walk off with many of our men's pants, etc., that were being washed. A soldier is not efficient without trousers, and poor Arboo had to make good these losses out of his own pocket. His business has further declined due to his returning clothes washed indeed, but also inhabited by not too welcome visitors.

About a week ago one of our corps died; a nice young chap called Morris.

Wednesday, March 17th, 1915. On Monday evening, night, and Tuesday morning it actually rained; the first that could be called rain since we came here.

All marching orders have been cancelled for the present. The rumour is that we were to be transported to a Greek island (Lemnos) as a base—Greece having joined the Allies. As Greece did not join we have been held up. Rumour also hath it that the 3rd Brigade is in Syria, has been in action, and has a number of casualties.

Last Monday week Father went to Port Said and met four more troopships, containing Light Horse, Reinforcements, and Ambulance (Col. Downes). These began to arrive in the early hours of Tuesday morning.

On Wednesday last, in the afternoon, I saw Stan. Barber and the men returning from the Canal. Stan. now first lieutenant.

On Saturday Father went again to Port Said to meet two more troopships.

March 20th. Climbed the forbidden Pyramid with

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Ruf. Nothing in it, though care is necessary. We had no guide, though I had a fair idea of the way.

March 22nd. There was a Capt. Todd there who had been seaplaning at the Dardanelles. His mother-ship had been torpedoed. He was asleep at the time; it didn't wake him; boat didn't sink, luckily, though one hold filled, and she listed badly. I wasn't able to ask him any questions, but there are rumours of 42 transports at Alexandria, and that English troops have been landed there. Further, the 3rd Brigade may still be at sea (outside Lemnos).

Tuesday, March 30th. Last Friday Sir Ian Hamilton arrived at Cairo. On the same day 500 New Zealanders also arrived.

French and English troops have recently arrived in Egypt. There is a naval brigade at Port Said.

All of us are apparently being held in readiness to be launched anywhere when opportunity permits. Rumour that 2nd Brigade is at Smyrna. In orders this morning that there will be a mail to them this week. I think it quite possible that they have gone to Europe, as Australian Refs. in the western theatre of the war.

General Hamilton inspected the 1st and 2nd Brigades yesterday morning, and is busy inspecting all the forces in Egypt.

Saturday, April 3rd. Last Monday evening General Hamilton returned to Alexandria. Yesterday Father went off to meet two more troopships. To-day the

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camp is in a great state of bustle, and some battalions and No. 1 Field Ambulance are going to-night. We may go to-morrow.

A number of us were offered commissions this morning. I in the infantry. Conditions are a course of instruction in Egypt, and then sent anywhere. I accepted and was told I would receive instructions shortly.

Friday, April 9th. Last Sunday we (Morrison, Peacock, Fox, and self) were sent out here (Base Details Camp, Abbassia). On the same evening most of No. 2 Field Ambulance and some of the 2nd Brigade Infantry went off to Alexandria. Last night I saw the remainder of No. 2 F.A. (the ambulance waggons) going to entrain. Some of the artillery have also gone. Shortly after we arrived here 18 out of the 59 of us were sent away, including Tom Fox. Six sent to Ismalia (artillery), and twelve (Army Service, Cavalry, etc.) straight to England. Yesterday General Spens had a word with the remaining 41 of us and the same evening we were gazetted and put up our stars. Before this our treatment had been so-so. I had some practice at company and platoon drill, but of course not enough. Our men are now helping to run two of these mixed battalions. A sgt.-major—now Lieutenant Creaney—is adjutant (acting) to No. 1 battalion and he has made me assistant-adjutant. Our battalion commander is Capt. Permezal. I have been all day in the office and hope to pick up the running soon.

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Sunday, April 18th. On Wednesday last about 60 Ceylon planters, rifle corps men, arrived at this camp. Like us they have been given commissions and have been spread out among our two infantry battalions. The 4th Brigade has gone to Alexandria—a few light horse, some artillery, and, I think, most of the New Zealanders; all the infantry.

On Friday I gave up the assistant-adjutant job, or, rather, was transferred at my own request to a platoon to get outside work. Was sorry in a way to leave the office in such a bad state, as the adjutant's job was a very trying one, and I didn't know enough about it to be of much assistance. The adjutant himself almost transferred, but the O.C. wouldn't let him go. A Ceylon planter of some experience has been put on to help him.

P.S.—The adjutant was wanted for another position. The man to take his place I knew I would not work well with, hence I asked to be relieved of the assistant position. Afterwards the adjutant was not allowed to go.

The chief trouble is the enormous number of fatigues required, and the fact that the company officers are not up to it, don't bother, and have no control over the men. The men also clear out of camp to Heliopolis in droves, and cannot be found when wanted. My short experience in an adjutant's office has convinced me more than ever of the need of discipline, *i.e.*, the immediate, precise, and thorough carrying-out of all

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lawful orders. Without this, military organization is impossible. I am certain I will have not the least trouble in commanding men when I know my work. Last night 180 sick Australians arrived from Syria (?). They are mostly 3rd Brigade men who, it appears, have not fired a shot, but have been at anchor off Lemnos, and going ashore daily for exercise, but always sleeping aboard. Some of these sick were "venereals."

Yesterday in town I met a lady journalist who had been to Alexandria. She said some Australians troopships had come back and disembarked, and that many are now under canvas at Alexandria. Apparently none have landed Dardanelles way. She didn't think much of the French troops, especially the transport and ambulance which she said were very antiquated—one had date 1870 on it.

I have, after some little difficulty, obtained permission to hold a soldier's concert here in the Cinema Hall. It is to come off to-morrow night if we do not strike camp and go to Zeitoun before then.

We are still without pay but hope to hear something about it soon. Seems certain that we will be here, Egypt, for some time.

Saturday, April 24th. We left camp on Monday last and established ourselves at Zeitoun. 1st Battalion left about 10 o'clock; 2nd in afternoon early. I don't think the 4,000 remounts are being shipped, and a few details were also left, but headquarters are with us. The two battalions are now quite separate and the

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officers have battalion messes ; the only possible arrangement. The tent accommodation for the men is much more limited—eleven to a tent, which is far too much in this weather. We have three to a tent (officers).

There are about two officers to each platoon; 1 C.P.R. and 1 A.I.Z. (roughly). I am attached to 1st Platoon Company, with a C.P.R.; man in charge named Bland. Some talk of trained officers and sgt.-majors from home to come here to instruct us. Hope it is true.

On Wednesday I suddenly, during the morning, got a bad headache and became very flushed, temp., etc., and was finally sent over to No. 1 General, where I am at present. Turned out to be only tonsillitis, and am nearly right again. Very good treatment in hospital.

News in morning's paper says 20,000 of Med. Exped. Force have landed at Enos, probably Australians. Soon be fighting. Looks as though they either hope to invade European Turkey and catch them on the hop from that point, and so perhaps weaken the Dardanelles forces, necessitating their partial withdrawal, or perhaps a direct attack at Dardanelles from the north on land. A great portion of this Med. Exped. Force has been gathered at Lemnos awaiting a favourable opportunity—all under Sir Ian Hamilton. How many? Hard to say; perhaps 100,000 men. Large Turkish army.

Friday, April 30th. Quite well again, but still at hospital. Many sick had arrived from Dardanelles up to yesterday, including 60 recent venereals. Yester-

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day three trainloads of wounded returned, mostly slight wounds, but in last train a large number of serious ones, about 450 all told. Three more trainloads to come to-day. About 650 beds are at Luna Park, 1,000 here; another building near racecourse holding more, and another building at Abbassia with venereals at present. All these are under management of No. 1 General. All venereals to go back to Australia. It appears that Australians landed on the Saros side of Gallipoli on Sunday last at several points and that they had a very rough time.

Zeitoun, June 6th. On May 1st an officers' school of instruction commenced here. Forty men from the Australians and C.P.R.'s were selected. I was not among them, but was able to fill a vacancy, and on May 2nd joined the class (Tuesday). The instructors are officers straight from France: Commandant, Major Colston; Adjutant, Lieut. Cook; Q.M., Lieut. Chadwick; Inst., Lieut. Clark. The course lasted four weeks with exams. It finished on Friday, May 28th, and we received our certificates on Monday, 31st. We are now hoping to be sent to England.

July 24th. From the time our course of instruction started until June 27th we combined in our training battalions. I in the first attached to A Coy. under Fussel; enjoyed the work.

On June 28th about 60 subaltern officers (also N.C.O.'s) from the 6th Aust. Brigade, which had lately arrived, began a course of instruction at the Zeitoun

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School. Imperial men who had done their course there were to replace them for the three weeks. As luck would have it, I, with three others, became attached to the 23rd Battalion and sent to the range as firing point o. Two were subsequently withdrawn; Armstrong and I being left. We finished our three weeks there and then returned to our training battalions. Armstrong and I returning on Tuesday, July 20th.

I have been attached now to C Coy. under an O.C. who hardly ever appears on parade or takes any interest in the company, etc., etc.

On Saturday, July 3rd, all men awaiting Imperial attachments were paraded by order S.O.C. We were asked what regiments we would like to be attached to, belonging to the 29th Division, at the Dardanelles. On Sunday we were again paraded and asked did we speak Hindustani.

About Tuesday, July 6th, 20 of our fellows, selected by ballot I believe, were sent off to ——. Last we heard was that they were at Malta. The same week twelve men were warned to hold themselves in readiness for the Canal (Indian Army); they have not gone yet. On Wednesday last, July 21st, another twenty were told to hold themselves in readiness, probably for the Dardanelles. I was the fifth to be recommended from 1st Battalion, but only three were wanted.

My experience at the range was useful *re* musketry and manhandling. Also it was another eye-opener *re*

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the Australian Forces. Men splendid, but untrained ;

~~Notes etc etc~~

August 2nd. On Saturday, July 24th, thirteen of our men went to join the Canal defences. On the following Wednesday 20 went off for Dardanelles. I had a fortnight helping to instruct some Australian recruits. They left for the Front on Saturday last after a fortnight in Egypt, quite untrained.

I have just been attached to a fresh company just arrived (7th of the 10th).

There appears to be a great fight either in progress or pending at the Dardanelles. We have an immense army there and it is imperative to break through before winter.

Sunday, August 15th. Twenty of us received orders to hold ourselves in readiness on Thursday night and to report at 7.30 a.m. on Friday, August 13th. We did so, and were told to entrain for Alexandria at 4 p.m. There were Bainbridge, Horsfall and self from No. 1 Tr. Battalion, Hanner and Webster from 4th; excluding Bainbridge the four of us made a party. On arrival at Alexandria we were told to report at Mustapha Barracks at 9.30 next morning. Spent night at Regina and next morning, Saturday, were told to embark on "Tunisian" at 3 p.m. Did so and have been here since. About 1,000 troops (largely Terriers) embarked last night but disembarked again this morning. The trouble is the propeller shaft has received injury and the boat may not be able to leave for some

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time. All unattached officers are forbidden shore leave and await orders.

Wednesday, August 18th. We had leave ashore from noon to midnight on Sunday. On returning to the ship we found orders to embark on the "Arcadian" at 9 a.m. next morning awaiting us. On Monday we embarked here and found much pleasanter quarters. The "Arcadian" has just come out from England, R.M.S.P. line. A fine ship containing various drafts for the Dardanelles. News arrived last night of one of our transports being sunk with large loss of life. We were to sail in the afternoon but anchored in the harbour for the night. Saw two packed troopships go out; no escort. On Friday night from the "Tunisian" we had seen a troopship go out, preceded by two submarines. Yesterday morning we left Alexandria at daybreak.

All men have to have lifebelts with them everywhere and every now and then an alarm goes. Unattached officers have been given certain posts, etc., and sort of sentry-go business in case of accident. Food on ship is excellent. Most of the younger officers are nice, some very young. Highest rank on board is captain—three of them. O.C. is a captain, very young and "mush quies".

Passed Aegean Archipelago Islands this morning early on port bow (Crete). British Tommies much better disciplined than Australians, very respectful, etc. Sturdy but not big men. Quite a different expression

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of countenance, not nearly so bold or self-possessed as Australians though no doubt just as brave. Three officers and 150 men of Royal Fusiliers on board—very good. Tommies' speech is very amusing to me.

12 noon. Islands on our starboard bow now. Also overhauling a steamer to starboard, painted grey; probably another troopship.

12.45 p.m. A British cruiser steamed towards us from the port bow. I had a splendid view of her through my glasses. Islands are still all round us, look very rugged and barren, but as plenty of fishing boats about presume they are inhabited.

2.30 p.m. Houses on top of island to starboard; one shining white building, looks like a temple or mosque; most unique appearance.

August 19th. After a peaceful night, during which we zig-zagged the whole time, we arrived at Mudros about 8 a.m. Most picturesque harbour, with a tremendous number of ships in the very fine harbour; all sorts of ships—battleships, cruisers, destroyers, transports, hospital ships, etc., etc., mostly British and French.

About 11.30 the M.C.O. told us our regiments. I am to be with the 2nd Battalion Royal Fusiliers; only a few of us with the 29th Division; very lucky. To leave for Cape Helles at 1 a.m.

N.B. on Mudros. Two or three net booms across neck of harbour (I could only see two). Camp all round on hillsides. A few villages. A glorious day

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and altogether the most delightful and interesting scene since leaving Australia. Nets round some of the warships.

Saturday, August 21st. Order came on Thursday to the effect that I was to land at Lemnos with rest of Fusilier draft (150 men and three officers). R.F.'s said to be coming back to rest. Landed last night. All three officers were ashore when boat came to take us off, but came back in time. After a very rough march of about three-quarters of an hour we arrived at our camp here (Mudros West). It is on an island in the harbour. Senior Officer, 1st Lieut. of Fusilier draft, "mush quies." Very pretty here in camp, and nice to be on turf again. A few pretty-looking villages about. There is another draft of R.F.'s already here, the one before our one, so they don't seem in a hurry for us. We are to see Major-in-Charge here at 9.30 a.m. and will then know something.

Sunday, August 22nd. Am on a sort of water guard near Gippies' and Hospital campson point. Deadly slow. Had a couple of pleasant walks yesterday, fine view of harbour from one of the hills; went through a couple of the Greek villages: stone walls, red tiles, blacky buildings, walls of all sorts and shapes of stones. Cultivation is carried on extensively, various kinds: beans, Indian corn, grain, etc.

There are the usual donkeys everywhere; a peculiar breed of sheep with very poor-looking wool; in fact, rather a poor-looking beast altogether. They have

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also tiny, little ponies, about as small as their donkeys, a few cattle, and saw a bull yesterday, not unlike a Jersey, only smaller, with upright horns and a paler, more greyish, colour, also very poor in hindquarters.

Round stone buildings everywhere, with a wind wheel with fixed axis, but with sails attached to the arms, so can accommodate to any wind. I take them to be corn mills, but haven't been inside any so far. Observed many of the fowls had a very large game element, and go all colours—black-reds, duckwings, spangled, blue, red cuckoo, etc. The people are, I believe, nearly all Greek, wear various rough clothes, but not skirts, and not gaudy like Egyptians. Very few speak English; civil enough and answer "wheelbarrow" or some such when said "Good evening" to.

News from Dardanelles speaks of advances at great cost; also another troopship sunk.

Monday, August 23rd. Yesterday afternoon I chanced on five Canadians. The first was a captain who asked the way to a camp. I guessed he was a Canadian by his very strong accent. He was pretty abrupt, and only thanked for information received over his shoulder after he had gone about ten yards. There are two Canadian hospitals just arrived and he was evidently a doctor. Next a chaplain came round and he was very pleasant. Finally three Canadian privates appeared on the scene; they were great; quite respectful in intention, but more independent even than the Australians. I should judge at the same time their

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manner was very manly and open. They were all of fine physique and didn't need much encouragement to talk about Canada.

About one o'clock this morning I was awakened and told to come back to camp as R.F.'s might be sent off at an hour's notice.

We left camp about 10.30 a.m., both drafts of Fusiliers and six officers, and the Lanc. Fusiliers with two officers. We were ferried to the "Prince Edward," a naval paddle steamer, to take troops to Gallipoli. A lot of other troops embarked in the afternoon—yeomanry and line regiments. The Y. officers done up to be killed.

