

Grandpa's war diary is a small book, about the size of a pack of playing cards. It measures 120mm high by 77mm wide and is about 14mm thick (4 ¾" x 3" x 9/16"). It has a dark, vellum like cover which is rather shabby but, considering its age and the distance it has travelled, is remarkably intact. Entries have been made from both the front and the back of the diary. The back entries have been made as they would have been if the back were the front (the book has been flipped over). On the inside of the back cover is a list of letters represented in Morse Code (dots and dashes), and on the facing page is a list of soldiers who appear to have been casualties of the battles. The front cover is lined with a red, wave patterned paper which extends across the front facing page. The lining of the front cover is completed with a small fold out pocket of the same material, with concertina skirts at the top and bottom. Inside this small pocket nestle two small newspaper cuttings, a Player's Cigarettes card representing some constellations surrounding the Pole Star, complete with some hand written notes on the card's face, and finally a material insignia, or badge, made from coarse drab, or khaki, material, oval shaped and about the size of a large egg. Embroidered on this coarse, army-tunic like material is a laurel, above which are the script letters M G (Machine Gunner?).

Notes:

* indicates a word which contains letters that are difficult to decipher, and which have therefore been guessed at, considering context

indicates letters which are too difficult to make out, and do not suggest any apparent meaning

Words and phrases which have been crossed out are reproduced as such. ~~As with this text, for example~~

[(Back side of front leaf) **Page 1**]

Croix Maresthil*

Nouveau Monde

Notes for letter home:

~~Silk shirts — well made~~

~~—Leather coat~~

~~Car#####~~

Wedding day wishes

~~Car##### ## #####~~

~~Emily's letter — Change Lloyds* to Cook*~~

~~17th May at 0530~~

~~31st~~

14 June

12 July

26 July

Letters - ~~Wedding wishes~~

~~Change Lloyds to* Cooks~~

~~Send ### Coin~~

~~Explain Coinage~~

~~Southern Baptist~~

Harry McKinley

Jack George

Contents of parcels. how nice

pickles potato chips paste ~~tablets~~

[Page 2 (facing page 1)]

No 4 Section

Platoon 2/4/16*

Cpl McDonald

~~Mc Alpin* ##~~

#08# Kent EJ 2585*

Ice#####

Pennycuck 2662 v

Pedersen 2667* v

Peach H 2665 v

Storry*

~~Ala#####~~ v

~~Cameron*~~ v

A C McKinley

135 A Coy

24 Batt

Letters, Ma. two 4 4 #. M^r Smith

~~Write W. Stock~~ ~~Write W. Smith~~

Ask for telescope

Write Will McK. re Haven*, Mays

& Kinta*

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April 28th 1916

No 4 Section No 5 Platoon

Issue of Rifle covers & st#ck

2662 W. Pennycuck Cover & Stick

2667 C.F. Pedersen “ “

2655 H. E. A. Peach “ “

3111 V. Dennis “ “

3059 G. K. Cameron Cover only

Polish 12^d

Brush 12 ½

Soap 8

[bottom of page has some scribbled calculations of costs in sterling]

[Page 4]

[This page has been turned on its side and divided into 6 columns. The page is headed 'No 4 Section No 5 Platoon'. The first column is headed 'No – Reg'; the second is too hard to make out; the third, 'Age'; the fourth, '###file No'; the fifth, 'trade'; and the last, 'address'. Only the first column has any entries:]

Corp. McDonald

McAlpin A

2583 Kent E. J.

2655 Peach H. E. A.

2667 Pedersen C. F.

2662 Pennycuck W.

3111 Dennis V.

Greening

3059 Cameron G. K.

Storry

[Page 5 – The diary proper begins. Written over the text, sideways – along the left side of the page – is the following comment: “This page for reference only. Continuation of previous diary”]

1916

May 7th Left school field* A*

Company (in trenches). Peach
gave me a letter from Emily
containing group photo.

May 6th Posted letter to Ma* &
Green envelope to Emily.

May 3rd Posted Field Service
Cards to Emily and Ma

May 1st Left trenches for
Engineering School.

Evening obtained leave
pass & visited Estaires

April 29th Arrived trenches

“ 28th Parcel (fly nets) from
Jean

“ 27th Bulletin from W. Smith
Arthur came along 2nd
evening

April 26th Rec. Aust Bapt from
M^r W Mck. & newspapers.
one from Anny*

[Page 6] May

Friday 12th May Received two
letters. Emily's 36th & Ma's 41st

Posted p/c to Emily, Ma, &
W. Smith

Sat 13th Left trenches & arrive

(Sun) 14th Fleurbaix, Rec Herald

March 18th from Dad.

May 16th Posted green envelope

letter to Emily, containing
my witnessed authority for
differences of Pay made

Payable to Dad.

Posted 5 page letter to Ma.

Saw Arthur.

May 16 Tues. Our billet shelled.

Peach & I had a narrow squeak.

Shell burst in road and missiles flew
all round us.

May 17th Received Ma's 42nd &

44th letters. One from Ray.

Chat* from Dad enclosed

with Ma's. Also Leader

from Emily & letter from

Bill Smith.

Posted 2 FS cards to Ma &

Emily

[Page 7]

May 18th Rec letter from Hector

McKenzie, Written from Tasmania

May 19th (Friday) Received

parcel from Alba. Contents

Scissors, Eucalyptus, ginger

insectibane, etc. Also

copy of Brunswick Leader.

Rec August Leader

& Australian Baptist

May 20th (Sat) Paid 20 francs.

May 22nd Mon. Posted Green

envelope letter Emily

containing coins for Ma

also F.S. cards to Emily & Ma.

May 23rd Bomb School.

May 24th Posted letters by CoCa##

to Rich, Ma, Jean.

May 25 Bomb School. Night

Fatigue. Got a pretty fair

wetting with constant

rain.

[Page 8]

May 26th (Fri) Rec two parcels

from Ma, One small. One

Tin Box contain Age 25-3-16

Posted F.S. Cards to

W. Smith & Miss H.R.H

Posted Gn envelope by

Arthur to Emily containing

in addition to her letter, one

each to Annie & Jean.

25th Evening. Trenches.

29th Fell into a ditch in

No Man's Land &

nearly had to swim for

it. Wet thro'

May 30th Received 7 letters.

2 from Ma 39 & 43. One from

Dad (very informative) 3 from

Emily (38, 40, 45.) One from

Miss HRH (10) & one from

Ray 28-3-16 Also some

papers. Atlas* from Home. M^r Smith

Saxon gone to hospital with Bronchitis

B. Sent F.S. cards home. (2)

May 31st Rec 4 letters from

1 Emily (39) Ma (44) Daisy (10)

Miss H,R.H. (26-3-16)

[There is a note, on the facing page, with an arrow pointing to the B, which says:]

B means we were bombarded by Fritz

[Page 9]

(May 31st cont) A fine day
night – ‘out on wire’.

Posted letter to M^r W Stock.

June 1st. Fine day. Night out
on ‘wire.’ ##### M.G. turned on
us & had 5 come in.

[M.G. = machine gun]

June 2nd Rec 3 letters. Two from
Emily (31 & 37)(Ma’s 45)

June 3rd Posted letter to Emily
& Field Service Card to M^{rs} E Shelley
A cloudy, cool day.

Evening. **B.** Out on wire

June 4th A cool, cloudy day
Evening out on wire. Chubb
Fraser got hit in the arm. A
ricochet off the wire. We were working
together & just missed me.

Went out again with party. Chubb
stayed back. Had 5 come in again

June 5th Inclined to be wet.

Posted letters to Alba & W. Smith

June 6th Wet day. Evening
building up para-traverse

Rec 4 letters One W Mck.

(43rd) & (44th) from Emily. One
from Daisy apparently intended for

[Page 10]

Arthur & addressed to me.

dated April 9th

June 7th Rec 2 letters from

Ma. 48th & 49th

posted letter to Daisy

Posted special letter to Emily

answering her 31st. Also containing

one to M^r & M^{rs} McK. (special)

Had a visit from Arthur.

Gave him letter received from

Daisy. Also gave him Saxon's

P###. Special letter was posted

& courtesy of M^r #####ay

Evening. 'Out on Wire'. Was not

troubled by Gerry*.

June 5th Received three letters

Emily 42nd Ma 50th

Dad April 13th 16

Posted F.S. cards to Emily & Ma

Evening Parapet building

June 9th. Received a parcel from

Emily wrapped in March 23rd

newspaper. Peps cake atlas

sponge chocolate cheese razor

blades. Such a nice parcel.

