

Arthur Newling diary, 7 April-24 September 1917

MLMSS 9498/Item 1

POCKET DIARY FOR 1917

NO 33801

A.W.B. NEWLING

MARCH RFTS NSW

FIELD ARTILLERY A.I.F.

(A.W.B.) THE PHARMACY

GLADESVILLE

SYDNEY AUST.

JAN 1917 HOME

1. 10.5.17
2. 16.5.17
3. FREMANTLE
4. FREMANTLE 21.5.17
5. 31.5.17
6. CAPETOWN
- 7.
8. 25.6.17 LONDON 19.2.17
9. 2.7.17 SIERRA LEONE
10. .7.17 LONDON 19.7.17
11. 24.7.17 LARK HILL
12. 7.8.17 “
13. 14.8.17 “

- 14. 29.8.17 “
- 15. 10.9.17 “
- 16. 25.9.17

ENGLAND 14	1	15	
	5	2	2
	1	2	2
	7	2	2
	2	4	7
	5	2	1
	3	5	6
	4	5	1
	2	1	
	44	22	102

FREMANTLE		15
DURBAN		30
“		2
CAPETOWN		4
SIERRA LEONE		2
LONDON (MR FREMAN)	4	
LARK HILL		102

159 25. SEP 17

K

1. 10.5.17
2. 15.5.17

3. 21.5.17 FREMANTLE
- 4.
- 5.

6. 1.6.17 DURBAN
7. 12.6.17

8. 20.6.17 CAPETOWN

9. 19.6.17

10. 27.6.17 LONDON 19.7.17
11. 2.7.17 SIERRA LEONE
12. 10.7.17 LONDON
13. 26.7.17 LARK HILL
14. 2.8.17 “
15. 7.8.17 “
16. 15.8.17 “
17. 28.8.17 “
18. 12.9.17 “
19. 19.9.17 “
20. 24.9.17 “

AUNTIE AL 15.5.17, 7.6.17, 31.7.17, 23.9.17

MRS NEWLING 26.5.17, 16.6.17

AUNTIE AGGIE 13.7.17 16.9.17

CHARLIE 21.5.17 13.8.17
 FRANK 26.5.17 16.9.17
 MR MERRIMAN 30.5.17 30.8.17
 TAYLOR 29.5.17
 DEANE 26.5.17
 JONES 26.5.17
 WATTS 29.5.17
 O.G.R 16.9.17
 MR LACK 15.5.17, 2.6.17, 6.7.17, 8.9.17, 22.9.17
 R. STONE 15.5.17, 7.6.17, 8.7.17, 9.9.17, 11.9.17

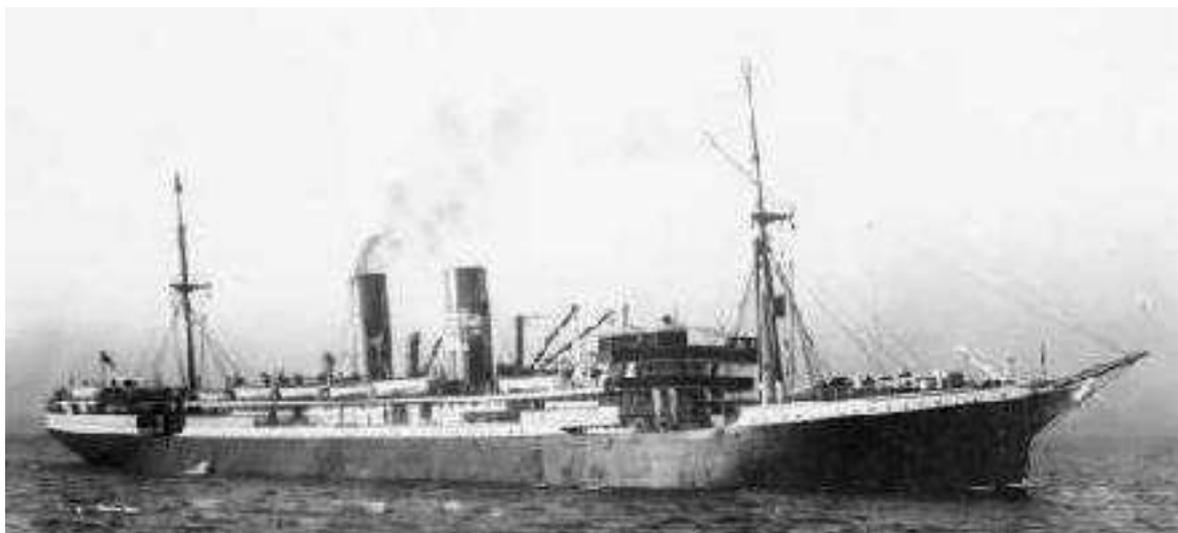
CECIL	15.5.17	3.8.17	16.9.17
REX	16.5.17	2.8.17	16.9.17
MRS BOYDEN	30.5.17		
MRS SHARKE	31.5.17		
MARJ	26.5.17	30.7.17	
MARIE	30.5.17	6.8.17	
AUDREY	26.5.17	17.9.17	
AILEEN	27.5.17		
MR L SCHOFIELD	26.5.17	6.8.17	
RON	26.5.17	16.9.17	
TOM	26.5.17	16.9.17	
JESSIE & MARV	26.5.17	16.9.17	
JOYCE	26.5.17	6.8.17	14.9.17
WINIFRED	30.5.17	16.9.17	
ISA	7.6.17		
MISS LODER	12.7.17		
ROSE D	13.7.17	16.9.17	
M	2.6.17	30.7.17	21.9.17
L	2.6.17	9.8.17	11.9.17
E	2.6.17	2.8.17	17.9.17
M	2.6.17	2.8.17	17.9.17
CUT	2.6.17	31.7.17	22.8.17
FATHER	6.8.17	23.9.17	
MOTHER	18.9.17		
MR ROBERTS			