There was a Border regiment draft, the men of which were particularly fine. We began to steam for harbour mouth at 4.30, bound for Suvla Bay. Our boat is said to be able to do 21 knots. Caught a rotten cold last night, first for months—rotten luck.

Tuesday, 24th August. We reached Suvla Bay about 9.30 p.m., as far as I remember. Saw a couple of hospital ships at Cape Helles on way and two more plus numbers of warships, etc., at Suvla. We could hear firing going on on shore. We went off in two boatloads. I was in the second boatload. We got ashore about 2.30. Tramped along in the dark for a couple of miles by winding path. For first time heard bullets go past. If near your head you want to duck, although of course, it would then be too late. Finally, after going to the right place were sent by mistake to the

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Headquarters, where we stayed for two hours' sleep. At 3 a.m. we were aroused, and after some little delay went by tens in single file a short distance to the support trenches of the 2nd R.F.'s. There are as yet no communication trenches to the fire trenches, so we are waiting for nightfall to go up. The fighting goes on in a desultory sort of way all day and all night, with varying intensity.

The Turks were shelling a ridge to westward held by us. Just now one of our guns replied and some naval guns from the Bay also had a say. It was quite an interesting duel and seems to have stopped by mutual consent. The naval guns make a terrific noise. Hulloo! the Turks have started again.

Wednesday, August 25th. Last night we came to the trenches; marched by a circuitous route in single file. Prickly scrub everywhere and snipers occasionally. We endeavoured to conceal our approach as much as possible and arrived without casualty. It was exciting, as we didn't know what the danger was. The adjutant goes backwards and forwards two or three times a day. Old hands we were relieving took not the least notice of the firing, though their sgt.-major had been hit in the foot on the very afternoon.

At 1 a.m. I had the pleasure of directing the burying of a dead mule by seven Tommies; a great job. I was relieved at 2 and should have been called again at 4 a.m., but they did not call me till nearly 5 a.m.

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At 4 a.m. everybody is aroused and stands to arms. The company I am attached to is commanded by a Capt. Bruce. Shaw and self now attached, another officer, a first lieutenant, having been appointed machine gun officer. The time is now being spent in improving trenches. The Turks are a long way off and we send out patrols, etc. All day long the snipers are after us, and this morning one of our men was slightly wounded, and another had a hole cut clean through his hat, which scared him considerably. "Some artillery" going on, but all is comparatively quiet.

Friday, August 27th. Still hard at it improving our trenches, and there is a great deal of work ahead of us. At present the thing is to see that they are deep enough everywhere.

On Wednesday afternoon a sniper got a sergeant and a lance-corporal: the sergeant just slightly through the arm, the lance-corporal through the shoulder.

The work is very tedious and, though there is hardly any firing to speak of, sentry-go must be rigorously adhered to. During day one in twelve on sentry from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m., but from 12 to 3 p.m. they are doubled; at night four in twelve. While these are on sentry, half are sleeping and the remainder on fatigues and digging. This is normal, but last night, for example, everyone had to be working until midnight, as a lot were away at the regimental dump getting rations here; it was advisable that we should be prepared. The men are frightfully sleepy, and I have had

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to send some men to orderly room for being more or less asleep on duty or not standing up when "stand-to" is ordered. "Stand-to" is for an hour at dawn and dusk: 4-5 a.m., 7-8 p.m. Everyone must be awake and standing to arms.

We have a very nasty place in my trenches, where a huge stone in the way forces one to come right up in view, and I am always in fear of someone getting hit. The captain ordered a forward sap to be made, and the last two nights we have been at it; last night we nearly finished it. I have a splendid old corporal, just made a sergeant to-day; been in France, a great worker and knows the job. He was conducting the digging party; it was done above parapet, and he says while I was up some other part of the trench they were sniped at and his shovel hit. This caused some little perturbation among the new hands; however, it soon became very dark and clouded (nearly full moon), and they were able to go on uninterrupted most of the night, though in early part now and then it was so bright I thought it advisable to keep down. We had outposts all out in front of us. The Turkish trenches are about 700 yards away. My company commander, Capt. Bruce, is a fine chap, knows the job and as "cool as a cucumber." Lieut S. is now in charge of 1 and 2 platoon, and I of 3 and 4.

Monday, August 30th. Things have been going on as usual, with exception that we have straightened our line out. Cut a new line of trenches from corner

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of X Company to near corner of No. 4 Platoon: we commenced Saturday night, the men digging all night without rest, then sleep all day Sunday and digging all last night again. To-night we will be at it again and will occupy the trenches to-morrow. It is about 135 yards of trench, the old trench behind will make an excellent support trench. Luckily we have not had a single casualty the whole of the two nights. Most of the fire was well over our heads but quite a number were close; as the captain says "there is such a lot of air and so little man for the bullets to go through," but nevertheless even he thought we were very lucky. Lieut. S. has been at the base the last few days, but will be back shortly when the rest men return, which will probably be to-night, i.e., when the new trench is occupied. So far we have had five casualties in the battalion; one is dead, and at least three were due to carelessness.

There has been a more or less broken battle going on on the hill to the S.E. The Turkish trenches are very visible and our guns often shell them. Last night was much quieter, but a night or so ago we could hear a very hot fusilade of musketry. One of our aeroplanes comes out, and has a fly round every day. Sometimes the Turks have a shot at him. I saw a shrapnel burst high in the air about a *mile* from him to-day. The men say a German one was out yesterday, but I didn't see him.

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Thursday, September 2nd. On Tuesday night we and the Dublins were relieved by Lancs. and Munsters. On the last day we had three more casualties. We filed back to the regimental dump which, by the way, is now often under shell fire. The idea is to give the Royals and Dublins a week's rest (?) there, and then perhaps the whole of the brigade might have a week at Imbros. The Lancs. have been very depleted of officers and four of the Royals are on loan to them, I included.

Capt. Bruce (once captain of Melbourne Grammar and my company commander, W Company), gave me a good rec., I believe. He himself has just been recommended for the Military Cross.

On Wednesday morning after breakfast we trooped back from the dump to our old lines and reported to O.C. Lancs.—“a topper.”

Am attached to a Company D on extreme left of lines. One officer in charge, a second lieutenant Stevenson, a New Zealander, who was at second school, Cairo, but got away with first draft.

In afternoon one of our men was sniped. He was digging my dug-out but got up on the top of the parapet and paid the price: he was an old soldier.

At 7.30 p.m. a few Turkish shells were fired at the 87th Brigade on our left. On the instant following the Turks began a real fusilade of rifle fire. This continued down the battalion line and lasted for a couple of hours with one interval. The row was terrific and the

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Turks, for them, fired quite a lot of shells, not very near us but plenty at the hill on our left. We withheld our fire as much as possible as there was nothing to see. Our naval guns replied vigorously. Our only anxiety was the gap in the line between our brigade and the 87th. However, all quieted down eventually about 9.30. Our company, however, lost one man killed. The battalion is said to have fired 21,000 rounds (exclusive of machine guns) and as there are three companies and ours only fired 3,000, we did very well. It was also satisfactory to me because I had been going up and down the line telling the men not to waste ammunition, only to fire when they saw something and then fire low.

After all the row was over I took a reconnoitring patrol about 300 yards to the front. We went up a gully until we could see the sky-line. My orders were to see if there were any enemy on this side of the sky-line. I satisfied myself that there were not and returned. All to-day has been fairly quiet.

Friday, September 3rd. Last night the R.F.'s put wire across the gap dividing us from the 87th Brigade. All day has been quiet till early afternoon when they began to shell us, our naval guns replying; two or three men from this company being wounded. Later we had word from headquarters that the aerial people had reported to howitzer observation officer that the Turks are massing on our left and that an attack is probable. It is further stated that the attack would

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probably commence with a bombing party. It is now 6.55 p.m.; all quiet. By the way, one of our naval shells fell short and wounded one of our men. Whether the Turks will or will not attack remains to be seen, but there is no doubt that our line is not strongly held by any means, and is as yet unjoined on the left. I observed that the Turks were very vigorous in shelling our aeroplanes to-day.

Sunday, September 5th. Well, the "Turkos" didn't make an attack on our side of Friday night; but a party tried to dig themselves in opposite the battalion centre, but had disappeared after a little rapid fire. One dead was left.

Yesterday a couple of our guns opened fire on the Turks from our rear. The result was that the Turks shelled us. Most unpleasant, but only one or two hurt. You get about a second's warning to duck and cling mighty close.

Last night I and servant found a dead man unburied about three yards at back of Stevenson's dug-out. A staff-officer had reported his presence about two days before and we had sent two parties to look for him, but they said they couldn't find him. The air was a bit "melly" and put me off food for a bit, but I ought to get used to it. My servant has not been altogether satisfactory. He sleeps like a log all night and then denies it, says he has worries, family, etc., which keep him awake. He has about as much initiative as an Orpington hen. I told him I wanted a sunshade over

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my dug-out. He made every difficulty and said he were no "archie-tect". I asked him what he was in civil life, he replied: "Oh, I earns mee own living," (reflection on me, I suppose); "I'm a norse 'air and feather buyer." Rather comical, but he does annoy and I shall have to get rid of him. Just as I write he has stuck a knife into his "finner". These Lanc. Tommies are fine men in their way but mighty rough. The N.C.O.'s in this company are *rotten*.

This afternoon another officer has arrived for this company. He is a Lanc. native who has lived most of his life in Ulster; very bright, vivacious, and likeable, and quite uncommon, so in every respect welcome. He reports that the battalion, and presumably the brigade, is going to Imbros for a week's rest on Wednesday.

Monday, 3.15 p.m. Last night was comparatively peaceful except that the Turkos bombed the scrub about 200 yards in front of our lines. They evidently heard our people digging the gap and the R.F.'s putting up the wire and thought they were more advanced. A N.C.O. on listening post came in at 2 a.m. instead of 3.30 a.m. Evidently got the jumps. Lied like a Trojan about it. Got severely reprimanded. Very quiet day. •

Tuesday, September 7th. Last night we connected up on left with the S.W.B. 8's of the 87th. The men did a good night's work. I was on duty from 8-12

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midnight. Patterson was in charge of the S.W.B. diggers and it was a great pleasure to meet him.

The C.O. came round fairly late and told me that there was some very good war news not yet public. Could speculate for a week. At 12 midnight A. went on duty. I said the first day he came he was uncommon; he is, fair "Wwahnsinnig".

About 3.45 a.m. I was awakened from sleep by a wild shout. I listened and once or twice it was repeated so I went out to investigate. After questioning the sentries along the line I came to two who told that about 100 yards to their front a voice had thrice called "Lancashires, where are you?" I thought it was probably one of the S.W.B.'s men's covering party lost, but it might be a Turk with bomb, etc. It was nearing daylight and if the man was wandering about it would be futile to send a patrol out. I decided to risk a shout and called the non-committal word "Lancashires". Immediately there was an answering cry about 70 yards off of "Where are you? Keep shouting, keep shouting". At the same time there was a great crashing through the undergrowth, so to speak, and a figure came tearing along towards us. I called upon him to stand and told the sentries to level their rifles at him, asked him who he was and found—A. His explanation was that he had gone out on the right to see if our listening post was all right, couldn't see them, walked straight on about 60 yards away, came across what he took to be one of them asleep, kicked him several

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times, and found it was a dead man; lost his head and careered about the bush, losing all sense of direction though the moon was well up and N. Star plainly visible. Swore snipers were after him, called out several times, and finally did the maddest thing of all—rushed in at top speed when he heard my voice. Luckily he didn't strike the barbed wire or he'd probably have been shot by our men. He is very young, but imagine his control of men!

Thursday, September 9th. Tuesday night passed quietly as did all Wednesday. Last night we were to be relieved by the Worcesters, but they lost themselves on the way, with the result that we weren't finally relieved till midnight. We should have embarked by that time. We then had a march of four or five miles to West Beach which was done at the run and very exhausting; many men suffering with dysentery. Finally got to beach at 4 a.m., only to find the boat gone without us. We bivouacked the night in dug-outs, and have spent the day on hillside; were shelled a little in the morning. The "Swiftsure" and one or two other warships here doing a little shooting now and then. Two aeroplanes spying for them (one hydro-plane). Fine view of harbour, and can see Achi Baba and Helles in the distance. Are to go over to Imbros to-night.

Friday, September 10th. Last night we embarked on a fairly large transport; ferried out to her, and in the morning, after some delay, were landed at Imbros.

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Sunday, September 12th. The C.O., on Sunday morning, informed the other R.F. officers and self that new officers had arrived. I reported back at our camp and then went with Stevenson and a new Lanc. officer to the native village of Panaghea, whither most of the R.F. officers had gone. We rode on donkeys and, being late, had to take what animals were left. It is about an eight-mile trip from the camp and one has to pass over some hills. It was a very delightful ride and as one reached the top of the ridge three villages gradually became visible; their red-tiled houses showing out fairly plainly. We had a late lunch at Panaghea which we enjoyed immensely though it was nothing remarkable, and then wandered round the village. Most of the inhabitants are Greek, and very sturdy they are, too. The children looked fine. We had some late "afternoon tea," and by the time we were ready to start for home it was dark. Then came trouble with our donkey men, who refused to start without the money first. They were put up to this by the wretched landlord who had overcharged us for dinner and I had refused to pay in full. After about two hours of trying to get other donkeys we visited the house of the English military police officer, a Mr. Thompson. He lives with a Greek interpreter, another first lieutenant. We found Mr. Thompson a charming man, and he eventually procured us animals for the trip home. While waiting, he told us he had been in Turkey at the outbreak of the war. He speaks Greek

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fluently, and has as his men a number of Greeks who were bandits or other such pleasant things in Turkey or Gallipoli, but who were now perfectly trustworthy to him. These men were posted on the hills around and kept an eye open to see that no secret signalling went on to Gallipoli, etc. Also, if there was any trouble with the inhabitants they acted as policemen of a rather peculiar character, thus: The Greek Government laid no claim to the island, and when Mr. Thompson complained to the Greek official of the island, he replied, "Why don't you deal with him yourself?" Consequently, if there is any trouble Mr. Thompson will tell a couple of his sturdy gentlemen that so-and-so has been giving trouble; so-and-so happens to be in a quiet part of the island one day or night, and then Mr. Thompson's gentlemen bring him to order.

Tuesday, September 14th. Yesterday we, the 86th Brigade, moved our camp about a mile and a half up a valley to a much more sheltered position. I was transport officer and everything went smoothly, fortunately. The reason of the move was that a great number of the men were being knocked over with dysentery, due probably to dust infecting the food. The old camp site was beastly, due to the dust. Our rest time was also extended to Monday, 20th.

Saturday, September 18th. I had not felt too well on Monday last, and got steadily worse, until to-day I told the doctor I was afraid I could go no longer. He

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sent me off at once to the clearing hospital to await the arrival of the first hospital ship.

Sunday, September 26th. At last the hospital ship came, and I, with a number of others, was put on board.

Friday, October 1st. The hospital ship, the "Leicester Castle," first went to Anzac and collected sick and wounded, and then to Mudros for more. We then left Mudros one evening, and after three nights and two days steam arrived at Valetta. We were well treated on the hospital ship. They sent us out here to the Officers' Hospital, Imtarfa, in motor ambulance.

Sunday, October 31st. I forgot to mention that while at Imbros we had several raids by aeroplanes, which endeavoured to drop bombs on General Headquarters, our air sheds, etc. They often occurred in early part of the night. The warning gun would fire three rounds; there would be a rush to turn out all lights and then a great row would commence from anti-aircraft, machine, and other guns.

November 16th. Had progressed uninterruptedly until November 1st, when, after three days on chicken diet, symptoms of dysentery were observed. Went back to fluid with one egg diet. Was not bad at any time. On November 8th got sore throat and temperature for a few days. Now all right again and have been three days on fish diet.

Tuesday, November 17th. First official sitting in chair.

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November 18th. Received cable from Father to effect that he had left Cairo for England on Monday, November 16th.

Saturday, November 26th. Boarded to-day with success. Major Elliott said I would be sent off as soon as possible.

December 5th. Left Imtarfa, and boarded the hospital ship "Re d'Italia," along with three other officers from Imtarfa. Are to sail to-morrow after loading some Red Cross stores, which are to be taken to Syracuse for new convalescent hospital or camp.