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June 9th Cont. Afternoon Parapet

building – Evening came

set* ~~7.30pm~~

June 10th 3.30 am arrived billets

thoroughly tired. Morning. Foot

inspection after 5 hours sleep

Blistered heels. Evening

Rec large parcel containing

paper April 1st. Such a

beautiful parcel containing

Pres. Ginger in syrup Pickles

salmon Cake coffee & milk

etc. (Ma)

Rec letter from Mother (M^{rs} Mck)

This is the one which I gave

Arthur thinking it was

from his mother.

Rec letter from Emily (41)

Rec letter from Ma (46) & one

4-4-16. Also parcel 2 hankies

And some raisins & spearmint Also

papers 17-4-16

Rec Leader 14-4-16

parcel (from family) containing

“Sailly” [word written vertically in margin,
probably name of current location]

[Page 12]

pudding jam meat paste

June 12. Rec letter from Ma dated

18-4-16 & one from M^{rs} G M*

Smith same date. Posted F.S.

Card to Emily

June 13. Rec Emily 49 letter, Ma 52

M^{rs} HRH & one from Dad 29-4-16

Inspection by Colonel

June 14 Drill all morning, afternoon

I was one of 15 men picked for

raiding party. 40 had

volunteered. Evening moved to

new billet - June 15 –

June 16 Rec letter from Rue*

Elder dated 20-2-16 Peach

brought it over. Visited Estaires

& met Will Mc. had a good time

June 17. Rec 20 francs pay

sent short note to Arthur

by Engineers. Sent FS

Card to Arthur

Posted letters to Emily

Ma, Miss Kerry & Ray

Rec letter from Saxon

Weather fine Good day

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June 19 Left Saily

Evening arrive over

Belgian border

June 20 four letters posted

on 17th returned till further
postal notice.

Met G. Marsdon in 6th Batt

& got his signature to

send home for pay.

In Aldershot Camp

bivouacs. Name Eglise

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June 21st Posted letters to Emily,

Ma, Miss Kerry, Ray, Dad

(with application to M^r Lee enclosed)

Eric Hall, W Saxon.

Handed #an boots in to Q.M.S

Received Miss Kerry's letter back

Brigade number to be deleted.

22nd. Received April 26th Argus.

Posted letter to Miss Kerry.

Posted F.S. Cards to Emily

& Ma.

Posted Souvenir Card of

King Edward & Queen

Alexandra to Emily

June 23rd Received five letters

Three from Emily 46, 47, 48

Ma 51, and Jean

dated 6-4-16. Afternoon

wet. Thunderstorm which

did not prove very bad

although promising great

deluge.

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June 24th Evening left Brionne

June 25th Early Morn Arrived

Billet. Evening Gas Guard

June 26th Rec Large Tin Box

fsome* all & contain paper

April 10th. Beautiful

parcel.

Posted F.S. Card to Emily

also 3 post cards.

June 27. Received letter from

cousin Maud.

Posted letter to Emily

June 28. Up in 8th trenches

Messines

Two Bombardments. Had a

[location, pencilled vertically in margin]

rather trying time. Bombard-

ment was terrific. Trench waist

deep in mud in parts.

June 29th Back from trenches at

about 4.30 Bombardments

lasted about 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours each.

Afternoon marched about five

miles for bath but on

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getting there were ordered to return immediately. About turn and marched home.

No bath. Tired out. Hasty tea and up to trenches.

Our raiding party acted as decoy with smoke bombs etc.

Three bombardments during night. Again terrific but not so bad as previous night.

Used gas for short time.

June 30 Arrived back at about

5am. Tired out. Slept

till 11 am. Evening. back

to trenches. Our Artillery

had bombarded Fritz all

day but he did not reply

He replied fairly vigorously

to our bombardment in

evening. Later we used

decoy smoke and Gassed

Fritz very strongly. His

shooting died away on the

gas attack, and artillery

fire got very wild and

erratic. Finally that died

away, there was a remarkable

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decrease in Ariel Torpedoes, high explosive shrapnel. Finally Fritz contented himself with answering with rifle grenades and finally closed up in spite of repeated bursts from our artillery inviting him on. The gas travelled splendidly and there is no doubt Fritz got properly gassed. Our decoy was successful in drawing the artillery fire on ourselves as was evidently intended.

July 1st. Arrived back to billets at 4am. Received papers

May 11th & 13th. Evening received pay 20f. Went over to U.G.

and saw Peder & Penny. They have been transferred to

LMG Section.

[Lewis Machine Gun]

July 2nd (Sunday) Church parade

Chaplain Miles repeated a sermon delivered out at

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July 2nd (cont)

#erapeum* East: Afterwards

Communion Service.

Received letter from W. Saxon

at Convalescent Camp.

Posted F.S. Cards to

Emily, Ma, A M

Smith, Rue Elder,

Maud Catt, Stan Kent,

Will McK. & Arthur.

Posted letter to Ma.

Received parcel from

Ma containing Aust

Bapt. & raisins also

some spearmint chewing

gum which was very

acceptable.

July 3rd Moved back to "B" Coy

Received large parcel from

Emily containing Large

cake, tin chocolate, tin

nestles milk, 2 pr socks 2

pencils.

Received letters from

Emily (50, 51, 52, 53)

Ma (53, 54, 55)

Daisy (10th) & M^{rs} Kerry 28-6-16

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Jly 4th Took over 26th Batt billets

On Guard Brandon Post

Hill 63

Jly 5 Received letter from Eric

Jly 6th Am told that Arthur's Coy

is at Morris*.

Jly 7th Three years since Elsie

died. I'm thinking of

Mother.

One year since I went

into camp

Left Fort Brandon, and

re-joined Platoon.

Received letter (54) from

Emily

Jly 8th Fatigue Party. Eight got hit

with shrapnel, Evidently

we were observed.

On Batt HDQ Guard.

Left billets & returned

to Aldershot Camp bivouac

Jly 9th On billet guard.

Evening. Voluntary Church

parade. Well attended. It

Kemmel

[location, pencilled in margin]

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Jly 9 (cont)

made all the difference to
the day and cheered me
up for I was a bit dispirited.

Jly 10 Morning A & B played C & D

& Details. Cricket

A & B won.

Jly 11 Up at 2am. Packed up & had
breakfast.

Breakfast in Belgium

Dinner in France, in train

going South. Detrained

at Doullens early in evening

& marched to fields a few miles
out.

I don't think I shall forget

my experiences in the

firing line around Messines

during my twenty-two day

sojourn in Belgium.

Bivouaced in field.

12 Jly Up at 5am & marched about

eleven miles to Village

of Flesselles. During

afternoon the 8th marched

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Jly 12 cont. through, and I was able to
exchange greetings at
a small distance with Will
McK. Evening
sent to billets

Jly 13th. Afternoon Left Flesselles
through Villers-Bocage
a fair sized village thro
Poulainville* to Cardonette where we
were billeted. About seven
(7) mile march. Arthur came
along and had tea with
me. It was so pleasant
after not seeing him
for so long. Saw
Jack James later on.

Jly 14 Received parcel from Alba
It was a beauty. Contained
scissors from Emily, also
lovely provisions from
Ma. The sheep tongues
went well with some
potatoes which we had dug
up & fried. The pickles were
lovely. I gave Arthur

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July 14 Cont.

half of the pudding, and chocolate. The tin of strawberry jam was excellent and the Nestles milk will go with some currents which we have picked and will stew for tea. The candlestick is a handy one but a trifle heavy for the pack. The bundle of "L O L A" Gems cigars which Uncle Harry sent were much appreciated I gave Arthur three of them.

The parcel came just after I had searched the village for provisions and could not get any, so was delighted to get it.

Jul 15 We found out last night that there was an owner to the currents which we had picked so we collected 15f between us & gave to her. She was well recompensed

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for them. She said that
the fifteen francs were
equal to a week's pay
to her husband

Received letters from

Ma (59 & 60) and Rich &

Kath (14)

Jly 16th Received pay 20 francs

17th Moved out of Cardonette

marched 12 miles to

Lealvillers. Gave letters

to a Scots soldier to post

for me. They were a Green

envelope letter to Emily &

a F S Card. F.S. Card to

Ma. Special Letter card to

Aust. Base London.

Containing cable to

be sent home. It ran

Arthur, Willie, myself

well. How is Richie? Cooks

London. Kent. & addressed

to Kent, F. S. Brunswick.

