

KEARSE 1916
Herbert May 30 - Nov 18

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May 30th

passed through Stafford
Bletchley, and London, arrived
Shorncliffe at 4. pm England
looks most beautiful
went into Risboro Barracks
at 6 pm. excellent quarters
saw an aeroplane and
a dirigible overhead.
it is an ideal place
for a camp the weather
is fine + warm. we are
close to Folkestone and
the sea.

May 31st

Our Battalion is quarantined
on account of measles
in the camp.

~~June 1st~~
received news of great
naval battle of the
coast of Gutland band
turned out and played
national airs

June 6th

received the sad news
that the H. M. S. Hampshire
has been sunk with
Lord Kitchener and his
staff on board.

June 11th

Church service at 9.30 am
in memory of the late
Lord Kitchener Englands
greatest soldier who lost
his life when the H. M. S.
Hampshire went down.

after striking a mine
off the Orkney Islands on
June the 5th 1916 only 12
survivors who were saved
by a clinging to a raft.
the band played the dead
march and the bugles
sounded last post.
drums were draped in
black very impressive service

June 18

quarantine is lifted
except from huts where
there are measles.
went down to Folkestone
first time very nice place
beautiful promenade called
the Leas. beach not very
good too many pebbles.

June 19th

Medical inspection in the
morning I am taken to
Moore Barracks Hospital
Ward 23 with measles
do not think it is measles
am not very sick
quite a number of men
with the same thing
from other battalions,
one with concussion of
the brain and shell shock
just back from the front

July 1st

Dominion day celebrated
by Canadian troops all
kinds of sports got out of
quarantine to see the fun
good news from the front
great offensive started,
Captured first line trenches.

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for 16 miles & still going
July 4th
fine & warm sea is calm
and beautiful can see
fishing smacks and trawlers
and destroyers and one
submarine & a seaplane
which travelled very fast
skimming over the water
nothing could look more
peaceful saw a military
funeral of a man who
blew his brains out
86th band played the
dead march and firing
party fired 3 volleys
very impressive scene
~~we~~ We saw a mine
exploded the earth

all round trembled
and shook like a quake
weather is beautiful

July 5th
came out of hospital
went on 6 days pass
arrived in London 10.30 pm
stayed at Y.M.C.A. in
Horseferry. ~~rode~~ Rode all night
saw the searchlights
playing over the city
very fine sight

July 6th
went from Trafalgar
square by tube to
Paddington left there at
9⁵² am arrived Oxford 11¹⁵
Eynsham 12 noon they were
all pleased to see me.

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July 7th

Went round Lynham and saw a few friends. hired a bike + rode round old twelve acre. place looks very natural. rode to Witney at night and met Harold, he hired a bike. then we went on to Minster through Burbridge where we saw a number of old friends some of them did not know us. arrived at Minster at 10 pm. where we got a splendid welcome

July 8th

Left Minster at 9 pm on the bike for Bivenceter arrived there 11⁴⁵ am. had a good time went to picture show with George

stayed there all night too tired to go back.

July 9th

Left Biven at 10 am for Minster Cousin Ethel came back with me nearly to Kencot arrived at Minster 12 noon. in the afternoon went to Widford and saw Allsworths at Swinbrook, camp meeting then on to Fordwells. where I saw Grampy. + Alice. then back to Stalleigh. and Worcham. Minster. Burbridge and Ducklington. from there through Witney to Lynham arrived there at 11 pm. They were gone to bed.

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July 28
saw a few more friends
at Lymington left there at
5 p.m. in motor car for
Gatford. Left Gatford at 5:55 p.m.
with mother in four for
Widbridge. Had to change at
Reading. Got there and saw
our train go out but to
wait an hour for another,
while waiting a man gave
me a parking for good luck
arrived Widbridge at 10 p.m.
where Brook + Frank met us.

July 26
Heard the Royal Belgian
band on the sea at
Widbridge. Large crowd to
hear them. also saw
a large number of
identification tags go on
board three liners and
leave France.