Monday, December 6th. Reached Syracuse at 6 p.m. when quite dark. After some little delay we steamed alongside the wharf and unloaded the stores. The officers were allowed shore leave until 11 p.m. I took a stroll through some of the streets, but did not find them too encouraging. There are a few fine broad ones, and one rather nice walk with trees along the harbour front, but, of course, not much to see in the dark. The average street is made of large square cobblestones, very narrow and no footpath, so that the heavy stone houses rise abruptly from the street. I observed several wine saloons and a few fruit shops, etc.

December 7th. The "Re d'Italia" is a ship of between 6,000 and 8,000 tons, high out of water, with a somewhat narrow beam. She averages about fourteen knots, and did the trip from Malta to Syracuse in six hours. At present we are carrying a large number of

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sick and wounded Tommies, and ten more or less convalescent officers. The ship's company and hospital staff are Italian, with the exception of the sisters, who are English, and two English and two Maltese doctors. The Italians are very polite and courteous indeed to us, though truly one is usually polite to strangers. We are, however, shown every consideration. We (the ten officers) have a small ward to ourselves (the Major, M. Cooke, has a cabin), which is quite nice, though the bunks were not made for me. The meals are truly excellent, and I think they have sought more or less to Anglicize them. To-day, though, they gave us *octopus* on toast for lunch. It would doubtless have been very nice but for our foolish squeamishness, which somewhat damped the vigor of our attack. Free wines are provided at lunch and dinner, so that what with ample and excellently-served meals I feel that I will be not unlike Sir G. Reid, in one respect, by the time I reach England. The meal hours, by the way, are—breakfast, 7.30 a.m.; lunch, 11.30 a.m.; afternoon tea, 3 p.m.; dinner, 7 p.m.

We expect to reach Southampton exactly to-day week. The ship's captain and staff are very anxious to spend Christmas in Italy, so that we will not dawdle on the way. Added to this we have so far experienced most delightful weather. No doubt things will liven up after we pass through the Straits on Friday.

Friday, December 10th. We arrived at Gibraltar about 7 a.m. to-day; anchored in the harbour until

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certain instructions were received and departed again at 9 a.m. Weather perfect.

Wednesday, December 15th. Arrived yesterday at Southampton at 9 a.m., but were not entrained for London until 5 p.m., as the "Mauritane" had just got in before us and had to be unloaded first. We arrived at Waterloo, and thence went in private cars to No. 3 General Hospital, Wandsworth.

Monday, January 10th, 1916. Left Wandsworth free of infection, with two months' leave.

Southampton, Thursday, June 8th. Boarded the "Caesari," a small black-painted steamer of some eighteen knots at 7 p.m. and sailed at 8 p.m. (summer time).

About 700 men and 100 officers on board. Men chiefly Canadians, who look hardy, but untidy and rough. Do not impress one much; nor are they much bigger than the Tommies and are less smart than Australians. A good number of Scotch officers of good type. Officers chiefly subalterns. We are bound for Havre and are being escorted by a destroyer.

A crowded ship and a piggy night in amongst the baggage.

Friday, June 9th. About 3 a.m. we reached Havre after nearly running down a picket boat. First time I ever heard French swear words. Everything very quiet; a solitary French marine doing sentry with a tremendous long rifle. Later, one of the silver-coloured dirigibles seen at Gallipoli had a cruise. Saw the French

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sentry relieved by another, who strolled up and took the rifle in one hand and ate a bun, which he held in the other. Later, he put his rifle in the sentry-box and took in the air from without.

After reporting we found we had till 12.30 for Rouen train. (French line unchanged.) I joined three Scotties, and we had a good breakfast, and then took a taxi all round the town and environs. The town was quite interesting, but looked antiquated and could do with a coat of paint. Women mostly hatless; dogs mostly clipped, muzzled, and tethered; streets dirty, but wide, made of cobblestones. Some buildings hung their beds out of the windows to air. A few of the buildings were very fine. The country around is very pretty; green, but not so intense as in England. No hedges, and only a few wire fences. Live stock not abundant, being chiefly cows, which are always tethered, so eating off a little feed at a time. They always looked remarkably well. A good deal of red and white clover grown for feed, while the chief grain appeared to be barley. This is hand-reaped and put in single sheaf stooks. On entraining we had a very slow journey through pretty country forest to Rouen. Trains are slow and bumpy. Eventually reached Rouen, and thence by tram to 29th Division, Infantry Base Dépôt (at the racecourse).

Sunday morning, June 11th. The method of passing an officer along to the front is quite a credit to the army, and is of necessity, I suppose, a heavy business.

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The War Office, or Southern Command wires for you; the adjutant, acting under previous instructions, wires for confirmation; War Office replies, "2nd Lieut. K. J. Barrett will proceed as ordered"; the adjutant gives you a lot of papers and says, "Report to Embarkation Commandant on . . .," leaving you a clear two days in town; you report to someone on station, and he says report to "someone" else at such a time; he has your name and everything already. Then you embark as ordered at Havre; next day you report to M.T.O., who knows all about you, and says, "R.T.O." The latter has already found out about you in the police records, and says, "Entrain at . . . and report to R.T.O., Rouen." Latter is quite charming and says, "Report to O.C. Reinforcements, Rouen." Here you see a sergeant, who says, "Report to O.C. 29th Division," etc., according to your records which he has; and so you arrive at your base. In all this only one of the papers is of any use, and one or two others are given you and taken away. It is delightful to find yourself so well known and cared for in a strange country, and gives you a true idea of your importance. Well, the camp here is very large, though of our own division there are not a great number of men or officers. The 29th have an unpleasant habit of parading at 6 a.m., all subaltern officers to attend, Sunday included. I have been put in charge of the Munster Fusilier unit, about 120 braw Irish laddies—"Owh, lave it to moy, sorr"—as there is another officer in

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charge of the Royals. At 6 a.m. this wretched roll-call parade takes place. Breakfast any time after 7. At 7.50 we fall in and march off to a huge plain in the Seine Valley, about two miles away, where the men are left to certain N.C.O.'s and the officers.

This early rising here calls to my mind the method by which Rowe and I used to call one another when at Falmouth. If he woke up first, he put a chalk mark on my door, while should I wake first I rubbed it out. We found the method worked with great comfort. Rowe also had a curious way of saying to anyone he wanted to get rid of: "Now, make a noise like a tree and branch off".

Yesterday afternoon was a half-holiday and I went into Rouen, a few miles. We are at the racecourse, with an officer from the Worcesters. It is an interesting town but like Havre dirty and more or less squalid; wretched cobblestone roads though not so narrow as English. Rule of road—to the right. We looked over the cathedral, a most remarkable looking building, and finally climbed the tower, a tremendous height, from which a fine view of the town, etc., is obtained. The town is on the North side of the horseshoe bend of the Seine, while our camp is within it. Later we went up to a hospital where my companion (Woodhead) saw a friend and I had a chat with an Australian named Thompson. He had been at Vimy Ridge (English Regiment), had been out nine months but got hit by H.E. about ten days ago.

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Monday, June 12th, 5 p.m. Yesterday turned out fine after all. Went to church in morning and observed one of the hymns began, "As pants the h(e)art for cooling streams," evidently composed especially for the Army.

L. Cooke will not be coming over as they do not wish unofficial help. To-day I am O.C. but had to take musketry parade as short of officers. The Scotty, named Reed, has gone off to the Front and am sorry I had so short an acquaintance with him. All the officers are very nice, the Irish lads quite entertaining. "Sure, an' the naxt toime Oi be joining the harmy, an' it won't be the harmy at all, but 'twill be the naevy I'll be joining."

Tuesday, June 13th, 7 p.m. Rather a slow day. Fired Lewis gun in morning early, and then a memorial service to K. of K. in the rain. It wasn't much of a service in any event, and it always makes one think that we are going back 200 years. It is interesting meeting various officers from the Front and hearing their opinions of the war. I still think there is a possibility of our winning it this year, but it remains to be seen what our coming move will be able to accomplish. Still beastly weather here, rain on and off all day long.

Thursday, June 15th, 7 a.m. Nothing of much note Wednesday, except that an officer with a draft of cavalry had been sent here the night before, and was obliged to return with his men to Havre; some

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muddlement. Officers keep coming, and we have been kept fairly busy with funeral parties, etc., we being duty div. for the week. Amongst the officers is a most amusing one, named Badger Clark, of the cheery pessimist type; he looks great when detailed to take charge of funeral party. Badger Clark told us that he had trouble in understanding the speech of his Scotchmen. To-day the corporal had remarked to him that such and such a man was "naw gude," "juist luk at his needious park." Clark was puzzled for a long time as to what "needious park" was, but eventually learnt that it meant "hideous (untidy) pack."

The Doctor, who was a Tommy in the S.A. war, but quite young, is quite a character, and got the M.C. at Gallipoli. The adjutant is an old ranker, who does not quite understand the handling of officers, not always easy for an educated man.

Last night several of us got orders from the front. I will probably take a draft, and there is another officer, Humphrey, senior to me, and attached to 2nd Battalion R.F., though a Buff, who will also be going.

Same day, 4.45 p.m. We are at last in the train. I have three small drafts for different regiments (1st K.O.S.B., 2nd R.F., 71st R.D.F.), and after delivering these I am to join my own battalion. There are ten R.F. men including my servant, a bright lad of 22, who has served six years, mostly in India. He is rather a hard case, and amusing; gave a very broad grin when first he found my coat had no brass buttons

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to polish. The entraining arrangements were pretty rotten, but we did get off at last. It is about the longest train I have ever seen, should say about a quarter of a mile, with an engine to pull and one to push, and when it is going almost reaches a speed of six miles per hour; just now it is having a rest. It is a lovely day, first for a week, and the journey should be pleasant, if only we could get a move on. All along the line French children cry to us for biscuits; they seem great cadgers, and evidently the Tommies have had plenty to give away. They occasionally sang "Tipperary," or such songs, for pennies. Some of them look bright, and others wretched. All wear skirts with a belt.

Last night (Wed.-Thurs.) clocks were put on an hour to correspond with English summer time.

Friday, June 16th. Last night about 8 o'clock on our road to Amiens we stopped (some three hours' journey off) for the night and split the train in half. Our half moved on at 3 a.m. There was a canteen, however, where we got tea. About 7 o'clock this morning we reached Amiens, but passed the town on our right; thence through Canaples in the direction of Doullens, but we branched off before we reached that town, along a line towards Acheux. In the distance we could see one or two observation balloons and hear the boom of a gun.

At 11.30 we stopped at a station which seemed to have immense stores of war material and a camp. All

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tents at the Front are coloured (either clay or green patches, etc.) to prevent detection by aircraft. About 1 o'clock we reached Belle Eglise, the nearest station to Lourecourt, where I have to take my first draft. Hence I had to get off here with the lot, though Acheux would have suited best for the other two. Humphreus also had some men for Lourecourt, so we went together. After a half-hour's march we arrived at L. (H.Q. of 87th Brigade) and delivered our drafts. It was a picturesque old village and appeared to consist of old barns chiefly, and full of troops. The houses or barns seemed full of live stock in the nature of fowls and rabbits, and green ponds. After lunching at L. we marched via Acheux to Mailly and were finally sent to Mailly Wood, where the regimental Q.M. store is situated. From here we were to be taken by a guide to Anchonvilliers, a small village behind our lines, where the reserve company (W) of our battalion was billeted; the remainder being in the trenches.

About 8.45 p.m. we started off gaily enough, being told the distance was about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles (we had already marched nine with packs). We had previously left some of our kit with the Q.M. and the men left their packs. All of us were issued with the dish-plate steel helmet. Well, we started off and marched through the village. Troops, troops, troops everywhere. Of course our guide took the wrong road out of the village, though at the time we were blithely unconscious of this. After about half an hour's tramp our guide

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had to ask a policeman at some cross roads the way. We were told very definitely, "Straight along the main road for Anchonvilliers." So we tramped along for another half hour until we came to a dead stop at a support-trench and our wretched guide confessed himself lost.

While asking the way a machine gun opened fire on us and return along the open road was impossible. It was mighty lucky it hadn't started before. Eventually we got an R.E. guide who took us along a trench through a part known as the "White City" (chalk) to a road leading to our village. Our original guide now claimed to know where he was, but on reaching the village he again lost us, and we had to enquire of a sentry where the company was. We eventually reached our billets and were given a good tea and a still better sleep.

June 17th. This morning we learnt that we were over-officered, having about eight to ten per company. One of them took us for a view of the Hun lines and showed us the village (Beaumont-Hamel) which our battalion is to take, the first to attack of our division. This attack has been rehearsed for a couple of months. In the afternoon Humpherus and I had orders to report at H.Q., where we were told by the C.O. (Col.) that we were to be attached to Y and Z Companies. On winning the toss I chose Z.

Being so complete in officers there is not very much to do; the officers take it in turn to keep watch over the whole line.

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Our dug-out is very crowded; underground, and full of rats. Already my stick has been broken in despatching a fine specimen.

The men here do eight hours' sentry (on and off), eight hours' fatigue, and eight hours' sleep, and as the trenches are fairly comfortable and dry they are much better off than in Y. This afternoon a considerable number of German aeroplanes came over our lines pursued by some of our own. It was wonderfully pretty to watch, and they soon returned, but one little one of theirs was much faster than ours. We, however, have the mastery and appear much more numerous. One subaltern named Bennett was a sergeant in the Coldstream Guards and was promoted on the field of Loos. He has been in nearly all the big fights and told us how at Loos the Guards dressed their line when on the top of the parapet, before charging. He attributed his success in avoiding bullets to an extra rum issue, which caused him to sway about so much that the Huns were unable to hit him. He also told us how when he first joined the Guards at the outbreak of war, a sergeant said to him that he should grow a moustache. He said, "I do, but I draw it in at night and bite the ends off." The sergeant promptly ran him in and he got seven days C.B. and extra pack drill.

Sunday, June 18th. They have a very neat device for telling which way the wind is blowing in case of gas attack—simply a stick with a cross-piece and two pieces of string with balls of fluff attached. These are fixed

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at many points along the line and are very necessary. A gas attack may only give fifteen seconds warning, probably about 45, a wind of from three to nine miles an hour being best.

This afternoon we were told that the bombardment will commence on Tuesday at 6 a.m. and last five or more days. The Royal Fusiliers are to commence the attack, taking Beaumont-Hamel, and then consolidate while the Dubs go through them, battalion to go through battalion, and brigade through brigade, and so on, on this front of some 500 yards. We were further told that ten per cent. of the battalion will be left to hold the line during and after the bombardment, and only brought up the last night before the attack. Only four officers of the company, the C.O., and adjutant to attack; the remainder, including myself, to hold the front line. It is said the Russians commenced their true offensive yesterday, and that we have tremendous resources in artillery, about a million and a half shells for the Fourth Army alone. Also that the attack is over a front of 46 miles. Unfortunately about an hour after all this information reached us word was received that the bombardment has been postponed four days. Many air fights occurred this afternoon and our gunners are said to have brought down one of their aircraft.

Monday, June 19th. This morning I was awakened by a large rat nibbling my eyebrow. On getting up I learnt that a man had been killed by a whiz-bang, the first death since leaving Gallipoli.

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This afternoon the Dubs relieved us, but not until they had sustained several casualties by whiz-bangs. Unfortunately, we had omitted to put earth over some sand-bag work, with the result that the Germans spotted it and ranged on it repeatedly.

When relieved we marched to Maily Wood, where we are now encamped under canvas.

Note. Our mess is a very entertaining one, there being included in its members a musician, a comedian, a Rhodesian, and another born comedian though not a professional, and lastly a public schoolboy who can't say anything without finishing with "Eh! What!" to the delight of the remainder. The born comedian keeps on cheering up the rest by saying "No, no, dearie, you are too young to die. You must not go," etc., all with an inimitable voice. Then he breaks out into:

"On this my daughter's wedding day
Ten thousand guilders do I give away;
But on second thoughts I deem it best
To put the guilders in my old oak chest",

and so on. The Rhodesian is an awfully nice fellow, and is for all the world like the Tommy in the sketches of Bruce Bairnsfather.

Wednesday, June 21st. Yesterday passed quietly. The colonel had a word (a well put one, too) with us in the afternoon. Told us that for our corps alone we had sufficient artillery ammunition to stretch a length of 46 miles if put on lorries. This morning Bennett and I went over to Acheux to get cash, stores, and a

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bath. We succeeded, and in addition got a good cheap lunch. The difficulty of making oneself understood is really not very great, though one officer offended the good lady very much by saying "Donnez le jambo" when he wanted jam. She thought he said "jambon". To-night three of us and some men take a fatigue party to "White City", a lively corner.

