

Second Diary of R.B. Cameron

Written inside front cover: "This diary of Robert's arrived Friday 21st September 1917 – and today theN.Zs on it again British attack on wide front? Hugh. (*Robert's father Hugh Cameron*)

April 5th 1916 – Left Moascar at 5pm for Ismailia station. Left at 6.30 in open trucks for Port Said. Arrived 9.30 went on board "*Franconia*" and had supper, bread and butter. First butter we have had since we left "*Willochra*" Also had spring mattress to sleep on.

April 6th – On guard at the canteen but canteen didn't open till five o'clock and we were relieved by Auckland at five. Spent most of the day watching the shipping and buying oranges from the canoe boats.

April 7th – All bustle and excitement getting ready to leave. All told off for our boats and were told to wear our life belts at all times. Left port at 10.30 am. No wind and sea just lovely.

April 8th – Two destroyers with us this morning. Came up during the night. Parades. Boat stations 10 o'clock. Rifle inspection 2pm. Land on both sides. I think its Candia (*Italian name for Crete*)

April 9th – Three steamers that look like transports in view this morning. They seemed to be travelling but by 9 o'clock there was no sign of them.

April 10th – Passed Malta this morning but we were too far away from land to be able to see much of Valetta. One of the destroyers left us here.

April 11th – Still doing fast time. Passed in sight of land which I think is Sardinia. Were issued with gas helmets. More to carry. On guard on bridge. Very cold first thing. Doing 4 hours on and 8 off. Go on again from nine till one in the morning. Tommy Taylor held a concert in forward messroom. Started to blow about ten o'clock and was the roughest night ever I was out in.

April 12th – Pulled into the harbour early in the morning and nobody was sorry because she was a rough old thing.

April 13th – Pulled into wharf and Otago and Auckland were the first to get off. We went off at 12.30 and marched to the railway station. Left 2.30. Didn't see anything of Marseilles. Had tea on the train and then tried to sleep but it was very awkward.

April 14th – Woke up just in time to see Lyons. Raining like anything but as we moved on we left the rain behind.

April 15th – Still on the train. Passed the closest we will get to Paris at five o'clock. Passed thru Amiens and at nine o'clock reached our destination. We thought we were stopping at Hazebrouck but we are at Morbecque.

April 16th – Church parade at 1.30 and then general leave. We went into town but had no money so it was not a great success. We are in a rest camp and are being well looked after. We can hear the guns quite plain but we are about twenty miles from the firing line.

April 17th – Raining first thing this morning. Cleared up in afternoon and went for a route march through Hazebrouck.

April 18th – Raining heavy and mud everywhere. Packed up ready to shift but its postponed.

April 19th – Cleared up a bit and we shifted into our billets. Half of 6 Platoon and the whole of 7 were in a loft. Packed in some.

April 20th – Still fairly wet but went for a route march in morning and rifle exercises in afternoon. Found Bill Manson at night.

April 21st – Route march 8.30 to 11.30. Hard walking on cobbles and playing up with chaps legs. More rifle exercises in afternoon.

April 22nd – More route marching in morning. Leave to Hazebrouck in afternoon but stayed in billet and rested.

April 23rd – Church parade on rifle range but the roads were flooded and 7 section turned back.

April 24th – Left one billets and shifted to new ones about a mile on the other side of Morbecque. Not nearly so crowded and handier to town.

April 25th – Route marching and rifle exercises and am fed up properly.

April 26th – Went down to range to test our rifles which we were issued with before we left Egypt.

April 27th – Route march in morning, on range again in afternoon.

April 28th – Route march till 11.30. Gas helmet practice in afternoon. They started to pay out this afternoon so we will get ours in the morning.

April 29th – Paid this morning and its just about time. Were paid 30 francs which in English works out at 21/6. First we have had since were paid off in Moascar. Went into town in afternoon and enjoyed ourselves better than last time we were in. NZ mail today.

April 30th – Church parade at 9.30. Leave in afternoon but I stayed in. The boys are making up for lost time and I'm picking a few to be up at orderly room for being out of billets at nine o'clock.

May 1st – Route march 8.30. Gas helmets parade 2pm. Trents and 2nd Brigade passed on the way to trenches. Didn't see any of the boys.

May 2nd – As usual route march in morning. Musketry in afternoon.

May 3rd – Big route march with full packs and it was very warm. Trigger pressing and gas helmets practice in afternoon.

May 4th – Supposed to be on fatigue but not wanted when we arrived at 5 billet. Arrived back in time for the road. All NCO's on bayonet fighting. New style, different to what we were taught. Some of the boys up on the mat for being out after nine. 7 days C.B. Afternoon as usual. Heavy firing in direction of Armentieres. Another NZ mail arrived today.

May 5th – Route march and again we got well lost. NCO's on bayonet fighting. In afternoon on trigger pressing etc. Paid money we handed in in Moascar. Some of the chaps slept in their clothes expecting a Brigade alarm which didn't come off.

May 6th – Interior economy after rifle inspection. Wrote a few letters and read and played cards all the rest of the day. Dick made a crib board and everybody has a craving for crib.

May 7th – Church parade 8.30 Was raining before we got back. Put in rest of day writing letters.

May 8th – Our Coy on fatigue today. 30 of us were supposed to be moving timber out of a wood but we put in most of the day waiting for four o'clock.

May 9th – Got our marching orders late last night. Reville 3.30, breakfast 4am, Orderly room 5.30, Brigade headquarters 6am. Everything turned out as was arranged and we were on the road by 8.30. Two of 7 Platoon up on the mat for breaking windows. It started to drizzle just after we got a start and lasted the whole way but it made it cool for walking. Went through La Motte and we are in Estaires. A lot of our chaps just about knocked up with the 12 miles on the hard roads. Passed the Dinks on the way up. Rumour has it that too big a percentage on sick parade and they have been sent back for more training. Arrived Estaires 11am. Had afternoon off and we went the round of town. It's a nice little place and far ahead of any other place we have been in so far. Concert in YMCA room.

May 10th – Route march and inspection of feet in morning. Bayonet fighting in afternoon. We were able to watch some hot aeroplane fights but they were too far away to be able to distinguish our planes from the Germans. Saw in London Times of yesterday that Anzacs were in France so I suppose the people at home will know now.

May 11th – Route march 8.30. Dinner at 11am. Inspection by General Birdwood. Finished at 1.30 and went round town. Saw Mark Fangrief who is in 2nd Brigade. Told us 10th hadn't joined up yet. Had a long yard to Bill Coltman who is now S.M. in 2nd Brigade Ordinance.

May 12th – Route march with band. Supposed to go for a bath but couldn't get there till afternoon. 2pm went down to baths and they are a treat – 3 hot water baths and a cold to finish in. They also change dirty clothes and give back clean. Orders out to shift at seven o'clock for Armentieres. 7pm on the road with eight miles to go. Transport taking our blankets. Arrived in billets at 12 o'clock. All our battalion in cotton factory.

May 13th – Raining heavily so didn't leave the billet in morning but after dinner had a good look round. Town is just about deserted by civilians. Any amount of evidence that there is a war on. Hardly a whole window anywhere and marks were shrapnel have hit on all the walls. 3pm got orders to pack up. Ten men and NCO. Fatigue party at Nieppe supply depot four miles away. Arrived there at 5.30 and had tea at A.S.C. camp. Went to billet. Old couple only people on the place. Six in one room and had to sleep on the floor and was terribly cold. Auckland and Wellington went into trenches tonight.

May 14th – Started work 6.30. Breakfast 7.30. Worked from 10 to 12. Finish work. Old lady treated us to coffee before we started and old chap made us mattresses so we ought to be warm now. Cigarette issue and a few b.....? Living like fighting cocks.