[F. S. = Fire Station]

I hope this will go alright.

Emily's letter contained group

[Page 24]

Jly 17 (cont) taken abroad S S Briton

Received twelve (12) letters

from Emily (55, 56, 57)

Ma (56, 57, 58), Dad 21-5-16

Rich (14, 15), Jean (12)

M^{rs} Dygens* (11) & Ron

Peare*. Visited by Arthur.

Jly 18 Shifted to Lewis Machine

Gun section and

had two lessons on

Gun. Evening Volun-

tary church service was

well attended.

Jly 19 Transfer came thro' in orders

Posted F.S. letter card

to Base telling of transfer

to Machine Gun section

Also F.S. cards to Emily & Ma.

Spliced some ropes to use

on machine guns.

Jly 20 Left Lealvillers and arrived

Senlis

Jly 21st. Left Senlis and arrived

at Albert. Bivouaced

for night.

[Page 25]

Jly 22. Had a very bad night. Did not feel the effects of sleeping in open without a blanket as much as expected, but suffered much from a sun-burnt chest which entirely prevented me from sleeping. Had a good chat with Will McK. who is bivouaced on the opposite side of this hill. He told me of Bunty Lawrence's wound and probable death. Received parcel from Ma. Contents 2 pr socks box medical lollies fly net was very glad of piece of towelling in which parcel was wrapped. I will sew this on to my shirt in place of the missing tail. Also received Aust Baptist Whilst taking a lozenge out of box I accidentally found a sovereign

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July 22 (Cont)

which must have been
the special "kiss"
referred to by Ma in her
letter. The discovery of
it was as far as I was
concerned quite accident-
al for I was not seeking
it and had eaten half
the lollies when I found
it. There is a Hand that
guides.

Received Emily's 59th letter

& Jean's 13th

Posted Green Envelope letter

to Emily thro' courtesy

of English ASC man. The

letter was short and

hurriedly written. Moved out

Jly 23rd In reserve Contalmaison Wood

Jly 24th Met Arthur. He was looking

well, and was resting.

Evening. We moved up to the

vicinity of Pozieres and took

two of the German trenches finally

retired to the first line and

Willie's Coy went

up to Pozieres village

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July 25th

held it. We hopped out at 10am

25th. By about 5am we were

well dug in, and the Germans

were commencing to attack

us. They came on in large

numbers on each flank

bombing with great vigour.

I had started the stop* out*

as No 7* man on a quittam*

By this time I was No 2 man

on another gun crew. Humphrey

was Gunner & I was No 2.

I observed for him & we got a

great tally. Could see Bill

Pennyquick Bombing in a

wonderful manner. As they

drove the Germans back we

caught them with the machine

guns and put in some very

good work. That was the last

I saw of Pennyquick. I'm

afraid he has not survived

the attack. Skilbeck*

did great work with a

Lewis Gun. He held it to

his shoulder like a Rifle &

fired right into the

[There is a newspaper cutting pasted to the margin:

"North of a line Pozières-Bazentin-le-Petit we succeeded last night

in capturing about 200 yards of an important enemy trench which has

hitherto successfully resisted all our attacks."]

[Page 28] July 25th

Germans from on top of the parapet.

I saw him get wounded.

Later on the Germans drove

us back down one side of the

trench with bombs and recovered

a portion of it. The aeroplanes

did great work & soon got the

artillery on them, so stopping

their attack. I got hit by

shrapnel in two places but

only slight wounds. During

the second attack by Germans

when they were reinforced, we

worked our M. G.'s to almost

a standstill. I got hold of

portions of two broken guns

and made a good one of them.

I then became gunner of a

new crew & used the gun

effectively during the day.

Jly 26. Was snatching a few minutes

sleep in the trench when

I was awakened and taken before

the Major who said he was

going to send me and another

man to Etaples to a Brigade

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July 26th

Machine Gun School.

I was not sorry to leave
the trenches where
so many of my own
pals have fallen.

Afternoon reached Bgde
Hdqrs & got a chap to take
a hastily written note to
Arthur telling him I am
well. Whilst waiting at
Hdqrs our Battalion came out
of trenches. What a difference!
Only about 250 men left. Only
Peach & I left of all the mates.
Received instructions from Hdqrs
and went down to Albert.
Here the officers at Div. Hdqrs
were most kind to my compan-
ion & myself. They took us
to their mess & gave us a
good hot meal – the hot tea
was greatly refreshing.
After tea Captain Bean,
official correspondent for
A.I.F., had a long conversation
with us & we were able to
tell him how we attacked

[Page 30] July 26th cont.

and what sort of fighting it was. I made a point of telling him of the Bravery of W. Pennycuick & Skillbeck. He was greatly impressed or seemed to be and took shorthand notes of my story concerning them. I finished up by telling him of the German Helmet which I had taken, and he promised to send it home for me. I gave him Emily's address. I feel sure he will do his best to get it away for me.

Jly 27 Reported at 1.15am. Motor came for us & took us to Achian Here we entrained for Etaples. Change at Dondas* Had a good look around Longpre – A fair sized town. Arrived Etaples about 5pm and marched about three miles to Toquet to camp There I posted Field Services Cards to Emily & Ma, and a Cable

From information since received Willie's Coy were relieved about this date

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July 27th cont.

by Special Field Letter card
to Home Stating – Myself, Peach
quite well. Have withdrawn to
base. Letters, delete B Coy
add Machine Gun Section.
I also posted many Field
Service Cards for the boys.
Posted Green envelope
letter to Emily also letters
to M^{rs} Peach & Syd
Humphry's Mother.

Jly 28th Posted p/c of Longpre
to Ma & Emily.

This is the Anniversary
of our Wedding Day.
Went in Sick parade with
the large contused bruise
on my leg & shrapnel
wound on arm. Doctor
said arm was doing
alright, and the only thing
for bruise was to rest the
leg. I told him that it
was much larger than
at first. Also told him
that I had not been

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July 28th cont.

able to visit dressing station
when hit because there were
so few of us left and the
Huns kept trying to break
thro'. Then when we were
relieved I was sent straight
away to the Machine Gun
School and decided to get
treatment down here.

We think a piece of shell
case must have hit my leg
flat on.

Had a good afternoon at
class. The morning & first
hour of afternoon were rather
tiring as all parts of the gun
were being detailed and
I knew them all. Latter part
of afternoon we had some
drill which was interesting.

Finished at 4.15pm

Jly 29th. First Class 7*am to 7.45

Yesterday about six
of us paraded to doctor
asking for a bath &
change of clothes

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July 29th cont.

The Doctor today sent us
in the Motor Ambulance
to a hospital in Etaples
where we had a hot
Phenyl bath and our
clothes fumigated.

A Tommy gave me a
new pair of braces
putties* & underpants.

After the bath we had
a look around

Etaples which is not
a large place. Had
a light lunch* there

and I changed the
Sovereign which

Ma had sent me as
a kiss. Returned to

school and received
a pass to visit Paris Plage

Had a splendid
meal at Paris Plage

Steak, eggs, green peas
cost 3f & was really

worth it. Obtained
some Post Cards of

Paris Plage & Returned
to camp

[Page 34]

July 30th

Sunday class from 9am till 12 pm

The weather has been

very fine ~~sent p/c~~

~~of Paris Plage to Emily~~

~~& Ma~~ Sent letter

to Ma & Dad. Good

Service in Y.M.C.A.* in

evening.

Jly 31st. Fine Day. Evening

Splendid lecture by

a Miss Ward. She

gave chalk sketches

on Black board

showing alteration to

faces caused by smiles,

frowns, lines of care,

etc. The moral was

keep smiling & don't

let the lines go down.

Posted letter to Publishers

Smith & Son* Esq*. enclosing

p/n 2/6^d & stamps for Machine

Gun Handbook.

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Aug 1st

Fine day. Afternoon

Lecture in Aspects of

War by M^r Goulburn

Lovell. Was most

interesting. I learned

much of the various Questions

which the War has brought

up. Posted letter & Post

Card to Emily

Aug 2nd. Firing at Range. I put

in some good shooting.

Weather still fine & warm.

Most of the men under order

to leave tonight.

Posted letters to Emily

Ma & Dad, Had

a very fine concert at

Y.M.C.A. The program was

marred however by absence

of performers who had to

leave earlier in evening.

Aug 3rd. Still fine weather

Left Stoneham Comp Lewis

Gun School for group* at

3pm. A Beautiful sea

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Aug 3rd cont.

breeze is blowing. Left

Etaples at 5.15 pm.