Saturday, June 24th, 7 a.m. The fatigue on Wednesday night turned out to be for carrying numbers of 50 lb. shells for the Stokes Batteries. It was a wearisome night, but was quiet enough. Thursday was not of much account except that Major Ryan (second in command, and staying behind with us, the colonel and adjutant going forward) told us a much more detailed account of what is to take place. The whole affair has been very well thought out, as far as I can judge, and the first phase should certainly be successful. Yesterday, Friday, the noble ten per cent. relieved the Dubs (Royal Dublin Fusiliers). It had been a sweltering hot day until about 3.45 p.m., just when most of us were out in the middle of some fields, when a most terrific rain-storm struck us, and we were shortly all drenched to the skin. The trench we were to have gone up was found to be so full of water that we had to take another route. Eventually we got to the lines, which are anything but pleasant. Our clothes have by now partially dried on us, but we must expect sopping feet for the next five days while the bombardment lasts. This, by the way, commenced very quietly at 6 a.m., and it is

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to gradually work up, we believe. It is drizzling slightly now and the trenches are beastly slippery. I have just been warned for an observation post with a trench mortar battery, so that I may observe how the cutting of the German wire goes on. Later I will probably go out on reconnaissance patrol to inspect the damage. All officers and men have a long deep dug-out as a refuge and sleeping-place, as doubtless the Germans will give us something to go on with before they get knocked out.

8 p.m. To-day the gunfire has chiefly taken the form of wire cutting and has not been intense nor has there been any considerable reply.

On-reporting at the R.H.A., 29th Division F.O.P., I found the officer was cutting the support trench wire only. It was an 18 lb. Field Battery Horse Artillery—L Battery from Peninsula (?). It was very interesting seeing him register and direct by telephone. There will be no patrol just yet, as he is not cutting the front line wire—shrapnel is used. On returning after an excellent lunch on game pie, I learnt with regret that our second in command, Major Ryan, had left to take charge of 10th West Yorks. Capt. Swift has taken his place. Incidentally the journey along the trenches to the O.P. was beastly.

Sunday, June 25th. Last night we were to have attacked by gas but owing to unfavourable conditions (hardly any wind) it was not let off, though on our left apparently it was, with the result that some of our own

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troops were gassed. The Huns evidently thought we were going to attack last night as they strafed us some time, particularly on our support line. We (officers and men of the company) are in a long dug-out, some dozen feet underground and strengthened with wood. At night we could hear and feel the guns pounding on top. In the early hours of this morning I was officer on watch and with the first grey streak of dawn our planes were out registering for the guns, while two of our battle-planes cruised about as a sort of convoy. In the later morning I again went up to watch the wire cutting and had a fine view of the bombardment which had now commenced; the German trenches being shelled with H.E., as well as the wire-cutting.

Monday, June 26th. Last night the weather was once more unfavourable for gas, but this morning from the A.O.P. I had a splendid view of an attack made from the right of the R.F. line. One could see the yellowish mixture of smoke and gas come out as a thick bank about four feet high, gradually becoming thinner and more vapourish until it passed all over the Hamel, as a thin mist. Unfortunately the wind was N.E. instead of E., so it did not reach their front line very concentrated, but the expert considers that considerable damage was done.

Shortly after it had started, about 10.30, the point from which it was issuing was most vigorously shelled and a few casualties sustained by us due to this and various causes (carelessness of operators). The strafe

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has now commenced in earnest and Beaumont-Hamel has been reduced by trench mortars and H.E. up to fifteen inch. It looks chiefly a mass of bricks now. Also the trench mortars are doing fine work wire-cutting. The Germans have replied to some degree and shelled in front of "White City" very vigorously early this morning. The row is now incessant and the trench mortars bursting on the German wire deafening.

Wednesday, June 28th. On Monday I was sent out in charge of a patrol of an N.C.O. and four men to examine the state of the German wire in the southern part of the re-entrant, south of the Hawthorn Redoubt. It had rained again in the afternoon fairly heavily; as a consequence all was mud once more. The night was very black, and crawling through mud and slush in front of the German wire is a very poor entertainment. The whole thing reminded one strongly of the picture by Bruce Bairnsfather of the Tommy cutting wire and the Verrey light showing him up. The Huns were continually sending these up and lighting everything up beautifully while we lay still as mice. As we got up close the Germans were firing over us, and once I heard a voice. Rifle-fire at night is nearly always high, and consequently not so dangerous as unpleasant.

This was all done at the silence hour, i.e., the period when our rifles and machine guns do not fire and our artillery lift. The Lancs. on our left also had wire-cutting parties out. As a result of the Lancs' wire-cutting, the Germans gave our front line a furious bom-

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bardment, and evidently thought we were about to attack. However, one of the men and myself crawled for some distance along the front of the German wire, and I was able to report definitely that it was still intact. Yesterday, Tuesday, the bombardment went on with about the same intensity, and occasionally the Germans warmed us up in reply, our front line being badly knocked about, but owing to the very few men actually kept on duty our casualties were always slight.

At night there were quite a number of things on, chiefly during the silence period, which was from 12 to 1. Firstly, there were parties out completing the cutting of gaps in our own wire, work that had been commenced the night before. They were made about six feet wide and fish-tail shape so that they should not be apparent to our friend the enemy. Secondly, there was a raiding party under one of our lieutenants (about sixteen men) to endeavour to capture a prisoner. They entered north of the Hawthorn Redoubt and had difficulty in getting through the wire. The Lancs. were supposed to have cut a gap there the night before. However, by the time they got to the German trenches, they found the Huns all ready for them and were glad to get out of it with only one man lost and some wounded. Lastly, Fox and I were each put in charge of parties with a Bangalore torpedo and told to make a gap in the enemy wire. Now a word about the Bangalore torpedo. It is just like a 20-foot piece of iron waterpipe, about an inch in diameter. It is plugged

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with wood at one end, filled with ammonal (safest of explosives) and at the other end a small hole for the detonator. You put the detonator in, wire it on, screw the automatic fuse slightly, after withdrawing safety-pin, and after fifteen seconds up goes the Bangalore. Well, the first part went swimmingly, like the night before, except that the Huns were giving us a good deal of rifle and machine gun fire, but of course it was high. After crawling along and selecting a spot, I pushed in the torpedo, one end resting almost on the German parapet, as the wire was not very wide at this point; it was also considerably damaged. When all was ready I sent two of the men some yards back and a third with a post painted white on one side. This is put into the ground, white side to us, so that we could locate the spot in the morning. Then I endeavoured to light the fuse. After much twisting and inward cursing I gave it up as a bad job and put in another. This immediately began to sizzle and smoke and the lance-corporal and I ran for it. We had gone half a dozen yards when the corporal fell into a shell-hole and knocked both me and the post sprawling. He was up like a flash and gave me a pull up by my glasses strap; we ran on, but soon had to lie flat, as Verey lights went up. By this time there was a proper fusilade going on, and bang went the torpedo. The minute it was dark we ran on a bit further till we got to about the centre of No Man's Land. Meanwhile, the Huns had sent up two red flares for artillery support,

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evidently thinking they were going to be attacked, and in incredibly short time our front line was subjected to a furious bombardment, and rifles and machine guns fairly went the pace. I realized at once that it was better to risk it where we were than to endeavour to rush into our trenches. Unfortunately, the other men had become too frightened to wait for me, and ran on, with the result that three out of the five were hit, though not seriously. After lying doggo for about a quarter of an hour the shelling subsided somewhat, and we were able to enter our trenches quietly.

The lance-corporal, Yates by name, was very good indeed, and remarked that it was the tightest corner he had ever been in. It was also satisfactory to find my own nerves of the best. Mr. Fox's party were unable to reach the German wire, due to the rifle and machine gun fire. On returning to report I found that Major Cripps had returned to take charge of the Reserve.

To-day the bombardment is continuing, but the rain has made things pretty miserable. To-night the battalion is to occupy the trenches prior to the attack to-morrow morning. I fear in the attack our troops may catch it somewhat from the enemy's artillery, which is by no means silenced. I shouldn't think their infantry would cause us much trouble.

Later. This afternoon word has just come round that the attack has been postponed 48 hours. Doubtless some good reason for it, but it is somewhat depressing nevertheless.

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Thursday, June 29th. Last night four parties of Bangalore torpedo workers were sent out under my direction. They all came from the battalion at Maily, and included two officers, Blackwell and Westaway. They started off fairly close together and spread out on nearing the German wire, and were successful, in that three torpedoes went off, while two of the party reported that they had been able to crawl right up to the German trench, which was only manned in parts. Our own artillery caused us some trouble, and shelled us pretty vigorously, wounding at least one man. On the return after firing the torpedoes, which was done simultaneously at a given signal, some of the men got lost, due to not sticking to their leaders. I recovered one panic-stricken individual myself. He had lain doggo too long after his officer had run, and so lost him; then without compasses anyone might easily lose himself. The net result of our own and the enemy fire was a few wounded and two men missing.

Later, some hours. Westaway and I made enquiries about these two men without avail, when of a sudden the Germans turned on a rapid fire and we guessed it might be our men wandering about. We both called the password "Venus" loudly to give them the direction, and in a minute the German fire increased while up went two red flares, and again our line was subjected to a furious bombardment, the Hun evidently thinking we were about to attack. After this we did not search any more as it was pitch dark and practically hopeless. They

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probably strayed into the German trenches. This morning the Huns have had two or three observation balloons up, the first we have seen for some days.

I am at present on watch in the front line trench. Nothing to do except be there should the one and only sentry report anything. The rats have been very entertaining, and I have been much amused at one big fellow that has been trying to screw up his courage to seize some remains of dinner. Ah! at last he has it and is off like a "bolt from the blue"! Here he comes again for a second helping—mighty quick at storing the first! These rats are quite a feature of the trenches and appear very upset by the shelling. They are most useful scavengers and one gets quite to like them, and for my part they may go in peace.

The bombardment continues, trench mortars and shells plugging away steadily. Of the trench mortars there are two chief kinds that have so far been in use.

1. A 60 lb. bomb and tail—the latter or tail end being a cylinder about two feet long and three inches diameter. This is pushed into the barrel of the gun, which fires with considerable concussion. The bomb explodes on percussion, with a terrific noise, and as it does not go deep, being round, it is very useful for breaking wire. The eye can readily follow it in its path as it slowly goes up in a curve. It looks like a big stud head as it travels, and appears quite small. Most of these trench mortar guns are placed in deep gun-pits.

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2. Heavy trench mortar. A French invention. This is shaped more or less like an ordinary shell, with a wind-vane in addition. It is 9.4 inches in diameter and weighs 192 lbs., standing about three feet high. It has a time fuse. The gun goes off with a tremendous concussion, and the man firing it does so with a cord attachment, taking care to be well round the corner himself. It looks like a huge cigar as it slowly mounts to a great height, then down, down, deep into the earth (20 feet), a second silence, and then a tremendous explosion—earth and rubbish being hurled to a great height. The torpedo takes about 25 seconds, roughly, from the time of firing to time of explosion, and clouds of white smoke appear afterwards over the crater.

4.50 p.m. There has been a tremendous strafe going on for the last ten minutes on our left, the artillery on both sides giving the opposing infantry in their trenches hell. Just now I saw a most peculiar shell-burst on the German front line send up a clearly defined ring of smoke which rose to a great height before dispersing.

The Huns have their three observation balloons still gaily flying, but no aeroplanes of theirs have put in an appearance since the first day of the bombardment or, rather, day before bombardment.

5.5 p.m. Our artillery is still vigorously strafing, though theirs has died down. Two of our planes are most pluckily observing for them, and now the Huns' balloons have been withdrawn.

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Friday, June 30th. Last night we had a most unfortunate accident, in that one of the trench mortars on our right, together with 200 rounds of primed ammunition, exploded. A hole of some 30 feet in diameter and about 15 feet in depth was made; the three men working the gun and the gun itself completely disappearing. A fourth man, who was just at the mouth of the pit, was dug out, badly knocked about. The cause of the explosion was uncertain, but it must be remembered that a single bullet hitting the primed cap would be sufficient to explode the whole concern. At the silence hour (10.30) I organized another Bangaloring expedition, again with four parties. Three Bangalores went off, and the information brought back was satisfactory. The whole affair went as a parade movement, and was without casualty.

In the early hours of this morning and in fact right up to 8.30 the Huns subjected us to periods of intense bombardment and about one o'clock poor Fox and his orderly, Preston, were both killed while on watch. I went on duty at 8.10 and from then until 8.30 we had a pretty warm time. At 8.30 our guns gave the Hun an hour's period of intensive strafe. I hope they enjoyed it; I did.

To-day should be the last day of the bombardment. Our trenches, especially W Company's on our right, are badly knocked about. Our casualties in officers to date have been two wounded and one killed.

Saturday, July 1st. Last night all had been arranged

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for the withdrawal of our men to 86th trench though some of us, including myself, were staying back in the front line. My post was to be at the top of 2nd Avenue, and Hyett and I found a lovely R.E. dug-out next to the mine in which we intended to spread ourselves. About 11.30 I took watch. All our men (10 per cent.) had long since gone out and the trenches were literally packed with the incoming men. For the moment, however, there was no one in the front line at all, though I had to reach it by going along the top. I decided that the corporal and I would do a little sentry-go. I had hardly got on the firestep when a whiz-bang burst in my face, hitting me only in the shoulder however. The C.C. sent me back to the dressing station and I walked back along the very route I had marked out for wounded only a few hours earlier. The doctor said it would take three weeks at least to heal and that I must go. It was most disgusting.

I walked with an S.B. guide to Anchonvillers dressing station where I slept for the night. This morning to Louvencourt via Ettienville, Forceville, and Acheux in an ambulance. At Louvencourt other wounded began to arrive, including another R.F. officer from W Company. While commiserating with myself at this dépôt I came across another officer who had as yet not been in the trenches, but attended an accident at a bombing school. He was a battered wreck. I began to think I was not so unlucky after all, a thought which was considerably augmented as reports of the attack in our

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sector began to arrive. It would appear that where we were the advance had failed and that our battalion had once more been cut to ribbons. Few of our men were able to get far past our own wire. All were laden up very heavily with various forms of equipment. The mine appears to have gone up all right but did not make as big a crater as was expected. All testify to the surprising number of machine guns the Huns had left, which they used with deadly effect. Their artillery was also said to be very severe.

After lunch we were driven to Sezamcourt (something like that) to the 29th C.C.S.—an officers' hospital—a mansion in beautiful grounds belonging to a French count. It was already full of patients.

July 3rd, Monday. We did not leave Sezamcourt until noon yesterday when we embarked or rather entrained for Rouen. Such a picturesque parade was never seen—officers in rags, torn and battered, covered with mud and dried blood, some without putties (myself), others without coats or only remnants of same, all unshaven. At last we got off, reaching Rouen (No. 2 Stationary Hospital) at 11 p.m.

I may mention here that we on the train had a "sweep" as to the time we should reach Rouen Station. I asked what time I had drawn and was told 11 o'clock. At 10.45 the train stopped outside Rouen and our small party at my end were quite excited about the prospects. As for myself the effort to appear unconcerned nearly caused me to faint. At last the train actually steamed

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in on the very tick of 11. The crucial moment had arrived and the future was assured. The manager stepped forward: "Mr. Marriott here? You have won first prize." The wretched fellow had mistaken our names and it was really Marriott who had drawn "eleven." It was very nice at the hospital and this morning we were X-rayed. It was here that I had vengeance on the miserable Marriott. At 1 o'clock this afternoon the doctor came round and said: "Oh, Barrett, I don't want you to eat anything at all until 6 o'clock when you will be on the table. You have a piece of shrapnel in your shoulder." There was nothing to do but look on hungrily and strafe, as the others filled themselves with afternoon tea, etc. At 5.45 the doctor came round again: "Oh, Barrett, I don't want you after all. It's Marriott who has to be chopped up." It was the judgment of God! The unhappy Marriott having over-eaten himself was now before it!