May 15th – Our easy job came to a halt this morning quicker than we expected. A squad from 10th Coy came out and relieved us so we had to pack our sways and move. Arrived back in Armentieres at 6pm. Received NZ mail. 2nd Brigade arrived here last and Canterbury and Otago went into trenches tonight. Went along to see anybody I knew. Saw Mick Hanley and Geo Paton but didn't see George Bailey. All our Coy on fatigue but our party unused. They went out at 2am and arrived back at 11.

May 16th – Nothing doing so we had a good look around town. Its been a nice place in peace time but very few civil population left now. Formerly there were 28,000 people in this place. Some of the Trents arrived early this morning.

May 17th – Had to go on water fatigue and by the time we finished all hands had gone out on parade. Bayonet fighting in afternoon. 3rd and 4th Trents arrived this morning but looked all over town but couldn't find Len. Tenth reinforcements connected up today.

May 18th – Bayonet fighting and physical exercises in morning. A big crown of chaps up at orderly room for missing parade. Most of them got seven days. Another NZ mail today. I received twelve letters. Foden got smacked yesterday. Len came round tonight and we looked Rooney** up. On fatigue at trenches tonight. Got

away about (*word crossed out*) and arrived at half way village where we drew shovels. Had our first experience of machine gun fire and I am not at all shook on it. Had to cross open road and got blocked there and the gun opened up. Never got under cover so quick before. We had no casualties but they got a chap further back. Had to dig out new trench. Mud up to our boot tops. A few strays coming over and Bert Wade stopped one. He is still alive but very serious wound. All hands kept well down off parapet after. Arrived home safely.

May 19th – No parade in morning. Spent most of the time getting clear of the mud. Went over to learn something of barb wire entanglements in afternoon. Went out to see if I could find Bill Luck but nothing doing.

May 20th – Inspection of gas helmets in morning, no parade in afternoon. Going into trenches tonight. Went out and saw Rooney? and we looked up Brick Brien. Had a long yard to A Keeston. Fell in at 8.45. Arrived safely in trenches. 5 & 7 Platoon in firing line, 6 & 8 in support. We slept on bottom of support trenches in overcoats. Were not allowed to bring blankets with us. A Pioneer officer killed and a sergeant wounded. Machine and rifle fire pretty hot at times during night, but a chap safe as a church as long as he keeps his head down.

May 21st – Stand to from 2.30 to 3.30. Most of the chaps went to sleep again but it was too cold for my liking. Things very quiet after 3.30. Found out that there were too many in support so we are going to reserve trenches. Shifted after dinner. Had a sleep till was time to go up to firing line for cook stuff. Except for a bit of artillery duel things very quiet. Stand to 7.30 to 8.30.

May 22nd – Stand to as usual. Seemed to be a sniper getting right on to the parapet of this trench. Terrible lot of rats here and it's a job to put tucker out of their way. German guns fired a lot of shells at one of our planes this morning but didn't get near it. Went into firing line.

May 23rd – Stand to 2.30. Doing one hour on and three off. Fired a few shots during night but machine guns going a treat. No fatigue here and it's a soft job. Stand to at 7.30.

May 24th – Another quiet night. Corporal got a bit of a scare when Fritz sent over three whiz-bangs that nearly got him. Our artillery did good shooting. In three shots demolished enemy cook house. Then he started to try and get ours and for half an hour things were very lively. They used all sorts of shells, high explosives, shrapnel. Bombs and aerial torpedoes but only two chaps were very slightly wounded. We didn't get any tea owing to a shrapnel bullet going through the tea Dixie. Were relieved after stand to and of course it started to rain. Just about got wet through before we got to reserve bivvys?

May 25th – On fatigue at the back of the firing line from 8 till 12. Had a really good sleep in afternoon. Out again on fatigue from 7.30 till 12pm.

May 26th – Had a spell in morning. Received a parcel of cigarettes from Elsie. On fatigue between firing line and supports from 7.30 till 12. Things fairly lively at times when machine guns opened up but we had no hits.

May 27th – I am striking it very lucky. Nearly all the chaps were on two parties today but all I struck was ration party at 8.30 and we had finished at 11. Cook provided tea for parties coming in and going out. Bill Bowie was accidentally wounded this morning. Our first man wounded. Hear today that Syd Norris and Jack Noble both died of wounds.

May 28th – Was wakened up by somebody calling out my name. Turned out to be Bill Luck. He is in 1st W.J.B. Taranaki Coy. He is looking very well but he couldn't wait very long. On fatigue at 12 till 4.30 in No 2 locality building a dummy trench. Were relieved at 9.30 by Wellington. Raining a treat. Arrived in our old billets at 11.30.

May 29th – Had a lovely sleep and it was quite a change to get our clothes off and no stand to in the middle of the night. Saw some of the 2nd Brigade chaps and they evidently had a worse time than we did. Went down to Port de Nieppe baths and had a lovely wash and got a whole new rig of underclothes. We all ought to be free from lice for a while now. Was in billet reading when all of a sudden the Germans started shelling. There was a rush for the cellar. No shells came into our billet but they landed all round us. All together I think five were killed and about forty wounded and it could easily have been worse. Fell in for fatigue at 7.45 in trenches and after filling a few sand bags*rest of page missing*

May 30th – *initial part of entry missing*...changed his mind and we were allowed to sleep in afternoon.

Was wakened at four o'clock by Rooney. I thought he was in the trenches but one of their chaps caught the measles and he is in isolation. They had a few casualties but he saw Len just before he came away and he was alright. Actually received 28/- from Bill Massey. Big paper mail in today.

May 31st – Parade as usual from 9 till 11. All the crowd doing it very hard. I'm picking Fritz to land a shell or two into us before long. Parade from 2 till 4 in afternoon. Received a NZ mail dated April 11th. Fatigue again at 2.45 in the morning

June 1st – Just fancy putting in a birthday in this place. Went out on fatigue at 2.45 and arrived back in 10.30. No parade rest of the day. Had a good job repairing trench. Saw Bill Luck for about quarter of an hour. Slept all the afternoon and was going to the pictures at night but we had seen them before.

June 2nd – Parade as usual at 9am and 2pm. Lecture in afternoon by Major Blair on gas. Went to the pictures at 6pm but at 7 orders came that all 1st Brigade had to hurry back to billets. We thought there must be an attack on, so

we hustled back. About half the Coy out in full marching order so we had to pack up and get down as soon as we could. Were given half an hour and only three of our platoon away. On fatigue at 9pm till 3am. Sand bagging at five dugouts. A few stray bullets flying but nobody touched. Very heavy bombardment out on left and had our first gas alarm, but no gas.

June 3rd – Kings birthday. Had orders at 3am to sleep in our clothes in case of gas coming. None came. Had breakfast in bed. Went down town and saw Cyril Coltman. The 1st Brigade had 100 casualties in their eight days in trenches. They came out last night but haven't seen Len yet. Bill Brierley transferred to Trench Mortar Btry. He has struck a good job and all being well, will get his leave to England in two months. On parade this afternoon putting up barbed wire entanglements.

June 4th – Church parade at 9.30 in 1st C. Coy billets. Had rest of the day off. Went out on fatigue 1am. We're working in five dugouts putting down duck walks. Arrived back at 8.30. Coming down the sap and Germans opened up with shrapnel. Did a fast two hundred yards to cover.

June 5th – Slept all day and at night Bill Brierley and I went to the pictures.

June 6th – On Battalion guard this morning from 9 till 9 tomorrow. All the rest of the Coy went out on fatigue at 9pm. Raining a treat. Our artillery have a big demonstration at 11pm. Australians and Hun trenches and brought back some souvenirs.

June 7th – Came off guard at 9am. Did nothing in the morning but went out on parade in afternoon.

June 8th – Out on parade in morning but S.C. Farquhar in charge so had very easy time. In afternoon went down to Porte de Nieppe to the baths and got a change of clean clothes. Len came round at night. Saw Joe Mulvaney. Up to the trenches at 9pm but rained a treat so made a bivie and waited till it was time to go home. Arrived back at 3pm.

