



DURHAM
AT **WAR**



Arthur Henry Corner

The diary of 18/242 Private Arthur Henry Corner, 18th Battalion,
Durham Light Infantry

Diary

28 December 1915 – 28 March 1916



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1916

31 & 29 Days

Jan & Feb

- Hot 31 MON Still sick. Beginning of trenching to time. Mail. Bacon & Jam - Kurrah! Transport brings a good supply. Jolly sing song.
- Hot 1 FEB TUES On Sick. Doctor ratty - result, light duty. Another mail. Sammy & Thompson disagree. Canteen opened. Wrote to Owen.
- Hot 2 WED On sick still. Owen's reply. Washing day. Lovely sunset. Singing.
- Hot 3 THUR On parade! Digging trenches. Afternoon off! Mail! Writing & cards.
- Hot 4 FRI Trenching. Rumours about German fleet, Bagdad etc. Headquarters arrive. Parcels!
- Dull 5 SAT Trenching as usual. Joe & I have a snaffle. On no 3 picket group. Rain, rain, rain. Hell of a night - soaked.
- Hot 6 SUN - 5 aft Epiph Short rations! Off duty until 10.30 am. Revetting until 4.30 p.m. Singing.



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Inside front cover

Marseille, Arles, Tarascon, Graveson, Barbentane, Avignon, Orange (breakfast),
Piolenc, Mornas, Mondragon, Bollene, Lapalud, Pierrelatte, Donzere, Chateauneuf-
du-Rhône, Montelimar, Livron, Portes-les-Valence (devils arrow) letters, Fain
(vineyards), Serves, Erome (Castle and tunnel), St Vallier, Andancette (3X△), St
Rambert d'ablon, Vienne, Estressin, Chasse, Feyzin, Lyon 4pm, St Germain and
M D'or, Anse, Villefranche, Macon (tea)

Title page

Lawrence

Page 1

Miss H Teasdale

Argyll View

Copley, Butterknowle

Miss Halpin

Infirmery

Workington, Cumberland

Miss S Milburn

122 Front Street

Tudhoe

Private AC Corner

3/5th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry

Miss L Jones

23 Rock Terrace

Coundon

Mrs C Atkinson

Hardgate



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Bishop Thornton
Ripley, Leeds
21 Urebank, Ripon

JE Archbold
Signal Section, A Company, 8th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry
Territorial Force Brigade

Mr E Blair
Kentnor
Durham Road
Spennymoor

Page 2

Mrs Dennison
Bishop Monkton
Ripon, Yorkshire

Page 3

Personal Details

Size in Boots 7

15 Collars 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ Hats

Weight 10st 4lbs Height 5' 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Insurance

Life £50 for 20yrs

Owners Name and Address

AH Corner

The Villas

Deanbank, Ferryhill

Page 4

Left Port Said Tuesday **December 28th [1915]**



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1 January 1916

Very hot

Physical and bayonet drill. ~~Off picket 6am~~ Camp moved. Bathing. Singing and feasting.

2 January 1916

Very hot

Church Parade. Bathing and resting. Singing in lines after tea. Hack and I get cigars and apples from ship.

page 5

3 January 1916

Dull

On fatigue. Chaps en route march. D Company leave for higher up Suez. More spies. Animated discussion on Influence Jim ratty.

4 January 1916

Rain

Short route march. Rations fatigue. Deserted from camel corps caught. Section Y defeated by 3 goals. Writing.

5 January 1916

Windy

Mail dispatched 11.30am.

Lines orderly. Pickles procrastinates. Chaps working at trenches.

6 January 1916

Windy

Thompson and Liddle crimed. Improving the trenches. On guard. Draughty guard room. Boddy obliges – at last.



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7 January 1916

Cold

The Colonel honoured. Harmonious guard. Rapid loading difficult to N.C.Os [Non-commissioned officers]. Off duty 5pm.

8 January 1916

Fine

Mail dispatched. With Skin at No 4 post. Bathing. Rice for dinner. Cards. Hack causes riotous laughter.

9 January 1916

Very fine

Church Parade. Harry catches a locust. On No. 2 picket. Weston fires off. Bathing. Glorious night.

page 6

10 January 1916

Hot

Off duty 7.30am. Bayonet fighting. Working at picket, trenches in afternoon. Bathing in canal. Cards.

11 January 1916

Hot

Post 4 under Skin. Entered for sack race and boot race. Sports – tent pegging, relay race etc. Platoon 6 to the front. Musical rides. Anniversary of leaving Hartlepool.

12 January 1916

Hot

Skin's working party. Ambrose and I go for a bathe. No. 2 picket under Fenwick.



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13 January 1916

Hot

Arrived in camp 7.30am. Battalion march – excused. Ration fatigue – dates.
Reading.

14 January 1916

Dull

Skin's working party. Sammy and I told off. Bathing in canal. Quiet evening.