Wednesday, July 5th. Yesterday about 1 o'clock we entrained once more, reaching Havre about 7.30, and there embarked on the good ship "Lanfranc." About 10 p.m. we left Havre and reached Southampton early this morning, but had to wait until the other hospital ships were cleared. At 4.20 we got alongside the wharf and about 8 p.m. the few of us who were lucky enough to be booked for London entrained.

Thursday, July 6th. Last night we finally reached Wandsworth once more, Ward H, just opposite the famous Ward M. I might mention that Cox is still

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with me. He caught me up at Sezamcourt, wounded in the arm with shrapnel on the morning of the attack. Coming up last night we were afforded some amusement at the stations by wounded Tommies describing the horrors of war to breathless admirers. "Oh, Miss, it was simply 'orrible."

Friday, July 7th. To-day I managed to get the doctor to let me be boarded and was granted leave henceforth till

Note on the attack on July 1st. August 28th. From accounts received from officers and men who took part in it, it would appear that for our portion of the line and in fact from Thiepval northwards, the assault was a failure. The mine blew up the Hawthorn Redoubt and was a tremendous explosion. Our battalion succeeded after heavy losses in entering the front line trench, i.e., the re-entrant. They were, however, eventually forced to retire as no support was forthcoming. Two officers were captured. All testify to the deadliness of the machine guns and shrapnel fire, the Germans having several of the former in the front line (re-entrant). Our battalion was cut to pieces though what extent of casualties I don't know. The reserve battalion was very roughly handled in therear, and some were never brought up at all. The question naturally arises as to why the attack failed. When one considers the limiting pace of 50 yards a minute and that the men were heavily laden it becomes obvious that it was planned on the theory of no resistance. There was, however, considerable re-

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sistance and apparently any number of men and machine guns in the trenches, to say nothing of the artillery support. Whether lightly clad infantry could have rushed two or three trenches and so on is a question I cannot answer. We were handicapped in not having any main communication trenches, a point which Major Cripps emphasized strongly on one occasion.

Tuesday, September 12th. Received orders report at Folkestone, Thursday morning; about 8 others also.

September 14th. Left Folkestone by the "Victoria" at 4 p.m. bound for Boulogne. Boat all officers. Glorious day.

Friday, September 15th. Arrived last night at Etaples and leaving Boulogne at 6 p.m. We are now at the great Etaples encampment under canvas. An officer has just come from Somme and says the great push has just started, and that the artillery is tremendous. Rumours are as usual well under way. It is now said a great number of cavalry are to dash forward, and another says that the big French push is from Verdun.

Saturday, September 16th. Joined the 4th R.F. (Royal Fusiliers.)

Sunday, September 17th. On Friday afternoon three of us from the 5th (Atterwells, Robertson, and self) had orders for departing next morning at 4 a.m. In the evening we went for a stroll through Etaples. One of the dirtiest towns I have ever been in. We did manage to get a good meal, however. Yesterday

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morning we started off, while our servant in great zeal woke us at 2.15. We didn't leave the station until nearly 8 a.m. We then travelled back via Boulogne, Calais, Hazebrouck, and finally finished up at Bethune, being bound for the 4th R.F. 9th Brigade, 3rd Division of the 5th Army (XIII Corps). Two other officers (from the 6th R.F.) came with us and eventually we reached our battalion in billets at Phillosophe, a small village. I was posted to X Company. I may mention in passing that Bethune is quite a nice town, a great improvement on Etaples. The Germans have however shelled it a bit lately with 13 inch. I was glad to find Holland from the 17th still here. So also Sperring, Captain of W. Company. A major of a Lancashire regiment is in command—a man of few words.

Tuesday, September 19th. On Sunday night I had to take a party of 36 out to dig T.M. emplacements. A very long tramp up a C.T., about 3,000 yards. Of course the guide lost his way. It poured all the time, but we arrived back very early. Yesterday passed quietly enough, but rained a good deal of the day. This afternoon Willis had news of a different appointment, and is leaving the battalion. Our company is X Coy. Commander Temp. Capt. Millson; subalterns: Rendell, Hudson, Brasher, and self (second in command). Company about 150 strong.

We are in the Loos salient area, and all is very peaceful just at present. The III Div. Artillery has come up, however, and is said to always bring trouble with

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it, being very good and energetic. Many rats are in the front line.

Wednesday, September 20th. Yesterday afternoon late we went to Nœux-les-Mines to see a demonstration of Flammenwerfen. The apparatus was a captured one and consists essentially of a metal cylinder about as big as an oil-drum. This was attached to a short hose with a nozzle and straps, by which it can be carried on the back. It is filled with a mixture of light and heavy oils and compressed nitrogen; about 30 atmos. It is divided into compartments, so that the oil can be put in after the nitrogen. At the end of the nozzle is a tarry rag, or some such, which is lighted. On release of a valve a jet of this burning oil is emitted with great violence as a huge flame with intense heat. The range of this concern was about fifteen yards, but the operator said we had one that carried 80 yards. It can't hurt anyone in a trench. Last night the 3rd Division Artillery strafed considerably, and our M.G., etc., also had periods of intense fire.

Thursday, September 21st. Last night I had another fatigue party and a long, weary tramp up muddy trenches. We managed to get back about 1.30, however, which was most fortunate. This morning we were relieved by the 2nd Devons of the 8th Division and have moved into billets in Mazingarbe, but depart again at 6 a.m. to-morrow. Apparently the whole division is going to have three weeks' training, and it's quite nice to be on the move—something doing. To my

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delight this afternoon I witnessed a fine game cock in the yard next door to our mess billet. Nothing much to do this afternoon. Willis has returned. Our route to-morrow is W.N.W., via Nœux-les-Mines, Four-a-Choux, Marles-les-Mines, Louinghen. Note: Mazingarbe is N.W. of Lens.

Sunday, September 24th. On Friday we had a good march through endless French villages. It is the coal-mining area, and one continually sees these huge slag-heaps which are quite a feature of the country.

At Lozinghem we had moderate billets, and at one house a rather sweet French girl of about sixteen gave us some excellent and much appreciated wine, and would accept no remuneration. Our interpreter rather put the acid on this by asking if it was really wine or only red water. The district was evidently a more or less educated one, as I espied another rather fine black-breasted, brown-red game cock.

Yesterday morning we again started off, but rested for lunch this time. Early in the route we went through Couchy-la-Tour (General Petain's birthplace). After a hard day's march of some fourteen miles we arrived at Laires about 5.30 p.m. Fourteen miles doesn't sound much, but when done with heavy packs without much training, and with the constant short stoppages which so often occur with imperfectly trained troops, it is quite all one wants.

Our billets here are quite fair. Capt. Millson, the C.Cr. and I are sleeping at the mess-house, while the

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other officers are in various places. Millson and I have quite a nice room and good beds. There are no civilians in the house, which is quite at our disposal.

These French villages are very dirty, but somewhat fascinating. The houses or buildings are all overrun with rabbits, fowls, dogs, pigeons, etc., and nearly all have a cesspool or manure heap in the central yard. In our little place we have two rabbit hutches by the mess—quite pretty-looking beasts. Still glorious weather, and I am beginning to hope for letters. We are in for a fortnight's hard training, I believe.

Thursday, September 28th. On Monday we had our first day's training but for me it ended there, as I was warned to go to the Divisional Grenade School for a short bombing course. I left next morning, with my servant driving in the mess cart, to the Brigade H.Q. about four miles off, whence we went to our destination, La Buvrière, by bus. On the way we passed through Lillers, a fine looking town. On arrival we found quite good billets and as nothing to do for the day another chap and I walked over to Bethune. The Huns have shelled it somewhat and consequently many of the shops and hotels are closed. The spire has been knocked off the steeple—clean as a whistle. On Wednesday morning our course started. The class consists of ten officers and there are also a number of men. There is a three weeks' general course which other officers are at and which is apparently a great loaf. A captain is in charge of us (a little man, very Scotch), while a sergeant does

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most of the instruction and talks to us about "Demo-looshun Toobes." Our hours are roughly from 7.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. To-day passed much as yesterday. All are feeling pretty bucked up by the news of Combles and Thiepval having fallen.

Monday, October 2nd. The bombing course went on smoothly, finishing yesterday. Had one premature explosion with Mills bomb fired from rifle. Luckily for me no ammonal in it.

On Saturday afternoon we, or rather two of us from the bombing course, joined the Divisional Course officers in a very nice cross country ride. We took bus to Mametz where we got our horses and had about an hour and a half. A glorious day and very enjoyable. On the way home we stopped for tea at Aire.

Yesterday the Divisional officers finished and a new lot came out, but to-day we have had word that all are returning to their work to-morrow. The show is closing up and the division is going over the top somewhere, probably Somme again. We had nothing to do to-day, but of course the weather must break and hence it resolved itself into bridge this afternoon. Bought three pairs of French cocks' spurs as curios yesterday. Good cocks in the village and apparently everywhere. At the estaminets they fight cocks in peace times. A strong dark red cock here is said to have won three battles. At our house they have some queer dark silver-grey coloured rabbits.

Thursday, October 5th. On Tuesday the Div. school

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closed and we all returned to our battalions. The weather still beastly. Yesterday we had a field day—practising the attack for the third time, I believe. It wasn't well done to my mind. A miserable day five and a half to six miles each way, and raining continuously. We got back about 4 o'clock and then had our lunch. After the attack they gave a display or demonstration of Stokes' guns, to give us an idea of the barrage we have to advance under. It was very effective. There was one premature burst. Last night they issued us with Lens maps, and there is little doubt we are off to the Somme. We leave here this morning.

Friday, October 6th. Yesterday we had a long, hard tramp of about thirteen miles to Pierremont, arriving at a little after 4 p.m. without stopping for lunch, which I considered damn bad staff work. Not a man got past the rearguard of our battalion, while the King's and West Yorks had streams fall out. Not a single man fell out of our company though we had to carry the packs, etc., of some who were at their last gasp. The men are certainly not as good as they used to be. None of the real old Tommy type. We have not such good billets here and the dame of the house is a most sour person. She would give us nothing to eat when we came in famished, and as our servants were lost we got nothing but a biscuit or two and wine until after 6 o'clock. The roads were very bad on the march but it didn't rain. Overcast again to-day but no rain so far. We spend the day here and entrain to-morrow, we believe.

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Monday, October 9th. On Friday at midnight we paraded for the march again and started off for St. Pol. It was drizzling again and not a very cheerful time to begin operations but the men were in fine spirits. After a couple of hours we arrived at St. Pol with bands playing. Many of the inhabitants came to their windows even at that hour and often had the torches flashed on them to the immense delight of "Mr. Atkins." At St. Pol after the usual delay we entrained and believed we were bound for Acheux. The whole division was en route.

After endless delays we arrived at Puchevillers about five in the afternoon—drizzling again. Thence we had a nine miles' march to Bertrancourt via Louvencourt—two villages I had been in in June. Louvencourt was packed with troops, mud, and smell. At Bertrancourt where we arrived pretty fagged about 7 o'clock we found that some other battalion had boned our billets through bad staff work and hence we had to go on to another village, Beaussart, about a mile on, where the men had one shed and we had another and what with the rain coming through and general discomfort it was not very jolly but might have been worse.

It appeared from the Q.M.S. that the site of our billets had been changed literally about five or six times in the course of the day.

On Sunday we were informed we were to go into the line at once. Starting at 1 o'clock we went via Mailly Maillet and right up to the cross roads where my guide

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of June had taken us wrong. Here however we turned to the left and entered C.C. (Railway Avenue) a good deal north of our old line. On the way up another company had one man killed and one case of shell shock.

On arrival due to some mistake X and W Companies had been given the wrong guides and the usual muddlement ensued. Y and Z Companies are in reserve. The general situation of the trenches is elementary and instructive. The front line has been so hopelessly bashed about by T. M.'s that we only occupy it at a few points by night and still less by day. In the bottom of the remains of the trench is anything up to two feet of mud. Thank God I had trench boots and am still dry-shod.

The main firing line is or was the old support line—called Rob Roy. This has some good dug-outs but is badly enfiladed from our left as the line sweeps right back. This line (Rob Roy) is about 150 yards behind the old front line which in turn is 150 to 200 from the Huns who are on the sky line more or less. In between is just a mass of shell holes. Behind Rob Roy a few hundred yards is Monk, the support line where the remainder of our company (two platoons) is placed. I had first watch last night but nothing of much event. Later the Huns crumped the lines on our right pretty freely.

An R.E. officer here had been down Beaumont Hamel way on July 1st put the failure of the attack down to the artillery lifting too soon—quite likely.

This morning "stand-to" at 5 a.m. and my tour from

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6 to 9—C.O. just come round. Another very dull day but so far no rain. The trenches, except the old first line are really quite good considering the past weather.

Note. Advance by platoons and intervals (?).

The shells were directed against our batteries which are all along the C.C. and the E. road behind; also more emplacements being made, something doing alright.

We relieved 2nd Battalion O.R. and Bucks, seemed pretty good, all their officers appear to have M.C.'s Poor old Fusiliers don't get them. They didn't do half as much on the Somme as our battalion, though I believe they did well. A successful attack by infantry calls forth praise, while an unsuccessful attack does not, though the latter is rarely their fault.

Wednesday, October 11th. Yesterday was fine, the best day of the month and the artillery livened up considerably, wire cutting being definitely begun and various other preparations going on. For our part we are endeavouring to improve the two trenches in the rear and I have been doing my best to urge other people to work. It is pretty hard, as few seem to quite understand the need for it, though they will vividly if they have to attack from the trenches as they are. In Rob Roy two new trenches are badly needed as the enemy enfilades us perfectly from the left. Gommecourt way. It is probable in the event of an attack here the 9th Brigade will be in reserve, but whether the R.F. will have to hold the trenches till then I don't know.

They have been sending a few H.E. over this morn-

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ing and just this minute a rum jar or Minnewerfer landed with its tremendous crash right in front of our trench.

Last night and henceforth an officer has to be all night in the front line as well as one in Rob Roy. My watch was from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. last night and now again from 6 to 9 a.m. in R.R. Stand-to is from 5 to 6 a.m. and 6 to 7 p.m.

The last two nights parties have been out endeavouring (in bright moonlight) to capture a Boche but of course haven't succeeded. Bang! they are now shelling just on our left. It's a mighty accurate gun, however a miss is as good as a mile, they generally send over about six at a time. Rather an amusing incident occurred the other night when one of the men on front line threw a bomb at what he supposed was a Boche entering our line—it was one of our patrols returning. Even if it had been a Boche it was a disgraceful thing not to try to capture him. To-day unfortunately is dull again and even threatens rain. Our artillery is also less active.

Saturday, October 14. On Wednesday night there was to be a raid by the 4th Gordons on our left. I was on watch in the front line till twelve and saw the T.M. man who got his three Stoke's guns in some shell holes in the valley between R.R. and front line. He explained the gun and fired a shot for my edification. It is a beautiful weapon and wonderfully simple. Eventually, however, the raid was disallowed.

On Thursday we were to be relieved by the N.F. and eventually after the usual mixing up and losing of guides

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the handing over was accomplished. For my part, however, I was detailed to observe enemy artillery in the afternoon on the occasion of an attempt on our part to draw their fire. I had the sector between R.R., front line, Jordan, and Le Cateau to observe, and we were to report to the intelligence officer.

I may mention here that while getting instructions at H.Q. the dump at Monk Trench, Jordan Trench corner, was blown up by a Hun shell and a tremendous explosion followed as the T.M. ammunition went off. Huge lumps of trees were thrown hundreds of yards, and a mass of flame went up, and a crater of about 40 yards across and about 30 feet deep was all that was left. An officer in a dug-out nearby was buried, and one of my men, a stout fellow named Clarke, came running to me to say that this officer was buried, and that he didn't know just where, and that his men ran away and left him. Eventually Clarke and I found the dug-out, and started clearing it. We got his coat, revolver, bed, etc., and were going strong when some of his other men came along, so we left the remainder of the task to them, and were pleased to hear later that they found him under the debris unharmed.