June 9th – Slept till 11.30 and then went out for dinner. Had a foot inspection in afternoon and the doctor examined our teeth. I put in for a new set. Packed up ready to move to trenches. Left billet at 9.30 and arrived in support trenches at 11pm. A.J. Hornsby, J.Aitken, H. Aitken, C.Clarke and self in one bivie.

June 10th – On fatigue to 12, 1 to 5, and 9 to 12. Building dugouts in daytime and carried sandbags from 8 dump at night. Our chaps put over a couple of 60lb T.M. and it woke Fritz up. We left our job in a bit of a hurry. After tea C.Clarke and I went souvenir hunting and got a good collection.

June 11th – On fatigue from 9 to 12 building dugouts. Harry Aitken and I have just about got ours finished. Wrote letters in afternoon and went onto fatigue from 6 to nine. Stand to from 8 to 9, and from 2 to 3. Same as before.

June 12th – On fatigue 8 to 12 and 6 to 9. Trench Mortar Bombardment at 3pm and for a while things were very lively. Our chaps were firing a 60lb shell and Fritz was sending back aerial torpedoes. They were falling short of our trench and we watched them bursting. All the men shifted out of front line so nobody was hurt. Our front parapet knocked about a bit in one place. Old parapet Joe raked the top of our parapet pretty persistently all night.

June 13th – On fatigue 9 to 12 in morning. Old Fritz must have seen us working on parapet for we got some shrapnel over. We did quick time to dugouts. Nobody hurt but some narrow escapes. Corp. Barnett nearly got caught. Bombardment at 5.30 but Fritz didn't answer back. Colonel had notice board put up in trench with results of North Sea Battle.

June 14th – On fatigue from 3 to 6pm. Dan Friel and I put in most of the time going down to Square Farm for tools. Slept till dinner time and played cards in afternoon. On fatigue again from 6 to 9pm but we couldn't do much as Fritz was sending over an occasional shell. Raining as hard as ever.

June 15th – Nothing to do today so I wrote a few letters. Were told off to our different posts in the mushroom by Corp Barnett but were afterwards told off as Coy bomb throwers. Daylight saving started today in France and time was put on an hour. Left for the mushroom at half past eight, 8 men and NCO. Divided into two watches of two hours each in listening post. I went on at 12.30 till 2.30 but though we expected it to be a dangerous job it was quite safe. Saw no sign of any Huns. Had a sleep in bivie before we went out and had to sleep with our tin hats on to keep the rats off our faces.

June 16th – Arrived back in time for stand to, 1st shift missed so we will miss tomorrow morning. Were put in dugouts in firing line and slept till breakfast time. Couldn't sleep after so we went up and had a look at our post in daylight. After dinner we made our bivie very comfortable and then had a game of cards. We had no fatigue to do so about half past three we made ourselves some cocoa and had afternoon tea in style. Supposed to be a bombardment at 10 o'clock so had to stand to in the mushroom. Bombardment started at 11pm and it was hell let loose. We all got close under the parapet so we were quite safe. All the shells went over us but there were a few stray pieces flying so we had to keep down. Fritz opened up on our fire trench and killed three and wounded nine. Went out to listening post but things were very quiet and arrived back at 2.30.

June 17th – Got to bed at 4.30 and didn't wake till 11 o'clock. Tried to sleep in afternoon but it wasn't a great success. Had a long yarn to H.F. Had to go to mushroom for stand to. Bombardment out on left by Australians but was not nearly as bad as night before. Out in post from 12.30 to 2.30 but nothing doing.

June 18th – Sunday again and things very quiet. Small bits of bombardments but nothing to speak of. Joe Mc Donald got a nasty smack in arm this morning. Fritz put over some aerial torpedoes in afternoon but nobody hurt. I was lying in dugout when first one came over and I didn't take long to shift. Supposed to be a big bombardment tonight again but things were very quiet. Nothing doing in listening post.

June 19th – Slept in till ten o'clock and had to do without breakfast. Our guns and trench mortars started and we had to get into mushroom. Fritz didn't reply much. Slept till two o'clock and missed dinner so boiled some coffee. Tea at five o'clock and had to go up to mushroom again and our guns knocked the Huns front trench about but he didn't send back a shot. Miners think they can hear Germans working under mushroom so there is a chance of us going for a fly. Out in listening post from 10.30 to 12.30. German working parties out but our machine guns didn't open owing to a patrol of ours out.

June 20th – Our guns again making things lively so we got into the mushroom. Fritz is very quiet and I can't understand it. Prussians in trenches opposite us. Jim Donaldson saw one this morning. Moving out into subsidiary lines tonight and three of us told off for gas guard. Was looking over parapet during stand to when a rifle grenade burst on the corner. Got down quick and lively. Moved out at 10.30 and in bivie at 11pm. Doing two hours on and four off so by the end of seven days will be well fed up.

June 21st – This guard is no catch. Coy only doing five hours fatigue a day. We are doing three on and six off during the day so that a chap can get some sleep. Except for artillery doing a little, things are very quiet. The first of the 11th reinforcements came in today.

June 22nd – Same old thing as before but its getting a long way warmer. More like summer. Germans opened up with artillery this afternoon and for an hour and a half things were very lively but most of it was on the Australian front. Ossy's opened up after and things were hot but luckily none came our way. NZ mail in today and I landed six letters. Went to bed at 10pm and wondered what was wrong when I was wakened at 11.30. Gas attack over on the right but got none here so we lost some sleep.

June 23rd – Things very quiet today but a lot of aeroplanes about so we have to keep indoors. Made porridge for breakfast this morning and condensed milk so we are living like toffs. Heard today that three chaps wounded out in listening post by German bombers. Raining a treat.

June 24th – Cleared up a little this morning. Jim McRohan got a blast for not having p..... on by adjutant. General Birdwood went up to firing line at 10pm. Artillery opened up a little till dinner time but in afternoon things were very lively. Huns bombarded our support line and one of our Coy got smacked. Received another bit of NZ mail which is still straggling in. Bill Brierley came down from support line. They had it very lively but were not using their guns. Another gas alarm early in night and our guns opened up to break it up. Six wounded chaps were brought down the sap. Major Blair is slightly indisposed.

June 25th – Came out on order that there is to be a strafe every day now on Fritz barbwire. Fairly lively go this morning. Same in afternoon. An aeroplane duel just over us and our plane had the better of it by a long way. He forced the Hun down and we thought he was done, but he righted himself before reaching the ground. Heard later that the pilot was wounded. Big strafe on our right and left at 10.30 but I slept through it all.

June 26th – Our guns going strong but Fritz has not replied. Corp. Barnett wounded this afternoon at No. 4 locality. He had a lucky let off, bullet just going through under his chin and out of his left breast. If he had been standing straight up it would have gone through his heart. Saw the greatest sight its been my lot to see tonight. Fritz had five observation balloons up and our aeroplanes attacked them. I heard a big cheer and was just in time to see one burst into flames and come down. Then two others quickly followed suit and the others were pulled down before our airmen could get within range. They used a new bomb that as soon as it touched anything burst into flames. Fritz opened up with his artillery on our right and things were fairly lively all night. Nearly all the division are carrying gas cylinders so must be a gas attack coming off.

June 27th – Things pretty lively this morning and Fritz is trying his hardest to hurt somebody in our subsidiary trenches. Later on they landed some in Square Farm and Wellington headquarters and then there was one landed in brick wall just alongside of us so we shifted in a hurry. A wonder nobody was hurt. We had just made some cocoa and toast. I landed down in dugout with toast, but cocoa stopped on the floor. Things just ordinary after that. Six Maoris brought down wounded. Relieved at seven o'clock and left trenches at 1.30. Arrived in billet 11.30. Had a lovely sleep.

June 28th – Went on sick parade to get my teeth fixed and dentist took one out and going to make two plates for me. Coy went down for bath. Went round and saw Len and Roosey. Was going to pictures but was locked out.

