

Diary Book 2

(Book No.2.)

Returning off leave 13-3-18. Night in London. Took train from Victoria station 6.30.
14-3-18 for boat to Folkstone, Held back through heavy fog on sea. Night in camp. 15-3-18.
Set sail for France (Boulogne) 16-3-18 3 pm Arrived Boulogne. 5pm Went to Alsaints camp,
a night there, revalie 3.30am. 17-3-18 breakfast 4am. Marched off for train 6am, arrived
Bethume 4pm. 18-3-18. Up at the orderly room for being a day late, but let off. Fritz shelled
us in the morning, and afternoon. 20-3-18. He shelled Bethume again, killed several civilians
in the morning on the 21-3-18. A terrible bombardment and air raid, had to get up and stand
to. He kept on all the day with shelling, shells dropped only 300yds from us. 22-3-18 Another
big air raid and shelling, killing 173 civilians in Bethume. 23-3-18. Daytime very quiet until
evening was having a stroll up the road, another air raid occurred. Shrapnel was falling all
around, we began to get wind up none hit us. 24-3-18 Very quiet for Sunday there was only 3
shells came over us, and 8pm. Another terrible air raid started, which lasted until 5-20am. On
the 25-3-18 The great offensive has been on about 3 days, in that 3 days our boys on a front
round Perone was driven back 19 kiloms. This was the day when we heard the news we got
orders to stand to, which was expectation fritz to come over at us. Anxiously waiting for fritz
to come. There was only shelling going on at night, they dropped a bit to near to be
comfortable. 26-3-18 Was on a working party, a shell exploded 20 yards from us, did not hear
it coming only heard the explosion. No one hurt, nor did we know where it came from,
another air raid at night. 27-3-18 Very quiet, only a little air raid at night. 28-3-18 and 29-3-18
Too windy for air raids. We have received orders to stand to go in the big stack at a minutes
notice. 30-3-18 Still quiet where I am, raining just had a day of it, and still coming down.
31-3-18 Still raining, very quiet. 1-4-18 Woken up by bombs dropping, and the shaking of our
billet, afterwards all was quiet.
2-4-18. Very quiet not a gun to be heard until 4pm. Fritz flying a great height, dropped 6
bombs killed 2, wounded 11, plenty of work for us, some wounded civilians. 3-4-18 Very
quiet. 4-4-18 very quiet. 5-4-18 still quiet. 6th and 7th still quiet.
8-4-18 Attack has started. 9-4-18 Fritz sending terrible gas over. 10-4-18 still throwing gas.
11-4-18 A terrible bombardment on our troops near Bethume. 12-4-18 Fritz has started to
knock Bethume to the ground, and big shells dropping round our hospital, but not many
casualties. 13-4-18 Shrapnel again and heavy shelling 14-4-18 Gas shell dropped round us but
no one gassed, then heavy shelling round our hospital putting the wind up us. 15-4-18 Still
strafing us, moving off from this part. [Touquires?] at 2-30 pm. Marched to Nour-So-Meins,
stayed in a school for the night, all cafes put out of bounds. 16-4-18 Went under canvas, put
on guard all night.
17-4-18 Orders for working party 7-30am. 5 kiloms away trench digging, marched back at
5pm. 18-4-18 A terrible bombardment started 10am. Fritz made 8 attacks but got stopped.
We went to la brelly again digging. Pouring of rain, got a bit wet, then when we got back, had
to stand to. 19-4-18 still digging and taubs came over at night just over our camp, expecting
bombs. 20-4-18 Still digging, another terrible bombardment on. 21-4-18 Digging again, but
got turned away as fritz was sending gas shells over at us, but I escaped it. 22-4-18 Had a rest
as there was several of our party had to go in hospital. 23-4-18 Rest.
24-4-18. Quick orders to move only 3 kiloms. We moved off 2pm. Arrived at Hersein at 4pm.
Went in a chaliue, layed on brick floor, very cold.
25-4-18 Several shells dropped in the village, killed several civilians. Heavy shelling around
us in the night. 26-4-18 Very quiet until night. Then a big bombardment started, and we also
had a lot of it. 27-4-18 Very quiet. Very quiet 28-4-18.

