

AUSTRALIAN
WAR MEMORIAL
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Diary of
War 1914-1918

Diary of 1916

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January

- 1st On desert at Abbysia training camp Egypt —
 9th Removed to Heliopolis training camp Egypt
 29th Orders to leave Heliopolis for Teled-Keber Egypt

February

- 2nd Arrived at Teled-Keber and remained there during this month drilling and practicing

March

- 1st Still at Teled-Keber
 19th Went to earthworks built by Dervishes against the British 35 years ago where the British square was broken before routing the enemy
 25th Went again to battle field & found relics of it
 31st Left Teled-Keber for Serapeum on Asiatic bank of Suez Canal a route march of 39 miles of with rifle equipment and pack through soft sand

April

- 1st Route march continuing passed bitter lakes
 2nd Arrived at Serapeum in the Afternoon

16th 17th 18th Terrible dust storms sweeping here
(Serapeum) have swimmers in Canal frequently =
25th Hold sports here Anniversary of the landing
of the Anzacs on peninsula

== May ==

1st Still at Serapeum Rumours of our removal to
France

8th Left Serapeum and arrived at Railend the
latter place being 4 mls out in the desert
from Serapeum

16th Left Railend for Habuta trenches about 5
miles out in the desert from Railend arri-
-ving there that afternoon after a heavy
march with full packs over soft sandhills

24th Doing out post duties at Habuta and
making sand bag positions

27th Fresh rumours of our removal to France

29th Left Habuta for railend

== June ==

4th Left Railend for train at Serapeum

- 5th Arrived at Alexandria Egypt =
- 6th Boarded the Troopship Arcadian about 2 a.m.
- 7th Left Alexandria about 9 a.m.
- 11th Arrived at Marseilles in afternoon
- 12th Left troopship for rest camp 2 mls from harbour
Also had evening in Marseilles
- 13th Left Marseilles for north by train at 10.30 a.m.
- 14th Continued our journey passing Orange at 4 P.M.
through different towns & beautiful orchard land
- 15th Continuing our journey passing the following
towns: Amiens, Abbeville, St Omer Boulonge
and arriving at Strazelle about 2 a.m. of 16th
and about 12 miles from the firing line,
- 19th Left Strazelle for Aestaires a route
march of about 10 miles.
- 22nd Still at Aestaires and going through
a course of stretcher bearing.
- 25th Went to within a mile and a half of
firing line passing Saily

— July —

- 12th Left vicinity of firing line for Aestaires
- 13th Left Aestaires arriving at Strazelle again

14th Left Strazelle for train route march of 10 mls
15th Left train about 2 a.m. and marched
about 10 mls to billets at Pernois arriving
there about 9 a.m.

16-17-18th 10 mile route marches daily.

19th Up before orderly room for missing parade and
was dismissed

29th Left Pernois for Rubempre with full pack
Rifle etc. a march of 15 miles

August

1st Left Rubempre for Contay wood march
of about 6 mls enroute for Albert.

5th Left Contay about 5 p.m. arriving on hill
near Albert about 9 p.m.

7th Left Albert for reserve trenches near La
Boiselle during the night enemy shells
killed 8 of our men and wounded three

12th Went to front line with aerial torpedoes

13th Battalion leaves for front line and for
the first time witness heavy shell fire

14th Left front line for second under heavy shelling

15th Left for Albert in open during night

- 16th Left Albert for Worloy in morning
— Left Worloy and arrived at Montrelet—
25th Left Montrelet for Rubempre
26th Left Rubempre for Albert via Contay
27th Arrived on ridge near Albert and endured
extra heavy rains with only oil sheets over us
30th Left Albert and arrived in same trenches
as the first time we went up

— September —

- 1st Went up to front line under heavy shell
fire
5th Left firing line for Albert stayed there 1 night
6th Left Albert for a village about 6 miles away
7th Left for another village march of about 10 mls.
8th Boarded train about 7 a. m. enroute for
Steenworde arriving there in the afternoon
19th Left Steenworde for Reninghelst in Belgium

— October —

- 7th joined a raiding party and left Rening-
helst for a wood about 1 mile away.
12th Went over in a raid & had 4 casualties
14th Rejoined stretcher bearers in the trenches

23rd Leaving trenches being relieved by Kings Royal Rifles
24th Find ourselves again at Reninghelst Camp
25th Leave Reninghelst for town on Franco Belgian Bdr.
26th Leave by train at 5 a. m. enroute for Oneux passing
Hazelbrouk, Boulouge and Amiens arriving at Oneux
about 4 P. M.

27th Leave Oneux about 10 a. m. and arrive at Yaucourt -
Busses about 4 P. M.

30th Raining very hard and inspected by General Cox here
— November —

2nd Left Yaucourt - Busses on route march of about 8 miles
Stayed the night in village near Flicourt

3rd Left on a route march of 10 miles arriving at
St Vaast Le Chasse in the Afternoon

6th Went into Amiens it being 11-9 kilometers from Le Chasse

7th Left St Vaast Le Chasse for Vignacourt 4 kilometers
away And took French motor lorries to Buire it-
being 2 1/2 kilometers from Amiens and 1/2 to Albert

9th Witnessed German aviator flying over our billet
with a plane resembling one of ours our anti air
craft guns settled him.

12th Left Buire enroute for Filers stayed 1 night halfway

Dear Mum. This is a diary
I have been keeping if you
put the pages together as they
run in months you will
have it all right. you needent
show it to any one but our
relations. hoping you and Alf
is both well and E m & Joe too.
Sorry to hear of the old home.
Will be writing a long letter
tomorrow with love from Dave

— September continued —
November

- 13th Continued our journey to Fiers arriving there 2 P.M.
16th Still at Fiers in support of German aeroplane falls
here from our anti air craft gun fire
17th Severe snows and frosts here (Fiers)
19th Left Fiers for front line
21st Left front line for supports about 1 a.m.
22nd Got trench feet and leave supports
23rd Arrive at Heley hospital
24th Leave Heley by train at 12 noon for Rouen
arriving there in hospital about 11 P.M.

