

August 16th.—Usual convoy work during the day. No excitement. Our company played Head-quarters at football in evening. We were beaten 2-1.

August 17th.—Out all day; a little gun-fire took place, but the souvenirs fell well to our right. On guard at night, 10.30 to 12.30, when tremendous rifle-fire took place, preceded by a short bombardment. On duty again at 4.20 to 6 a.m. "During the 'off' period 'found' a nice rasher near the cook's corner, so it soon was frying. Also 'found' some apples on a tree! During first turn—it was about midnight—something came sneaking up a hedge to me. I challenged, then quickly lay down, ready. No response! Got interesting, so crept cautiously nearer! It was a cow!!!!!! For spite I sent it away with a good clout on the hindquarters.

August 18th.—Out in morning, when I met Mr. Stowell, now Lance-Corporal. In evening I made a bed, sacks nailed across a frame and fixed to props eight inches from ground. I was fed up with getting wet through dew. (I don't mean to suggest that I had been in the habit of plucking the flower of the dandelion as the cause of me, on waking, feeling wet.) The night dew is very heavy here.

August 19th.—The bed was a great success. (Wish it was bedtime again.) Up to Head-quarters on convoy—the nearest I get to trenches at present. One of my old pals was wounded in head the previous night when up at trenches with engineers. I was always lucky.

August 20th.—Another day nearer the end of the war! On convoy all day. The 75's were busy at night.

August 21st.—Saturday; my great day at home. Am quite ready for another of those good old days. Got a pass to visit a town in our rear to attend an entertainment provided by troops. It was tres bon.

August 22nd.—A grand day. Aeroplanes very active over us, but our flying men chased them off. Church parade at night, the first I've been able to attend out here. It was all right. On piquet after—7.30 to 9.30 and 1.30 to 3.15. Enemy searchlights were sweeping the sky all night.

August 23rd.—On convoy, with no excitement.

August 24th.—Had a fresh pair of horses; absolutely b—s! Landed me twice in a ditch during day. How I brayed them! (More language!)

August 25th.—Beautiful day. Would not entertain horses I had yesterday. Had my pick, so got a good pair. At night I did my washing; funds were too low to pay for it. Boiled the garments, and added a disinfectant. Have had a few chats about me lately.

August 26th.—Out from 8.30 until 3.30. A couple of shells landed in a field where I put up for mid-day watering and feeding of horses. They ploughed the ground up; don't think anyone was hit by splinters. Anyway, I wasn't. "Lucky Peter!" A heavy bombardment took place at night, wherein we did well.

August 27th.—Very warm during day. At night I walked to the A.C. to see Stowell. He is champion. Had an hour's chat.

August 28th.—The heat continues. Best weather we have had all summer. On piquet at night, 7.30 to 9.30, and 1.30 to 3 o'clock. Got two hours' "doss" in harness.

August 29th.—Roads simply like a desert, so thick with dust. Was about choked. However, it simply poured down in afternoon. Rain is much needed, so we didn't grumble at the wetting. Got new clothes on return. Patched up my "bivi" where rain was coming through! Rained heavy all night.

August 30th.—Reveille at 6 a.m. Up like the lark. (Perhaps.) On convoy from 8.45 to 3 p.m. On return was warned to pack up and be in readiness to proceed to Brigade Head-quarters on the morrow. That is my old job; consequently that means more night work. Not over-pleased at change, as I was extremely comfortable here. However, all sorts happen in a soldier's life. Got paid after tea. Bed at 9.15.

August 31st.—Proceeded to Brigade Head-quarters, where I arrived in time for dinner. Took over my horses and trappings in afternoon. "Queenie" and "Darkie" are my new pals. The former has been shot in breast, but has now recovered. Saw Arnold's brother in evening. Had a sing-song before going to "bed."

September 1st.—Camp duties in morning. Reading in afternoon. It rained heavily. Turned out at 6 p.m. Reported at engineers' place, and went to trenches with them. On arrival at destination (by a famous water-way), 300 yards from trenches, the "75's" gave the enemy fifteen minutes' rapid fire—and they can rapid fire, too. In return a few shrapnel came over, one bursting on the road fifty yards from us. How the bits whistled! A little rifle fire came our way. Just missed a shell hole by a hair's breadth on return ride, but got back to camp all right. After stabling, it rained in torrents.

September 2nd.—Up to the boot tops in mud. Dodging about camp in morning. In afternoon a brisk bombardment took place. We were ordered to "stand by." Firing renewed about 7 p.m. Rained in torrents most of the time.

September 3rd.—All night it simply poured down. Blankets and greatcoat wet. Turned out at 6.30 in a downpour. Mud up to knees. Horses shivering. Took them for half-hour's exercise. Curse the rain! At 9.30 I left rain, and what rain! At certain parts the horses had areas to cover up to the knees in water. Was out in it up to dinner-time. Was in our tent most of the afternoon trying to find a dry spot. Left at six p.m. for trenches. The fields were in an awful state. However, I got there; but things were quiet, only a little rifle fire taking place. On return I was on piquet. Got a couple of hours "doss."

September 4th.—Turned out a fine morning. Almost required a hammer and chisel to break through the crust of mud on horses! Was on the road by nine a.m., getting back at 1.30. Camp duties in afternoon. Evening in camp.