June 29th – On fatigue at Divisional Training camp. Nice easy day. Some of the Coy in trench fatigue. One of Hawkes Bay bearers deserted and Fritz gave our trenches hell. A good few casualties in front line. Pioneer Maori officer killed. Saw George Bailey and had a long yarn to him.

June 30th – Went down for a bath and called in to see Len on my way back and landed a pair of trousers. We thought we were going back to Morbecque but its off. Big advance expected anytime now. On parade from 2pm

till 4. Big NZ mail in. Received nine letters but no parcels yet. Still trusting on. On fatigue in the morning at 1.30.

July 1st – Arrived in No 1 locality at 3am. Were making new trench. Big fleet of our aeroplanes over and dropped bombs on Lille last night and they were over again this morning. Arrived back in two 9.30. Huns bombarding church at back of billets. Slept till dinnertime. Supposed to be on observation post. Went to pictures at night with Bill and Jock Hornsby. More bombardments at night.

July 2nd – Church parade at 9. Colonel Young gave us a bit of advice when we go in again. He also told us Wellington raid came off last night was a great success. Captured 10 Germans and did in several others. On fatigue at 12.30. Reported at Square Farm and sent up to No.4 to carry bricks but no bags filled, so put some of the mob on filling them but had only been working when Fritz sent over a whiz-bang and that finished work. Bill Farrell was the only one wounded. Arrived back at 5.30. Wandered round and saw Bill, Len and Roosey. Trenches not going into firing line. British offensive started down south
Received cigarettes from M.T.S. Issued with regimental badges.

July 3rd – Down for a wash at 8am. Standing by to proceed to trenches. Supposed to move out at 9.30pm. Saw some of the Wellington chaps who were in the raid, also some of their souvenirs. 10pm German started bombarding town. We were late getting away. Moved off at 10.15. Arrived in support trenches 1.30am. Three pushed into a two man dugout. Bombardment lasted till 1am. None of us hurt. Huns played hell with Auckland. Over 100 casualties. Stand to 3 to 4.

July 4th – Shifted out of bivie and put in with P. Carnell. Did a bit of sandbagging. Very quiet on this front. Our guns opened up 12, 2, 4, 6 but Huns didn't reply. Got special war news twice. British and French still going strong. Stand to 9 to 10.

July 5th – Taking things very easy. Did a bit of watch repairing in morning. Wrote letters in afternoon. Received letter from G.A.C. from France. Things very quiet today, no artillery, hardly anything doing. Permanent fatigue from 10pm to 2am while in this trench. Up at Major's at home. Got 7 days C.B. for not complying with censorship regulations. Supposed to do all dirty work. Got 2 coppers – Whitehead and Fitzgerald. Stand to 1.30am. Our guns giving them what ok.

July 6th – Our C.B. fatigue after 4 o'clock stand down. Had us at it again till dinner time in the rain. Fritz gave us a fright about ten. He started sniping with a nine inch howitzer. No fun for soldiers. No casualties. On fatigue again in afternoon. Making our bivie a bit more solid till 12pm and slept till 3am.

July 7th – Fritz again shelled supports but very few landed right in trench. He did a bit of damage in communication sap, but nothing to speak of for the number of shells he put over. On fatigue from 10 till two.

July 8th – It's the usual thing now for the Hun to send over some big stuff. Started after breakfast and lobbed one right in A.F. & A.J. Hornsby bivie. Nobody hurt. Jack Currie and Jack Clancy also homeless. We were in bay in front of bivie when shell landed but only got covered in dirt. It's not too safe for a man to put his head over the parapet. He is often putting some shrapnel over. Stand to at 9pm and at 9.10 Germans opened up all the artillery they could muster on our front and support trenches. It was like hell let loose. They kept it going for two hours. They raided the mushroom but only stayed in a few minutes. Our casualties were very light considering the amount of stuff put over, but in the front line it must have been something awful.

July 9th – Stood too all night and repaired our parapet which was blown in in several places. Slept till dinner time and in afternoon went stretcher bearing. Had an awful job getting two bodies down to the headquarters. Went in front line during stand to. A. Farquhar in charge of patrol in No. 2 locality. Lieutenant K. Aitken, P. Connell and self. Doing one hour on and four off at night, and two on during the day. Lloyd away to hospital and good job too. Haven't heard full casualty list but I believe it's fairly big. A lot of old 15 Platoon smacked. Lt Friel away at school of instruction. Fred Broome and Dave Cammock in hospital and we now have 3 N.C.O.'s and 27 men in Platoon. Joe Rankin badly hit but can't find out how he is.

July 10th – Fairly quiet up till 3 pm. Our guns put a bit over and Fritz put a lot of rifle grenades and pineapple bombs back. Nobody hurt. Our guns opened up again at night and there was something doing. We didn't know where the best place to be, but in the end we stayed in bivie we built and although some landed very close and gave us a fright, we came out unhurt.

July 11th – Some rifle grenades coming over again this morning. They dug out another chap who was buried. Another big strafe at night but things were not quite so lively. If they keep going like this we won't have any news at all soon. I believe some of the 11th Coy were landed last night.

July 12th – More rifle grenades and two Wellington chaps killed and one wounded. A bit of strafe in afternoon but well away from here. NZ mail arrived, received 11 letters. Started doing two hours on at night. Harry Aitken and I on from 11 to 1. No strafe for a wonder. Bill Campbell wounded in leg out on patrol. Two chaps wounded in listening post out from the mushroom.

July 13th – Slept right through breakfast and woke up in time for dinner. Strafe on at 3.30 but only about half a dozen landed anywhere near us. 10.30 our guns opened up just on left of us and things were lively. Supposed to

let gas go but wind not favourable. Otago raided but was a failure. Fritz got search light onto raiding party and then cut them up with shrapnel. Archie Hamilton and another chap killed in the mushroom. One of the stretchers bearers hit down the sap. Had a bit of ducking about to do dodging Minnie Murphys, as Pat Connell calls them after bombardments.

July 14th – Things very quiet after strafe last night. On patrol from 8am to 12. Nothing doing. Heard that Otago raiding party didn't get outside their own wire, then Fritz opened up with rifle, machine gun and artillery and cut them to pieces. A lot of dead and wounded lying out in no mans land and no chance of getting them in. Bill Brierley and Cock came along. They are having a pretty rough spin. Joe Rankin died of wounds today. Another strafe on our right at 11pm and another at 12pm. Our artillery put over some heavy stuff and when the Dinks raided they could hardly fund the Hun trenches they were knocked about so much. Some dead Huns lying about. Some Otago chaps tried to bring in the wounded in no mans land, but only got thirteen in when Fritz opened up and one chap was killed and eight wounded.

July 15th – On patrol from 6 to 8 and I'm mess orderly so don't go on during day. We were expected to go into sub lines tonight but orders are cancelled and we have to put in another three days here. We are all doing it hard too. I was going along to see Bill but seeing we are not going out, tomorrow will do. Fritz was supposed to have brought down one of our planes this morning. There is a couple of our planes up and he is wasting hundreds of rounds on them.

July 16th – Had a quiet night except for heavy rifle fire. Harry and I on from one to three and we strafed Fritz in good style. We fired about two hundred rounds but its hard to say if we hit anything. Auckland has relieved 12th and 13th Coys. Dinks going further to the right. Ossies supposed to be advancing down the one. On patrol 9 to 12. Things very quiet. Artillery doing a bit of bombarding in afternoon but none came our way. Auckland raiding tonight so we are expecting a hot time. Bill Brierley blew along today and he says its going to be warm. Auckland raid postponed.

July 17th – Things just as usual. Fairly quiet night. Got a shock when 8 platoon came and relieved us at 7.30. Shifted down to support line and it was pie getting a good sleep.

July 18th – Got up in time for breakfast and put in nearly all morning cleaning my rifle. Had a yarn to Brownie and got the strength of the Hun raid. Went on fatigue carrying cans down to Square Farm at 1.30. A big batch of chaps came in from Etaps? Harry Aitken and I bivied together.