MRS MANCHEE	16.9.17				
LANCE	16.9.17				
BILL	24.7.17	30.7.17			
LANCE	24.7.17	30.7.17	6.8.17	24.8.17	8.9.17
STEWART	24.7.17	9.8.17			
DAL	24.7.17	9.8.17	23.9.17		
MRS B NEWLING	30.7.17	9.8.17	13.8.17	20.8.17	
MISS SUTTIE	30.7.17				
CON B	6.8.17				
ENID	14.8.17				
STAN	8.9.17				
CEC FORD	6.8.17				
L STONE	11.8.17				
LENA	13.8.17	24.8.17	11.9.17	23.9.17	
UNCLE WILLIAM	22.8.17	30.8.17	12.9.17	15.9.17	
BANK	13.8.17	20.8.17			
JIM LOBER	30.8.17				
AUNT BEN	27.8.17	29.8.17	8.9.17	19.9.17	24.9.17
EDIE	12.9.17	23.9.17	24.9.17		
LOTTIE	23.9.17				

1917

LEFT SYDNEY	MAY 10	11.45AM
ARR FREMANTLE	MAY 21	11.45AM
LEFT FREMANTLE	MAY 22	4PM
ARR MAURITIUS	JUNE 5	10AM
LEFT MAURITIUS	JUNE 5 NON STOP	10AM
ARR DURBAN	JUNE 12	9AM
LEFT DURBAN	JUNE 15	12.15PM
ARR CAPETOWN	JUNE 19	7.45AM
LEFT CAPETOWN	JUNE 22	10AM
ARR SIERRA LEONE	JULY 4	10.30AM
LEFT SIERRA LEONE	JULY 7	8.25AM
ARR ENGLAND DEVONPORT	JULY 19	6AM
ARR LARK HILL LONDON	JULY 20	12 MIDNIGHT
LEFT	1.9.17	1PM
LEFT	6.9.17	9.20PM

HMAT A74 *Marathon*



HMAT A74 *Marathon*

[From: [Clydebuilt Ships Database](#)]The HMAT A74 *Marathon* weighed 7,827 tons with an average cruise speed of 16 knots or 29.63 kmph. It was owned by the G Thompson & Co Ltd, London, and leased by the Commonwealth until 28 July 1917.

10 MAY 1917 AUSTRALIA

Left Liverpool 3AM.

Embarked on SS *Marathon* at 6.30 and drew out into stream. Left harbour at 1pm. had a good view and was able to speak to family on wharf. The 'Encounter' and a destroyer are accompanying us.

11 MAY FRIDAY

Reveille 6am. Beautiful weather. Sea calm. Ship fired two shots with her stern gun. These are the first shots we have heard in the war of course. They were only practice shots. Comforts sent aboard where distributed – two parcels for me.

12 MAY SATURDAY

Weather raining in the morning but fired up with fresh sea. afternoon sea became rougher and night came on with heavy seas. Retired at 8.30. Ship is heaving and staggering nearly all are now asleep in quarters.

13 MAY SUNDAY

Meeting with rough seas approaching the Bight. Were joined by 4 more transports this morning – can see Mr Pearson's boat the one Leonard is on.

14 MAY MONDAY

Today is the roughest yet. Seas breaking right over the bows and sweeping the decks. Have been put on guard. The weather is bitterly cold it is said we are in the Bight – the convoy consists of 'Ulysses' 'Marathon' 'Port Sydney' 'Pakeha' 'Tofua' 'Therakina'.....'Shropshire' and 8 (?) others.

TUESDAY 15 MAY 1917

Morning broke clearer with seas calmer but during day rain set in with rising seas. We are not yet out of the Bight and expect to make Fremantle on Sunday. Had a yarn with Theo Meillion on deck at night.

WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 1917

Not quite so rough today but a heavy sea towards night. It is said that the ship rolled to an angle of 45 degrees and remained so for 3 seconds last night of course the rumour is ridiculous.

THURSDAY 17 MAY 1917

Today it is again very rough and it is said the glass is still falling. Have been watching the 'Tofua' pitching and rolling like a cork. Seas have been breaking over the deck and one man was hurled up against a winch by one and rendered unconscious.

FRIDAY 18 MAY 1917

We are now getting seas on the port bow and the ship is rolling rather much. It has not rained but the sky is still cloudy. We have apparently turned slightly N.W. and should make Fremantle by Sunday.

SATURDAY 19 MAY 1917

Still the same endless stretch of sea only broken by the other ships of the convoy. The weather is still dull with a rather calmer sea.

SUNDAY 18 MAY 1917

During last night a cruiser joined us on the port side. The weather is misty and the sea calm as a millpond. Attended C of E service in the morning and Y.M.C.A. in the afternoon.