Met a chap from the

20th Batt who told me

that Stan Kent was

Quartermaster & was in

good health.

Aug 4th. Still in train which has

been shunting backing &

going in again all night

Detrained at Vignacourt

at 10.15 am & took up our

abode at a small collecting

camp awaiting guides for

our battalions

Left camp with 12th Batt

guides. At 7.15pm Left Guide

at Canaples. Bivouaced

on roadside for night

Aug 5th Up at 5am. Had breakfast &

went on. No trace of Bonneville

on Kilo stones. Questioned

motorcyclist & found we were

going wrong. We had got

near to Berneuil, & were on

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Aug 5th cont.

the road to Berneuil. Turned
round and struck right road
leading thro' Montrelet.

Here we found direction
for Bonneville. We had
gone about 3 kils wrong which
meant about 6 kils thro' turning
& retrace of our steps. My

mate is G. Londey** Arrived
Bonneville. Peach gave
me 1 letter 1 cable & 1 parcel

Later I met Saxon & gave
him four letters which I
had been holding for him

My parcel was from Emily

A fine box of biscuits &
handkerchiefs. The Cable

was from ~~Cooks~~ Emily stating
that money was at Cooks.

Letters were from Emily

(58, 61, 62) Ma (61, 63,

64, 65, 66), Daisy (11),

Rich (15) & Dad 4-6-16

Miss Higgins (12 or 13)

Also a card from Hdqrs

acknowledging receipt of

letter card from me

[*not sure what this means - humour
of some sort?]

[Page 38]

Aug 5th cont.

Evening Battalion concert

Aug 6th. Church Parade, later Holy

Communion. Padre made

inquiries for me regarding

Bill Pennycuick & Pedersen

They have been posted as

missing. Peach tells me that

Bill McKenzie has been severely

[Uncle Willy McKenzie was Emily's brother]

wounded. Also that Arthur

is well. How I trust that

Bill will get on alright.

Evening. Voluntary Church service

Aug 7th. Made 4 Francs at haircutting

The first time I had used the

new scissors. They made about

half their cost right away.

Left Bonneville and

marched to

where we bivouaced for

the night. Here I met

Arthur. He had found

out same as Peach had

about Will McK.

He was told that a

[Page 39]

Aug 7th cont.

shell had burst in
the trench & hit all
bar one of the section
that Will was in
Will was found next
morning conscious &
spoke to one of them.

How I trust he may
recover

I also saw Jack
James. He is well.

Aug 8th. Warwick Armstrong gave
me a Gillette Safety
Razor. I shaved with
it & must say that
I like it

Arrived Vadencourt
& went to bivouac in
wood.

Aug 9th Made inquiries at 8th Batt
from Will Mck's friends
& found out all that I
could concerning him
I am afraid that his

[Page 40]

Aug 9th cont.

wound will turn out

a very serious one.

Evening went to village

& so missed

Arthur.

Aug 10th. The King of England

rode past today

we were lined up

on roadside to see

him. Afternoon

met Arthur later

met Pat Madden,

Weatherston & Proctor

Had a great chat with

them. Arthur & I had

a good feed together.

Aug 11th. Sent 2 F.S. Cards to

Emily & one to Ma

so#### gone to school

Padre Miles told me of

Dave Payne's death.

Arthur told me that

Dave Hopkins is wounded

Received fine parcel

from Home. contains

[Page 41]

Aug11th cont.

papers June 8th

Also parcel of sox

from Ma. Small

parcel with writing

material & paper

& M. G. Book from

English publishing

firm Saw Arthur

Aug 12. Attended Dental parade

Spent all day at

Hospital. Posted

Green envelope & white

one thro' Hospital mail

bag. Green to Emily & white

to Ma. Have thought

since that they may

think I was in Hosp.

hope they won't

Received Emily's

64th letter. Had a

visit from Arthur.

Concert by* 5th & 6th tonight

[Page 42]

Aug 13th

Wrote & posted letters to

Emily, Ma, & Bill

Smith.

Received 60th letter

from Emily

Church Parade

Holy Communion

Afternoon made inquiries

about Will McK. Latest

report is that he is wounded.

Met Dave Horton late

M.F.B. Melbourne. He

is in the sixth Batt.

Aug 14th Left Vadencourt. Arrived

Albert.

Aug 15th. In* Reserve

Aug 16th. Fatigues to Firing line

###ines**

Aug 17th. Had the pleasure of seeing

one of our planes set a

Fokker alight. The Fokker

came down inside our

lines

[Page 43]

Aug 17th cont.

Evening Went up to front line with M.G. I went up as No 2 to Foster who very soon asked me to take over No 1 as he did not feel up to it. Peach No 2. M^r Makin put us in a position which was rather an isolated one. We dug in & consolidated position as far as possible. Fritz was shelling very strongly, and to make matters worse our own shells kept knocking our trench in. Two of our men, Davis & Morris, got shell shock rather badly. We had just about got our position fixed when we got orders to close the right trench. From then on we kept getting orders each contradicting the others, & were kept moving backwards & forwards under very

[Page 44]

Aug 17th cont.

heavy shell fire for about two hours. At the end of this time I found out that our officers in this particular trench were all out of action, so decided that all these orders must be coming from various men along the line none of whom were responsible for the line. I then informed the team that I would take no more orders but intended to set up a position and stay there at all costs. We were all by now wet through with rain and had unfortunately lost our overcoats. Mine contained a leather coat and shirt which I had hoped to have for a change. Well so as to keep warm whilst our clothes dried on

[Page 45]

Aug 17th cont.

us I gave orders to
dig in, and consolidate
our position by this time
we had lost one man &
the other was suffering so
much from shell shock as
to be of little use. So
well did the boys work

Aug 18th. that by about 3am on

18th we had got our trench
down to a depth of about
eight feet with a very
fine parapet & parados
We also had a fine
position to fire from.

The fact of our digging in
so deep turned out well
for in addition to what
Fritz kept sending at our
parapet, our own artillery
kept putting shrapnel
into our trench & kept
knocking our parados
in with Wizz Bang*

Twice this morning they
knocked our parados
in on us, covering us

[Page 46]

Aug 18th cont.

and the Guns with clay.

I do indeed thank God for

bringing us safely thro'

some most trying

ordeals. At about 3am

our digging having

finished we began to

look around for overcoats*

I had given my water-

proof sheet to the stretcher

bearers so that they

might keep warm a

poor wounded fellow

whom I had helped them

carry from the ground

on top of our trench.

On looking round I

found a dry coat &

waterproof sheet so

was comfortable for

rest of morning.

Later on after daylight

I found my coat which

had been kept for me by

mates who had seen my

name on leather coat

inside overcoat.

[Page 47]

Aug 18th cont.

Late in morning we were relieved and very thankful we were to get out.

All Gun teams had had experiences of getting buried. Some worse than others. I heard from Arthur's Corporal this morning that he is alright. He said he would give Arthur my message.

Received Sydney Mail from Emily.

Aug 19th. Attended Jack Stark's burial this morning. He got hit by a machine Gun bullet last night.

Only yesterday afternoon I had shaken his hand and told him I liked him. He was on my team during the hot time we had two nights ago, and showed no fear whatever, being ready to

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Aug 19th cont.

do whatever was required
of him cheerfully &
quietly. He and Peach
were valuable allies.

Went over to B Coy and
received a letter from
Rich dated June 25th

Received letter from
Ma (67 or 68) & Jean

25-4-16 Also an

Australian Baptist
from S.S. Union.

Had a conversation
with M^r Thompson
regarding Willie.

Neither of us had any
news.

Received photo of
Ma & Ivan Marcroft.

Heard from Sapper Collins
that Arthur is alright

Aug 20th Sunday

Had a splendid morn-
ing. I had felt led
lately to speak to a
couple of the lads of
matters spiritual

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Aug 20th cont.

The result was that
four of us had a little
Bible reading & Hymn
singing which made
things more like Sunday
I chose the Parable
of the Sower & also that
of the Wheat & Tares. We
had a very profitable
discussion.

Aug 21st Enemy sent over large quantity
of gas shells at an early
hour this morning. Several
of us got enough to make
us feel uncomfortable before
we were awakened and put
on our gas helmet.

This morning I went to
the Army Med. to get some-
thing to take away the
sick feeling in my
stomach. Dr Jack Lee
was there and gave me
some pills. We had a
yarn about home, and
promised to mention
in my letter that I had

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Aug 21st cont.

met him. It is the first
time I have seen him
since leaving home.