July 19th – Bill Lindsay and Bill McGrath are the only two chaps I know who came in last night. Had a very easy morning. Went into town to get my teeth fixed up but dentist is busy. Got to be on Friday week. Coming up the sap saw Jack Anderson and he told me Bill Luck was wounded – the first I've heard of it. Three hours bombardment started at eight o'clock but most of it was on our left. We sent over gas and bombs and we couldn't see two yards in front of us. Auckland raided but nothing doing. All Huns in front line killed with bombardment. Australians advanced on our right and holding all they got.

July 20th – On fatigue from 4am till 8. Fred Lloyd brought some green pears up from Haystack Farm and put in most of the afternoon getting them ready and cooking them. I can tell you they were some class. Things very quiet today. Having grand weather now. Huns opened up just after 10om and thought we were in for a hot time but they only sent over shrapnel for about half an hour.

July 21st – Things fairly quiet. On fatigue from 3 till 8am building bivies. Had a letter from Bill Campbell from No.24 Ward, No.2 Gen. London Hospital, Chelsea and he is doing as well as can be expected. Were relieved after stand down by 12th Coy and arrived in old billets in sublines at 11pm.

July 22nd – All hands slept in this morning. Supposed to leave here at 8.30 to go to front line on fatigue but it was later when we got away. Working in No.2 sap. Fritz sent over half a dozen pineapples but nobody hurt. Had a good nights sleep. Morning stand to cut out.

July 23rd – On fatigue same as yesterday. I was told off to boil water for dinner so did no work. Had to go to support lines and borrow a Dixie off 12th. Returned it after dinner and put in a long time yarning to E. McPike, Callahan, Lomes, C. Phillips and A. Keaston. Arrived back in front line a three o'clock and went along to and had a look at the Hun country through telescope. After tea A. Farquahar and I went out for some pears and put in rest of evening cooking them. They were a bit of alright too. Captain Taylor held a short service in trench.

July 24th – Am still cook for fatigue party but took Dixie with me. Had a very easy day. Left front line after dinner but didn't get here till half past three. Called in at Five dugouts and saw Bill Brierley. He reckons they are going into town tomorrow for a spell. Barney got quite a lot of rumours about us going over the parapet. Great game now after tea and just before stand down to boil our dixie and make toast.

July 25th – On fatigue at 8.30 again and on the same job as yesterday. Had a pie on day. Things are very quiet on our sector and as long as our guns leave Fritz alone, he is quite content. Left front line at 2pm and was finished at 8.30. Filled in the rest of the time washing and shaving. Toast and cocoa as usual for supper.

July 26th – Fatigue at 8.30 a washout. Left for town to have a bath at 8pm. Feel quite new in clean clothes. Saw Seymour Barr, first time since leaving Egypt. Also saw Bill Brierley. He tells me Mc is in town so I'll look him

up tomorrow. Fred Comer gave us a quarter of an hour off so we ducked away and had some morning tea. Arrived back at 11.30. Went on guard at 12.30 till 2pm to let guard in for a wash. Four men going into town a day for six hours leave. I have appointment with dentist on Friday so I'll get leave then. Went on fatigue at 9.30 under Cap. Lloyd and finished at 3am. Our party working in sap. Old Fritz put over a few grenades and pineapples but otherwise quiet night. Heavy bombardments on either side.

July 27th – Missed breakfast and slept right till dinner time. Everything very quiet and a few drops of rain falling. Same fatigue as last night. Had letters from W.C. and G.A.C. Had very quiet night on fatigue in front line.

July 28th – Had a clean up morning and wrote home. Left for town at 1pm. Saw dentist who made another appointment for Wednesday. Saw Bill Brierley and went over to A Canteen and had afternoon tea. Saw H. & J. Aitken and were going down to cemetery when came over and dropped a couple of bombs. One fell about a hundred yards from us but only one artillery chap wounded and no damage done. Had tea in town – eggs and chips and after getting a few things came back to sub lines. NZ mail waiting when I got back and answered Elsie's straight away. On usual fatigue. Didn't see McLean in town, he went back first thing this morning.

July 29th – As usual woke up for breakfast and slept till dinner time. Spent all the afternoon writing. Had a letter from Lindley and he heard I had been hit so I wrote straight away and let him know different. A fleet of our aeroplanes went over, I suppose to get a bit of our own back. On usual fatigue.

July 30th – It's a lovely day just like summer in NZ and in morning it was so quiet would hardly know there was a war on. Taking things very easy. Fritz put a few shells over near our lines but no damage done. Capt Taylor held church in lines and was about the only way we knew it was Sunday. Two chaps killed by shrapnel in headquarters. Wilson, 17 Platoon 8th one of them. Out on fatigue at 9.30 in sap.

July 31st – Things very quiet. Slept till dinner time. NZ papers came to light but none for me. Out on fatigue as usual in front line and both very busy with machine guns and rifles. Heard of Lemberg fallen and Romania joining allies.

August 1st – Couldn't sleep after breakfast. News confirmed we heard yesterday. A bakebush? parcel from NZ distributed. Our aeroplanes fairly busy. Lovely weather only a bit on the hot side. Same fatigue as usual tonight. Fritz put over a big lot of minenwerfers but no damage done.

August 2nd – Slept till dinner time then got ready and left for town. Saw dentist at 2pm and had impression taken. Rotten job. Went round to see Bill Brierley but was told he was up on fatigue. Arrived back in time for tea. Packed up after tea and at 10pm left for support lines. Five of us in one bivie. No fatigue tonight.

August 3rd – News about Lemberg a wash out. Did it hard getting out for stand to but slept till dinner time. Had to go to dentist again at three. Got a few things and got home at five. Terribly hot walking and the warmest I've been since leaving Egypt. Caught a bit of a cold after it.

August 4th – On fatigue from 3am till 8. The best shift of the lot. Slept till dinner time and then had to go to dentist again. It won't be long till I get my bones now. Saw Gordon Taylor and hear Cyril Coltman had been killed. Also heard Ted Loper had died of wounds. Town is awfully quiet and its no joy going in every day. Fatigue changed. Wiring in front of supports from stand to till stand down. Worst job I've been on yet. Received a parcel from Mrs Fulton.

August 5th – Slept till dinner time and left for town at four. Had to wait at dentists a long time but both before I left. Terribly tight fitting and I'll have to go back and get a bit out of them. Cutting wire till stand down. Worked on wire till 1.30 and ran out of material. Dinks relieved by Tommies. Neil Redmond stopped one in the face

August 6th – Took my clothes off and had a lovely sleep till dinner time. First time I've had my clothes off for five weeks. On wiring again tonight. My hands are like a bit of raw meat with handling stuff without gloves. 1st C.J.B. going to have a raid. Called for volunteers yesterday while I was in town so I missed out. Out wiring till stand to. Neil Redmond hit while out in front. Fairly badly smacked through face.

August 7th – Slept till dinner time and wrote a couple of letters in afternoon to Dave and W.C. Word came for us to pack up and be ready to move down to sub lines to take over gas guard. Arrived at subs at 7pm and took over. I took first shift from 7 to 9. A Whitehead and D. Field and C. Waring on with me. Quiet night.

August 8th – On from 3 till 5 and then from 9 to 11.40. Got a blast from still for not being dressed properly. Bill Brierley came in today. Saw A.J. Hornsby this afternoon. Were paid at 6.30 – 60 francs. Heard Army Keaston had been hit in leg. Received letter from W.C. and H.C. Bill Luck in 2nd Chelsea Hospital. Fritz opened out on front line with minenmorfers but no damage done. Strafe at 10.30.

August 9th – On from 7 to 9. Whitehead away on Sig. Tom Booker on in his place. Terribly hot today. Fritz put over a lot of stuff looking for batteries but did no damage.

