

JUN **Belgium**
1917

Mon 4 (732-188). Up at 8 a.m. Back to pits behind old position. Bon day but we could not do much for Fritz balloons. Plenty of shells & shells & tear gas after sunset. Worked all night on dugouts & gun-pits. Assisted by W.L. gunners. Ebert hit.

Tue 5 (733-189). On phone 3 to 5 a.m. Slept in old phone pit. Fritz shells close to new possie. Dump of 6' Howitzer went up. Dumps go up every day. Bed about 10 p.m.

Wed 6 (734-190). Phone 2.25 to 4.25 a.m. Fritz shelled B sub gun. Slightly damaged buffer. Bom. Murray hit in back. Gear for hop-over to Group. Rolled wire on small reels. Ready for stunt & then had tea. Left H.Q. about 7 p.m. & went to front line in stages. Bit of shelling.

Thu 7 (735-191). Stayed in dugout at Seaforth Farm D.R.1 all night. Rotten joint & about 40 of us were jammed in it & we could hardly move. Buzzard making an ass of himself trying to get thro' to Div. Art. At 3 a.m., the 5 mines went up & the stunt started. Thought dugout was coming in the way it rocked. Hauled out at 5 a.m. & went to front line about 15 yds away. Shells about. 2 or 3 Fritzes & one of our chaps wounded just where we hopped over. I had a big reel & off we went. Crossed the Douave R.[iver] on a big duckboard. Joined on my reel & made for Douave Farm (behind Hun line). Where we left Goudy & Ladd. (Elliot was at D.R.1.)

Off again past Schnitzel Farm where we left Carpenter, Richards & Calder. On thro' some barbed wire to wood by Bethlem [sic] Farm. Lobbed in a shell-hole & Buzz did his block as usual. Machine gun bullets & we cut wire & p. off back to trench the N.Z. were digging & dug ourselves in. We were then near the foot of a ridge at rt. of **MESSINES** & left of N.Z & 3rd Div. Austr. This was about 6.45 a.m. & we stayed there all day. Getting thro' on phone sometimes.

One of our planes had a wing blown off (by one of our shells, I think). Hun plane flew low over us twice & Buzz p.off. Fritz shelled 4th Div. Inf. arriving in about midday & our second barrage for their hop-over started about 1 p.m. Three tanks came up behind them & crossed trench near us, drawing a few "crabs". They returned later on. Fritz counter-attacked on the right about 3 p.m. T.S. & Dennis out on line. Sent a pigeon. Fritz dugout near us with dead & wounded in it. Off home about 6.30 p.m. Ladd & I together carried in a wounded Austr. 3rd Div. Machine gun bullet in foot. Reported at Brig. H.Q. where Rallitt was Liaison Officer. 40 steps concrete dugout.

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Back past Hyde Park Corner, passed 12 machine guns on ridge, Hill 63, also 18 pdr. Tommies going up to a forward position. Back to Bty. & told to go to W.L. for a spell. Left about 10.30 p.m. (Gas shells about but not as bad as previous night. 4 of our chaps had to go away, "gassed"). Rode on 3 limbers & a motor lorry to get home to W.L. about 1 a.m. Wagon Lines.

Fri 8 (736-192). Slept in till about 11 a.m. then went & had a bath & over to other wagon lines. Waited for pay but came a "gutser" " as Barraclough brought no money back from pits. Heavy shelling by Fritz. Back to W.L. about midnight. Had a feed of sausages, sauce, sardines.

Sat 9 (737-193). New tunic & breeches. Also shirt & boots & socks. Packed gear for other Wagon Line & put in afternoon at Steenwerke. Slept in bivvy with Gunner Barber. 11 p.m. (Pub with N.Zs).

Sun 10 (738-194). Up about 8 a.m. Up town with T.S. who was sprung as yesterday. Had photos taken. Up to pits after tea. 4 guns moved to Tommy position in morning.