July 25
there at 8 p.m. and found
out of boy had moved out
into married quarters had
some time sorting out my
kit. our house was no 8

July 11th
left Widbridge at 4 p.m. for
Paddington and from there to
Exbury Green by tube
left Exbury Green station
5:10 for Bromley arrived

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at very good machine
 the name of it was the
 Pungat 'Invention' - I was
 also picked out to parade
 before Colonel Stewart with
 a model pack.
 Dr Sam Hughes expected.
 I am picked out for guard
 and placed at Battalion
 orderly room for looking after
 July 29th
 Took and pass to go to
 Featherbed busy with
 George Page to his home
 arrived there 5 pm was
 country and was posted
 made as very welcome
 July 30th
 it is very large and will
 throw a powerful light
 Sgt Featherbed for London
 Bridge and Shorncliffe at
 7.30 grand night through
 London near Royal Palace
 and St Pauls Cathedral
 in the distance arrived
 at Shorncliffe 1 pm.
 July 31st
 saw two boys put up
 quite an interesting boxing
 match the address collected
 over 9/ for them which
 made them very happy.
 Aug 1st
 started for the third time
 On musketry class.

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Aug 4th

Grand review on mooves
plains by general Sir Sam
Huges thousands of troops
and all branches of the
service bands playing in
all directions and all kinds
of bands. at night saw
the same two boys box
in the 'A.S.B. arena.
they went to it splendid
27/10^d was collected for
them to buy them some
new clothes

Aug 6th

went to Hythe along
the banal which is
a beautiful walk
great old Elm trees nearby
all the way and

numerous boating parties
also heard a b. of b.
clergyman speak at an
open air service for the
Salvation Army and
spoke well.

Aug 11th

received Sergeants Certificate
also Lewis M. G. Certificate

Aug 14th

Leave camp at 4.30 am
for shooting at Hythe
Ranges.

Aug 19

finished musketry at
Hythe qualified as a
first class shot 118 points

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Aug 20th
Church service in A.S.B.
Arena listened to a
splendid address by Mr
Sherwood Eddy. Assistant
Secretary to the international
Y.M.C.A.

Aug 22th
I was in a sham battle
at the bombing school
which some French Staff
officers witnessed. smoke
bombs being used and a
mine was exploded which
made it very realistic

August 25th
A ^{company} boy of the 86th Battalion
held a farewell concert
in the Congregational
School room. it was very good

Aug 28th
Left camp in a 6 day pass.
Stayed at Uxbridge all night

Aug 29
Left Uxbridge at 9 am.
arrived Oxford at 12.
Had to wait 2 hours for
a train went up into
the city had dinner at
Rivers High Bridge Street
then went up into the
market where I saw Mr
A.A. Alden. he was very
pleased to see us. arrived
at Lynton at 3 pm went
to Baptist Church at night
I saw Mr Bouldry.
all looks very natural. ^{brings} brings
back old memories.

Aug 30th

Went up round Twelveacre
and saw L. Deane. old
Fred Brooks and his wife
+ Black and George Batts
and his family. left
Cynham by train at 7 pm
met Harold at Witney then
went down to Longs and
hired a bike and rode
on to Minster through
Grovebridge arriving at
Minster at 9.30.

Aug 31st

Helped Uncle to pick
plums as he was short
of help and crop good.
At night rode to Burford
and saw Uncle Ben he
is looking well.

Sept 1st

cut and tied up barley
for Uncle Ted. at night
was going to see Grampy
got as far as Worcham at
Aunt Sarahs when my
tire burst and I had to
walk back to Minster

Sept 2nd

Rode Harold's bike to Witney
and got a new tire came
back. put it on and went
on to Astalleigh. saw Cousin
Arthur + Aunt Polly. then
down to Fordwells. saw
Lucy. + Alice. had a little
dinner. then went on to
Louthlawn + saw Grampy.
from there on to Shipton

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and saw Uncle Will he
is looking much older.
from Shipton I came back
to Minster. then from there
to Brawley and saw Fred
Buchingham my last Boss in
England. from there on to
Witney handed in the bike
went to the station for Lynton
arrived there 7.45 pm.