August 10th – Went in for a bath at 8am and had leave till 2pm. Didn't see Len or Rooney but saw Berry Haite and he told me they were alright. Had a good dinner and after getting some things arrived back here up to time. Terrible hot today.

August 11th – We are living like fighting cocks. Sausages and bacon and porridge for breakfast. Not bad for soldiers. A good bit of stuff flying about both ways. Another chap wounded with a premature burst at Square Farm. The third in about a week. Another strafe at 2.30 but have not to stand to. Wrote a couple of weekly letters. Saw Len Russell, H.Lindsay and a few other chaps who passed through on fatigue.

August 12th – Strafe came off this morning but I slept right through it. It was the same as last one. Our chaps put over a fair amount but Huns hardly replied. Three wounded chaps came down during the night. Hit out on patrol. Things very quiet and very hot. Heard we are being relieved tonight but officers not heard yet. Still any amount of rumours and the one that gets the biggest hearing is that when we go out, we are going to the Somme but I have my doubts about it. NZ mail arrived. Received letters up to June 24th. Fritz opened up after stand down and for a while things were very lively. Kit inspection today. Looks as if there is a move on somewhere. No mail collected this morning but Capt Taylor was round and took it. He has heard nothing about it being stopped.

August 13th – On duty from 5 to 7 and Maori pioneers all brought their tools down so it looks as if something doing. Capt Taylor held service in the lines at 7pm. Our chaps giving Fritz a bit of a hit up but otherwise things just as usual.

August 14th – Heard this morning we are being relieved in a day or two by Seaforth Highlanders. Must be going soon because our mail handed back today. Chaps coming from town say Dinks moved out last night. Wrote quite a lot of letters these last two days. Having good weather for the last month but rained in torrents for about an hour. Heard casually that big bomb strafe at 9pm and for once rumour was right. Fritz got hell. Our chaps were supposed to raid but was washed out. Strafe again at ten and it's a wonder if any of Fritz trenches left.

August 15th – Things fairly lively first thing. Only three slightly wounded last night. Our cooks away today so everybody has to do their own. Being relieved 9pm. Relieved of guard at 7pm by Gordons 4 B? They had just come from Somme and they reckoned it was hell down there. Left sub lines at 12 and arrived in billets at 1pm.

August 16th – Had a wander round town before 10am. Saw Bill Brierley. Left Armentieres at 11am for Steenwerck. Arrived at one and it was a long 8 miles. Had dinner and then entrained. Ten in a compartment. Came through Hazebrouck and got off train at Ebbingen and then had five miles to walk after that. Saw Lindley. They are billeted near station. Billeted now in a old farmhouse. The country was a picture when we came through. Right in the middle of harvest.

August 17th – Fell in at 9.30 for foot inspection. In afternoon had an inspection by Colonel Young and our Lt got shaken up for some of us still wearing tin hats. Two mile route march with full packs on. After tea Jim Tenant and I went for a walk. Watched some hospital barges going down a canal and went a bit further on and run into Lindley coming up. Tried everywhere to buy cigarettes but nothing doing. On leave to 9pm.

August 18th – Parade 8.30 musketry order. Heard some General was going to inspect us but after going through saluting by numbers and rifle exercises we heard he wasn't coming. On Battalion Guard. Mounted guard at 5.30.

August 19th – At 9.30 had to take prisoners over to transport to do some work. The same in afternoon. Relieved at 6.30am by 1st Coy. Went to bed early to get ready for big day tomorrow.

August 20th – Reville 5.30. Breakfast 7. Packed up by nine but didn't move till 9.40. Walked to Arques about four miles and took train to Abbeville. Arrived at 7.30. 586 platoons on fatigue including transport wagons. By the time that was finished, rest of Battalion ready to move out and we only had time to get a biscuit before we moved out. We had no idea how far we were going but thought it was about five miles. Were going till 4.30 and by all accounts we did about 13 miles.

August 21st – A lot of chaps fell out in march and they were turning up all morning. Merelersert is this village only a small out of the way place. Colonel Young took us out and gave us a real good shaking up about so many falling out.

August 22nd – Out at 8am till 12.30 on Coy drill. In afternoon route march. Terribly warm walking. Bill came along tonight. He is about 8 kilos away.

August 23rd – Parade 8am. Practising French attacking so before long we will be in the Somme. Route march through the village where 2nd B. are billeted. Bill came along again tonight and there is a vacancy in TMB. I'm leaving it alone just now. Frank Maze also was onto me to go into Battalion Bombers. NZ mail in, but no letter from Elsie. First mail I've not got a letter from her. Letter from GHC.

August 24th – Same as usual in morning. Route march in afternoon and we passed through Hallencourt. Saw Bill Coltman. Concert in chateaux which was a huge success and for which we have to thank P.E.Taylor.

August 25th – Parade at 8.15. At 9 we started to practice wood fighting. Had the afternoon off the fix Lt Tayers watch. Wrote a few letters. Received a letter from Elsie and Scottie. Had a great yard to the padre. Bill Brierley came round at night.

August 26th – Corp Cammock, J. Tennant and self told off for Battalion escort. Reposted to R.S.M. and we were sent to a village about six miles away to get two prisoners. Met 2nd C.B. on way down. Arrived Airaines at 10.30 and had a look round town. Fair sized place as big as Hazebrouck. Had dinner but no prisoners there so left for

home again. Saw 2nd C.B. again and had a yarn to G. Paton, M. Hanley and Scottie. All our chaps had a half holiday. Tommy Taylor had to go to hospital.

August 27th – Supposed to be parade at 7.45 but rained all night and parade off. Church parade held by Col. Young. 1st NZ man shot at Hallencourt for leaving his post. Football match in afternoon between 1st and 2nd B. officers. Rained all the time – 2nd won.

August 28th – Parade as usual. Attack in wood. Rained like one thing. Route march in afternoon. Some more NZ mail in.

August 29th – Parade 8am. Went to Citerne and witnessed an attack by two Battalions accompanied by an aeroplane. A great sight. Rained in afternoon so parade was cancelled. Supposed to go out at night but it was a washout.

August 30th – Still raining – no parade. Had about ten minutes physical exercises in between the showers. Had lectures and gas helmet practice in billets. Same in afternoon. Roumania declared war and rumours of another win for the British fleet.

August 31st – Fine this morning. Parade as usual. Parade at 1pm and marched about three miles where whole Brigade had a lecture by Major Campbell on bayonet fighting.

September 1st – Parade at 4.15. Bomb throwing and fumigation of blankets. Attack practice under Major Rowe. Jim Tennant and I went to Hallencourt after tea. Had quite a lot of fun. Nearly all the mob boozed up and she was a rough house.

September 2nd – On the road again. Packed up and ready to move at 10am. Moved out at 10.45 and had dinner on the road. Arrived at Airaines at 2pm. Had a new pair of boots on and feet pretty sore. Got a loan of a pair of boots and not so bad. Airaines is a nice little place. 2nd Brigade moved further on. Dinks coming up behind us.

September 3rd – Another rough night last night. On the road again at 8.30. Moved out at nine. Arrived at Hengest on Somme (*Hengest-sur-Somme*) at 12, nine kilometres from Airaines. Dinner not ready so we went on till one. Only had two miles to go to La Chaussée 2nd Brigade over river in Picquigny. Feet sore so went to river and washed them. Stayed in and wrote letters. Raining a treat.

September 4th – Still raining so had gas helmet practice in billets. Short route march. Full marching order route march in afternoon. Went round 2 Battalion Trenches and home P**. Saw Mc and Bill Brierley.

September 5th – Brigade attack practice in morning. Gas helmet practice in afternoon. NZ mail arrived. Waimate papers from Isaac.

September 6th – The same as usual in morning. Colonel told us we were going to the Somme. In afternoon watched another attack accompanied by aeroplane. Went over and saw M. Gaffney. Heard D. Leedon has his commission.