15 January 1916

Fine

Improving picket trenches. Weary afternoon filling in trenches. Quiet night.

16 January 1916

Fine

Station fatigue. Football. Hard end of an easy day.

Mails!!!

page 7

17 January 1916

Fine

Missed Bridge fatigue. Bayonet fighting. On 4 picket. 2½ hours on duty.

18 January 1916

Fine

Off duty 7.30am

BSM [Battery Sergeant Major] inspection. Trenching. Carrying rails and setting engines on rails until 12pm.

19 January 1916

Fine

Bridge fatigue – absolute pinch; learning Arabic. Called out at night for Leeds Pals.



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20 January 1916

Fine

Rail fatigue – slow but sure. Washing day. Unexpected mail.

21 January 1916

Fine

Demolishing trenches after ration fatigues. Afternoon off. Rails at night. Tarry and I as muleteers.

22 January 1916

Fine

Divisional supply fatigue. Dates very popular. Pinch of a day. Getting supplies in.

23 January 1916

Fine

Reveille at 4.30am. A and B [companies] strike camp and leave Kantara 7.45.

Devilish march – 8 miles into desert.

Sacred sing song.

page 8

24 January 1916

Fine

Joe and I orderlies. Dobbie's little joke. Platoon 3 on guard and sentry 9 o'clock.

No. 2 picket.

Hellish night – rain and sand. Bob's midnight debate and serenade.

25 January 1916

Rain and wind

Off duty by 7.30.

Many tents lying low. Got our tent into shape by teatime. The section late for parade.



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26 January 1916

Fine

The Petition drawn up. Physical drill. Route march? The Petition presented and favoured.

Good mail!!!

27 January 1916

Dull

Route march in morning. Physical drill etc. in afternoon.

28 January 1916

Dull

Physical drill etc.

Open order attack. No. 6 on inlying picket under Warmy. Ferrier ill. Rotten night – jaw for two.

29 January 1916

Hot

Off duty 8am.

On sick. Miserable day. Canteens raided at Kantara. Sing song. Annie Marshall married.

30 January 1916

V. Fine

On sick. No Church Parade. Bathing day. Mail – no luck. Bigger ration!!! Sacred concert.

page 9

31 January 1916

Hot

Still sick. Beginning of trenching to time. Mail. Bacon and Jam – hurrah!

Transport brings a good supply. Jolly sing song.



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1 February 1916

Hot

On sick. Doctor ratty – result light duty.

Another mail. Sammy and Thompson disagree. Canteen opened. Wrote to Owen.

2 February 1916

Hot

On sick still. Owen's reply. Washing day. Lovely sunset. Singing.

3 February 1916

Hot

On parade! Digging trenches. Afternoon off! Mail! Writing and cards.

4 February 1916

Hot

Trenching. Rumours about German fleet, Bagdad etc. Headquarters arrive.

Parcels!

5 February 1916

Dull

Trenching as usual. Joe and I have a snaffle. On No. 3 picket group. Rain, rain, rain. Hell of a night, soaked.

6 February 1916

Fine

Short rations! Off duty until 10.30am. Revetting until 4.30pm. Singing.

page 10

7 February 1916

Fine

More revetting under Skin. Pickles does a bit.

Two Leeds Pals killed by sentries.



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8 February 1916

Rain

Completed revetting.

9 February 1916

Hot

Working party at new trenches – time limit. No. 5 picket. Glorious night. Warmy and the Lord Mayor.

10 February 1916

Hot

Off duty 7am. Working party – damned hard work. Chaps rather riled and done early. Washing day. Reading.

11 February 1916

Hot

Trenching again. Indian camel corps in place of cavalry. Stocks pulled down – result guard. Ripping tea. Reading and singing.

12 February 1916

Fine

Revetting complete. Visit of General Murray [Sir Archibald James Murray] and procession. Afternoon off. Part of our division off to Baghdad. Talk to Swindly.

13 February 1916

On inlying picket. Section 8 clicked. Three of us have a good sleep.

page 11

19 February 1916

Fine

Cyclists moved to El Cap. No. 5 picket. Glorious night.



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20 February 1916

Off duty and digging at 7.30. How we worked (?) Church parade after dinner.
Rain spoiled camp fire. Sing song.

page 12

21 February 1916

Fine

Completing trenches, we work hard? Farewell sing song. Move definitely fixed.

22 February 1916

Fine

Usual "Stand to." Hurried preparations for departure. Section 8 rear-guard.
Champion march. Spent afternoon at Kantara. Well organised barge journeys to Spit. Packed like cattle. End of 12 hour journey.

23 February 1916

Fine

Section 8 on wharf duty under Fenwick. Bathing parade – what a luxury! Digging four miles away. Joe and CWJ bandy words.

24 February 1916

Fine

Pipe laying. Four of us fuel carriers, saw Tinch [Tineh]. Fall out on return journey.
Bathe.