Evening left reserve*

trenches Arrive Albert

Met Tom Whitehead who
is Sergeant in 12th Engrs.

Had a talk about various
lads who had left M.7.19*
to go to the front. It seems
that he joined up about
a week after me

Aug 22nd Left Albert Arrive Warloy.

Afternoon met Arthur.

Had a yarn & walk with
him. Tried B Coy for
letters. Still none
coming to light.

Met Arthur again

Got Paid 30F.

Aug 23rd. Posted letter to
Emily, Ma, Dad and
inquiry to Base Hdqrs
London about Willie.
Emily & Ma's letters

[Page 51]

Aug 23rd cont.

were very long ones.

Also posted F.S. Cards

to Ma & Emily

Received letter from

Dad dated June 22nd

Speaks of parcel sent

which had number

put wrongly.

Left Warloy & arrived

Rubempré. Met Arthur

He, Saxon, & I, had a long

search thro' village

and at last had a

great feed of eggs &

coffee. Sent Cable

home on week end

form. It ran:

MYSELF, ARTHUR

PEACH QUITE WELL

AFTER RECENT

ACTIONS. DADS

LLOYD IDEA EXCELLENT

KENT. This with

address cost 16f half

of which Peach paid

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Aug 23rd cont.

as I had included

him in my last.

Received 8 parcels

from home. One from

Emily & one from Ma

contained Biscuits

Tin milk, tub meat paste

sox etc etc etc.

small parcel card*

Aug 24 Left Rubempré & Arrived

Amplier.

Aug 25th Received Emily's 63rd

Ma's 67 letter

Also Emily's 65, 66th letters, Ma's

69th letter, one from Mrs

Morgan & Miss Higgens

Abt 11pm left Amplier

and arrived Railway

where we entrained

Aug 26th Slept all night on train

and awoke this morn to

different scenes.

[Page 53]

Aug 26th cont.

Arrived in North of France

after Absence in Somme

District of over six

weeks. Got wet thro'

with very heavy rain

Arrived huts about

1pm. In Belgium, just

over the road from France

Had a feed down in the

little town with Peach.

Aug 27 Sun.

Blankets issued again

after some weeks without

Church Parade. Went

to the little town here and

had a good dinner. The

lady who was running the

Estaminet was a Belgian

very quiet & refined looking

She spoke very fair English

and her story in part was

that she was on Hill 60

when the Germans reached

there. The English drove

them back and told her

to leave her house & come

back in three days. This

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Aug 27th cont.

she did and she says "When I came back to my house in three days I found nothing missing". That is a testimony.

Later she said the Germans drove the English back & of course the people came back too. She

had a sister who was apparently dragged away by the Huns for she said "The Allemande got

my sister and put a strain in her arm & made her promenade

"We have not heard from her for two years" One of the lads said

"Where do you think she is"

She simply shrugged her shoulders & said "I do not know"

She told us that many Belgian men worked in the factories in

France going to work each morning & returning in the evening to their wives, and

families. When the Germans advanced, these Belgian men

could not return to their homes

and so could only turn

round & serve with the

[Page 55]

Aug 27th cont.

French Army, their families
being lost to them.

Aug 28 Rec Ma's 70th letter,
Emily 68th, Annie Mck 9th Jly

Posted letters to Emily,

Ma, & Rich. Had a

good tea in Estanminet

near by eggs & coffee

Went to bed early

Aug 29th

Received two letters.

Emily's 67th & Daisy's

12th with one from Cyril &

Elsie

Weather close & drizzly. Has
been so for three days.

Left Connaught Camp

where we have been

for above three days

and arrived in town

of Poperinghe. A very

large town with two

Cathedrals. Billeted in

what was at one time

[Page 56]

Aug 29th cont.

a tile & pottery works

went out & bought stuff

for the boys. Rain very

heavy.

Aug 30th Rain very heavy all night

Our billet is fairly dry

inside. Yesterday we

read cables of Roumania's

entrance into the War.

Today it is verified in the

daily papers. May it

bring the war to a speedy

conclusion is my

fervent wish. Had

a hot bath at div. baths

Aug 31st. Fine day. Received two

letters. One from Dad 9.7.16

and M^{rs} McMaster 10.7.16

Had a look around the town

this morning. Left

Poperinghe & arrived

Ottawa Camp.

Sept 1st. Drill morning. Afternoon

left Ottawa Camp. Arrive

fronts* reserve &* firing line

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Sept 2nd

Rather close day.

Wrote and posted

letters to Emily,

Daisy, M^{rs} Morgan

and Field Service

Cards to Emily & Ma

Sept 3rd. Fine day. Gas attacks

during last night

were awakened three

times to put on Helmets.

Tucker rather short – $\frac{1}{4}$ loaf

and no biscuits. Missed

morning bacon thro' C Coy

going on fatigue, and taking

it all with them.

Paid 20 francs. Good tea

to make up for shortage

all day. Evening Twelve of

us had service in our

dugout. George Milne

spoke. We took 19th

John.

Sept 4th Up at 3am. Breakfast

4am. Left for trench

fatigue. Day inclined

[Page 58]

Sept 4th cont.

to be wet. Fatigue in

Ypres Salient. Met Arthur

Home in afternoon. Later

it rained very hard.

Sept 5th. Had a good night's rest

This morning the Batt.

opened a canteen which

is very handy.

Raining all day. Evening

had a nice service abt

20 M.G. present in our dugout

which is built to accommodate

that number. George Milne

expounded last verse of

Revelations to us. Had

some hearty singing &

finished up.

Sept 6th. Up at 3am. Fatigue in

trenches. Quiet day. Fine

weather. Back at dugouts

at 4-20pm. More encourage-

ing news of War generally.

Saxon came and had a yarn

on the way to the trenches

I met the youngest Barnett

[Page 59]

Sept 6th cont.

of Abbotsford. Belongs to

101st Howitzer Batt.

Bread issue back again

to what we have had for

a long time, viz ½ loaf.

Yesterday I was given

No 1 position on No 3 gun

& given list of 5 men as

crew. They are all

excellent fellows & I am

satisfied.

Sept 17th. Spent the day cutting

hair & sharpening Razor

The scissors have

proved a profitable

pastime. Read a daily

paper which gives more

encouraging news.

Sept 8th. Up at 3am. Fatigue in

Ypres Salient. Fine day

Met Arthur who gave

me some letters to post.

posted FS cards to Emily & Ma

Sept 9th. Fine day. Did some

haircutting. Paid 20f.

[Page 60]

Sept 10th. Sun

Received Ma's letters 23-7-16

& 72nd. Mentions receipt

of my Cable sent from

Lealvillers (1st) Also

one from Dad & Ray.

Aust Bapt from 8.5.16

Sent short letters to

Emily & Ma.

Received letter from

Rich (16 or 17) On Guard

11th Sept. Fine Morning. Rec Emily's

69. 70, 71st letters. Jeans 15

And Miss HRH 22-7-16

Posted letters to Emily

& Ma.

12th Sept. Emily's & Ma's letters

returned to be posted

later.

Sick parade for sore

eyes. Attend four times

per day for lotion.

Obtained a stone & sharp-

ened scissors. Cut hair

for several fellows.

[Page 61]

12th Sept cont.

Late at night rec

large parcel from

Ma, and small one from

Ma. Contain Ginger, tobacco,

& lollies, chewing gum.

13th Sept Packed up to leave billets

Arrive trenches. Opened

large box. Lovely collect-

ion of eatables. Most

enjoyable. In dugouts

in reserve. I have a

team of five. All Good

fellows.

14th Sept. Missed our breakfast this

C Coy getting it all. Went

round firing line visiting

all M. Guns & finding

quickest means of reaching

same from reserves.

Provisions in Box

sent by Ma is prov-

ing most handy. Mak-

ing meals most enjoyable.

Had Gas Helmets

inspected. Had a sleep

Ypres Salient

close* reserve

[Page 62]

14th Sept cont.

during afternoon.

In support in Salient Ypres.

15th. Sept Up in firing line arranging

change of two men in M.G.

Afternoon Cut Hair Slept

Sharpened Hair Clippers.

16th Sept Had a bath. Rec Emily's 73rd

letter. Had a Fatigue Party of 5 men

& self this morning.

Sent letters to Emily & Ma

Also enquiry form to Hdqs

London asking information

of Willie. Did some Hair

cutting. Fatigue Party

again this afternoon.