September 7th – Physical drill and bayonet fighting till 11.30. Packed up by 12.25 and on the road at 1pm. Marched till 5.30 and stayed the night in (blank space left). Tried to buy cigarettes all over the place but nothing doing. Came about 10 miles.

September 8th – On the road again at 9am. Had half an hour for dinner and arrived at camp two miles from Albert at 4 o'clock. Terribly hot walking but none of our Battalion fell out. Fairly close to guns and some noise during night. Supposed to have gone 15 miles. Saw a big crowd on Hun prisoners travelling about in motor cars.

September 9th – Foot inspection at 9. Parade of inspection by Godley at 10. Bathing parade in afternoon but terrible dirty water. Had letter from N. Campbell. Bill Luck died in hospital.

September 10th – Church parade with 2nd CTB** 2nd Brigade moved out at 1pm. We moved at 5 but didn't go through Albert. Arrived Fricourt at 6.30. Slept outside and not at all cold. It was only a rumour. Big guns all round and a terrible noise all night.

September 11th – Saw Tom Mitchell. Dinks moved up last night but reserves sent back. Mat Wall killed with a dud. Physical drill, bayonet fighting and gas helmet drill till 11.30.

September 12th – Bayonet fighting and bomb throwing in morning. Same in afternoon. Started raining.

September 13th – Bayonet fighting and gas helmet practice. Orders to get ready to move up. Left Fricourt at 6.30 for Mametz and stayed the night there.

September 14th – No. 586 on fatigue at 10am road making. Came back to Mametz but Battalion went on, so we went on.

September 15th – Heavy bombardment so I expect advance has started. Road making again and moved up to Savoy trench and then into old support trench.

September 16th – On fatigue on Green Dump for picks and shovels. Rest of Battalion ready to move when we got back and lost a lot of men going across. Germans put a heavy barrage over. Arrived in trenches where Dinks were and saw Lindley. Went further to right and helped Wngton consolidate. Tommies not up on right so we couldn't advance. Went back into support left of Flers

September 17th – Dug ammunition trench along sunken road. Germans shelling fairly heavy.

September 18th – Still digging and raining a treat. Wet through and mud all over. On rations fatigue.

September 19th – Still raining and very miserable but were relieved by 2nd Wngton. Had a crook spin back to Green Dump.

September 20th – Found a bivvy and slept with Ser. Barratt and Corp. Farquahar. Nothing doing.

September 21st – Inspection parade. Weather clearing a bit. Living well. Canteen handy. Fatigue to front line.

September 22nd – Still in old trenches and doing nothing.

September 23rd – On fatigue repairing Longeval road.

September 24th – Me and .. again to front line and still plenty of mud. Relieved 2nd Dinks.

September 25th – Fairly quiet all morning but our guns going strong. Barrage lifted at 12.35. Hopped over and reached our place in half an hour. Dug in and except for a few casualties we were let off very light.

September 26th – Out on outpost and got very little sleep. Digging all day. Moved across road to let 12th Coy in.

September 27th – Still digging. 12th & 13th Coys advanced at 2pm. 788 Platoon mopping up party and 586 in support. Huns gave us a rough spin alright. 6 of us on stretcher bearing. Going all night and day.

September 28th – Finished stretcher bearing at 1.30 and slept till night. Relieved by 2nd Cant at 12.30. Ernie Julian killed. Moved out at 12.30 arrived Green Dump at 2.30.

September 29th – Bivvied with Allan Farquahar and rained fairly heavily.

September 30th – Still raining a little but plenty of mud. Had to shift bivvy out of Wngton area, and Allan, Jim Tennant and I built one.

October 1st – Still waiting orders to move. Expect to be relieved shortly.

October 2nd – Still doing nothing and just waiting about filling in time as best we can.

October 3rd – Things very quiet except when Fritz drops a few shells into transport.

October 4th – Started to rain at dinner time. Orders came out to move up to Flers and we had a lovely trip. Slept in mud in trench.

October 5th – Still damp and cold but warmer as day advanced. Relieved at 9 o'clock by 32nd RF, and then marched back to Pommiers Redoubt near Mametz. Slept out.

October 6th – Had to sleep out, no bivvy. Saw Lindley and he said 12th ** had joined and we went over to see Tom Atwell and some more of the boys.

October 7th – Left Redoubt at 6am and reached Albert at 9 o'clock. Waited about all day and entrained late in afternoon.

October 8th – Arrive Longpre at 5 o'clock and got a cup of tea at YMCA. Coy billeted in loft. Parade in afternoon for shortages.

October 9th – Route march at 10am. Coy drill in afternoon. On guard 6am. Gift parcels from NZ. Received parcel from home.

October 10th – On guard. Wrote letters and have correspondence just about up to date. Saw Bill Brierley and got him to cable home (*home appears crossed out*) to Issac. Came off guard 6pm.

October 11th – Moving today for Caistre near Hazebrouck. Moving at 10.30. Entrain 12.30. Only had 35 in a truck and had an awful trip. Arrived Caestre? 2.30am and went on by motor bus to Estaires. Arrived 3.30. Turned in with J. Tennant and slept well.

October 12th – Rumours we are going to Blugg St to relieve Australians. Doing nothing so far. Rifle inspection in afternoon and leave to Estaires from 4 to 8. A. Farquahar and I went in and got a few things. Received parcel from Elsie, also papers.

October 13th – Got roused out in a hurry and orders to move at nine. About 40 14th Reins. Came into Coy before we moved off. Arrive Saily at 12. Had dinner and moved off directly after and went straight into trenches and relieved 6th Batt. Australians. Things awfully quiet after Somme. On listening post, 6 men and NCO. Do three hours and finished.

October 14th – Slept nearly till dinnertime. Put in afternoon repairing bivvy. Things very quiet. Rumours of Tommy raid on right.

October 15th – Quiet night. Dug out to go on fatigue. Gen. Russell inspected trenches. Trench mortar bombardment on right. Wet and very cold.

October 16th – Another quiet night in listening post. Some of the chaps got wet but was dry when I was there. Gen. Johnston round. Changing posts again. On with another new chum. Had bivvy fixed up and we got busy and fixed up a fire and are very comfortable. Able to ruin supper.

October 17th – Another wet and cold night in post. Slept till dinner time. Got our issue of new clothes and I think we will be clear of lice for a while. Orders out about winter clothes and changing. Going to be issued daily with clean socks and every man to have trench boots.

October 18th – Things very much as usual. Shifted listening post. On first shift and rained like one thing and then cleared up.

October 19th – Moved out at 2pm. 7 Platoon took our places. O. Clarke and I in good dugout. Told off by S.M. to be trench storeman.

October 20th – Went into town for stores. Rather awkward at first, but after I know where to get things, will be alright.

October 21st – Some frost this morning. In for stores again today.

October 22nd – Went to church service held in YMCA in Saily. Had yarn to G. Evans and also saw A. McKenzie.

October 23rd – Things as usual. Bought sausages in town and Charlie and I cooked them for supper. We also have porridge at stand down in morning 5.30am. Paid today. NZ mail in.

October 24th – Had a bath before going to town but not much stuff, so got it at canteen. Had dinner with D. Finn. Bill Brierley was away so didn't see him. After dark Charlie and I gave rats a shaking up with a stick and torch.

October 25th – Moving out at 2pm. Nothing to do so wrote letters. Left trenches 2.30 and went back to billets. Fairly windy and leady show.

October 26th – Breakfast 6 o'clock and left for trenches at 7.30. Only five miles to walk but didn't do much work. Left for home at 3pm.

October 27th – On fatigue again and its no good. Arrived back at billets and found rest of Coy had shifted. ** said billet wasn't fit for his men. Packed up and moved. Rained all the way to new billets.

October 28th – Had an easy day. Exterior economy in afternoon. Charlie Clark and I went into Laventie** at night. Had a real good time.

October 29th – Church parade 10am. Raining all the time. Stayed inside all day.

October 30th – New respirators issued. Practice all day and rifle exercises.