25 February 1916

Fine

Mess orderly – rather a disorderly job. Bathing parade. Tom on sick.

26 February 1916

Fine

Ordinary routine. Move to Point 34 cancelled. Bathing parade reading.



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27 February 1916

Fine

Early bathe. Bathing parade and Church Parade. Glee party.

page 13

28 February 1916

Hot

Usual ordinary routine and bathing parade. Letter writing. Tarry on parade!

29 February 1916

Very fine

Usual preparation for a move. Early bathe. March from El Hersh (Spit) to Kantara.

No news of Owen. Cards.

1 March 1916

Fine

On guard over Nothing. Bathe before and after dinner. All prepared for leaving.

2 March 1916

Dull

Reveille 5.30. Left Kantara 8.30. Via El Cap. Tinch [Tineh] and Ras El Leigh and El Hersh. Port Said. Night in town, Kursal.

3 March 1916

Fine

Physical drill etc. Bathing. Three of us in Arab Town – the Retreat.

4 March 1916

Fine

Usual routine. Bathing. 18th v R.F.A. [Royal Field Artillery] 2 – 1 goals. In town.

Visited Mosque and picture hall.



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5 March 1916

Fine

Embarked on Ivernia at 12pm. Favourable impression.

page 14

6 March 1916

Very fine

Woke with a muddled head. Sailed 5pm. Flying fish and tortoises. Parcels! Bob and I sought fresh quarters.

7 March 1916

Very fine

Lovely day. Physical drill and lifebelt parade.

8 March 1916

Dull

Usual routine. Sighted African coast. Rather windy.

9 March 1916

Rain

Passed Malta – stopped for orders. Choppy sea. Medical inspection.

10 March 1916

Fine

Sighted Sardinia. 12pm. Lone Rock. The Watch dog Rock. Pay.

11 March 1916

Raining

No parades. Sighted Pendus Isles about 10am. Entered Marseilles 11.30. Collided with 'Mosquito'. Boarded train 11pm.



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12 March 1916

Fine

Stopped at Orange. Mails 16 letters. Tea at Macon.

page 15

13 March 1916

V. Fine

Stopped at Les Laumes. Alesia and Montereau for refreshments.

14 March 1916

Fine

Arrived Cisemont 4am. 10 mile march via Hallencourt to Citernes. Billeted in Madame barn. Walk round.

15 March 1916

Dull

Route march, deuced hard roads. Foot inspection. Mails! Letter writing. More blankets.

16 March 1916

Fine

Sick list. Pay 12/6. Green envelopes dished out. Section 8 sign on for MGS. [Machine Gun Section].

17 March 1916

Dull

On sick. Platoon 6 has a depleted appearance. First instruction on machine gun (Louis) [Lewis]. The 'three' out of bounds.

18 March 1916

Fine

Night's birthday. Machine gun practice.



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19 March 1916

Fine

Sammy and I orderlies. Church parade. Wilk and I obtain passes. Hallencourt and Fricourt. Saw Owen.

page 16

20 March 1916

Dull

More machine gun practice. Beginning of seven days' leave. Dobbie is a father. Letter writing.

21 March 1916

Rain

Continuation of machine gun instruction. Chocolate from West Indies. Dobbie off.

22 March 1916

Dull

Five chaps depart for trenches. Machine gun stoppages. Jim and I chez Bouilly.

23 March 1916

Dull

Edna's 6th birthday. Night-firing box. Jim and I at Madame Bouilly. A parcel from Dot.

24 March 1916

Dull

Usual machine gun drill. Last night at Madame Bouilly's. Xmas pudding!!

25 March 1916

Dull

Set off 8am. Reached Longpre 2pm. On guard. Mademoiselle very kind – a real bed.



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26 March 1916

Rain

Set off from Longpre at 8am. Wilk and I fell out. Reached Fresselles at 5.30pm.
Cafe au rhum.

page 17

27 March 1916

Rain

A restless night among the rats. Set off from Fresselles at 8am. Hellish 10 miles to Beauquesnes. Mails. Sleep!!!!

28 March 1916

Fine

A morning's rest.

notes at rear

Khaddik wardi	your cheek is rosy
Ana shibbik Kaman yaseedi	I love you too sir
Khallin abooyak	let me kiss you
Ana Ahilbrick Peiteer	I love you so much

inside back cover

2 loaves
2 dozen oranges [?]
1s biscuits
2 tins pears

Verrey, Les Laumes Alesia (breakfast), Montbard (cultivation), Tonnerre (Vineyards – unterraced), Laroche Montereau (tea), Champagne-sur-Seine (vineyards), Melun Villabe, Corbeil, Jurisy (clay and limestone) Savigny, Petit Vaux, Gravigny Chilly-Mezarin, Champlan, Bievres, Jouy en Josas, Vers. St Cyr



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