Sept 3rd

Hired a bike + rode to
Oxford sent them back
by train and left Oxford
at 5 PM for London
and Shorncliffe where we
arrived at 12 midnight
also on the 3rd a Zepp
was brought down in

flames at Boffley by
Lieut Robinson. he was
awarded the v.c. being the
first brought down in
England.

Sept 14th

Started on machine gun
class, instructor is Corporal
Henderson a Burlington boy.

Sept 17th

went on week end pass
to Uxbridge arrived there
5.30. had a good time

Sept 18th

left Uxbridge for London
by train at 2 o'clock.
passed through Hillington
Southall + Ealing to Acton
a very nice ride

Went on L.C.W. train at
Acton for Highbury station
where my cousin met us
with his wife. He is got
very stout weighs 16 stone
has got a smart wife. very
flashy but not proud.
they have a very nice home
at 230th New North road
Islington 4 rooms.

left there 8.30 for Charing
Cross and from there at 9.15
to Camp arrived 11.45 pm.

Sept 23rd

On the night of the 23 + 24th
2 more Zepps were brought
down in Essex, one crew
being captured alive.
a lot of damage done

Sept 28

went to Sandy Lane to
fire on miniature ranges
with colt machine gun

Oct 1st

On night of Oct 1st and 2nd
another Zepp. was brought
down at Potters Bar.

Oct 2.

went to Hythe Ranges to
fire with colt machine gun

Oct 4th

week end Pass to London
arrived at New North Rd
at 6 pm.

Oct 8

Saw cousin Arthur went
to see a little of the
city, saw St Pauls. and

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Buckingham Palace the
Queen Victoria memorial.
Marble Arch. War Office.
Home Guards. and other
notable places. Parliament
Buildings & Westminster Abbey
a very enjoyable time
left Charing Cross Station
at 9.15 pm for Shorncliffe

Oct 13

On picket at Folkestone
saw an accident, also
a wounded man very
much hurt taken to
hospital in ambulance.

Oct 14

medical inspection. passed
the doctor and put on
draft to the 10th. Batt.

received web equipment

Oct 15

Went to Hythe to fire
running practice.

Oct 18

Advance party leaves the
Depot for Cromborough where
the whole Depot is going.

Oct 21st

Trafalgar day. up at
4.30. breakfast at 5. am.
fall in at 6 o'clock. ready
to proceed to France
left Barracks at 6.45 am
to Headquarters. left there
at 9.15 boarded train at
at Shorncliffe at 9.15 passed
through Red Hill. Guildford
Winchester. arrived at

Southampton at 1.45 pm
had some refreshments and
went on board the Princess
Victoria at 4.45. boat not
very large. and crowded. Docks
are large and extensive.

left Southampton at 5.30 pm

Oct 22nd

arrived at Le Harve. 12.30^{am}

after an uneventful voyage
not sick at all. weather

fine but cold. came off

the boat at 7.30 am left

Le Harve at 8 am. passed

numerous war supplies.

including big guns. the

city is very dirty. buildings

old and dilapidated.

passed very large munitions

factories, french children

very dirty and begging

money and cigarettes.

arrived at camp at 11 am

after several delays.

got dinner at 7 m e a. and

changed money. at 1 o'clock

medical inspection. which

was not very severe

also received Lee Enfield

Rifle No 17031 name of

village near camp. Rouelles.