Mon 11 (739-195). Up 9.35 a.m. To O.P.s with Capt. Coe who has charge of Bty. Bit of shelling. Back to lunch 11 a.m. all guns over. Word thro' about 10.30 p.m. to go to new position near Armentières. Moved out at 1.15 a.m.

Tue 12 (740-196). Phones 4.30 to 6.30 a.m. After messing round all night, packed gear & moved out about 10 p.m. Walked nearly to Nieuport, then rode on limber. Guns & gear left on side of road & we turned in in 'new' billets at Petit Rabeque Farm near Le Bizet at 2 a.m. (Gunnery Res (?) X'n slept under trees all day. Could not get to position.)

Wed 13 (741-197). Up at 11 a.m. Had b'fast (at tables & chairs in decent room). Layed line to 106 Howitzer & then we heard we had to move. Moved out about 10 p.m. to an old position near (?) Gussnor Farm. Rotten job. (Grand Rabeque Farm). ½ hr. after we finished a shell hit line (3 a.m.)

Thu 14 (742-198). Up about 10.30 a.m. & went with Capt. Coe (Craven Farm Steel Tree near front line) & then to Station O.P. (West Hook) about half way back. Couldn't do anything as Fritz had Balloons up & we are only 2,000 yds from his front line. Registered one gun about 5.30 p.m. & then back to tea. Stunt at 7.30 p.m. Good work. Sight Fritz retreating.

Fri 15 (743-199). Ran line to Group before dinner. (B'fast 10 a.m.)

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Fritz shelled behind us on & off all day. To O.P. with Capt. Coe. Registered 4 guns. Back at 7 p.m. Linesman for the night.

Sat 16 (744-200). Up about 10 a.m. Richards to O.P. with Capt. & Lt. Mtjoy. Up to O.P. with Mr Barraclough about 3 p.m. to relieve Rich & Mtjoy. Messing round till 8 p.m. Bit of shelling.

Sun 17 (745-201). Messing round. Bridge, etc. all day. Brown to O.P. till 9 p.m. Shells. **Looking at fire on Fritz's side. Some say, Lille.**

Mon 18 (746-202). Up 9 a.m. Nothing doing. Fritz chucked a few near us. Getting ready to pull out. Wagons, etc. came up & we got out safely although a no. of shells came very close. Went thro' Nieppe. P/out Nieppe to Steenwerke W.L. Slept in open.

Tue 19 (747-203). Up at 7.30 a.m. as it came on to rain. Moved out at 10.30 a.m. thro' Neuve Eglise to W.L. near Dragnotre. Not a bad place. Got tent for Spooks.

Wed 20 (748-204). Rev. 6.30 a.m. Stables, etc. Then Spooks worked on their gear. ½ holiday. Went up Mt. Kemmel to have a look round from old mill. Had some wine & citron with Bob Graham & McCreddin. Home about 9.30 p.m. Felt a bit crook.

Thu 21 (749-205). As usual. A bit of flag-wagging Showery. Fritz brought down 2 balloons.

Fri 21 (750-206). As usual. Took horses for exercise. (Grooming, etc.)

Sat 22 (751-207). Stables. Three balloons down by Fritz. We retaliated by sinking 5 of his. & an aeroplane. ½ holiday. Showery. Foot drill in morning.

Sun 23 (752-208). Walk. & I went to Bailleul. Had look at machine guns. T.M. s & whizz-bangs (5 large). Tanks (2 small, 1 barrel, captured from Fritz in Messines stunt). 2 W.B. presented to Vic. One (small) had smashed shield, the other had 4 dents on shield & one on end of buffer, also twisted seat). Had dinner at No. 12 (road to Steenwerke). Very nice. Shared people's Sunday dinner: 3 course. On towards Steenwerke, had a bath (nice little Madamoiselle). To Steenwerke & had photo taken. Tea, fruit & back home about 8 p.m. Church (barn) near Neuve Eglise. One shell dropped in it by Fritz: 8 killed; 23

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wounded. 9 a.m. service. Fritz planes overhead bombing about 11 p.m. Fritz nose-dived about 3,000 ft. to dodge our planes about 9 a.m. Nearly landed , then rose again with 2 triplanes after him. Only a few hundred feet above our W.L. Don't know whether he got away or not. Fritz sunk one of our balloons. We retaliated shortly after.