21ST MAY 1917 MONDAY

Before daybreak we where able to see lighthouse. Sae calm. 11.45 am on guard on mess deck and we are just drawing along side wharf in Fremantle Harbour. Route march and leave in afternoon. Spent a few hours in Fremantle not impressed with town.

TUESDAY 22 MAY 1917

Ship drew away from wharf at 6AM and anchored in stream. The day has been glorious We drew away from stream and steamed westward at 4pm. The sunset was gorgeous and the sea calm. Before leaving the DC was taken off and new command put on. 13 of our men were left behind.

WEDNESDAY 23 MAY 1917

The dawn broke with beautiful and calm weather which continued throughout the day. It appears that all but 2 of the missing men were brought out in a tug at midnight – Eric Bull and Tom Sleeman have missed the boat. Attended a short service on deck.

THURSDAY 24 MAY 1917

The weather is still calm and beautiful. This afternoon all the stragglers which had been brought out and put on the 'Marathon' were transferred to their respective ships in mid ocean.

FRIDAY 25 MAY 1917

The weather continues fine and the sea calm. The water is a beautiful blue and gorgeous sunrise and sunsets have been general since leaving Fremantle.

SATURDAY 26 MAY 1917

Still the weather is fine and calm. There is no sign of life about. The birds have all forsaken us. A sports meeting was held on deck this afternoon. Have rotten throat and cold.

27 WHITSUNDAY MAY 1917

Attended service on port side of Promenade deck. Conducted by Major Foreman (Meth) and Communion afterwards held in Saloon. Weather is still beautiful. Wrote several letters both yesterday and today. 11 in all.

28 WHITSUN MONDAY

Nothing particular occurred today - the sea is still kind and the weather fair. The night was beautiful moonlight and I stayed on deck soliloquising and brought a hammock up and slept on the fore hatch.

29 WHITSUN TUESDAY

Arose at 5.10 and after bathing went on deck as usual. At 8 o'clock we all paraded and forming 4 deep facing outwards. This was because of a burial of a man on the 'Tukarina'. Which boat went about 2 miles ahead of the convoy for the ceremony. The flags were flown half mast.

30 WEDNESDAY MAY 1917

Have been 8 days out from Fremantle and the weather is still fine. Full dress parade was held this morning and this afternoon was devoted to washing clothes and writing letters of which I have written a great number since leaving Freemantle.

THURSDAY 31st MAY 1917

Continued fine weather with a fairly heavy swell. Rose about 5 and bathed as usual. Wrote home in the afternoon. The evening for the past few nights have been beautifully moonlight. It is rumoured that we reach Mauritius on Tuesday.

FRIDAY 1ST JUNE 1917

Weather still glorious. We are supposed to be just within the tropics so our course has been W.N.W. Wrote to K in afternoon, retired 8.45.

SATURDAY 2ND JUNE 1917

On guard today. The weather is OK. Boxing tourney held in afternoon. Wrote to all the girls and Mr Lack. The moon was brilliant at night. Slept on deck.

3 TRINITY SUNDAY JUNE

On coming off guard had shower and was in time to attend Communion service at 11. Saw several flying fish do good heights. Evening again moonlight.

MONDAY 4 JUNE 1917

Parade took place on Saloon deck and will for future which is improvement. Have been allotted to lifeboat No 7. During parade where shown knots and splicing. Concert was held on port Saloon deck aft after tea. Evening moonlight.

TUESDAY 5 JUNE 1917

About 10.30 land was sighted which proved to be Mauritius. It is an interesting place from appearances. Is covered with high and clear cut peaks. H.M.S. Diris left us here and 2 Japanese cruisers took over the convoy.

WEDNESDAY 6 JUNE 1917

The weather today is very nice and clear with a very calm sea. Another island was sighted about 6 o'clock which however I missed stated to be Reunion Island. The convoy is in the same formation with the 2 Japanese cruisers in the lead. Have seen plenty of flying fish today.

THURSDAY 7 JUNE 1917

The day passed off uneventfully with the weather perfect. A cool breeze blowing over a blue calm sea tempered the sun's heat. We are travelling south west and have been ordered to hand in the mail before tomorrow night. Should make Durban about Wednesday.

FRIDAY 8 JUNE 1917

Today we ran into a rather severe wind storm which continued throughout the night. Had a lecture in the afternoon. About teatime we had a very heavy rain storm. Mail closed today and I posted 25 letters and 6 postcards.

SATURDAY 9 JUNE 1917

The sea worked up during the day and at night the ship was rolling heavily but the sun shone warmly. Sports help in the afternoon. Yarned with 'Scully' on deck after tea.

SUNDAY 10 JUNE 1917

On guard today but was relieved to be able to attend Communion at 11 o'clock. My position was in wheelhouse. The sea worked up at when on duty 10pm-2am a following sea was hurrying us along whilst now and then it broke over the port aft.

MONDAY 11 JUNE 1917

Weather still good. About 4pm the convoy divided one cruiser and 6 boats including the Marathon went ahead whilst the remainder dropped behind. Had a rainstorm about dusk.

TUESDAY 12 JUNE 1917

On getting up this morning land was visible towards which we were making. At breakfast time it was quite visible with farmlands dotting the hillsides. Convoy proceeded into harbour of Durban. We went alongside. Route march in the morning, leave in the afternoon. Had lovely time.