4-5-18 Got shelled very much, but escaped unhurt. 5-5-18, 6-5-18 Very quiet. Ordered to parade 10am. For going tunnel digging on 8 hour shift, from 2pm. to 10pm. Ready for coming home, had to take cover shelling dangerous. Our relief party coming up had two men wounded, our party got back safe 1am on the 7-5-18. Off again 11am [raining]. 8-5-18 Still tunnelling, started to come home at 10pm. 6 kiloms fritz straffed us .We was walking through a death trap, but got through safe. Shapnel and gas shells following us, we then started to run for our life. We arrived home at 10am on 9-5-18. Then fritz came and gave us an air raid to top all up. 8-30am had orders to stand to for a stunt. 13-5-18 Started tunnelling again. 14-5-18 Going to work, got heavily shelled, but all safe. I got hit with a piece of shell about 7pm, nothing very serious. 15-5-18 Had to take cover between Musingcarb and Vermells. Very dangerous coming home at night, shelling very heavy. He then sent gas over, then we run for our lives. 16-5-18 Very quiet. 17-5-18 Very lively.

18-5-18 We again got straffed. 19-5-18 A lot quieter, but got straffed before leaving our work. 20-5-18 Very quiet. 21-5-18 A bit lively. 22-5-18 Finished tunnelling, taking over the line, then we moved from coupiyney to a hospital at Al Brackermont. Wet through and black with sweat and dirt, the sun boiling hot, then had to pitch tents [tired out]. 23-5-18 Carried on with our duty, still tired. 24-5-18 Quiet. 25-5-18 still quiet.

26-5-18 lively. 27-5-18 Heavy shelling and a big air raid at night. 28-5-18 Going tunnelling again at Vermells, [got straffed]. Fritz kept shelling us from 10 o'clock in the morning, until 5 o'clock in the evening, dare not put our heads outside. Started for home at 9-45pm [quiet]. Arrived home at 12 o'clock at night.

Had orders to move off at 7am 29-5-18 for a place called Philostpe, had to work underground. 30-5-18 [Quiet]. 31-6-18 Quiet until 11am, then we got shelled very heavy but none hurt 1-6-18. Shelled again but got well under cover. 2-6-18 [Quiet].

3-6-18 A terrible straffing. 4-6-18 A little quieter. 5-6-18 In the afternoon we was shelled again, and at night he sent us nearly 200 gas shells round our hospital, but we had got our gas blankets. We got aroused by the alarm, but no-one has any effect of it. 6-6-18 We was shelled by gas again at night, still we kept it out of the hospital. 13-6-18 Very quiet early morning, but at night the shelling was dreadful. We began to get the wind up, as he was knocking the house down that we was under. All lights went out when the shells burst. A shell went right under the stables and killed both horses. We went out in the morning 14-6-18 to see if we could see any holes. The place was all holes, walls down. Me and my mate that night went to our cook house to draw soup at 11 o'clock, as we was working until 12, a shell burst outside, the pieces flew inside. Then we run for safety, but we took our soup with us. 15-6-18 Battle shelling and standing to for the line. 16-6-18 Sill standing to. 17-6-18 Went into the line at 3-30 to Merve for a big stunt. I was posted at a dressing station. Then went up picardily trench through Loose, we was posted 500 yds from Fritz's front line. There was a little charge, then 41 prisoners, then after that we stood to for the big one which came off at 7 o'clock on the 18-6-18. The only casualty we had was 1 officer and two men killed, 6 wounded and took 17 prisoners. We stood on top of the trench and watched the boys go over into the charge until fritz started to drop shrapnel near us. Cleared three wounded and then went back to Phistoph tired out. 19-6-18 Rest.

20-6-18 Another severe straffing. 24-6-18 Orders for the line for a big gas attack, moved off 7pm. Raining to the right of Vermells, but was cancelled after we had been on the line for nearly 2 hours. We then came back home. 12-7-18 We went on another gas stunt, this did come off at 2 am until 13-7-18 There was 4,000 cylinders sent at him, the artillery made him stand to, and the gas followed. One whiff of gas and they are dead in a second. If they have their masks on at the time they are luckier, they live 4 seconds. Then Fritz was done, there was none of his guns fired. It was reported that 12 train loads of dead was observed to be taken away. 16-7-18 We had orders to go up front for a big raid near Hulock, we was only 700

yds from Fritz, and waited there until the raid came off at 3.30am on the 17-7-18. We had 17 wounded and one killed, most of them was wounded in our own barrage, reported a failure. We were carrying the wounded under very heavy shell fire, but none of the bearers was hit. A very heavy storm came on before the attack.