17th Sept Went on Sick parade as

rash has been giving trouble.

Painted with iodine & given

tonic pills. Also to see the

Quack again in two days. He

seems a very decent fellow.

Rec Emily's 72nd. & Ma's

74 & 75 letters these have

taken 7 weeks to come.

[Page 63]

17th Sept cont.

Posted letter to Foster Groun* & Co

London with P/n 24/c 234725

asking for copy of their book

Instruction in L.M.G. by Simplex

Fatigue all afternoon

& evening.

18 Sept. Went up to A Coy and

took over their M Guns

revolvers etc. Was given

a team of 5 men & self

as Gun team. We are

a Crater Snatching

team. I have a good

team of men & only

trust that if the

mine goes up during

our stay here that we

may make good. Have

every confidence that

we will do so.

Went to dressing station

and got painted with

Iodine for rash.

Rec letters. Emily's

74th with one from Jean

enclosed. Ma's 76 & 77

Dad Aug 6th with one to

[Page 64]

18th Sept cont.

Pat Madden enclosed

also Emily's 75th

yesterday evening I went

across to where Arthur

is entrenched and left

a letter of Daisy's and a note

for him. He had gone for

a trip to Ypres

19 Sept Rec small parcel of sweets

and dates from Ma. It

was such a nice little

parcel. Also rec a letter from

Ma (78) and one from Miss

HRH. Ma's letter stated

that she had received the

cable which I had sent

from Etaples.

Paraded to Doctor on account

of rash, and feeling run

down. Am not sleeping.

He said that I was run

down & is sending me to

hospital. Peach lent me

four francs. He owed me one

and I had no change, so

kept the five. Stayed at

[Page 65]

19th Sept cont.

dressing station all

day and then came

down to another dressing

station where I am now

waiting for the ambulance

wagon. It seems quite

funny to be going into

hospital. The rash

however is very troublesome

At this station the Doctor

has marked my ticket

“scabies” Arrived at

further dressing sta-

tion after passing thro’

Ypres in a motor amb-

ulance wagon about

midnight. The ruins

of the town struck me

greatly, and I have

seen some ruins in

my travels thro’ France.

The desolation of the place

is terrible.

20th Sept. Slept at dressing station all

night. This morning am

waiting to go to Rest Camp

[Page 66]

20th Sept cont.

Finished letter to Ma and posted. Posted short letter to Arthur . Sent note to Peach by Bill Rose who expects to rejoin Batt tonight. Posted short letter to Bob Hogg.

Afternoon, motor ambulance conveyed several of us to the 1st Field Coy Ambulance Here we were put in a semi-isolation camp where thing seemed very dismal indeed. The weather has been very wet and cold for s few days and today is no exception had a bath & went to bed

21st Sept. Things improved much.

Food is splendid. They gave us new tents which we put up ourselves. Posted letter to Peach & Arthur

Posted letter to Emily

We bathe in hot water each day & rubbed our bodies with sulphur ointment

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[This page is divide into 3 imaginary columns. The first contains various categories of Naval vessels. The second column is headed British and the third, Hun. It seems to be a tally of some sort. It has finally had a rough line drawn through each column as if to cross out the page]

	British	Hun
Battleships	nil	2
~ cruisers	3	2
cruisers	3	1
Lt "	nil	4
Destroyers	8	9
Submarines	<u>nil</u>	<u>1</u>
	14	19
	115,355	145,035
	tons	tons
	5,625	7,165
	crew	crew

145,035 Hun

115,335 British

29,700 diff tonnage

7,165 Hun

5,628 British

1,537 diff crew

7-6-16

[Page 68]

Sept 22nd

Cut hair. This is
a splendid place we
are well looked after.

Posted 5 page letter to Ma.

Sept 23rd Up early had my bath

Doctor says I am

improving fast. This

is a splendid place for

meals. Four meals

per day. The last being

of from* puddings

etc. Today we had jelly

& custard. Cut hair.

Gave orderly my watch to

get repaired if possible

at Poperinghe. It has

been broken for a couple

of weeks. Exchanged a

Bengal Blade Razor for

an Auto Strop Razor.

Have not used it yet but

if it proves a success I

will have made a very

good Bargain.

[Page 69]

Sept 24th

Four days since I came here.

The Doctor said this morning
that I was greatly improving.

He marked all the obstinate
cases for another hospital.

I am to stay on here. The
food is excellent. Cut

hair for a couple of the
lads who are leaving

early tomorrow. I have
made five francs at

it since coming

here. The orderly brought
my watch back last

night, and said that

it could not be

repaired in Poperinghe.

Could not attend a

service today because

we are isolated.

25th. A number of the men

left for hospital today.

They are cases where

skin is taking a long

time to get right. It

is a fine day. In fact

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Sept 25th (cont)

with the exception of my
two first days here, the
weather has been perfect.

Evening. indulged in a
trip to Poperinghe. Had
an amusing experience
with a butcher there. I
wanted Rump Steak.
He didn't understand
either Rump or Steak. So
there was a dead lock
until he had served the
last of his lady customers.

Then I pulled up my
coat & proceeded to go
thro' the action of cutting
off a bit of Rump Steak.

He thought it a great
joke & immediately got
me what I wanted.

I got the steak cooked
at an estaminet &
had it with chips & egg

26th. Sept

Another fine day. More
good news regarding
capture of zeppelins.

[Page 71]

26th Sept (cont)

Am progressing well.

Posted a letter to Emily
which I found in my
pocket. I had written
it in the 17th inst.

Also posted envelope
containing postcard
of Poperinghe & coins
Belgian & French value
about 2/-

27th Sept A little rain this
morning. Finished
a four page letter to
Emily & posted it.

28th Fine day. Wrote 5 page
letter to Ma & posted it.

Wrote & posted letters to
C.F. Pedersen, Jean,
M^{rs} McMaster.

Received note from
Peach Evening

Popped into Poperinghe,
Had no pass but success-
fully elude MP.' of
whom there were many.

They were examining both

[Page 71]

26th Sept (cont)

Soldiers & Civilians. Bought a number of Picture Post Cards & two souvenir handkerchiefs to send home. Also bought a very handy pocket lamp of leather made to go on belt if necessary

Got some good insoles for boots

Had quite a good night shopping.

29th Sept. Day inclined to be cold,

Wrote & posted letter cards to

Ray & p/c to Ma & Emily

Had a piece of hard luck tonight

Had purchased two lovely

silk handkerchiefs – worked –

for Emily & Ma. Was putting

final touches to box to put them

in when the envelope that they

were in slipped against candle

& in a moment there was a

hole burnt thro' one & the other

scorched. The worst of it is

I can't replace them & I wanted

Emily to get hers for Birthday.

They were pretty too.

Posted p/c to M^r Collins c/of*

Annie Mck, & HRH

[In-between the two previous pages was a small slip of paper on which is written the following]

This wrapper is off a readdressed
parcel which I received recently.

Note all the Readdresses.

As I haven't any brown paper this will
be handy. Feeling well

Lots of love dearest

Your loving hubby

Ernie XX

[Page 72]

30th Sept. Fine day. Sgt Schrader lent me francs so that I might replace the handkerchiefs which got burnt last night. Went into Poperinghe. Met Bill Saxon who lent me five francs so that I might repay Sgt Schrader. I can repay Bill any time. I got the handkerchiefs & left one burnt one with the shop-keeper. He said his wife would cut out the burnt parts & sew it up. Got back to camp & found that Peach had evidently been out to see me & left two letters & parcel for me. There was an answer to my inquiry about Willie. It ran Regret to state Pte W McKenzie 3199 Died of wounds 2-8*-16. This is a great blow. I had been praying that he would get over it. He must have lingered for about 9 days before

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Sept 30th cont.

passing away. Wrote &

posted Cable to all

at home as follows:

McKENZIE. 110 EGLINTON STREET

MOONEE PONDS VICTORIA

JUST RECEIVED SORROWFUL

NEWS, WILLIE. LOVING

SYMPATHY. GOD STRENGTHEN

YOU. KENT. and dated

it for 1st Oct.

Rec Letter from Ma 81st

& Rich 2-8-16

Oct 1st Sun. Fine day. Not allowed to

attend Church service

because of isolation.

Hopped into Poppy to see

if Peach had gone in.

Met Saxon. Lent me

5 francs which is additional

to 5 which he lent me last

night. Met Ernie Ascot

of Footscray MFB. He is

in D of C. (British). Met

several 5th lads also.