WEDNESDAY 13 JUNE 1917

The vessel coaling yesterday and all today. Route march in the morning, leave in the afternoon. Saw Mr Pearson today and Len last night. Had dinner tonight at Royal Hotel also last night. Went into the surf baths. Weather beautiful. Had rickshaw trips and did some shopping. Returned 9.30.

THURSDAY 14 JUNE 1917

This morning we had another route march and was granted leave till 4.30 as the ship was to sail at 5. Went to the Zoo, Art Gallery and Museum- tried to get message through to Bill Kerkaldie on 'Awchese' which is in port but failed- Vessel drew out into stream. The Suffock collided with the Ulysses and smashed a hole through the Ulysses hull.

FRIDAY 15 JUNE 1917

At 12 o'clock weighed anchor and left port with one cruiser ASCANNIUS, TOFUA, TUKARINA. Very sorry to leave Durban having had a bosker time.

SATURDAY 16 JUNE 1917

Travelling south along the coast which is quite clear, today being perfect. Forgot to mention there where thousands of Tommies in Durban. We were told that including us (13,000) there were 35,000 troops in the town.

SUNDAY 17 JUNE 1917

The weather very rough today with green seas sweeping long and sheets of spray enveloping the vessel. It was rather cold also.

MONDAY 18 JUNE 1917

Sea still rough but moderated towards evening. About 7.30 pm we passed a hospital ship all lit up. Think it was the OXFORDSHIRE. Are just about rounding the Cape of (Good Hope)? and should reach Cape Town tomorrow. Half an hour later we passed another hospital ship.

TUESDAY 19 JUNE 1917

At day break land was in sight and we proceeded into port coming alongside wharf at 12 noon. Thus arrived at Cape Town but got ashore at 7pm to 10pm the rest of the troop were granted leave at 2pm. Being dark when I was on shore could not see much of town. Table Mountains very clear with cloth on it.

WEDNESDAY 20 JUNE 1917

Should have sailed this morning but when ropes and gangway were cast off and tugs alongside sailing was cancelled. Granted leave from 2pm to 10pm. Visited Art Gallery, Museum, Gardens and took train to sea point and returned by train to town arriving about 5.45. Had a good look about the town, which is bigger than Durban with more whites.

THURSDAY 21 JUNE 1917

At 7am moved to a wharf at right angles to that occupied by us the last two days. Washing parade until 12 noon. Leave granted in afternoon. Football match between F. A & Infantry former won 47 to 3. Saw match for 20 minutes & went into town. Sent cable home. Went to Parliament House & heard debate where we saw Botha Mr Merriman & others. Returned to ship at 10 o'clock.

FRIDAY 22ND JUNE 1917

Day broke dull and cold. At 7.30 am pulled out from wharf and anchored outside. At 10.15 we left accompanied by auxiliary cruiser 'ORAMA' and 5 others of the transports viz 'ASCANIUS', 'SHROPSHIRE', 'RENALLA', 'TOFUA' and 'TURAKINA'. Sea calm but cold continued throughout the day. Passed a whaling vessel at 5.30pm.

SATURDAY 23RD JUNE 1917

Today have been travelling in a northerly direction and the ship has been rolling more so than on any previous day of our trip. The sea has a big swell which is striking us broadside. The air

is warmer than yesterday but still chilly. A number of applicants for the Royal Flying Corps and convalescing Tommies joined us at Cape Town.

SUNDAY 24 JUNE 1917

Again on guard occasioned by my speaking on Parade on Monday last and for which I was awarded 3 guards. Such penalties for petty offences are more petty spiteful than those given at school. One would think that men are pupils in an infants school. Day was beautifully calm.

MONDAY 25 JUNE 1917

My post on guard was Cells. The prisoners last night gave us some trouble and threw water over the Military Police on guard on 3 occasions – I had to parade a man of our guard to the C.O. for being asleep on guard. Fixed some photos. Day again beautifully fine.

TUESDAY 26 JUNE 1917

Weather dull but sun came out in afternoon when the orchestra gave a concert. Completed a letter home. Have heard rumours of the proceedings when we “cross the line”.

WEDNESDAY 27 JUNE 1917

At daybreak a steamer was sighted on the horizon. The ‘ORAMA’ with all guns out went after her. It appears it was a Norweigan vessel of 5,000 tons and she put on full steam put up 17 knots thinking the ‘ORAMA’ was a German. She was overhauled by the later and her papers examined then instructed to alter her course. Weather beautiful and night moonlight.

THURSDAY 28 JUNE 1917

Again the day was fine and as we are well in the tropics it was fairly warm. The sea was calm as the harbour practically and scarcely any motion was noticeable in the vessel. The night was beautifully moonlight. It is rumoured that another rebellion in Ireland has broken out.

FRIDAY 29 JUNE 1917

Today has been really hot and we are close to the line. Plenty of flying fish are to be seen. This morning we dropped out of the line and indulged in some gun and rifle practice. The gun fired about 8 shots. The war rumour today is that the Russians have launched 3 offensives and that the ‘MONGOLIA’ has been torpedoed.

SATURDAY 30 JUNE 1917

Usual Saturday morning alarm did not take place. Sports held in afternoon and after an exciting pull with the engineers the F A won the final tug of war. Alarm was sounded at 5.30 whilst the evening service was being held on deck. Should cross the line tonight sometime.