Well, at 2 p.m. our little affair started, and I observed from Champion Trench. The plan which was carried out was as follows: first, a show of bayonets in the front trench; second, clouds of smoke let off from front by parties of men under the bombing officer, Holland; then simultaneously with the smoke our guns

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and mortars opened fire on front line and support and reserve trenches, etc., lifting in due course, and generally behaving as though for an attack. It was a pretty imposing spectacle, but it failed in its object, i.e., to show where the Hun will put his barrage. He sent up two red lights from the front line, but his artillery was slow in coming up to assistance and, when it did, merely strafed our trench in retaliation. I had a lovely view of some of his rum-jars—big trench mortars filled almost entirely with H.E.; they make a tremendous explosion, but our part of the trench was really wonderful lucky. After all had died down and I had reported, I went up to the front line to see how Holland was getting on, as I feared he might have had casualties, as the Huns strafed the two lines pretty well. I found poor Holland killed, ~~General Mineta~~.

I returned and went back to Mailly to rejoin the battalion in their billets. It was great getting a bath again and also a night's sleep. Our billet is quite a good one. They have planted a number of guns all round us, and last night and Thursday night they sent some shells over, but none came too near, fortunately, as we were far too lazy to move. Yesterday was a day of rest and so also to-day. So far, though, the men are constantly on fatigues, and to-night Brasher and I are on one.

We have been told of the general plan of our attack to come, and we (9th Brigade) are in reserve. It is hoped to be a great stroke, and surely after three months' bitter experience on the Somme, and with all our pre-

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ponderance of artillery, we can make a success. We shall see. We were relieved in the morning.

Monday, October 16th. Nothing much to report, except that Brasher and I had a fatigue on Saturday night, but we were back at 1 o'clock. On Sunday I was told to take over command of the bombing company, much to my disgust, and that I would be out of the stunt at the beginning. I understand the discipline of the bombers was slack, and I am to put it right. In the evening there was a pretty lively display of artillery on our left for a little while. I believe the King's had sent back for assistance when the Boche sent over T.M.'s. This morning I was told that I should be permitted to go into the attack in command of W Company, and they would have Sperring back for the present. It suits me, and they probably don't want to lose Sperring; he is the best C.C.

This afternoon the wily Teuton sent over some "heavies." A couple landed on the side of the road about 100 yards off and made craters six feet deep and about ten across, and covered everything within a radius of 50 yards with mud. Another smashed a huge tree up and covered our washing with mud, to the great annoyance of our servants. "There goes two — — hours' — — washing!" All day Hun planes were very active and were over our lines several times. Doubtless they directed the shells on the guns in our garden.

Tuesday, October 17th. This morning, or rather early this afternoon, we left Mailly and marched to

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Courcelles. Found the latter full of guns and troops, and very poor billets.

Due to some error Junior H.Q. missed their mess and are now under canvas. I have joined them now, and miss my friends of X Company very much and, to add to the depression, it has begun to rain. We expect to go a few miles further back for five days' training shortly. Looks as though the stunt has been postponed, seeing that wire cutting of at least a portion of the line began six days ago. I do hope the weather does not crack up. It's certainly getting jolly cold.

Friday, October 20th. Well, let us look back on the last few days. On Tuesday night the C.O. sent for us at 9 p.m. It was raining steadily, and was generally a beastly night. On reporting we were informed that the attack had all been altered. The whole corps on our left has been washed out of the attack (probably wanted elsewhere), and our Division is attacking in quite a different manner. We, the 4th R.F.'s, are now first in attack, and have to take the first six lines of trenches. The C.O. wished the C.C.'s to inspect the area from which we are to start (to the right of the line we occupied). Our battalion left is to advance on a line with left of Serre Wood, two companies abreast, W on right, four waves in all. We, the C.C.'s, at the C.O.'s request went forth at 4 a.m. next morning to inspect the trenches. It was miserable getting up, but eventually we arrived at the front line, which we found most severely knocked about and more or less a mortuary.

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In passing along the line we were completely exposed to the Hun from time to time, but luckily we were not sniped at. The Hun wire was very thin and not a hundred yards from us . . .

[Pages 58 and 59 unreadable.]

. . . deserved a V.C. for riding a bike on it through such traffic. The day, for a change, was beautifully fine, and on the way back, after the stunt, the roads were much better.

Two other young officers from W Company and self managed to get on board a locomotive going to Acheux, where we had lunch, after which we boarded a motor-bus or transport back to Vauchelles.

Yesterday the guns were very active, and again this afternoon they all thundered away. Hun planes were also active, and I saw one hotly shelled to-day; they also dropped bombs on the roads.

Tuesday, October 24th. The last few days have been fruitful, chiefly in showing how often our higher command can change their minds. On Saturday and Sunday we practised the attack with all men, but nothing was definitely fixed until yesterday, by which time half our men had been sent into the trenches again. This was due to a note coming in on Sunday night to the effect that three companies were to be in the trenches by 9 a.m. next morning—somewhat a bombshell. The Colonel went and saw the heads, and the order was altered to 200 men of three companies, and later to 200 men representing two companies;

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though this was no use to us, as already a lot of our men were out on fatigues, and we couldn't get 200 men from two companies. I may mention that on Sunday, after the operations, our Divisional General spoke to all officers and again warned us about keeping up to the barrage. Our Brigadier, Potter, is a very fine man, and very clear and practical.

Well, to continue. Yesterday morning the 200 men, with a proportion of officers, moved off for the trenches. In the afternoon they were followed by the remainder of the three companies, while at 3 a.m. we had a conference at H.Q. and got some points finally settled. Then at 5.30 p.m. we had another conference with the Brigadier at Louvencourt, which was also very helpful (all officers of brigade). The Brigadier read us some extracts of a German officer's diary, which was very pessimistic, but very amusing. They must be having a rotten time.

After this performance we returned to —, after which the remaining officers of the three companies, except the Company Commanders, went off to the trenches. Incidentally it began to rain. Millson came and had dinner with me, and we talked our part of the show over.

Last night, late, word came round that no officer would be going up to-day at all—nor, of course, the remainder of the battalion. God help us—the last alteration of the staff! I am hoping it only means a two days' postponement of the "strafe" and that the

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men are coming out of the trenches. It is most unfair to keep them long in the line before attacking, and we can do little good. However, it is only 8.30 a.m., and doubtless we shall hear in due course. The attack was to have been at dawn to-morrow.

Sunday, October 29th. Before 9 o'clock on Tuesday morning word came round that Company Commanders were to go into the trenches at once. Phillips, Millson, and I accordingly started off—raining, of course. We arrived at the trenches about four in the afternoon; had tea with Major de la Perrelle and went on—now in pitch darkness. The difficulty of finding one's way was beastly—mud over the ankles. Eventually, I reached W Company headquarters—a most miserable apology for a dug-out—just a few sandbags head cover. We learned that the attack had been postponed 24 hours.

After taking over command from Radford and groping about the lines a bit I sent Nicholls and his platoon up to the front line. Nicholls himself and, later, two or three of his men, got bogged going up Flag Avenue, and had to be dug out. Eventually, I got them all there. Later, Nicholls went out and patrolled the German wire. He found working parties repairing it, and, of course, it is dreadfully thick. Our front line is even worse than where we were before. On our left was Giles and his company, assisted by Phillips.

After a pretty rotten night I went out to have a look at the wire between our front and support line, as we have to cut it sometime. This was about 6 o'clock,

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fairly light, and our guns had begun bombarding the enemy. I judged the latter would be keeping their heads down. However, I was mistaken, and got sniped at for my pains, and my orderly and I had a fairly lively time. We got into the front line, but almost at the same time the Hun guns began—"whizbangs" all round us. We ran for it, as far as we could, through the mud and, once, I remember the red flame of a shell in our eyes, but we got away untouched, though had to get into a dug-out for a spell. On returning to C.H.Q. later I learned that we were to be relieved that day (Wednesday). This was eventually carried out, but not before the Hun had sent over numerous "rum-jars" and made a lovely crater, completely blocking the trench about 20 yards from our dug-out. The explosion was augmented by some "tadpoles" being left in that part of the trench.

We were eventually relieved, and after a weary march in rain and slush to Courcelles, we got lorries home. I may mention that the R.S.F. got badly caught in Southern Avenue, losing many men, and also one of our planes was brought down. We were very lucky as far as casualties went.

We returned to our old billets, where we have been since, with the exception that to-day all officers were billeted, and I have joined W Company mess.

Radford has gone sick, and Robertson has now joined us. The men have been doing fatigues, bathing parades, a little work, etc. The stunt has, of course, been post-

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poned again and again, as the weather has kept bad and the trenches been almost impassable. The General and some Colonel (Brett) went to inspect them the other day, and coming down Flag Avenue, over one of the parts that had been smashed in, Colonel Brett got bogged, and at the same time a sniper opened fire on him, with the result that he was obliged to lie flat in the mud. Now they know what the trenches are like. On Saturday I was to "pay out," and after everything was ready found that Nicholls had gone off to Louven-court with the cash.

Monday, October 30th. Rain again nearly all the day. Plenty to do as a C.C., but find it interesting enough, and there is lots to improve from discipline downwards.

Tuesday, October 31st. Yesterday passed moderately miserably, as it rained most of the time. To-day Phillips left us—a sad blow—and this evening Sperring came back, and Jervis is also going—a great loss. I have reverted to the bombing company.

To-night on rejoining my J.H.Q. mess my orderly came round to say good-bye, and said he liked someone like himself—rough and ready. Apparently he wants to be my orderly in battle—rather nice. He is a stout lad, and was at the Dardanelles.

Wednesday, November 1st. Nothing much doing, except that weather last two days has been better. I have been strafing the bombers pretty thoroughly, and

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they need it. Some of them have been looting poultry. Jervis left to-day, returning to 76th Brigade.

Sunday, November 5th. On Thursday, November 2nd, Sperring went sick, and I had to take over command of W Company again, as well as the bombers. I had a pretty active time, as I was hard at it having the bombers trained and also livening them up on parade. This latter I think I accomplished, and some day I shall write a book on "How to be unpleasant on parade, by one who has done it." On Friday C.Cr.'s had to reconnoitre the line, same place as last held. I had to go up as well to see that the training of the bombers was carried on. All went well, and even the day was a little better, but it was a long, weary tramp.

On Saturday (yesterday) we all went up to the line, leaving, we hope, Vauchelles for the last time, and relieving the——. They appear to be a very rag-time crowd, and have certainly raised the ire of the divisional commander, as he gave the order that they were not allowed to leave the trenches until we were satisfied with their condition. Their condition is worse than it ever was, but out of mistaken kindness we let them go, and now we have the job of clearing up. I am luckily in reserve this time, but as McMichael has gone sick I am sole bombing officer as well as company commander. Yesterday went quietly enough for us, though the men had to work hard all night. This morning, unfortunately, they have taken Robertson from me—an awfully nice boy; he is

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to go with one of the front line companies (Z). This leaves me with Nichols and Attewell. Both last night and this morning our artillery gave periodical strafe. The Hun hardly replied at all. Just this afternoon, however, a damned fool of a signaller had a fire that was smoking from the bottom of their deep dug-out, and brought some shelling right on our bit of trench, much to our annoyance. There are some damned fools in this world. I should have reported the whole crowd, only did not wish to get the signalling officer into trouble; I should do so were any of my men hurt or if the damage to the trench is not repaired.

They have at last taken to giving us a change of socks each day for the men in the trenches, but we have been unable to get underclothing for nearly a month, which is scandalous. The men are, of course, lousy.

The weather has been better during the day, but rains again at night. We have been told definitely that the attack and whole stunt has been put off altogether. It is a great pity, of course, but the cracking up of the weather has made it quite impossible.

The 3rd Division is expected to move to another quarter shortly. We anticipate a three days' sojourn in these merry quarters. The trenches for my company are by far the best, though that is faint praise. There are, however, practically no deep dug-outs except B.H.Q. which is near by. Our company dug-out has one of these steel arches and about two to three feet of earth—possibly whizbang proof.

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November 7th. Yesterday and in fact ever since we have been in we have had to work night and day in cleaning up the trenches. Last night a raiding party of ours endeavoured to catch a Hun. They got into the front line all right, but found it unoccupied for a distance of 200 yards. The wire was bashed about so as not to be an obstacle any longer, while the ground even from our trenches looks more like a ploughed field than anything else—shell holes galore.

Yesterday morning we were told that the R.N.F.'s were relieving us to-day, then that the relief was cancelled, then that the attack was coming off after all on Thursday, and that we were to be relieved to-day after all. Finally this morning I hear that the attack has again been postponed, but our relief is going on.

Sgt.-Major Wheeler's death on Monday, and same night Thodey headed a small raid in front line—chasing dead men.

Friday, November 10th. In due course, Tuesday morning, we were relieved by the N.F.'s, and, of course, it simply teemed, landing us at Courcelles more like drowned rats than like anything else. I found that in addition my men's billets were untenable. This, after some difficulty, I set aright, but only to find there was none for me. This again was eventually put right, thanks to Major de la Perrelle and the town mayor. The men, of course, were detailed for fatigues in no time. I may mention that Sperring returned on Tuesday, and I am once more with the bombers.

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We have, of course, had continually changing information as to our final doings, and only this morning we were all packed up for Bus, when word came to unpack.

I was on fatigue—carrying party last night—as were the remainder of the battalion. Some had casualties—about four killed—probably due to smoking cigarettes and drawing Hun artillery. Coming home they shelled Colincamps and Courcelles with gas shells, but did no harm, except to keep us awake.

Saturday, November 11th. Last night our guns in the village strafed heavily; even more so than usual.

This morning, shortly before breakfast, we were summoned to the C.O., who informed us that the whole plan had been completely changed once more, and that now the 76th and 8th Brigade were attacking while we are in reserve, also the depth of the attack is being altered (shallow). Our particular battalion of the 9th Brigade is going to be in Sackville Street. We were sent off to reconnoitre, but on returning shortly were informed that half of the part we reconnoitred was not to be occupied by us after all. The weather continues passably fine, though it is to be hoped no more rain comes and no more changes. There are practically no dug-outs in our trench, and we will have a jolly time being shelled, doubtless. We are to see the C.O. at 9.30 to-night.

We have a new padre now; he was an Australian stretcher-bearer at Gallipoli; seems a nice chap. We

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introduced him to our mess this afternoon, and robbed him of 23 francs at bridge.

Sunday, November 12th. The day draws to a close, and to-morrow at dawn begins the Battle of the Ancre. Our final dispositions are that we remain in Sackville Street until called for, either to re-counter-attack the wily Teuton or to continue the advance. We go up at 9 p.m.

Last night the Hun raided the N.F.'s, and got right into Rob Roy, captured a Lewis gun and knocked another out of action, wounded one or two men, and returned scot free. The raid was preceded and accompanied by a very heavy barrage.

Monday, November 13, 9.15 a.m. Last night we occupied our trenches about 10.30 p.m. A very heavy mist everywhere. The night passed quietly as far as we were concerned, though our guns kept up a more or less continual shelling.

At 5.45 a.m. the Battle of the Ancre began, and then truly was let loose the thunder of a thousand guns. We were all very hopeful, but as casualties began to arrive it became obvious that the attack was being held up in many parts, when allowance had been made for the stories of shaken men. We have been ordered to dress in fighting order, and are now waiting to be sent whither?

Note. A— leads his platoon five minutes too early through Colincamps (9.25 p.m.) on 17th.

Scene. A pitch dark night; platoon after platoon at 200 yards intervals team along road. B— and his

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platoon ten minutes too early. Voice in dark behind B—, "Halt, there; halt, damn you; halt." B—, "Who says halt?" and after some delay stops. C.O. appears from gloom, "Why the hell didn't you halt?" B—, wheeling round to man behind him, "Why the deuce didn't you say who gave the order to halt?" C.O., "Didn't you synchronize your watch?" B—, "No, sir." C.O., "Don't grin at me, man." At this moment up stumbles W— in the dark. C.O., "Is this keeping 200 yards interval?" W—, "Didn't know there was a platoon in front, sir." B— escapes in the dark, and afterwards says, "And to accuse me of grinning at that hour of night—was it likely?"

Friday, November 17th. Well, my dear mother, we are back in billets once more in Bus after some adventures, but were not called on to attack.

After waiting nearly all Monday to be sent up to the line, and seeing the wounded stream in about 2 p.m., Millson and I were sent for and told that we were to be lent to the Shropshires and East Yorks respectively. I eventually posted my company in Legend and Maitland trenches, where we spent the night and part of next day.