Mon 24 (753-209). Up as usual. 6.30 a.m. Stables. Foot drill. Dan McCreddin & I: Lamp practice till dinner-time. Stables, etc. Parkinson riding horse over hurdle. Horse fell & broke its neck.

Tue 26 (754-210). Telep. Orderly all day. Guard at night. Fritz dropping bombs.

Wed 27 (755-211). Guard. Brigade sports. Tug-of-War. Rescue race, etc, etc. Fritz brought down a balloon.

Thu 28 (756-212). As usual. Full marching order at 2.30 p.m. I had old Ginny. Football match 40th Batt..... red & 12 Bde. We won by 5 goals. Band was there. Thunderstorm as match finished. Balloon struck by lightning. Must have struck cable as balloon seemed to be a ball of fire & then went out & came slowly down. Heavy rain. Men out digging drains round their tents.

Fri 29 (757-213). As usual. Flags & helio. Stables & harness cleaning. Spooks horses on separate lines & we fall in separately.

Sat 30 (758-214). As usual. Exercise horses. Very wet. ½ h' day. (Buzzard had charge of horse exercise.) Parcel from home.

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Sun 1 (759-215). As usual. Showery. ½ h' day. Lt. Hay back.

Mon 2 (760-216). Stables, etc. Staff out manoeuvring.

Tue 3 (761-217). Out with C'pt Coe & staff. Map-work.

Wed 4 (762-218). Directors. Horse picquet at night.

Thu 5 (763-219). Stables. -----(?)-----

Fri 6 (764-220). As usual. Cavalry spooks. Up around Mt Kemmel.

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Sat 7 (765-221). Manure cart Fatigue. Ginny lost a shoe. & I stayed home. Thunder-storm about midnight. Vivid lightning. H.Q. wireless struck.

Sun 8 (766-222). As usual. Muddy. Stables. Band. Church service in evening.

Mon 9 (767-223). Cav. Spooks. Football (Rugby) match after tea.

Tue 10 (768-224). Get horses & gear ready to move also clean up camp. Water. 10 p.m. B.& S. 11.30 p.m.

Wed 11 (769-225). Moved off at 12.30 a.m. thro' Bailleul. Strazeele to W.L. near **HONDEGHEM**. Arr. 8.30 a.m. Very tired & slept half the day. Saw planes & (?) Burkett / [Burnett. Slept in open.

Thu 12 (770-226). Rev. ¼ to 3 a.m. Off about 4 a.m. thro' Bavinchore, Zuypeene Wemuers & Wormunde (fair-sized town about Bailleul size. (Billets near latter.) Passed a Bg (train & a few 100 motors. Not a bad place. Blanket – tossing , etc. Bed about 10 p.m. Crook tabbies. Capt. Coe went away with appendicitis.

Fri 13 (771-227). Rev. 3.30 a.m. Moved 5.30 a.m. Passed French & Belgians & finished up at W.L. near Ghyvelde about 11.30 a.m. Very level country. Canals all through. Thro' Wylder, West Cappel, Warhem, Lus d'Averes to Ghyvelde. Thro' Ghyvelde, Bray Dunes to Plage after parade finish. -----(?)----- Cameron & Ramsay. Passed big aerodrome. High sand dunes. 30 ft. Fine esplanade deserted except for Red Cap heads. Entanglements in front of esplanade. Mob in swimming stung by jellyfish.

Sat 14 (772-228). As usual. Stables, etc.