SUNDAY 1ST JULY 1917

Day very hot. Stated to have crossed the line at about 3A.M. so that we are now in the Northern Hemisphere. A general alarm took place at 11.30 the siren being sounded for this purpose for the first time.

MONDAY 2ND JULY 1917

A burial on the 'ASCANUCO' took place. On guard today. In afternoon at 3.30 the "Neptune" ceremonies were held in honour of crossing the line and were a splendid success. Just as they concluded at 4.30 all men were ordered on deck with their boots on, a fire having been discovered in the coal bunkers. Relays were sent down and the fire got under control at about 11pm. One of our men fell down the stokehold and severely cut his face and head.

TUESDAY 3RD JULY 1917

Today has been refreshingly cool. We expect to reach Sierra Leone tomorrow morning. We saw a fine shoal of porpoises this morning. The mail closed on board yesterday. Sent letters to K and home.

WEDNESDAY 4 JULY 1917

This morning we arrived at Freetown the capital of Sierra Leone. W. coast of Africa. It is a small place and unhealthy. All the fleet anchored in the stream. It is very warm and muggy. Natives have been out in their canoes diving for coins. A pair funnel cruiser is here. The entrance has a huge net across it to keep out submarines.

THURSDAY 5 JULY 1917

Today the officers went ashore but we have no prospect of going. The weather is sultry but not very hot. Niggers have been coaling but they are very lazy. Had war news of Russian success. Several fellows have been taken ill with a sort of fever.

FRIDAY 6 JULY 1917

This morning a heavy rainstorm burst over the place and the niggers again did some coaling. More chaps ill with this fever. It is rumoured we leave here tomorrow. A peculiar sickness has broken out. About 10 F.A. fellows being bad.

SATURDAY 7 JULY 1917

At 8am we drew out from Sierra Leone and now starts the final run to England. Orders came out to the effect that from now on our lifebelts must now be carried continually. A boxing contest took place in the afternoon. Did some washing etc.

SUNDAY 7 JULY 1917

We now occupy the tail of the right line instead of as hereto for the head of the left line. We are making good speed stated to be about 13 knots. Weather fine & cool. Did some photo

printing in afternoon and wrote to Reg Stone. Sickness is still bad about 30 of our chaps in or just out of hospital.

MONDAY 9 JULY 1917

Last night the cruiser fired 3 shots across the bows of a steamer near us and compelled her to alter course. Today the weather has been beautiful towards evening freshened up with sea rising.

TUESDAY 10 JULY 1917

The sea is rather rougher today and a stiff headwind is blowing which is rather chilly. Commenced another letter to Kath. It is said we get home next Tuesday or Wednesday.

WEDNESDAY 11 JULY 1917

Today was on guard. Some of the men are assisting in the stokehold shovelling coal. The weather is cool fine. Tonight the cruiser (MANTUA?aux) dropped to the rear of the fleet.

THURSDAY 12 JULY 1917

The day dull and cool. Came off guard. Kit bags brought up from the hold in order to get anything necessary out of them and pack them prior to disembark. The 'MANTUA' again at dusk dropped to the rear. Light up to 8.45pm.

FRIDAY 13 JULY 1917

The weather is fine and cool. Today the convoy has commenced evolutions as precautions against submarine. Each ship is going a zig zag course turning sharply every few minutes. It is very interesting to watch. A vessel appeared away on the horizon but soon disappeared.

SATURDAY 14 JULY 1917

Weather fine and sea calm. Nothing doing in morning. In afternoon sports were held and were successful. Followed fancy dress ball on deck. Rumoured that a man fell overboard on the 'BENALLA'.

SUNDAY 15 JULY 1917

On guard today. Attended farewell Communion Service at 11 o'clock at which about 60 were present. Weather fine and sea calm. Service held in Well deck 7pm.

MONDAY 16 JULY 1917

Morning damp & misty but fine during the day. Rumour that we will be joined by destroyers shortly are rampant. At night farewell concert held on deck. Had a super before going to bed.

TUESDAY 17 JULY 1917

At 2.20 were joined by destroyers (6) which came up out of the mist. No 86 came quite close whilst (58) is slightly in advance. Later 2 destroyers left us and went off with the cruiser. The weather is misty.

WEDNESDAY 18 JULY 1917

Today has been foggy and wet. The destroyers are fine, flying her there everywhere. Some wreckage floated by including a wheelhouse. The sea has been rather rough. We should get in tomorrow early. On guard in charge of a guard watching the rations to be taken ashore tomorrow.

THURSDAY 19 JULY 1917

Passed Eddystone Lighthouse am. Arrived in Devonport 6am. Remained on ship all day and night after proceeding to wharf. Saw Plymouth Hoe Harbour full of shipping and war vessels destroyers etc.

FRIDAY 20 JULY 1917

Entrained about 2pm. Journey took us through Devon & Somerset. Country looked gloriously green. Went through Exeter. Arrived at Amesbury at 10.15 pm and marched 5 miles to Lark Hill. Arrived about 12. Bed 1.30 after having bully beef & biscuits & tea. Slept in tents in 'isolation'.

SATURDAY 21 JULY 1917

Saw Eddie Corbett. Reveille 7am. Parade 10am. Nothing much done in morning. In afternoon went over to the village of Amesbury and saw old church building about 14th century. Looked through it, had tea and went to concert in Buffet. Walked back about 8.15. Enjoyed it all immensely. Saw Stonehenge.