In the meantime it became certain that the attack in our sector and in that of the 2nd Division had been a failure. Apparently in the thick fog men had lost direction hopelessly, and what with mud up to their waists, and wire, and Huns, they lost the barrage. The 8th Brigade on our right apparently did worse than the

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76th, but eventually all had to retire. The 2nd Division, however, attacked again on Tuesday morning with success, and formed a defensive flank on our right, while down south we were informed that everywhere had we had success and that Beaumont-Hamel had been captured.

On Tuesday at 2 p.m. all C.Cr.'s were sent for, and we were informed that the whole battalion was to be lent to the 6th Brigade of the 2nd Division on our right.

We started off along Sackville Street, but there was a heavy strafe, and the C.O. decided it was best to return and await quieter moments. By the time we set out again night had fallen, and it was only after great effort that we eventually reached the H.Q. after travelling over badly knocked about trenches. Here the Brigadier was very nice, though he didn't want to see all C.Cr.'s. He told our C.O. what we were to do, etc., and told us also how successful the attack had been down south.

I was somewhat appalled to hear him say that he only found out on the night before the attack that the 8th Brigade had replaced the 9th.

After the C.O. had made arrangements with the 2nd South Staffs.' C.O., whom we were to relieve, and also another battalion, both of whom were weaker than our battalion, since they attacked, we arranged that Z and Y Companies should take the front system which was ever so much worse than any Rob Roy part, and that Z and X should be in support, but be allowed our old position on the first night before the attack. In due course we moved off, being relieved by the King's, and

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about 12 midnight I was able to report that we were once more in our position in Sackville Street.

I may say here that we did not sustain a single casualty, as it is more or less behind a ridge, and most of the shells went either over to Euston Dump way or on the trench in front. It is perfectly straight, without any shelter at all, but from its position cannot be enfiladed. Before closing the narrative of Tuesday it should be remarked that in the afternoon numerous Hun aeroplanes came over, and ours showed considerable activity. On the day of the attack almost all aeroplane observation was impossible, and artillery observation likewise out of the question.

Another factor of interest is the fact that the weather though fine is getting mighty cold.

On Wednesday all went quietly until once again, shortly after lunch, Attewell and I were sent for. The C.O. informed us that the 6th Infantry Brigade wanted a real good officer and 50 men, and a machine gun or two, to reinforce the defensive flank on the right of our sector near the Quadrilateral. It was at present held by the 22nd R.F., 13th Essex, and 1st King's. Their numbers were said to be very diminished.

Attewell and I with Nos. 2 and 4 Platoons and Lewis guns were to be off. We were soon ready, and I went on ahead with my orderly, Gosling, to report to O.C. 13th Essex, who were to provide us with a guide across the new trench in No Man's Land. I started off along Sackville Street; we had not gone very far before

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the trenches became worse and worse, and soon quite impossible—mud up to the waist, and bashed about so as to be almost unrecognizable. There was nothing for it but to go over the top and risk the considerable artillery strafe which was going on at the time. On our way we crossed a tram road and saw two smashed up tanks and also a smashed aeroplane with a [illegible]. We reached Egg Trench, whence some men took us to Essex H.Q. I reported and returned to look for men with a couple of guides. After travelling right back to our old place in Sackville Street I was unable to find any trace of them. And then began a lovely time of chase about on top at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, looking for them, in the midst of a fine strafe. One C.Cr. complained that I was drawing fire on them, and he in his deep dug-out! After the devil of a time I found Corporal Carrie and Lance-Corporal Cope and a half drunken wretch who had been the cause of their staying behind, through losing the rest of his party. I forgot to mention that before this I had met Sergeant — slightly wounded and shaken returning to dressing station after having been buried by a shell; he was my best sergeant. To return, I took this remnant into a bit of trench near Essex H.Q. to decide on the next step to be taken to find Mr. E—— and the remainder. After a little delay I sent Corporal Clapham back down Egg Trench to look for them, as I judged sooner or later E—— would hit the C.T. and begin to come up it. My expectations were

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justified as soon I saw Clapham waving and men began to appear out of a trench to the rear. I went out to hurry them on, when a large shell burst quite close, wounding Corporal Carrie and the drunken wretch in the trench, but left me untouched. Eventually all reached —, except about six to eight casualties.

I reported to H.Q. Essex again, and was then sent on by guide to go in and report to Major Adams of the — of the flank. It was now nearly dark, so we rushed on without delay, and though some shelling was going on, reached the old S.L. without further mishap.

On reporting to Major Adams I learnt with keen disgust that he had already more men than he wanted and our being sent up was most certainly a mistake.

I was ordered to put my men into the German dug-outs and await orders. This I did, also saw very much of interest.

The German trenches are very well made, deep, well rivetted, and traversed; depth about nine feet, and fire-step often four feet six inches, with regular shelves to get up. In the parapet is a long, deep, and almost continuous dug-out system with any number of entrances. To each of these is attached a kind of glorified periscope, through which the sentry can observe all that is going on in the front while he himself is within the shelter of the dug-out entrance. Then there is a bell which he can press and which rings down in the dug-out, and in a moment the trench is manned. This particular bit of

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front line appears to have been occupied only the night before, and any amount of equipment, etc., was left lying about, while with regard to comfort, etc., there were numerous wire beds and small side pockets, as it were. To return, Attewell and I got our men all in, and put a sentry at each entrance of our portion, and then the remainder turned in to sleep. Attewell and I were very hungry so we tackled some bully and button biscuits and found it excellent. We also found a small round loaf of German bread on the floor—all muddy, but the inside might be all right—so we started on it. It was very sour and a failure, and I remembered it to my cost next day. All this time there was a considerable strafe going on—in fact, when we were going into the dug-outs had it been our trenches we must have had casualties, but their trenches are so beautifully deep that we came through unscathed. About 9 o'clock, just as we were all comfortably asleep, word came round from Major Adams that 4th R.F. detachment were to go back at once to Bus.

We collected the men again, and after some of the usual delays found our way back to battalion H.Q., where I reported to the C.O., who appeared very pleased with our performance. We then made our way back to huts at Bus, and after a very arduous day had the satisfaction of being the first of the battalion to arrive home—12 midnight.

On Thursday the weather was colder than ever, but nothing much doing, except that in the evening the

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C.O. asked me if I would care to take on adjutant. I told him I should be pleased to do anything I was asked to do, but that my ambition in soldiering was to lead my company in the field; and this morning I was definitely posted in command of Z Company, Seymour Brown having been hit slightly on Wednesday last.

Sunday, November 19th. Last two days have passed quietly enough, except that there was snow Saturday morning, but rain later and more again to-day, so that once more everything is beastly. This morning the brigadier had a word with us *re* trench duties, and drove home a few points I had been striving hard at while in command of W Company, with partial success. He also informed us we might be about this area all the winter, and that the brigade was expected to be in for a fortnight in our old sector, N.F.'s and W.Y.'s starting first. Other rumours are also afloat. However, this afternoon we moved to Courcelles once more—rotten billets, and village more shattered than ever due to all the howitzers about it.

Sunday, November 26th. We stayed at Courcelles until Tuesday night, when we relieved the N.F.'s. My company on left front, W on right. We are in Rob Roy, and hold the front line with bombing post and Lewis guns. Wednesday was a glorious day, but an attack of Frankfort Trench on our right at 3.30 p.m., to get out some marooned men, caused a beautiful barrage to be put on Rob Roy, which was kept on for

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over an hour. Our casualties were very slight, though one man was hit next to me just as I was leading up a relief to the front line. Subsequently we learnt that the 200 surrounded men surrendered, after being in the German lines for five days. Thursday and Friday were very fine days with black nights. Trenches are very bad, but we are hard at work repairing them. Yesterday, unfortunately, opened with a heavy mist, which developed into rain, but too early. Visibility was so low that we were able to do wiring during the day. By night the trenches were well filled with water, and we have now a sticky time before us.

During the afternoon an orderly, a bright lad named Lawson, and I discovered a "Stiffun" near the top of Souther. I suggested to Lawson that we should pull him by the heels into a crater, but Lawson said, "I'm afraid he'll pull right out, sir." So we got him by the coat, and after some effort got him into the shell hole. We then hastily threw mud at him, as he was thoroughly roused, then gladly departed.

To-day the trenches are worse than ever and it is still raining, What with one thing and another—endless chits, to send reports, to make reports, etc.—I've come to the conclusion a C.Cr. earns his "filoose." We hope to be relieved to-morrow night.

Wednesday, November 29. On Monday we were properly strafed from our flank, due to a number of parties wandering about on the top on our right.

The weather again cleared up, and after great efforts

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my little part of the trenches was made passable, but C.T.'s, etc., in many places were impossible, while the company on our right was frightfully knocked about.

At night, in due course, we were relieved by the roth R.W.F.'s of the 76th Brigade. There were only two officers in the company which relieved me, and the captain had been made a subaltern in the attack. Only four out of seven of their officers returned. He emphasized the great use of the rifle as compared with the bomb for attack. I am also in entire agreement with him, and said as much with regard to two bombing posts in the front line, which to my mind should be snipers' posts by day. Old French says the rifle has been superseded by the Mills and Lewis sentries; let him come into our front line for a bit. After a considerable struggle we finally got back to billets in Bus, myself and Robertson, about 4 a.m. Tuesday.

They actually took some of the officers, etc., for fatigue yesterday, and to-day the whole battalion is hard at it. They have actually got some road-cleaning machines, but evidently not enough to leave the men alone. To my mind it is absolutely sinful to use men who have just been under arduous conditions up the line for this sort of thing.

Undoubtedly the whole success or failure of an attack rests with the infantry, and these are pelted about until they are exhausted and weary, and then flung into an attack. Is it any wonder that they sometimes fail? Again, officers get little encouragement—they can get

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temporary promotion if in command only; but as soon as they get wounded or sick they go back to be second lieutenants. It is said 70 per cent. of officers in France are second lieutenants.

Monday, December 4. The days have passed peacefully enough in lines except that the men have had endless fatigues. The weather has been quite kind, and to-day is glorious. Y and Z Coys. are again together and we have quite a nice billet. The other night we had quite an amusing little incident. We had played Bridge until about 11.30, when we retired to our bunks, but L. decreed we should have a little gramophone. He put in "The End of a Perfect Day," but had hardly set it going when he fell over the red hot brazier, catching his breeches to the handle. He made desperate efforts to extricate himself, but only succeeded in scattering the charcoal about, and dragging the brazier round the room. His language no one could understand. All the while the machine kept up "The Perfect Day." We were all quite helpless to assist him until finally Shannon cut him free. He has not forgiven us yet.

Yesterday the Doc. and I were going up the main street when a hoary-headed old Frenchman rushed out upon us in a state of hysteria, pointing the while to the back of his cart, and then at some Tommies in a billet nearby. We followed him into the billet on the assumption that the back of his cart had been stolen for firewood. We were unable to find any trace, and of course

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the Tommies denied any knowledge, and we were about to send the frantic man to the Town Mayor when of a sudden he looked into his cart again and there saw the tail-board under some straw. Shrieks of merriment from all Tommies, and frightful scowls and cries of "Mauvais" from the aged Frenchman.

Tuesday, December 12th. On Tuesday last (5th) we moved into Courcelles once more, but for a wonder had quite good billets, both for the men and ourselves. The men were again put on endless fatigues, to my intense disgust. In addition we had to snatch them for wiring instruction, as this is to be our turn in the line. On the night of the 7th the C.O. was sent to take temporary command of the 8th Brigade, the Brigadier having been wounded by a sniper that day. In the night of the 9th we took over again from the N.F.'s and thus we have a much more extended line to hold, with less men than ever, and wire is urgently required to be put up. Of course it began to rain the same evening, and the trenches were knee-deep by the time we arrived, all the nice drainage channels we carefully prepared having been allowed to fill up by the other people who took them over from us. I have the same sector as last time, except I entered further on the right, and have fewer men than ever. To-day is our third day in, and the men have had the hardest time yet; nevertheless, the best keep in wonderfully good spirits, and dream of the two months' rest which is coming in due course. Some of them are really

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priceless, and too comical, for words. One of my corporals who is always chuckling, was sent out to reconnoitre the enemy wire.

On going up to take a stroll round later I found it was bright moonlight and immediately thought of my patrol, as I knew nothing would stop the corporal. Hurrying up to the front line to warn them to be careful I saw to my horror that they were already halfway across "No Man's Land," as clearly visible as by day, and WALKING BOLT UPRIGHT.

I told the sergeant that they were mad, and had hardly spoken when "Crack, crack, bang," rifle and machine guns started and also a bomb. That patrol came back at about 40 miles an hour, and where they had taken half an hour to get out through our own wire, they only took about two seconds to come in through it. The two men were in a state of complete panic, but old Corporal Lumly was chortling the whole time.

Then I had another corporal—Corporal Salt, and a hard old Salt, too—out with a wiring party. He is absolutely the last Bairnsfather touch to the tee; and has me in shrieks of merriment.

Sergeant Sullivan, who has been out ever so long, is simply priceless. I have him on trench duty entirely, as he can get more work out of men than anyone else, and has heaps of common sense. He looks after the trench drainage for me. Lastly, young Lawson, whom I have made a lance-corporal, is a bonny boy, very

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bright, quite fearless, full of energy, and also keeps me thoroughly amused.

It is the comic side of these men that makes life worth living, but it is very hard to describe. As an example: when I told Sergeant Sullivan to get some men for pumping water out of the trench he wished to take eight. I said, "Wouldn't six be enough?" He said, "Well, yer know, sir, they gets that there rheumatics feeling in the joints very quick if they don't get plenty of reliefs"—said inimitably.

Yesterday three new officers came out. One temporarily posted to my company—a very lively chap, named Dick, who was out thirteen months before; one of the other officers—Chamberlain, from Falmouth way—and the other, a Captain from Dover (Cave). There is also another captain expected—a very good chap.

I am Junior Coy. Cr., but don't think they will take my company from me again. I hope not.

Friday, January 5th. I fear my diary has been neglected recently, however we will resume from the day before we came out, i.e., Tuesday, 12th.

On Wednesday we got half an hour's intensive from the wily Teuton, which fairly smashed things up, but by marvellous good fortune no one was hit, though a big lump of chalk hit me on the wrist once, and another time a packet of iron stakes which had been hurled in the air landed on my back.

The relief in the evening was finally completed,

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though, as usual, Sgt. Sullivan amused me immensely. We had signed for a large number of gloves when we came into the trenches, but at the end of the tour over half were missing. Sgt. Sullivan was arranging a scheme by which the incoming officer should count a certain number in the first dug-out, and then while he was going to the next dug-out someone was to run round with those he had already counted and get there first for him to count them over again. Sullivan said, "I don't like doing it, sir, of course, but there ain't no help fer it—no other way out at all, sir." We returned to Bus once more, and did not get bad billets.

Time passed as usual at Bus, and we were all very bucked at the thought that the next would be our last tour for a time. The C.O. went home on leave before we got as far as Courcelles.

On December 24th I was given my temporary captaincy, and on Xmas Eve we went up the line to the same old sector. Of course going up the artillery had a strafe on, but apart from this nothing much occurred. One shell landed within about three yards of me, but did not touch me, though I was quite in the open; rather lucky.

The next four days were stickier than ever, and the trench was almost waist deep in parts. However, it all came right in the end, and we were duly relieved by the gallant R.W.F.'s on the night of the 29th.

I might mention that before going up the line this time Sperrin again went sick, and Finney, who had

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returned from four months' sickness, took command of W Company. He is a topper, and a great acquisition, as he has plenty of pluck and ginger. On returning to Bus I found that the N.C.O. reliefs had come out from England a few days ago. My old man returned. The three new ones seem good, and the new C.S.M. quite a success.

The men held Xmas Day on January 1st, and had a gorgeous spread, and appeared to generally enjoy themselves.

Yesterday Major de la Perrelle told us that he was being sent to command the East Yorks. What will become of us I don't know, as he is simply splendid, and puts a bit of keenness and discipline into the whole battalion.

Colonel North has not yet returned.

Monday, January 22nd. On Sunday, January 7th we left Bus and marched to Sarton, where we spent the night and the following day.

On Tuesday we marched on to Bomvalle, our training area, where we are now.

The chief features of the last fortnight were Major de la Perrelle's regrettable departure on the 10th, leaving me temporarily in command. However, the C.O. returned about 11.30 p.m. in great form—in the Earl of FitzWilliam's car.