Bought a splendid pair

of Riding pants today for

4 ½ francs (3/9^d)

[Page 74]

Oct 2nd

Wet day. Alternated
reading with playing
cards.

Oct 3rd

Doctors sent all scabie patients
on to Hazebrouck.

Got Saxon's parcel sent
away for him. Cost 7^d

I had 6 ½^d so Bill the

Orderly put ½^d on it.

Left Camp (Remy) at

about 1.30 ## & walked

to Remy Station close by.

Caught a train & went

to Hazebrouck C.C.S. Here

we had tea. Bathed &

giving our clothing in

received pyjamas in

exchange.

Oct 4th. Wrote & posted letters & FS

cards to Emily, FS

card to Ma, letter to Peach

& Saxon.

Oct 5th. Attended Sentist & left

plate. Wrote & posted

letter to Ma.

[Page 75]

Oct 6th Left Ward in CCS & went
into Convalescent Camp

Oct 7th. This is indeed a step
better than the last ward I
was in. There seems to be
nothing to do of a morning
except visit the Doctor.

Afternoon leave is given from
2 till 7pm. This is very
generous and gives a chap a chance
to exercise his muscles once
more. Meals like the
last ward I was in are of
good wholesome food but
more like Battalion tucker.

Bread butter boiled bacon &
tea for Breakfast. Stew &
bread for dinner, Bread
butter tea & jam for Tea.

Cocoa & bread & butter for
Supper. Of course we don't
get either supper or cocoa
in Battalion Menu.

The Rest Camp was the pl#er
tucker. There we had delicacies
such as custard, jelly, stewed
fruit, every day.

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Oct 7th cont.

Pte J Jenkins 11 Batt lent me five francs last night. He wanted to give it to me but I got his address so that I can send it when I get back. This makes the whole of my next pay now mortgaged unless I can get a double amount. I'll parade for it. The last few days have been cold and bleak. Today is no exception. Just been to medical tent & got medicine for indigestion which has been troublesome of late. Teeth the main cause and the Dentist refuse to replace the front teeth that are broken off. Said Army regulations wouldn't allow him to replace front teeth, Made no difference to him that I used them for chewing thro' shortage of others. Well it's all experience. Next time I parade to a dentist I wont

[written in margin:] Jenkins & I chummed up at Hazebrouck. We had some good times together. I had my clothes & he had not. So I used to lend him my overcoat & borrowed a pair of shoes. He put these on over hospital clothes. I have since sent a p/o by registered post.

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Oct 7th cont.

have any teeth to be repaired
so he'll have to fit me with a
new plate. Don't suppose he
will leave the front teeth
off it. At present I'm kept
here until his highness
replaces two back teeth that
are broken off.

Oct 8th Sun.

Have discovered that
the row of tents that I
am in is named
Abbotsford Terrace.
there are some nice little
beds of flowers there too.
One bed contains my
favourite flowers
Pansies in several
colours. Spent a quiet day.
Afternoon went for a brisk
walk. Evening Met a
couple of 5th Batt. boys in the
scabie ward. The rumour
is that the whole Batt is
isolated with scabies.
Had an interesting talk
with the RQM corporal
who has charge of the scabies

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Oct 8th cont.

here, last night. He assured me that my complaint is not scabies at all but a skin trouble accentuated by use of too much Sulphur ointment. He has had charge of these cases since last November so should have a great deal of experience with the number of cases thro' his hands.

I am inclined to believe him also because my trouble responded to his treatment very speedily whereas it seemed to be at a standstill on the sulphur treatment. Have noticed some peculiar habits amongst population in this town. Sunday sport amongst men seems to be that of throwing large wooden discs a distance of about 20 yards onto a mark. Another is that of shooting arrows at small objects stuck in

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Oct 8th cont.

the branching arms of a sort of double tripod on top of a long pole standing about forty feet high. This must be a regular sport as the pole is probably built up from the ground and occupies a place in the town such as our bowling greens would do. Another custom noticeable here is that of having a small piece of mirror built into the window frame of a house in such a way that a person inside can see the faces of passers by in the street.

I obtained some very nice postcards of the locality.

Posted Gn Envelope letter to Emily. Contains few photos of anzac* in addition to letter Church service at Y.M.C.A.

Enjoyed it. John 14-14

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Oct 9th

Posted 2 page letter to
Emily. Met a Padre who
took my little package of
silk handkerchiefs, censored
it & promised to send it away
for me. Still on medicine
for indigestion.

Gave Sgt Gurlick a note
for Peach as he is rejoining
Battalion tomorrow
10th. Found that I had sent the
wrong address to Peach
so wrote a note & sent it
by post this is 1/1 Northumbrian
C.C.S.

Oct 11th. Found the remnant of my Gold
tooth very loose this morning
so worked it off the tooth.
It was very small but as I
wanted money & the bit of
worn out gold was of no use
to me, I took it to
a local jeweller. The man
there gave me half a franc
for it. I thought it would have
brought a franc but half is

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Oct 11th cont.

better than none. Evening

Y.M.C.A. Have just written

a long part of letter to

M^{rs} Pennycuick and

am glad now that I have

got it done. Also wrote

letter to Rich in answer to 2.8.16

12th. Posted letter to Rich &

M^{rs} Pennycuick.

Evening, Went to concert

in "E" Block Hospital. Several

Flying Corps men came

out as Pierotts &

altogether the Concert was

a huge success. At the

interval Officers came

round with cakes and sand-

wiches. They were awfully

nice and pressing these

English Officers. Some

Doctors & some Patients.

There were three or four

nurses there. One of them

stood at the door and gave

us cigarettes as we came

in. The others were up in the

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Oct 12th cont.

front row with Officers. I

spent the evening with

the other nurse at the door.

She was awfully nice, made

me feel at home, & at the

end of the evening shook

hands & invited me to come

round to her ward if I

wanted books or anything.

Oct 13th. Afternoon. Went for a

brisk walk towards

Morbecque but didn't

reach it owing to shortage

of time.

Oct 14th. Stayed in camp all day.

Received paper sent from

Aust. putting forward

Wm. Hughes' views on

Conscription. These

simply bear out all that

I have put forward to

the chaps ever since we

first heard of the possibility

of Aust. Having conscription.

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Oct 15th. Sun

Evening went for a

walk & arrived Y.M.C.A.

in time for Service.

Oct 16th. Voting on Conscription postponed for three days.

Evening Went for a walk &

then to Y.M.C.A. for a

bit of Hymn singing.

Sent F.S. P. card to Emily

Oct 17th. Evening Y.M.C.A.

Oct 18th. Afternoon. Visited Sister

in "A" Block had a pleasant

chat.

Evening. Wrote letters to

Emily & Daisy & p/cs to

Ray & Cyril & Elsie & Richie

in Y.M.C.A.

Last two days wet & cold

Oct 19th. Day very wet

morning. Posted letter &

p/c's to Emily & Daisy.

P/c's to Ma, Daisy's children

& Ray

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Oct 19th. Cont

Went to "A" Block &

voted on conscription.

Oct 20th. Visited dentist & got my

teeth from him.

Evening attended concert

in "E" Block. Not such a

success as last week

but finished well.

Day cold. Morn very frosty

Oct 21st. Thick white frost.

Attended doctors parade &

obtained discharge from

this camp. This comes

into operation tomorrow.

Posted p/c's to Emily (6)

& Ma (4). Views of Hazebrouck

Afternoon visited pictures

Evening went to say good-

bye to Sisters at Hospital.

They were very good & gave

me warm underclothing to

take away. Must write Sister

Parry when possible. Later

went to Y.M.C.A & wrote a letter

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Oct 21st. cont

to Emily. Said goodbye to

M^r Thomas the secretary there.

Oct 22nd. Got ready to go away &

was suddenly taken

bad with the cold. Morn-

ing was awfully cold.

Was sent to "A"Block hospital

ward where the sisters before

referred to sent me to bed.

23-26 In bed two days then got up.

felt pretty bad next day

after getting up. Sisters

keep feeding me up

with the idea that all I

require is fattening owing

to having been run down.

27th Oct. Explained to Sister yesterday

that fattening is not what I

require as I have been trying

to do that myself for past

three months . Explained to

doctor today that trouble

was a stomach one as all

food taken makes stomach

revolt. Also explained

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Oct 27th

that I had been like this
ever since getting
Gassed at Pozieres in
middle of Aug.
He accordingly marked
me for evacuation to the
Base. Bade goodbye to
the Sisters, and went in motor
with a lot of others to
Hazebrouck Stn. Here we
entrained &
the following eleven
hours were passed in a
beautifully appointed
Hospital train bearing
the name Princess
Christian. Detrained at
Boulogne at about 11pm &
was taken by Motor to a
convalescent camp which
although beautifully
appointed is a very
cold place.
I shall never forget
the kindness received
at the last hospital
at the hands of the

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Oct 27th

late Matron & Sister Parry.