20-7-18 One of our fellows got killed, we went and buried him in the cemetery at Philostophe in the afternoon. 8-8-18 Went on a raid near Loos, commenced 2pm. Very satisfactory. The boys went over, and over 100 Germans were coming to give themselves up. The guns stopped firing for about 8 seconds, and the Germans turned and ran back. But guns started, the shells dropped in amongst them, and not one was left alive

16-8-18 Air raid at 10pm. Bombs dropped one limbless and one was blown all to pieces. Horses killed, and men, some were blown to pieces. We were picking odd fragments of men's bodies up, it was not a pleasant job I am sure. 17-8-18 Again we were bombed, 11 horses and 13 men killed at the entrance of the hospital. 24-8-18 We were relieved from the line, went to headquarters, slept in open field. 25-8-18 Marched to Bully Grinay, took train on the light railway to Marquay in open trucks. Was riding to Louvins in a thunderstorm, pouring of rain, wet through. Walked 2kiloms to the camp, arrived in camp 12 o'clock midnight, slept in tents. 26-8-18 Still raining got put on guard at night. 29-8-18 Left Marquay in motors for the line near Arras, a place called Raclincourt, slept in the open field.

30-8-18 Left 5pm and marched back to Mouraull not needed, slept the night there. 31-8-18 Made off at 8am pouring of rain, 7kiloms to Arras. Passed through Anyin and St.Catherine. 1-9-18 Air raid and shelled. 2-9-18 Very busy with receiving wounded. 6-9-18 Fritz started to shell Arras, shells just crept over top of our billets. It was at night, we lay in bed could not sleep, expecting our billet to get hit. We were in great danger, he finished shelling at 7am on the 7-9-18 but started later in the day. We had to run for cover as he was sending three at a time, we went to bed at 9pm. Waiting to see if he would start again, we were fetched out of bed 2am. 8-9-18 Changed our billet went into a cellar, laid on a stone floor. 15-9-18 We had some heavy shelling and bombs dropped around us. 18-9-18 Left Arras at 7.30 in motor lorries to entrain at Frevin Caffell. To go to no.1 army rest camp for 14 days, which was 12 Kiloms from Boulogne, a place named Audresselles. 20-9-18 A dreadful storm came in the night, the rain beat through our tent. All our clothes were wet through, bed as well. 21-9-18 found our boots full of water. We of course, said our prayers about the rain. 1-10-18 Left rest camp to own units entrained at Wimereux, arrived at Egney 12.30pm Went into barns to sleep. 2-10-18 Had to get up after being laid down for an hour, through being cold. 10.30am had orders to join unit which was at Cagnicourt near Cambria which was 28 kiloms. We kept getting a lift in lorries, then a walk. At last we reached the place, we marched 12 kiloms of it with full pack. Slept in dugouts but was tired out. Left Cagnicourt. 7-10-18 After walking 24 Kiloms Then I walked another 10 kiloms to Saucy hestree near Epinvy, slept in the open one night. Then on the 8-10-18 we found some dugouts, there we lived until the 13-10-18. Then we moved back to Sains St. Marquin, there we lived in barns. The boys came out of the line, there we lay in reserve. Was billeted in a chateau which was mined, but we slept comfortable. Left on the 20-10-18 to follow up the advance, we marched 9 miles, was pouring of rain all the way. We passed Boulon wood, our journey's end was Cambrea, stayed in billets. 21-10-18 Was under orders to move, but stayed the day. Troops still advancing. 22-10-18 Still under orders. 23-10-18 Moved off for a 10 mile march to Villas Lebauches. There we stayed for days. German patrols had been in this place 2 days before we went into it. 29-10-18 Had orders to go and join the 52nd Squadron RAF for duty. Took me in a car to Bournon Wood where they were supposed to be, but they had moved. Then we went to Averis Si-Lee. 30-10-18 took over duty as Medical Officers orderly to this Squadron Sef-Averis Se-Lu. 10-11-18. Went to Valenunes 11-11-18 news of armistice. Went to Sille, then moved on same date to Sinselles, stayed until 26-11-18. Returned to Valensenis working from 6am to 6pm, with flu cases.