SUNDAY 22 JULY 1917

Was tent orderly. All stayed in during the morning. In afternoon went over to Durrington. Had tea at Y.M.C.A. there and went to church in evening. Church built 11th century. Pulpit placed there during reign of Queen Elizabeth. Enjoyed it muchly.

MONDAY 23 JULY 1917

Reveille 5.30. In morning moved guns. In afternoon dentally examined. Wrote letters in evening. Airman was looping the loop during evening. Wrote up diary before going to bed. Cabled home.

TUESDAY 24 JULY 1917

Did not do much work. Lecture and physical drill in morning. Nothing doing in afternoon.

WEDNESDAY 24 JULY 1917

Again not much doing. In afternoon sports meeting was held and much enjoyed it. Went in for bowling at wicket and nearly won it.

THURSDAY 25 JULY 1917

After an easy morning in afternoon we were again inoculated and then dismissed to our tents. Mail came in and I got 10 letters. Mother 1, Mabel 2, Eth 1, Kath 1, Mirrie 1, Charlie 1, Cec 1, Marie 1, Joyce 1. Was very glad to get them.

FRIDAY 27 JULY 1917

Inoculation giving rather painful results - arm sore and bad headache. More letters from Father 1, Marj 1, PC from Cec Ford.

SATURDAY 28 JULY 1917

Little fatigue work in morning. In afternoon to Fighledean where we saw 'The Spreading Chestnut Tree' and Blacksmith shop. Went on to Durrington and had tea there at Y.M.C.A. tent and stayed to an open air concert there. Arrived back at camp at 9.30. Many airplanes flying around today.

SUNDAY 29 JULY 1917

Yesterday met Arthur Long fresh from Egypt where he had met Cuttie. This morning we had church parade and as it rained in afternoon we did not go out. Wrote letters in YM hut and went to bed early.

MONDAY 30 JULY 1917

Raining on and off during day which made everything miserable. In the evening we went to the YM hut again and wrote to Lance and Bill. Had a letter today from lance and he is in England and says he will come out some day next week and see me. Says Bill is in the "Nestor" A71.

TUESDAY 31 JULY 1917

Still raining dismally. Did little rifle drill in morning. Formed part of a firing party at the funeral of Sgt Morrison of the A.F.C. who was killed Sunday. Buried at Fighledean. Had a look in Barracks of the Flying Corps. Tea was provided for us there on our return from funeral. Were taken over in motor lorries.

WEDNESDAY 1 AUGUST 1917

The weather is most miserable and cold. Little gun drill in morning and physical exercises etc. In afternoon signed up our pay books. It looks as though our tent is leaking and we are in for an uncomfortable night. Tonight messed in marquees.

THURSDAY 2 AUGUST 1917

In spite of wet slept very well with waterproof sheet both under and over me. A number of the chaps slept in the stables. Still raining but cleared slightly during the day. Was again inoculated and results are rather uncomfortable. At night wrote several letters home to the girls.

FRIDAY 3 AUGUST 1917

Weather is still bad with muddy parade ground. Feeling rather sore in arm after inoculation but not as bad as after last weeks injections. Nothing much doing – Had a nice letter from Aunt Ben to which I replied – Wet feet yesterday and today.

SATURDAY 4 AUGUST 1917

Rather wet in morning during which we had a Kit Inspection. In afternoon Jim Sully and I went to the village of “Shrewton” a nice little place about 4 miles away. Had rather nice tea, bought a loaf of bread cost 11s. Returned to camp about 9pm.

SUNDAY 5 AUGUST 1917

Weather fined up considerably. In morning usual church parade. In afternoon Jim and I went to Lake a small village, Woodford, Middle Woodford where we had tea – Great Durnston where we stayed to service in a church over 900 years old. The walk was beautiful. Returned 9pm.

MONDAY 6 AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY 1917

The weather is fine and warm, did some gun drill in morning & physical exercises in afternoon. In evening wrote letters & wrote up diary.

TUESDAY 7 AUGUST 1917

Weather rather bad again. In evening wrote letters and received telegram from Lance saying he would arrive at 2pm tomorrow. I am looking forward so much to seeing him. Received a letter from dear old Stewart.

WEDNESDAY 8 AUGUST 1917

Raining steadily all day. At 2.30 Lance arrived. I got off for afternoon. E had a great time together Learnt for the first time he had been wounded under left eye. Had tea together then motored over to his camp at Perham Downs 14 miles away. Hope to arrange to meet during weekend.

THURSDAY 9 AUGUST 1917

Commenced mess orderly duties for week as it is now my turn. Weather is much clearer and sunnier. Aired clothes and did a little washing. In evening wrote to Lenna & Stewart.

FRIDAY 10 AUGUST 1917

Nothing doing – still on mess orderly which seem to be a soft proposition – continued showering throughout the day & evening.

SATURDAY 11 AUGUST 1917

Weather much finer than has been for some days. Received a letter from Lance saying he had been sent to Weymouth in the expectation of being sent home to Australia. In afternoon as meeting old Lance was out of the question I went over to Durrington & had a pleasant time.

SUNDAY 12 AUGUST 1917

Weather still pleasant after dinner went to Fighledean and then returned to Durrington where we had tea after which we attended service which was held in the meadow. Had another note from Lance.