Sun 15 (773-229). Exercise horses. Rt. Section went into action> Position alongside Nieuport. Very flat country. Few hedges. Phone pit made. Roads here are not too good. Amm. goes up in barges. Water also. Horse picket.

Mon 16 (774-230). On 5 to 7 a.m. Just as (?) teams returned. They were aay all night as it is 12 to 15 miles away. Rest of battery went up. Up town with Bdr. Cameron.

Tue 17 (775-231). As usual 15 horses for 7 spooks to look after now.

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Green stuff on horses' legs. 5 men to a loaf. Rations no good. With 88th Div. (15th Corps). Wrote letters at night. Letter from Bob. Had to groom a bout 6 horses & water 7 as Left & Centre Section returned about 6 a.m. & were allowed to sleep in.

Wed 18 (776-232). As usual. Wet day. No parade. After b'fast til 11 a.m. Loading manure into G.S. Stables, etc.

Thu 19 (777-233) Exercise horses. New dope of 1 star artist arrived. Harness cleaning.

Fri 20 (778-234). As usual. Acting No 1 Exercise horses. Harness cleaning. Sent back to clean up lines.

Sat 21 (779-235). Exercise horses , etc. stables. Finished at 3.30 p.m. so Brownie & I went to Dunkirk in motor lorrie. (Saw Gyppos working on barges in canal.) Lay down in barrels, baskets going thro' barrier. Had a good dinner & then messed round. Saw 9.2 naval guns & submarine at docks. Church hit by shells. Lost Brownie (Ternaqui (?)) Came back in R.N.A.S. lorry which left square at 9 p.m.

Sun 22 (780-236). Took horses to beach near (Bray Dunes) Plage for a swim, 8.30 a.m. Galloped about a mile full out to it along a beautiful hard stretch of sand & then swam the horses & ourselves & returned. Stables finished about 4 p.m. Day, Gribbs & I went to Malo Les Bains by lorry & tram suburb & watering place for Dunkirk.) Beautiful day & a fair crowd of people, officers (French, Belgian, English & Austr.) & some well-dressed civilians. Aeroplanes swooping down. Two Monitors lying off the shore. Tennis & croquet on the sand. Casino had a shell right into it. Must have been a 6" naval gun, at least. Had a couple of drinks & came home, arr. about 9 p.m. Could see Fritz shelling(?)..... Dunkirk all day.

Mon 23 (781-237). As usual. Horses for exercise. Harness cleaning.

Tue 24 (782-238). ----- do----- Horses for a swim & canter in morning. Clean harness after.

Wed 25 (783-239). Wet morning. I went to Dunkirk on leave about 10 a.m. Motor half way then 112th How. Bty's Cook's cart to Rosendael & caught elect. tram to Dunkirk. Messed round. Had good 5 course dinner for 3 Fr. Strolled round docks, etc. Had a yarn to an Austr. doctor from Albert Park. He

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was an officer in the French Army & had been at Verdun. Tram to Malo Les Bains. Sleep on sand. Back to Dunkirk gare & M.P. wouldn't let me pass as pass hadn't battery stamp on it. Back to Malo. Had good tea. Bought pastry & then back to Ghyvelde, 9 p.m.

Thu 26 (784-240). As usual. Horses for exercise. All teams up to dump to fill wagons. Gunners were up for 24 hrs carting Amm. from barges to bty position: returned first thing this morning. Clean harness. Some horses crook. Sand colic.

Fri 27 (785-241). Took T.S' horse for swim. Cantered up the beach. Then Lt. Hay took us for a trot about 2 mls along beach to hospital & asylum at Zuydeoone (?) then back to Ghyvelde (?) air 12 midday. Harness etc. Swim in the canal with Brownie. Talking to Gypos. Back home about 9 p.m.