Oct 23rd

received 120 rounds of
ammunition, also inspected

by a Brigadier General

left camp 7 pm. arrived at

Le Harve. at 9 pm after a very

hard march + came down a

large number of steps. went on

train. at 10 pm as ^{escort} to

two prisoners

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Oct 24

Left Le Havre. at 1 am .
a long heavy train. had lots
of room. slept well. arrived
at Rouen. at 8 am. after
passing through 2 long
tunnels train very slow
at 9 am went up to ~~rest~~^{rest}
camp. where we get hot
tea & eatables very cheap
also a wash and clean up
raining hard. saw
German prisoners at work
district very hilly lots of
traffice on the river Seine.
left the next camp at 3 pm
marched to the station, weather
cleared off. Left Rouen at 5 pm
in box cars 30 of us in one car
very tight squeeze.

Oct 25

arrived at Etaples at 8 am
after a very ~~tiresome~~^{tiresome} ride
buildings look very old
very busy station, Australian
troops passing through
enroute for the Somme after
being at ~~Etapes~~^{Etaples}. a very
large British and Colonial
camp near the town.
Left Etaples at 6 pm.
arrived at St Pol. at 9 pm
just settled down nicely
for the night. when we
were bundled out and
marched to a rest camp
we were put in a
recreation hut. earth floor
very damp and cold.

Oct 26th

midnight too cold to sleep
went out & walked about
to get warm. could plainly
see the flashes from the
big guns on the firing line
went back to the station
and into a room where
there was a nice fire
had a little sleep.
came out at 5 am. had
a wash and shave...
then went across the road
and had some breakfast
in a trench house.
St Pol is a quiet old
place but quite a
large busy station...
left St Pol. at 3 pm. in
Motor Transporte arrived

at La Bunte at 4:30 2nd
Brigade headquarters. passed
the doctor and was detailed
with G Wakefield & B. Fordham
to no. 1 platoon of ^{COMPANY} Coy 10th Batt
taken to our billets at 6 pm
which is in a large barn
had no blanket did not sleep
very well too cold & draught

Oct 27th

Up at 7:30 pavered at 8:30
for half an hour. then
through for the day.
saw some of the fellows
with their shirts off
picknig out vermin
the billets is a trench ^{farm} ~~farm~~
which is very dirty compared
with Canadian or English farms.
sanitary arrangements are
very bad in France.

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44

French threshing machine
 driven by a horse
 on reversing steps
 very slow work - man
 ties up the straw as it
 comes out.
 At 9 am the Bat + Brigade
 move out from the bank
 to billets nearer the trenches
 heavy marching roads ^{at 50 ft}
 passed numerous transports
 along the road.
 arrived at destination at 12:30
 billeted in a barn better
 than the last one. quite
 the large village ^{rum} ^{near}

Oct 29th

Drery wet day. French
 service in a field ^{very}

cold. 6 years ago today
 I left England for Canada
 Oct 30th

started on another bombing class
 weather still abominable - very
 muddy + wet underfoot -
 French farm house. stables and
 barn in almost every case

forms a square. The manure
 is thrown into the center

which makes it very unpleasant
 and unsanitary the stench
 from it being very strong
 the French women work very
 hard round the farm and
 wear thick heavy boots

no parade in the afternoon

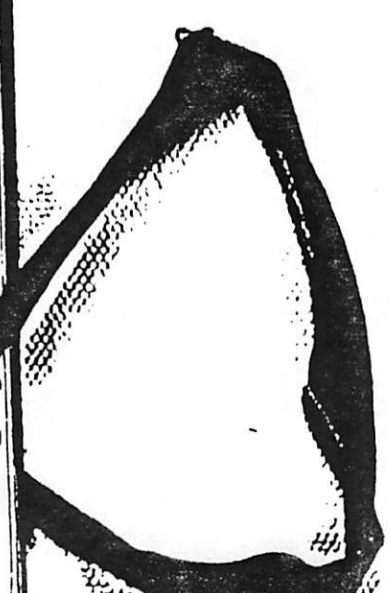
it is a very long life can

see leaders from the guns very
 plain at night.