MONDAY 13 AUGUST 1917

Owing to no gunners being allowed to do duties and I had to relinquish mess orderly and go out on gun drill etc. Wrote to Lena, Boyden as well as other letters in evening. Weather very showery.

TUESDAY 14 AUGUST 1917

The weather again very showery. In afternoon we were drafted into our batteries I being put into No 2. Met 'Sproggie' Cameron in camp this morning and had a yarn to him.

WEDNESDAY 15 AUGUST 1917

Commenced duty in new battery and was put into A group gunners for instruction. This it is rumoured may interfere with our leave as after completion of course which is supposed to be uninterrupted we should be ready for draft. Hoping otherwise however.

THURSDAY 16 AUGUST 1917

In morning was put into 'B' class Gun Squad but in afternoon managed to get back into 'A' squad. Went to Durrington in evening after tea had a pleasant time arrived back about 9.

FRIDAY 17 AUGUST 1917

Gun drill physical drill etc during day. Mail from Australia given out. Had letters from K, Lenna & Ethel, Mabel, Joyce Lance Mr Merriman and the bank. The latter say no money has arrived which is very unfortunate.

SATURDAY 18 AUGUST 1917

Gun drill all morning. In afternoon Jim Scully and I went to Amesbury, The Lake Great Dunsford & Woodford and had a most pleasant afternoon. Took several photos and returned to camp about 9.30. Had a letter from father & Aunt Ben.

SUNDAY 19 AUGUST 1917

In morning firstly 'stables'. After breakfast went to church parade. In afternoon went to Durrington with Littlemore and then on to Amesbury where I met Jim & we went to church together which we enjoyed. Arrived back at 9pm.

MONDAY 20 AUGUST 1917

In morning we were inspected by the Duke of Connaught who is very like the late King Edward but has no beard was quite close to me and he spoke to several of the boys in a most friendly manner. In afternoon again put back into 'B' Group of Gunners. God must have some reason for the change.

TUESDAY 21 AUGUST 1917

This morning took on job of "limber" gunner for one week, Weather very unsettled. Jim Loder went on leave with other today. Went to concert tonight.

WEDNESDAY 22 AUGUST 1917

Weather still showery & unsettled. Nothing much doing. In evening went to a concert at Y.M.C.A. Hall but it being very poor left early.

THURSDAY 23 AUGUST 1917

Again the same routine – nothing to record much. Weather bad as usual. In evening Sully and I went over to Durrington put in an hour there driving home at 9pm. Put in for a 'road pass' to Salisbury for Saturday.

FRIDAY 24 AUGUST 1917

Raining. Aust mail in today. So far received letters 2 from Mabel, Mirrie, Ethel Marj & Audrey, Mr Robinson, Father but none from K. In evening wrote some letters.

SATURDAY 25 AUGUST 1917

Fine weather today. In afternoon have procured 'ROAD PASS'. Sully and I went into the town of Salisbury and had a very enjoyable time. The great cathedral is magnificent & stupendous. In evening went to an entertainment. Left at 9pm. Arrived in camp 10.40pm.

SUNDAY 26 AUGUST 1917

In morning weather was very pleasant but remainder of day was very wet. In afternoon Littlemore & I went to Durrington had tea there & went to church. Walked leisurely home arriving 9pm.

MONDAY 27 AUGUST 1917

Today has been very wet indeed and so things are a bit miserable. In evening Sully & I wrote letters in Y.M.C.A.. Received 2 papers from Kath.

TUESDAY 28 AUGUST 1917

Weather very cold 54o & rain, wind & mud. Usual training during day & wrote home in evening. Nothing of particular note occurs.

WEDNESDAY 29 AUGUST 1917

Weather atrocious rain wind & mud. Court Marshals (3) read out during parade this morning. Cleared up towards evening when I wrote home & to Aunt Ben telling her that the leave I was expecting was off.

THURSDAY 30 AUGUST 1917

Today has been weather similar to previous day. Wet & cold. Usual drill. Received letter from Aunt Ben. In evening wrote letter as usual.

FRIDAY 31 AUGUST 1917

Today unexpectedly granted leave so telegraphed Aunt Ben telling her. Expect to leave lark Hall in the morning about 8am. Paid etc during day. Cleaned leatherwork etc during evening.

SATURDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 1917

Reveille 5.30. Breakfast 6.15 left camp 7.30 for Amesbury. Train left 9.50 arrived Waterloo 1pm. Marched to HQ'S A.I.F. Horseferry Rd dismissed – caught train for Buckhurst Hill 3.35 & arrived at Roebuck Hotel 4.15 – met Aunt Ben's cousins Lottie & Edie. Went for a walk with latter. Tea 8.30 Retired 10.15pm. Wet in morning fine in afternoon.

SUNDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 1917

Rose 8am. Beautiful day. In morning with Cousin Lottie took a bus into London through Woodford etc, east End Whitechapel etc. Saw monument. Went on London Bridge, saw Tower Bridge, Mansion House, The Bank Exchange etc. Returned 1pm. Afternoon went to Sidney's house to tea. Came back went with Edie & Lottie. Retired 10pm.

MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 1917

Left Buckhurst Hill 10am. Arrived London 11. Went to Bank NSW fixed up money. Went to Saunders & Shepherd, saw Mr Holland, had lunch with him. Went to St Paul's Cathedral, Y.M.C.A. saw Roy Clack. Went to Clements & Newling had a look over works. Arrived back Roebuck Hotel 6.15 – Went 20 mile motor trip. AIR RAID 11.30 to 1am this night.

TUESDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 1917

Went to dentist 9.30 – 10.30 thence into town. Went over Tower of London & up Monument. Then to Y.M. headquarters. Had lunch, had a long walk round West End. Called Stewart Dawson's Regent St. Left town 5.30 for Woodleigh. Also went to Art Gallery & called at Clements & Newling.

WEDNESDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 1917

Went into town. Saunder's & Shepherd, saw Mr S & Stewart Dawson. Met Lottie went taxi ride round Hyde Park saw Buckingham Palace, Marlborough House & West End then to His Majesty's Theatre to Chu Chin Chow Oscar Ashe etc very pretty. Raid last night. Killed 11, wounded 62. Big Thunderstorm.

THURSDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 1917

Weather fine. Rose at 8.15. After breakfast played piano player. At 11.30 went for drive with Edie called on Mrs Linder near the 'Roebuck' and met Phyllis her daughter. Returned home to lunch and Bertha (Mrs Riley) was there. In evening Sydney called. Very regretfully took my leave at 6.30. Have had a glorious time and they have been so very kind to me. Arrived camp 1.30am.

FRIDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 1917

Today did a little drill am on guard tonight. A draft goes on Tuesday and I think 'Sully' is in it. Weather is beautiful. On guard at 5pm.

SATURDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 1917

On guard still wrote to Lance 8am & Mr Lack & Cut. Relieved about 6.45 & then went to Durrington with Sully who is to leave for France with draft next week. Returned about 9.15.

SUNDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 1917

In morning attended church parade & Communion afterwards. After dinner went to Durrington with Littlemore and wrote to R Stone, commenced letter home. After tea went to service 6pm which was well attended. Returned 9.

MONDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 1917

Weather fine today. Drill all day. In evening wrote letters. Tonight received a parcel from Reg Stone which proved to be a tin of Arnott's Biscuits and which are very acceptable.

TUESDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 1917.

Draft in which was Sully left today. Weather fine. In evening wrote letters.

WEDNESDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 1917

Weather beautifully fine. Nothing doing but rumours of being on draft next week seem persistent. Wrote letters in evening. Commenced one to K.

THURSDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 1917

Nothing to record much. Received a paper from Ethel & 'Sydney Mail' from K. In evening did a little extra "gunlaying" & then wrote & finished one to K. Weather fine.

FRIDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 1917

Weather still fine. Plenty of gun drill today. Another 'Mail' arrived from R but no Aust letters. Had a letter from Aunt Ben.

SATURDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 1917

Gun drill. Fine day. At dinnertime was warned for draft which was rather sudden. In afternoon went into Amesbury returning about 9pm.

SUNDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 1917

Stables before breakfast and church followed by medical examination afterwards. Then wrote letters. At 4.30 – 5 reported to stables and then went to Durrington to church. Arrived back at 8.45pm.

MONDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 1917

Drill as usual all day. Aust mail delivered. Received 8 letters which were very welcome. In evening had a yarn with Jimmy Loder and wrote some letters.

TUESDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 1917

Weather very miserable. More Aust mail from home K 1, Aunt Al & Aggie etc also had a letter & a number of cards from Edie. In evening wrote to Mother who I learn in letters has been very ill. Tonight it is cold windy & wet.

WEDNESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 1917

Raining very heavily today. All morning was lectured to by Major Jackson on Barrage Fire. In afternoon it was still raining so we again had lectures. In evening wrote as usual.

THURSDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 1917

In morning went on to usual drill. In afternoon went through our gunnery tests but I am afraid it was not too well done as a whole. Our detachment however only had one error. In evening went to bed at 8.30. Did no writing which was exceptional.

FRIDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 1917

In morning went through a series of barrage fire. At 2 o'clock were officially warned that we were on draft. Went through a dental inspection. Sent a cable to mother 25th Sept. Wrote in evening.

SATURDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 1917

In morning handed in our surplus clothing to QM store. Went through Battery gun drill in gas helmets whilst smoke was sent across the battery. In afternoon did extra gun drill- laying etc. In evening went into Durrington with Jimmie.

SUNDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 1917

In morning church & medical inspection. In afternoon did writing and then went to Durrington with Jimmie Littlemore, Theo Meillon. Had tea there & then went to church. Returned about 8.30.

MONDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 1917

In morning went through the 'gas' room. In afternoon after lecture went through a gunlaying test and passed. There seems to be some doubt as to whether we go tomorrow. In evening wrote letters to K & home.

END OF THE DAY TO DAY TELLING OF THIS DIARY

THE REST OF THIS BOOK HAS THE FOLLOWING

DECEMBER 13 THURSDAY

Kay's birthday this day which I ascertained whilst enjoying the week end at Newport 14/4/17

MAY	CASH MEMORANDA	1917
10	To cash on hand	4.13s4d
	Pay	2.5s1d
29		10s
15	By Mess	6s
16	“ “	6s
17	“ Lemonade	7s
20	By Mess	2s
20	“ Chocolate	1s
21	“ Tea 1/3 Nuts1/	2s3d
	“ Ink 1/3 Novel 1/6	2s9d
	Medicine	1s
22	Fruit	9d
	Washing 2/- Mess2/6	4s6d
	Photo Dev	2/-