Sat 28 (786-242). Swim with horses down near hospital & asylum. Buzz in charge so we had some horse racing. Back about midday. Capt. Coe returned the other day. Great aero activity on our side they seem to be doing a lot of bombing. Fritz is rather troublesome on the front line though.

Sun 29 (787-243). Wet morning. Raised horse lines to about 8 feet off the ground so horses cannot get their heads down to eat the sand. Stables as usual. Left X'n & swim horses. They got slightly wet. Lt. Fleming arr. back at Battery. Spud fight.

Mon 30 (788-244). Drizzly. No parade. Stables. Clean harness.

Tue 31 (789-245). As usual.

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Wed 1 (790-246). Wet all day. Trying to drain camp. Not much good as ground is too flat etc. Cruise ½ hour.

Thu 2 (791-247). Clean lines. Horses out to graze. Wet all day.

Fri 3 (792-248). Same as yesterday. Exercise after lunch as well. Wet all day. Brulet & Brown to Dunkirk in the rain today & yesterday.

Sat 4 (793-249). Wet again but trying to be fine. Exercise. I was on day stables ½ day.

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Sun 5 (794-250). Quite warm & fine today. Exercise horses ½ day. Bert Gillard & I went to Malo & Rosendael after dinner. Motor lorries & train. Had tea & biscuits. Strolled along Prom. Back & had tea & drinks. Cogniac . Billiards. Pastry. Diabolo. Apples & Pears & h'dkerchiefs. Cigs from 3 ladies & gent. Gave them Hun bullets & Austr. Badge souvenir. Back to main road & pulled a Belge F Corps motor full of Tommy officers. Jammed in on top of them, singing etc. They got out a mile from Ghyvelde & we travelled the rest in the front seat. Back home about 11.30 a.m. O'Brien, Walton on leave. Some gunners relieved on R.F.A. guns.

Mon 6 (795-251). Told off as orderly. Exercise & stables as usual. Exercise again after lunch. To Malo again with Gillard. Cogniac & billiards. Diablo in side street & met some decent French people. (Dogs: Bismark & Ki Ki.) Invited us into sitting room for drink. Stayed till nearly 10 p.m. (Adrienne, nice girl.) Walked back to main road & caught French Red X car. Seats inside like guards van. Comfortable ride. Back home about 11 p.m. Cpl. Walker down for leave.

Tue 7 (796-252 Bdr. Cameron to pits so I went with him as far as Bde Hqrs (near Pelican Bdge, 1½ mls behind Nieuport) to bring back his horse. Very decent ride thro' ----- (blank) ----- along main road which follows the canal. Have to leave road & skirt Farnes though, as no troops allowed in town. (Agreement with Fritz). Plenty of pontoons & bridges on canal (some swing, others lift up.). Monitors on canal, some with about 4.7 inch guns on). A few 5.9s being thrown near Nieuport. Also 18 pdr firing. Back for stables about 4 p.m. To Malo. Met a Belgian interpreter going there also & we walked to tram terminus (drink & cigarettes). Into Malo in taxi. Left him at tram. Met Cpl. Wilson & went to see Adrienne. Leave to Malo & Dunkirk finished. Caught tram , then motor bus. Home about 9.30 p.m.

Wed 8 (797-253). As usual. Horses for a swim. Worked all afternoon on horse-lines. Wet evening. Very heavy rain.

Thu 9 (798-254). Horses to beach, ½ battery. The others went after lunch & got very wet. Our chaps who were attached to Tommy battery, also Left X'n, came down for a spell. Pelican Bridge blown up. Brown, Sell, Anderson ... to Blighty.

Fri 10 (799-255). As usual. Showery. Exercise.

Sat 11 (800-256). Showery. Long ride for exercise with Flossie. (Mill

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1817). Saw one (?) yesterday. Horse-lines very bad. Cpl. Tiller back from D'kirk sprung. Drain lines after lunch.