Shall write Sister Parry later

on & so let her know how

I get on.

Oct 28th. Up early. Couldn't eat

breakfast. Got clean change

of underclothing & had

a bath which was

miserably cold.

Attended doctor & rec

medicine.

Wrote Emily telling

her just how I am.

Posted this letter. Also

one to Ma, and one

to Peach.

Acted Librarian for Y.M.C.A.

this evening.

Oct 29th. Sick Parade. Told the Doctor

that I still feel bad and

rather weak. Showed him

my photo to show how much

I had come down. He sent

me to N^o 5 Canadian Hosp.

Admitted Ward P1

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Oct 30th

Fairly well in morning

Afternoon felt bad again

Told doctor & he said I

had better go to bed. He

has not examined me

yet.

Oct 31st. Doctor examined me

thoroughly from head to

foot. Asked heaps of

questions & wrote up on

my medical card all I

told him about my case.

Finally took my card

away. Later the Sergeant

told me I was marked

for England & sent me

for my clothes. The

doctor had said when

leaving that what I

wanted was a long rest

& I replied that if I could

only get the trouble at the

bottom of my stomach

fixed up I could soon get

back to work. He tried to find out if I was

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Oct 31st. cont

malingering by

asking if I had different

kinds of pains & all sorts

of different little things

but I stuck to the one

complaint & refused

to agree to any of his

suggested complaints

as I fancy malingerers

are apt to do.

Since being sick I have

experienced a great

tendency on part of

Doctors to try & get one to

say that I am feeling

better. They do this in

many ways but I have

determined to stick to

my guns now until

cured of the trouble.

Nov 1st.

Left Hosp by Motor

at midday &

embarked S.S. St. Andrew

Left Boulogne abt 2 pm.

First 20 minutes out

felt very sick. Had a

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Nov 1st. cont

lot of dry reaching. Later
felt better. Trip took a
couple of hours. Was
delighted at seeing the
chalk cliffs of Dover for
first time. Not that they
were very attractive,
for it was a dull day
and they did not
glisten as they would
on a sunny day.

But I have read of them
so often that it was
a pleasure to see them.

Entrained after dark
Went thro' part of London
and in darkness passed
over River Thames at
Wandsworth.

Nov 2nd. Arrived Bagthorpe
Military Hospital at
3:30am. Sent to Ward 14
Slept from 4am till 7am
when we were wakened for
breakfast. Spent the
day easily. Wrote Emily

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Nov 2nd. cont

Wrote Thos Cook & Son. Posted

cable to Emily as follows:

KENT FIRE STATION

BRUNSWICK. Victoria

HOSPITALS ENGLAND DEBILITY

GOING ON WELL NO LETTERS

SIX WEEKS HOW ARE ALL

HOME CABLE USUAL ADDRESS

STOP PARCELS. KENT

25 words in all.

Had a good bath this afternoon

Wrote Horseferry Rd;

present address asking

them to send on mail – Also

asking locality & Country

(England or France) where

Willie was buried.

Wrote postcards to Arthur

and Peach.

Nov 3rd. Posted all letters written yes-

terday. Had a visit from

Miss Morrison on behalf Aust,

Red Cross. She gave me FS

Letter Cards, Note paper, Shaving

soap, toothpaste & hairbrush.

Also took a note of names

[Page 91]

Nov 3rd. cont

of Rev's EL Watson & F.C. Spurr*

with a view of obtaining

their addresses for me.

Wrote a long letter to Emily

and posted.

Nov 4th.

Wrote Ma

and posted. Also

wrote M^r Aitchison

Emily's 2nd cousin.

Nov 5th.

Received note from Cooks

stating that my money

would be available at

their Nottingham branch

Not so well today

Wrote Sister Parry in

Evening. C.E. chaplain

held short service here

Wrote to Metropolitan

Tabernacle for addresses

of Rev's E L Watson and

F C Spurr. Posted

these letters

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Nov 6th. Doctor allowed me up
from 2 till 4 pm. Rather
'headachey' today. Not
slept well for two nights.
Evening wrote an eight page
letter to Emily.

Nov 7th.

Bad day till about 3pm.
Couldn't eat dinner.
Evening better. Received
note from Nottingham branch
Thos Cook & Son stating
money was available.
Received card from Horse-
ferry Rd stating cable
would be dispatched last
Saturday & other matters
receiving attention.

Wrote & posted reply Cooks
& note to Alf Brown

Nov 8th. Sister gave me some
medicine at about 1.30am
to take pain away as I
hadn't got off to sleep.
Felt better. Much better
today all day. Received

[written in margin]

Sister Reynard (Aust)

This Aust Sister was like a mother to
me. She left the hosp. next day on
leave.

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Nov 8th cont.

very nice letter from

M^r Aitchison, Glasgow.

Nov 9th

Received card from

Metro. Tabernacle London

containing addresses of

Rev's E L Watson & F C Spurr

Nov 10th

Received reply from Headquarters

to my query as to where Willie

was buried. Full details.

Nov 11th.

Received Cable from

home saying that

all are well. Greatly

relieved. Received letter

from John G. Aitchison Junr*

nephew of the Gentleman

to whom I first wrote.

It is a very sincere &

heartly* letter, Afternoon

Attended party at Lewis'

Factory. ##### drive, Tea

& Concert. Splendid

evening. Motored

both ways.

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Sun Nov 12th

Orderly all day, A light job
serving meals & washing
ups. Wrote to Ma & enclosed
with 8 page letter to Dad
& posted. Enclosed card
from Hdqs abt place where
Willie was buried.

Wrote J. G. Aitchison Junr.

Replied to Cable received yes-
terday which was prepaid
12 words only allowed

KENT FIRE STATION BRUNSWICK

VICTORIA. LOVING WISHES

RECIPROCATED. IMPROVING

EXCELLENT TREATMENT. KENT

[This is the last page of daily record in this little book.

The next few pages are devoted to random poems

On Guard on the Shell torn
 ruin
That once was a happy
 home
Set on the hill like a
 jewel
Ere War caused its people
 to roam
A garden that once bloomed
 in beauty
Was a setting for (fem*) rare
 & sweet
The fairies have played
 here at twilight
When earth & sky seemed
 to meet
The fairies alas have
 departed
Far off to some happier
 shore
The garden with weeds is entangled
Pandora has loosed her dread
 store
This corner that once seemed like
 heaven
Is now like the nethermost hell
List to the trees softly weeping
Hark to the roar of the shell

---- . ----

The Guns are roaring me####
The bayonets bright & keen
A Lord our help in ages past
On whose strong arms we lean
Be with us now & help us
Through this last hellish fight
That we may conquer tyranny
By thy Eternal Might

J. M^cDonald

6-7-16 Fort Eberl
 " Brandon

Verse Rec from M^{rs} Morgan
25-8-16

My times are in thy Hand

-----o-----

Shot & shell around me fly
Till He bids, I cannot die
Not a single shot can hit
Till the God of Love sees fit

-----o-----

This I firmly believe & have proved. E.J.K.

~~~~A Soldier's Lament~~~~

~~~~~  
When you've little Army Corps
On your body forming fours
Always on a Night Attack
Making charges up your back
Till you shout with all your might
God strafe those figures of
the night

~~~~~  
Though hundreds you may kill  
you'll feed these hundreds still  
For they hide behind each other  
And they're good at taking cover  
And they have an awful bite  
And a shocking appetite

~~~~~  
There are families in dozens
Mothers, Sisters, Uncles, Cousins
And they have their married quarters
Where they rear their sons and daughters
And they take a lot of catching
And cause a deal of scratching

~~~~~  
When you're getting off to sleep  
They are forming up two deep  
When you're in the land of nod  
They are forming up in squads  
And you find it most annoying  
With those sections fast deploying

~~~~~  
Till at last there comes a day
When you heave your shirt away
And you'd cast off trousers too
if you thought they'd let you do
And adopt the ancient style
of wearing no thing but a smile

~~~~~  
No 2499

Sept-7-16 Pte W. L. Pilkington  
Dide\* branch Y.M.C.A. 1<sup>st</sup> Battn