September 5th.—Rained heavily during the night. Out exercising by 6.15. At noon Capt. Cameron came to our camp, and I was ordered to pack up and return to the company. The sergeant in charge of us, however, wanted me to stay with him, so he got the captain's permission to retain me. I wasn't particular where I went. Took over a new pair of horses in afternoon—nice tits, too. Attended sick horse at night. Was fine during afternoon.

September 6th.—Nice morning. On road by nine o'clock, returning at 1.30. Left camp at six o'clock. Called at Head-quarters, bombers' (had to take some there!), dug-outs, then our sergeant and I set out on a trench trip. Had a map to guide us across fields. It was a rotten job; got lost, and into an area full of shell-holes. Then followed a little steeplechasing. Nearly got my head cut off by colliding with a wire. Bullets were fairly numerous, and on arrival at reserve trenches they were too thick for my taste. Got instructions to "stand by" at a corner, but I thought it was extra hot there, and was considering what to do, when someone shouted that I was on a "marked corner," and if I didn't want to go "home" to hop it b— quick, I broke the world's record for speed! We were both glad to get out of it. We then set out to find another point, but again got lost, and in the end had to make the most of our way home, where we got at 2 a.m., plastered in mud. A little rum and mild did us no harm!

ENEMY REPLY FEELER.

Sept. 7th.—Got permission to have an extra hour in bed. Tres bon! In camp all day. Aeroplanes numerous. Had a ride out in evening. Bombarding about 8 p.m. Of late the enemy artillery have replied very feebly to the hammering they have been getting. No objection!

Sept. 8th.—Very warm day. Bare-back ride before breakfast. At breakfast got stung on upper lip by a wasp. Was christened "Mass Johnson" at once! Talk about having a lot of lip! At trenches at night. Fairly quiet while I was there, but business got very brisk just as I got nicely away.

Sept. 9th.—Inspected by Major in afternoon. Engaged on a new job later. Very frequently the making of a noise draws fire in your direction.

A DIFFICULT JOURNEY.

September 10th.—Warm weather continues. Head-quarters at night. From there to trenches on my own. Not a nice job alone. Had to find the bombers, as I had bombs for them. Rifles fire very hot. Went with a few bombers into a corn field to dig-outs by reserve trenches. Had to hack a path through; very difficult work, low wires continually catching the head. Got more bombs on lumber. Finding my way out—and a few whizzed over—I had the bad luck to trample over several newly-dug graves, knocking down the crosses. This hurt me very much, but owing to the oph nature of the spot—and the machine guns rattling up and down the area—I couldn't stop to repair them. A voice from a dug-out promised to put things right. Had a stiff task getting over fields to bomb head-quarters, shell-holes and low wires causing a lot of trouble. The blinding flashes of our artillery about blinded me; the exploding shells on enemy trenches could easily be seen. The artillery reply was weak. Had a little excitement at bomb head-quarters, having a bomb in my hand, which I mistook for a part of a trench pump. Could not get the head screw to turn, as I tried, and that was fortunate, otherwise —!!!

It was about 15in. long, for throwing into trenches at short range. When I was told—!

EASIER DAYS.

September 11th.—Had a cross-country ride before breakfast. The luxury of a bath in afternoon was greatly enjoyed. Trenches at night, but things were not too brisk. Back at twelve o'clock.

September 12th.—An easy day in camp wasn't amiss, followed by a stout or three in the evening; then early to "bed," but not before doing a little sewing.

September 13th.—Up at 5 a.m. Inspection by a famous general took place after breakfast. Left camp after, returning at 1.30. Left for trenches at night, but the engineers did not require my services, so before they could change their mind I galloped off like —! Tres bon!

September 14th.—Ride out before breakfast, afterwards taking horse to be shod. Had to travel three miles each way. Remained in camp at night.

September 15th.—Out for an hour's ride before breakfast. Was ready to go to trenches at 6 p.m., but was recalled, and was engaged on courier work instead up to 10 p.m., when I took up the duties of piquet until midnight; then "bed," feeling very tired.

September 16th.—Dull all day. Did my washing in forenoon. Don't like washing-day! Trenches at night, and while there a silly devil in front of me banged into a pile of sheet iron, upsetting the lot. What a noise! Of course it was heard "over the way," and soon a machine gun played on us. The horses were as still as statues—behaved grand. I lay flat in front of them, behind a fallen tree. One or two "bumps" on the ground very near to me did not sound comfortable. After quietness came on I was not long in clearing off. Back to camp at midnight.

September 17th.—As usual, had a ride before breakfast. Was out from 3 to 6.30. Met in with a chap—a cellarman—who supplied me with a glass or three of wine, which was tres bon! Didn't trouble a damn for anybody afterwards! Had a "chat" in evening, but had a poor time, only catching two; but they were "real" ones.

September 18th.—Fine weather continues, but there is a sharp nip in the mornings. Trenches at night; business rather brisk, artillery especially. Glad to get out of the zone. Anxious to return? Not at all, but I will, simply because I've got to. Evidently I'm not so heroic as Fred. Lull, who, I understand, is "anxious to return"—I don't think. If not so heroic, I claim to be more truthful than Freddy. Artillery continued a heavy bombardment throughout the night. (Nice way to spend a Saturday night, eh?)

September 19th.—Aeroplanes very active at daybreak. Camp duties throughout the day. Had a cross-country ride in evening.