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Oct 28th



Oct 31st

Weather still stormy had a little rifle drill in the morning in the afternoon a Divisional inspection of gas helmets. rations issued biscuits + cheese.

Nov 1st

two hours drill in the morning in the afternoon a bath parade about three miles away across muddy fields. on our way back nearly got lost and was covered with mud not being able to pick our way in the dark. we also got paid 15 francs. or 12/6. pay book being dated Nov 2nd

the name of our present billets is Etree Gauchie
Nov 2nd

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up at 6 am. fall in 7.30 and left Etree Gauchie for brigade billets nearer the front line passed numerous trench work and light railways. arrived at our destination at 9.45 am name of it ~~for name~~^{Garency} which has been heavily shelled nothing but walls left standing trees almost bare billets are fairly good. in made up huts five place in ours. raining hard. saw a battery of artillery.

left at 7 pm on a work party for the trenches went through lots of mud + water was working on a tunnel. shells. + ~~star~~ more shells. + machine gun fire. ^{lost} lost our way in the trenches lots of great big rats.

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Nov 3.

arrived back at billets at 6 am
very tired and covered in mud
had rum ration and breakfast
went to sleep till noon. in
afternoon saw anti aircraft gun
~~firing~~^{firing} at enemy aeroplane
pretty sight. left for trenches
again at 6.30. went to a
different sap which was much
better than the last not as
muddy.

Nov 4th

arrived back at 6 am. not
quite so tired done very
little work had rum went
to sleep till noon. went on
another work party again to
a different sap which was very
good. but close to trity

Nov 5th

arrived back at 5.30 am
myself + Wakefield warned to
be ready to proceed to the
Lewis gun school at 6.30
left at 7.30 + marched to
Divisional headquarters where
some more joined us and we
left there at 10.45 am on
motor bus. arrived at Pemes
at 12.30 after passing through
some nice country and ~~several~~^{several}
large towns Pemes en Artois
is quite a nice large town
we are billeted in a large
flour mill and very draughty
near a stream. supper was
very good beans + pork
and bully beef + tea.
saw some more 86th men

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Nov 6th

still raining. started on the Lewis gun ~~course~~ ^{course} at 2 p.m. at night, a concert which was very good. the 28 band being present.

Nov 7.

still raining. nothing of importance happened. had some fun in a shop trying to make the girl understand English buying some cards.

Nov 8

still raining. had some fun with the Frenchman who gave us a calling down for filling his mill with tins & rubbish he had the mill working.

Nov 9th

Nice fine day. mill still working. market day in Kemas. quite a novel affair 28th band concert at night.

Nov 10th

fine day. large number of Australian artillery pass through the town. done some firing on the ranges with the Lewis gun. the old Frenchman was calling us up early made the boys mad. bought a cigarette case.

Nov. 11th

Fine day. fired stoppages with Lewis gun.

Nov 12.

dig trenches all morning little service in cinema hall at night which was very good.

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Nov 13th

digging trenches. a large
French battle plane came
down near us. very misty.
concert at night which was
very comical

Nov 14th

dig trenches till 10 am. had
orders to move. left Parnes at
2 pm on bus 34. after many
delays owing to engine trouble
arrived at Div Headquarters
at 4:30 from there to the
transport links at 5 pm.
stayed with signallers all night

Nov 15

got new pair of boots
left front for front line
at 10 am. joined the
Batt at 3 pm

Nov 16

fine + cold + rity, a little
sandy, sending over shells

Nov 17

fine + cold work party
at night. at 11 am one of
our ^{Army} ~~Army~~ lancers fell about
+ blew ^{porpoise} galloway
to ^{Pieces} ~~pieces~~. he was well
liked and the first to make
friends with us it was
a horrible night. I got one
of his buttons in remembrance

Nov 18

Our Brigade is relieved we
leave front line at 3 pm
marched back to Ederes beach
was just about all in feet
terribly sore. went on guard

Nov 19

stormy + cold ^{at 7.0} not feeling very good.

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