Sun 12 (801-257). Showery in morning, but not bad after reveille. Clean up lines. Had to go to Malo to take message to Lt. Fleming. Rode along beach & messed round for about an hour & finally found him with the Capt. on the promenade.. Back home about 6.30 p.m.

Mon 13 (802-258). Very muddy lines. Changed horses round. A few mares picked out for breeding purposes.

Tue 14 (803-259). As usual. Fairly fine. 4 reinforcements arrived. Bldg harness sheds. Grand swim with horses on beach this morning.

Wed 15 (804-260). Horses to beach. Business as usual. Went carting ashes. Then strolled ----- (?)----- down to Bray with Corpl. Wilson. Engine off track. Watching crane lift it & whistle started to blow.

Thu 16 (805-261). Swim horses. Cleaning horse-lines. To Malo with Corpl. Wilson in an old armoured car (used to carry 4 machine guns & 12 pdr), were in 2nd Battle of Ypres. Run by R.N.A.S. Royal Marine Artillery (one 9.2", 12", 15"). Saw A.[drienne]. Back with Sth. Africans in French Ambulance about 11 p.m.

Fri 17 (806-262). Horses to beach. Bon day. Horses as usual back on old lines. Washing. Letter from Florrie, also French book. Aeroplanes about.

Sat 18 (807-263). On lines. Paid 40 Fr.

Sun 19 (808-264). As usual. To Malo with Cpl. Wilson. Swim horses. Berry & Derrick drunk.

Mon 20 (809-265). As usual. Stayed home. Berry drunk.

Tue 21 (810-266). Capt. Walker & Gill back from Blighty about 2 p.m. Clean harness, etc.

Wed 22 (811-267). Leave to Dunkirk & Malo. Saw A. Stayed a couple of hours & then went to Dunkirk. Strolled round & had a feed & drinks & afternoon tea. Back to Malo & (?) sat on sand till 8 p.m. Back on tram. Waited for an hour for R.F.C. motor. Fritz planes up. Hell of a lot of search-lights

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going. (Heard on Fri: raid on England.) Back home about 11 p.m. Capt. Coe at pits.

Thu 23 (812-268). Slightly showery. Exercise in afternoon.

Fri 24 (813-269). Showery during night. Cool wind blowing. Exercise.

Sat 25 (814-270). ½ h' day. Stayed home. Fine day. 47th gun blown out. 3 men killed yesterday. Tommy sports on.

Sun 26 (815-271). Same as yeaterday. Rained at night.

Mon 27 (816-(272). Showery.. Exercise. Made harness shed after dinner. Rumour of move. Cpl. Walker wagons & G teams went to pits. 7 to 9.30 p.m. to pull battery out.

Tue 28 (817-273). Showery. Battery back by about 4 a.m. All spooks on parade at 2 p.m. Messed round in stables. Few drinks in Ghyvelde.

Wed 29 (818-274). Showery as usual.

Thu 30 (819-275) Harness cleaning & exercise.

Fri 31 (820-276). Hurse evacuated. Fine afternoon. Other batteries moved. 3rd Bde. Fritz night.

SEP

Sat 1 (821-277) Tent struck. At 9 a.m. Cpl. Walker away ---- (?) ---- with billeting party. Dull day. Car rolled. Bty to move at 6 p.m. Told off to go with advance party in motor lorry at 2 p.m. Went to B.A.C. for authority to move but couldn't leave till 7 a.m. Drizzly rain till about 8 a.m. Messed round in motor all night. Brigade passed us several times & we got lost several times. Pulled up for ½ hr. or so at Warmhoude to wait for lost motors. ½ doz. 8" Howitzers drawn by tractors passed us; also Tommy engineers en route from Ypres to Arras.

Sun 2 (822-278). Finally finished at billets near a village called ----- (?)----- Octazedele (nr. Cassel) just after battery pulled in. Slept in barns half the day, only turned out to stables. (Left 4 men behind at Ghyvelde for Blighty leave.) (Artillery on the road like a circus.)