October 31st – Inspection parade at Saily. Sir Joseph Ward and Hon. William Massey were present. Back in billets for dinner. More respirator practise. Went up to Laventie and bought Xmas cards. NZ mail in. Got parcel from Dan.

November 1st – Went through gas test with new helmets. Rifle exercises, bayonet fighting etc in afternoon. On guard at night.

November 2nd – Whole Coy on fatigue in trenches. Saw Bill Brierley and put in most of the day with him. Stayed in and wrote letters. Received parcel from NZT? NLT?

November 3rd – Whole Coy on fatigue again. I went on sick parade to get a tooth out. Dentist too busy so went to Saily and had a real good day. Had dinner with Tom Booker at Div. Reins Camp. Laventie at night.

November 4th – Came out on orders last night we were moving into trenches today, so put in morning packing up and getting some stores. Left at 1pm and had some load – 2 blankets, gumboots, respirators etc. 6 Platoon in front line. Got a lively reception. Fritz put six shells into sap alongside my bivvy. On listening post again. Charlie Clark and I on same shift and in same bivvy.

November 5th – Very quiet night. Made porridge at stand to and didn't get up for breakfast. Slept till dinnertime and then wrote letters in afternoon.

November 6th – Raining a treat and water running into bivvy. Trench mortar strafe on in afternoon so we moved down to supports. Were paid there. Another quiet night in post.

November 7th – Still raining and trenches in a terrible state. Had a bit of fun in post with 13th patrol.

November 8th – Cleared a bit but plenty of mud. Moved to support. Going down sap water up to our knees. Good job we had on gumboots. On gas guard.

November 9th – Pretty cold but fine. Paper mail in from Jimmie.

November 10th – Still fine. Cammock back from England. Page goes tonight. Things very quiet.

November 11th – Things still going along as usual. Weather fine.

November 12th – Weather still fine. Relieved by Auckland at 2pm. Had some load to carry and was warm by the time we got to our billets.

November 13th – On fatigue at Mellar Avenue. Went to Laventie at night for eggs and chips.

November 14th – On fatigue again at same place. A long walk and very little work done. Went along and saw Bill Brierley. He has two stripes up.

November 15th – Parade at 9am. Rifle exercises etc. Same in afternoon. Orders at night to move up to Windy Post. NZ mail in.

November 16th – Packed up and away at 7 o'clock. Put on cooks fatigue carrying dixies. Put on permanent cooks fatigue. Having a good time. Down to Coy Headquarters for mail at 6pm.

November 17th – Our first fall of snow this morning and terribly cold wind blowing. We bought oats, potatoes and cabbage and are living like toffs.

November 18th – Still cold but weather improving. Paper from Isaac. Jock Sutherland goes on leave tomorrow.

November 19th – Jock left at 10 o'clock. Received decent little parcel from Jessie Menzies. Moving into supports tomorrow at 2pm.

November 20th – Busy morning packing up. Moved at 2pm. Our platoon in supports for full time. Told off for trench storeman. Rest of section on patrol.

November 21st – Fine weather. Stand to at 5.15. Went to Saily for stores. Stand to at 4.30 at night.

November 22nd – In Saily again. Living very well. 1st Coy raided at night but no Huns in trench. Pat Foster wounded.

November 23rd – Things very quiet, nothing doing.

November 24th – Saw Sam Evans in town. Things still very quiet though our chaps are knocking his front line down every day.

November 25th – Raining a treat and I didn't get at all wet going to town. Limbers didn't bring stuff up tonight.

Finish. Still going strong 12.12.16

RBC

No.6 Platoon 2nd Company 1stCIB

May 1916

Frier, Lieut

Wounded Somme Sept 15th

Luden, Serg.Quarter

Commissioned

Broome, Serg.

Buried Armentieres 8.7.16

Carrock, Corp.

Buried Armentieres 8.7.16

Barnett, Corp

Wounded Armentieres 25.6.16

Lloyd, Corp

Wounded Somme 15.9.16

Farquahar, LC

Sick, Returned NZ 20.1.17

Maze, LC.

Bomber

Wade, LC

Died of wounds. Wounded Armentieres 19.5.16

Killop, Pvte

Duncan, Pvte

Wounded Somme 24.9.16

Hanley, Pvte

Sniper

Lockhard, Pvte

Wounded Armentieres 8.7.16

Sutherland, Pvte

McRohan, Pvte

Bill, Pvte

Russell, Pvte

Killed Somme 25.9.16

Brierley, Pvte

Friel, Pvte

Accidentally wounded 8.9.16

Whitehead, Pvte

Wounded Somme 15.9.16

Wareing, Pvte

Tangney, Pvte

Bomber

Head, Pvte

Killed Armentieres 8.7.16

Graham, Pvte

Finn, Pvte

Page, Pvte

McDonald, Corp,

Wounded Armentieres 18.6.15

Butters

Wounded Armentieres 8.7.16

Bradley

Hospital, sick Wardreaux

Chaney

Traffic police

Cromarty

Headquarters

Tennant

Gason

Wounded Somme 25.9.16

Shallerass

Transferred 2nd Brigade. Wounded Somme

Dagnall

Observer. Wounded Somme 15.9.16

Austin

Sick

Jeffreys

Sick

James, Pvte

Booker, Pvte

Fitzgerald, Pvte

Buried Armentieres 8.7.16

Connell, Pvte

Wounded Somme 15.9.16

Collins, Pvte

Bomber, wounded Somme 15.9.16

Donaldson, Pvte

Wounded Armentieres 8.7.16

Box, Pvte

Aitken, **Pvte

Wounded Somme 25.9.16

Aitken, Pvte	Wounded Somme 25.9.16
Clarke, Pvte	Anzac Miners
Currie, Pvte	Transferred N.C.T.**
Hornsby, Pvte	Killed Somme 25.9.16
Firmstone, Pvte	Wounded Somme 25.9.16
O'Connor, Pvte	Transferred 2 nd Brigade
O'Brien, Pvte	Pioneers, wounded Somme
Crawford, Pvte	
Cook, A.E., Pvte	Traffic Police. Wounded Herbaix**
Cook, Pvte	
Loper, Pvte	Bomber. Wounded Somme 28.9.16
	Returned to NZ 12.1.17
Barnett, Serg.	Wounded Somme 26.9.16
Cammock	

NOTES:

Robert Brown Cameron was awarded the NZ Military Medal for gallantry in action in France in August 1918:-

“Cameron, Robert Brown 6/3270

M.M. Corporal 1st Battalion Canterbury Regiment attached No. 2 Light Trench Mortar Battery.

L.G. 13 March 1919 p3452 Rec No 2659

For bravery and devotion to duty on August 24th 1918 during the attack on Bapaume. Corporal Cameron was N.C.O. in charge of a section of 2 guns of a Light Trench Mortar Battery. The teams had to advance over very difficult ground which was subjected to a heavy shell and machine gun barrage. Corporal Cameron succeeded in keeping his men together until one of the gun teams was blown out. He then made excellent use of the mortar and ammunition remaining at his disposal. Later during the withdrawal from the forward positions he showed great coolness and leadership and was in constant touch with the Infantry. Throughout the operation his courageous and decisive action was an inspiring example to his men”

*Source: “Honours and Awards to the N.Z. Expeditionary Force in the Great War 1914 – 1918”
By Wayne McDonald.*

He was discharged from the army on 13 May 1919 on the termination of his period of engagement.

Sap = A covered trench or tunnel dug to a point near or within an enemy position.

Trents = possibly The Trentham Regiment

Minenwerfer = German mortars.

Dinks = Rifle Brigade

Listening Post = A post, that is a short trench that runs out under the wire entanglements, and at the end is a trap door which is opened at night in order that the sentries may look around and also listen if the enemy are digging etc.

The Mushroom = mentioned in The History of the Canterbury Regiment 1914-1918 as being in a sub-sector of the NZ Division's section 'a salient known as The Mushroom, of evil memory.