The next few days were spent in reorganization, until Sunday, when the Divisional General gave us an

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interesting lecture on our training, and on the French attacks at Verdun.

On Monday our training started in earnest, and since then we have been fairly hard at it—parade 9 to 1, and then recreational training in the afternoon.

Friday, February 2nd. On Saturday last a small cyclone hit us, in that we received orders that the division was moving to a new area the following morning. This had not been altogether unexpected, but it came very suddenly, just when two weeks of our training were up.

On Sunday we marched to Barty, and on Monday we had a long tramp past St. Pol to Souchon. The men marched very well, but fifteen miles with heavy packs is very severe. The cold was as intense as ever, and it was my first experience of frozen roads, which in parts were so slippery that it was only with the greatest difficulty that the transport came along at all. We rested at this place next day, and then went on again on Wednesday, marching about eleven miles to Hermin, where we got fine billets for the night. Yesterday we moved on again, and reached our destination, Louey, N.W. of Arras. Our new role is to work on the railway lines, I believe; for how long no one knows. The cold is still severe, though the sun is bright enough.

Thursday, February 8th. The battalion is still at work at Louey, but I have had a stroke of luck, as yesterday I was sent to Arrai-le-Chateau, the third

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Army Infantry School, where I now am. Everything is most promising, and this is just what I have been longing for. The course is to last five weeks—all captains, bar one or two majors. Now for solid but interesting work.

Thursday, February 15th. Course going strong; very good. Had a slight thaw a few days ago, and weather better. Had fine concert last night—"Blue Birds" of 30th Division. Heard yesterday that battalion had moved again; now at Magincourt sur Coucy, not far from here.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

FROM KEITH TO HIS FATHER

[Written in great haste November 20th, 1916.]

Just a short line to let you know that I am still going strong, and though many times on the brink of leading my company into the attack in the recent battle of the Ancre did not actually do so, the battalion remaining throughout in reserve. I did actually take half the company to reinforce in the old German line the day after it was occupied, but only to find we were not needed.

The German trenches are very good and a great object lesson to us.

The recent attack was made under great difficulties, in a dense fog, rendering the keeping of direction difficult, and aerial and artillery observation impossible, and the ground in parts was waist-deep in mud. Nevertheless one cannot help feeling that if every man efficiently and resolutely discharged his part of the work no attack would fail, as this one did in places. It is this spirit that one is always endeavouring to instil in all ranks and, of course, officers sometimes lack it too.

I see that at last they are endeavouring to harness the nation at home, but one cannot help fearing that some wretched politician who doesn't know the A B C of economics will be made "Food Dictator."

The Australian business, at the height of the struggle, is very depressing, while the Roumanian business is another "eye-opener." The C.O. asked me to be adjutant the other day but I said I prefer to lead my company in the field and, indeed, I feel I can do this well, while, in addition, it is the men that are three parts the interest of the job. He seems very pleased with my exploit in getting my men across to the German lines, which was attended with some difficulties. I might mention I saw one scuppered tank in our lines on the way.

Now in billets but expect to be in the line again soon.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

[Letter dated March 2nd, 1917.]

(The last letter received.)

Just a line to thank you for your letter and to let you know that I am getting on all right.

We have just come out of the trenches after a pretty strenuous tour. We had to consolidate a position which entailed much hard work, but the battalion received high praise from the general for what was accomplished.

Am pretty well occupied now-a-days. My only regret is that conditions are not conducive to study. We have to get up early to be ready for the Huns.

NOTES ON LEADERSHIP

This is becoming more and more important. In old days only one course was needed but now much more is necessary.

The country has built up an army out of nothing. It is a wonderful achievement and has never been done in time of war before. If we are going to use this army to the best advantage we must have skilful leadership. Discipline, as we know, is essential to success, but we must have the leadership to apply it.

British army goes in for *esprit de corps*. Continental nations for *army spirit*. To keep up our *esprit de corps* it is essential to have capable leadership.

Every officer has a great responsibility in that he controls the lives of his men and possibly the lives of the men of his battalion; if he fails to make himself efficient he is wasting his men's lives.

What is leadership? It is getting men to do what you want and to follow you—but not through fear.

There are two sorts of leaders: the born, and the man who has acquired the art through study. It is merely a matter of applying certain principles.

ESSENTIAL QUALITIES IN LEADERSHIP.

1. Knowledge of human nature.
2. Example.
3. Sympathy.
4. Justice.
5. Determination.
6. Knowledge of your job.

1. By understanding your men you understand their motives and act accordingly. Also you can then select the right man for right job.

2. Example: French say men of the company are the mirror of their officers and N.C.O.'s.

NOTES ON LEADERSHIP

. Example in all kinds of behaviour. Must keep fit—endurance is essential.

3. Sympathy. Must look after your men but combine this with strictest discipline. Do not confuse with cheap effort at popularity.

4. Justice. Always. If you understand your men you will be able to punish for the *motives* more than for the acts.

5. Determination and courage and cheerfulness. Latter is of tremendous value under adverse conditions. A good word of command on parade is essential.

6. Know your job. Skill needs a lot of hard work and thought, in and out of line. Skill in use of ground and in movement, etc., is important.

LETTERS

RECEIVED BY RELATIVES AND FRIENDS AFTER APRIL 17TH, 1917

The diary relating to the battles of April, 1917, and during the months preceding, either was not written or has been lost. The part he took is, however, indicated in the letters which follow.

War Office, Whitehall, S.W.,

July 6th, 1917.

Sir,

I have it in command from His Majesty the King to inform you, as next of kin of the late

LIEUTENANT (ACTING-CAPTAIN)

KEITH JOY BARRETT

of the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment), that this Officer was mentioned in a Despatch from General Sir Douglas Haig dated November 13th, 1916, and published in the Second Supplement to the "London Gazette" of 2nd, dated January 4th, 1917.

Also in a Despatch from Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig dated April 9th, 1917, and published in the Second Supplement to the "London Gazette" dated May 22nd, 1917, for gallant and distinguished service in the field.

I am to express to you the King's high appreciation of these services, and to add that His Majesty trusts that their public acknowledgment may be of some consolation in your bereavement.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) M. D. GRAHAM, Colonel,

Assistant Military Secretary.

Lieutenant-Colonel J. W. Barrett,

Royal Army Medical Corps,

Shepherd's Hotel, Cairo, Egypt.

LETTERS

[EXTRACT OF LETTER.]

Dear Colonel Barrett,

April 20th, 1917.

I cannot tell you how deeply I sympathize with you in the loss of your most gallant son.

He was one of the finest characters I have ever met. Brave to a fault, absolutely fearless, cool, self-reliant, most unselfish, and kind-hearted, with the very highest ideals of honour, duty, and loyalty.

In my 27 years' service I have never met a better or more capable officer.

His death has cast a deep gloom on the whole battalion, who were devoted to him.

Not only was he a first-class company commander, but was an excellent second-in-command, and had I been hit, would have commanded the regiment.

The brigade commander (General Potter) thought him the best company commander in the 3rd Division.

We all hoped that his splendid courage and vitality would pull him through.

Your son behaved magnificently both on April 9th, when he held the post of honour in the capture of the Harp, near Arras, and on the 13th, when he was mortally wounded, and died on April 16th, at Etaples.

I have asked 2nd Lieut. Binn, the only surviving officer of your son's company, to write to you.

Our success on April 9th was greatly due to your son's fine leadership, and his behaviour on the 13th simply magnificent.

He was the most popular officer in the battalion with all ranks.

He was a son to be proud of, and the world is a worse place since he has gone.

No words of mine can adequately express my deep sympathy and that of the battalion, and especially his own "D" Company, at the loss of one of the finest officers and charming men I have ever met.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) EDWARD B. NORTH,

Commanding 4th Royal Fusiliers, B.E.F.

LETTERS.

April 23rd, 1917,
B.E.F.,
France.

Dear Mrs. Barrett,

By now you will have heard of the very sad death of your son, Captain Barrett, who died of wounds, and I am sure you will be only too grateful to get news about him from one of the officers.

I was in his company, and from the very first time I met him I had a very great respect for him, which latterly grew into a love for him. I am very young, being nineteen, and to my mind he was the bravest man I have ever known. He not only had a name in the battalion for being a brave, ever keen soldier, but was known well by the brigade staff and higher authorities.

When I was posted to his company, when I joined the battalion, the colonel said to me, "I have put you in Captain Barrett's company, and he is my best officer." Only to-day one of the men said to me, "We shall never get such a fine leader, sir; the captain was almost too brave." I cannot tell you how much we miss him, and I know too well what a loss he will be to you. He was always extraordinarily keen on his work, and his keenness never slackened. His favourite remark was, "We are out to beat the wily Teuton." Everyone in the battalion who is left will ever remember him, and I for one will always hold his name sacred.

I sent you a photo of us, which Captain Barrett asked me to send you. I am the right hand one of the back row, and I hope you will receive it all right.

Offering you my deepest sympathy.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

RASHLEIGH H. WILLIAMS,
2nd Lieut., 4th Royal Fusiliers

LETTERS

Lady Carnarvon's Hospital for Officers,
48 Bryanston Square W.,
Paddington, 2301,

April 24th.

Dear Colonel Barrett,

I was terribly sorry to see in yesterday's paper that your son had died of wounds, and I want to offer you my sincerest sympathy on the loss of one of the finest men who ever walked.

I was in the 4th Battalion with him for about six months, and our two companies usually messed together, so we saw a good deal of each other. We were both wounded on the 13th, and travelled down to the base in the same car on the hospital train. At the time he seemed to be getting along all right, and the nurses said that, although his wound was serious, he would probably recover. He seemed to have difficulty swallowing any food; his fractured jaw, of course, being the cause. At the base we parted, as I was sent on to England almost immediately.

Both Keith and I got through the first attack on the 9th; his Company Z leading the battalion, with W Company beside him. We got our objectives all right, and did nothing more until Friday, 13th. Then we attacked again, and this time W and Z Companies were supporting X and Y Companies.

Our leading companies, with whom I was, got about wiped out by machine guns, but the companies in rear caught the artillery barrage and had an equally bad time. Three of the four officers with the leading companies were hit, and I am afraid the other companies must have suffered equally.

Keith's loss will be a most severe blow to the battalion, where he was one of the reliable men who could be counted on to do the right thing at the right time, and his presence seemed to inspire confidence in both officers and men, all of whom will deplore his loss.

You may not have heard that he was recommended for the M.C. for his excellent work in the push last November, and Colonel North

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was putting his name in for the D.S.O. for the way he handled his company on April 9th. I sincerely hope that they both come through all right.

I am sorry that I cannot write more fully or give more details just now, as I have a bullet wound in my right shoulder, and writing is rather difficult.

Again with my sincerest sympathy,

Yours sincerely,

COLIN W. G. GIBSON,

Capt. Royal Fusiliers.

May 17th, 1917.

Dear Mrs. Larking,

I must apologize to you for not having answered your letter, but the battalion had only just come out of action and had been in the trenches over a week.

Colonel North has already written to Captain Barrett's father. As it is now some time ago that Captain Barrett was wounded, I think I may safely give full details.

He was wounded on April 13th, 1917, at Guemappe, while leading his company—although wounded he led his men on through those hostile barrages where he was severely wounded. Being unable to speak he issued orders in writing. Our padre Captain Andrews, who has since got his M.C., at the risk of his own life carried Captain Barrett to safety, and it was owing to him that Captain Barrett got medical attention as soon as possible.

We all hoped and thought that the wonderful determined spirit and energy of Captain Barrett would bring him through safely but I regret to say that he died in hospital at Etaples, on April 16th, 1917, in No. 20 General Hospital and was buried in the mortuary at Etaples. His wound was a gunshot wound in the jaw causing compound fracture of the lower jaw.

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His loss is very great to his battalion. His Colonel had the very highest opinion of him and valued him greatly. He always did his work with minute thoroughness—most conscientious and was most courageous and a fine leader.

I offer you my sincere sympathy.

Yours sincerely,

KEITH J. MARKBY,

Ass. Adjutant.

September 16th, 1917.

Dear Mr. Barrett,

Ever so many thanks for your letter of the 29th June. I always wanted to write to you after the death of Keith, but being away from the battalion, and having plenty of work to do, I have never carried out my intention. Yes, I am very fond of Keith, and knew him to be one of the very best of fellows, besides being one of the bravest of officers out in France. He was a sincere friend.

I cannot speak too highly of him; he and I were the greatest of "pals" out in France. It is to him that I owe my present position; it was he who recommended me to the colonel to become adjutant to this battalion, and I regret very, very much that I cannot thank him in person. I often think of him, and often speak of him to my colonel, who also knew him well, and thought much of him.

He is always referred to as "dear old Barrett." He was one of the best, and out here in these times of stress, friendship is a far greater thing than one can imagine it to be. I have always maintained that if the British army had officers everywhere like him, this war would have been over ages ago, with a fine victory for England.

I was posted to his company in December, 1916, after returning from wound leave in England. He was in trenches at Terri at the time, and I found him there. The trenches were the worst I have ever come across. But things were not so bad with such a Company

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Commander as Barrett. Whenever the enemy shelled he was out with the men in the trenches, when he might have been sitting safe in a deep dug-out.

We went in and out of those trenches till early in January when the entire division was withdrawn, preparatory to the great Spring offensive. It was about this time that I left the 4th Royal Fusiliers, and became adjutant to the 8th Bt. E. Yorks. I saw little of him during the coming months, except occasionally.

On the night before the battle (evening of April 8th) I saw him, and we had a talk together on the coming struggle. He was full of enthusiasm, and so were all officers and men of the companies who had the greatest confidence in their leader. On the morning of April 9th the great attack commenced. Everything went well. It was his company, in conjunction with another, which captured the famous German strong point south of Thillooy known as "The Harp." It was there that I met him during the battle. He was going strong and as enthusiastic as ever. I had to push on, but we wished one another the best of luck, and that was the last time I saw him. But what I knew after that I heard from the padre, who, unfortunately, was wounded about three weeks ago. I will find out from him all he knows and get him to write to you.

The battle of Arras continued all that day and night, right throughout the following day. The division having completed its allotted task was asked to do a little more.

A certain village just opposite the position we had captured had still to be taken, and the 9th Brigade (including 4th R.F.) was called upon to complete this task. The battle started in the evening of the 12th about 6.30 p.m., the result proving disastrous. The Germans had brought up many machine guns. It was during this attack that dear old Barrett was wounded. In spite of his wounds and loss of blood he continued until carried away in an ambulance. All the way from the battlefield, although he could not speak, he wrote on paper what he wanted to say. He was enthusiastic till the last. When I

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heard this story I was confident that he would live, and it came as a terrible shock when I heard he had died.

This is my whole story. It is short, but in the short time I was with Barrett, a great bond of friendship arose between us. I will communicate with you again as soon as I have found out where his padre is, and also one or two other officers, but I don't think anyone can tell you any more about him. I hope sincerely that I shall meet you once after the war. I should just love to talk to you about Barrett.

There is still plenty of fighting to be done yet before the war is finished.

With many, many thanks for your kind wishes for my welfare.

I remain,

Yours very sincerely,

R. E. H. DICKE,

Adjutant 8th Bt., E. Yorks.

The Royal Overseas Officers' Club,

At the R.A.C.,

Pall Mall, London, S.W. 1.

December 10th, 1917.

Dear Colonel Barrett,

I am so sorry you did not receive my last letter which I wrote some time ago from France. Since then I have been wounded and am home in England.

Your son was a great friend of mine, and, as I expect you have heard from all sides, he was much beloved and respected by all in the regiment.

I reached him soon after he had been shot, and did everything to get him away immediately. He had all his senses, although he could hardly speak, and he wrote me several messages in the dressing station, as we were attending his wounds. The messages he wrote were about the other officers and men—how they were getting on, etc. As long as I was with him his thoughts were of them.

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He wrote me and said his wound was not giving him much pain, which much relieved me. We then conveyed him by motor ambulance to a clearing station, where I left him, and the doctors had great hopes of his recovery. *

I did not see him again, as he was taken by train to the base, and when I left him he seemed confident he would recover.

After the war I hope to be coming out to Australia again, and am looking forward to meeting you.

With kindest wishes,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) L. MARTIN ANDREWS, C.F.

Wholly set up and printed by G. HASSELL & SON,
Currie Street, Adelaide