— December —

- 19th Left France on hospital ship ~~Battle~~ Caris -
brook battle about 4 a.m. arriving at Victoria
Royal hospital about 2 p.m.
18th Left No 3 stationary hospital Rouen and
took train to Havre. (last two to be reversed)
27th Still at V.R. hospital had an argument

= 1917 January 1917 =

- Left 9th left Netley V.R. hospital about 10.30 a.m.
And arrived at the Australian C. Camp Dartford ^{2.15 p.m.}
15th Left A.C.C. Dartford 9 a.m. for train at Dartford
and left for London 10.30 a.m. reached London 12 noon

~~Dec~~ January (continued) —

- 16th Staying at Waterloo Road of N. C. A. London
- 21st Still at N. C. A. went round London with an English Chap —
- 22nd Went through the Tower of London and to theatre that night
- 23rd Went out to Silvertown where the explosion occurred
- 25th Went out on the purpose of having a look through the British Museum it being closed to visitors went through another and Westminster Abbey
- 28th Had dinner at my friends place
- 30th Left London for Perham Downs Camp arriving there same day

— February —

- 2nd Still at Perham Downs very cold here
- 12th Commenced drilling with rifle in No 2 Camp
- 27th On fatigue in sergeants mess Perham Downs

— March —

- 2nd Removed to No 5 Camp Perham Downs
- 16th Still in No 5 Camp drilling and practicing

— April —

- 3rd Warned for a draft to go to France

= April (continued) =

- 4th Left for France at 9 p. m. entrained at Tidworth
- 5th Arrived at Shore Cliff at 5 a. m. boarded boat 9 a. m.
Sailed 10 a. m. arrived at Boulonge 1 P. M.
and marched to a camp outside the town
- 6th Left camp at Boulonge at 5.30. P. M. and
entrained for Etaples 6.15. p. m. arriving there 10 p. m.
- 9th Went to bulring on bayonet fighting
practice and bomb raiding
- 11th Throwing live bombs at Bulring
- 12th Night operations at bulring
- 13th Rifle shooting near Camp
- 14th Rifle drill and extended order drill at BR
- 18th Went through gas at bulring
- 22nd Warned for draft to rejoin the Battalion
- 24th Left Etaples 7.30. a. m. and arrive in Albert ^{3.15}₂₆
~~12.30. & rejoined the Battalion~~
- 25th Left Albert about 10.30. a. m. arriving at Buire
12.30. and rejoined the Battalion there

= May =

- 2nd On leave in Amiens
- 3rd Shot in competition and won by 62 shots

— May (continued) —

- 6th Sent to Worloy to attend musketry school
12th Last day at school went on field practice
near Theipwal
13th Left Worloy for Buire to join battalion
15th Left Buire for North by rail at 3 p.m.
16th Passed Caestre & Strazelle and arrived near
Veuse Berquin in the afternoon
31st Left Veuse Berquin for Peuve Englise

— June —

- 1st Went to firing line on fatigue work
7th Recalled to stretcher bearers and left
Peuve Englise for the advance at ^{Messines}
and arrived at firing line 12 noon
8th Under heavy shell fire in firing line
9th Left firing line with shell concussion
and arrived at a.n.z.a.c. rest camp
19th Left rest camp for transports at Steenwerck
21st Left Steenwerck for Veuse Berquin and
rejoined the Battalion there
30th Leave Veuse Berquin for vicinity of
firing line & arrived in bowworks on ~~Small Hill~~
Near Peuve Englise

— July —

- 8th Boxed in tournament but didn't want it so
challenged the winner for 300 francs
13th Left bivouarks for firing line near Messines
19th Left firing line and arrived back in bivouarks
21st Left bivouarks and arrived in billets in the
vicinity of Bailuel and Steenje

— August —

- 8th Left billets on a route march of about 12 mls.
passing through Steenwerck and arrived
in tents on Kemel Hill wet thro with rain
13th Went to firing line with a fatigue party
16th Went again to line on fatigue
15th Left Kemel Hill for dugouts in the
vicinity of firing line (to be reversed)
18th Went again to firing line on fatigue
20th Left dugouts for tents Between Bailuel & ^{Neuve Englise}
22nd Left tents and arrived in tunnel in Plug Street
24th Went on fatigue to firing line
25 & 27th Went again to firing line on fatigue
31st Left tunnel for tents we had left before coming
here between Bailuel & Neuve Englise

= September =

- 1st Left tents about 8 a.m. and arrived in billets
3 killo's. from Caestre passing through Bailuel
- 4th Left billets by motor lorries for Coyecque arriving same day
- 7th Put in bird cage by St Jones and relieved by him gr of
an hour later
- 8th Battalion held sports here today
- 15th In rest billets at Coyecque
- 20th Left Coyecque by motor lorries for billets in Belgium
- 21st Left billets for dugouts on ypres canal at ypres
- 25th Left dug outs for a hop over and gained all objectives
- 26th Got wounded and went to Canadian Clearing Station
from there went to Rouen arriving in No. 11 Stationary H
- 27th Went under an operation and had metal removed

= October =

- 16th Still in hospital at Rouen Marked to go to Blighty
- 24th Left Rouen for England about 6 a.m. arriving at
Havre 10 a.m. Boarded the "Grantully Castle" 4 p.m.
- 25th Arrived in England in the afternoon after a
very rough voyage and arrived at Bristol by
rail during the night and was sent to Bishop's
Knoll Hospital.