

Major Sydney James Walker  
World War I Diary  
Part 1

## Major Sydney James Walker's World War Diary

Joined the Australian Imperial Forces on 24/12/14. Reported at Liverpool but owing to no definite instructions received, was granted leave until 28/12/14.

- 29/12/14 Accepted the responsibility of commanding and organising the Artillery Reinforcement of N.S.W.
- 4/1/15 Selected the men to form the 2nd F.A.B
- 5/1/15 Ordered to remove camp from Liverpool to Moore Park. No arrangements were made to receive the men consequently a great deal of trouble was caused in order to make some kind of camp.
- 11/1/15 Ordered to quarters in Victoria Barracks.
- 27/1/15 All arrangements were completed for the men of the 2nd F.A.B to embark. Also ordered to Melbourne on the date, to embark on the Hessen.
- 28/1/15 Arrived in Melbourne, ordered to Broadmeadows and took over the command of Artillery Reinforcements in Victoria.
- 30/1/15 Went into Melbourne in order to draw men's pay, met Charlie and his wife, went to Evoli; missed last train home and had to put up at Victoria Coffee Palace.
- 31/1/15 Appointed Adjutant of Troopship "Hessen" AH5 and ordered to go aboard 1/2/15 in order to take over and arrange for arrival of men and horses on 2/2/15.
- 2/2/15 Remainder of troops and horses embarked, set sail about 4.30pm.
- 3/2/15 Appointed Orderly Officer of forward end of ship (142 horses)
- 4/2/15 Appointed Orderly Officer of Aft end of ship (258 horses)
- 5/2/15 Horse died. Funeral at sea. Removed horses from lower deck to top deck. much excitement being caused in the process. Called away whilst writing to attend to sick horse. The horse was dead when I arrived. The vet held a post mortem over same. Pneumonia the cause of death.
- 6/2/15 Same old routine today. Rise at 5.50am, parade 6.30, men's breakfast 7.30, parade 9.30, men's dinner 12.30, parade 2.30, tea 5.30. Officer's meals half-an-hour after men. Another horse died today and was quartered. The odour was most revolting and objectionable, penetrating all over the ship; the more noticeable because all were inoculated today.
- Feeling very miserable and can hardly stand up on account of insulation. The work is very strenuous now and if anything goes wrong or if anyone is wanted, the Adjutant is called.
- On duty from 6am till 10pm; the only time I have to myself is meal time and a few minutes I take off to smoke and write. The men planned a "musical evening" tonight but insulation caused it to be postponed.
- Weather fine but very, very cold at night.
- 7/2/15 Suffering from severe headache today. The weather is fine but cloudy. It is very pretty sight to see the three ships (Hessen, Chilka, Clan McThay?) all sailing abreast of each other. Another horse died today. Pumps went wrong and night picquet had to bail the water out, the men struck and Capt. Johnston dealt with the case and got the men to return to duty. I had retired for the night when the C.O sent for me and wanted me to attend a meeting re. settling on account of fodder. The result was I had to count all the horses. This put me in a bad temper and one of the picquet had left his post I therefore put him under open

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- arrest and the outcome of his trial was that he was let off and an officer had to remain on duty all night. I was selected to act first night (naturally).
- 7/2/15 Horse died 2.30am. Land sighted at 6am. Weather fine but sea rather rough. The "Thydeus" passed us today. Albatrosses followed the ship today; the first time we seen them. Sent a wireless home. Feeling much better today. Headache gone and effects of inoculation passed off. Another horse death reported to me at 9.15pm. Passed Cape Leevin Lighthouse about 8.30pm. Saw a big bush fire on the coast. Found every picquet and sentry asleep; put them all under open arrest.
- 8/2/15 Slept all morning. Arrived at the Rendezvous Rott nest at 12:30pm. We had to wait 1/2 an hour for the "Mashobia". A boat had to put out to meet her and get some salts for the horses. The Vet and I went with it and got some press news. The weather was very fine and pleasant today and the four ships moving abreast through the Indian Ocean must look very imposing. Played cards in the Chief Engineers room until 12:15am then went to bed.
- 9/2/15 Carried out the routine work today the same as usual. Played cards at night. The engines stopped suddenly during the night, nearly all the crew, cooks etc. All jumped up out of bed fearing the Germans had arrived. It is beginning to get very warm during the day; the lower deck is almost unbearable for both horses and men during the day.
- 10/2/15 The Vet overstepped himself today by 'ordering' a soldier to do some work for him. The soldier refused to leave his horses, as he was picquet and told by C.O. not to leave. The man was made a prisoner and tried. He was let off as the C.O. considered him in the right. This excited the Vet who there upon got drunk and quarrelled with me over fatigues. He also used the horses in such a brutal manner the C.O. and Capt. of the ship had to interfere. Two more horses were disposed of today. One died and one was shot. The weather is extremely hot during the day but it gets cool in the evening. Played cards (Bridge) tonight until 12:40pm. On duty all night until 6:30am.
- 11/2/15 Pay day. Nothing unusual today. Weather fine and cloudy but warm.
- 12/2/15 Ordinary routine. Exercised horses. Played cards until 12 o'clock. All were vaccinated today.
- 13/2/15 All the Officers (myself excluded) were inoculated today. Nothing else unusual.
- 14/2/15 Man disobeyed an order today was tried and punished. I was on duty all night. Had a sing song in Chief Engineers Room and then argued on origin of Languages, Predestination etc. until 1:35am. The Vet. was very funny. If in the course of this speech he made any statement that might possibly require explanation (Indeotradability of matter for instance) he would branch off to explain and during its explanation he would make a similar divergence, the Chief would argue on every divergence so that by 1:30am we had covered all the possible ground in regard to religion and every other possible and impossible subject. Whilst having a final talk to the Vet (2:15) I suddenly received information from the officer on the bridge that a cyclone was coming

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- our way. Every man was accordingly awakened and the task of shifting all the horses below deck was commenced. It was an enormous task but by 4:25am it was completed. I went to bed at 6am for a sleep and dreamed of horses all the while, it was a horrible nightmare. The Doctor awakened me to inoculate me at 9:15am.
- 15/2/15 Rested for the greater part of the day. The cyclone passed North of us we have a gale blowing all day. It is raining and the sea is very rough. If you stand on the bridge, every now and again you receive a shower bath. In fact it is very hard to maintain your balance with the wind beating against you and the ship pitching and rolling.
- 16/2/15 Nothing unusual. Played cards in the evening. Won 3/-. Still blowing.
- 17/2/15 Another horse died or rather was shot. Still blowing strongly. Occasionally very heavy downpours of rain accompanied by extra strong winds.
- 18/2/15 Still blowing and raining periodically. Another horse shot. Wrote letters home and to friends. On duty until 6am.
- 19/2/15 Heard in a round about way that there was some discontent amongst the men about the severity of my authority. They wanted a deputation sent to C.O. but only the men with enough character to be listened to refused to have anything to do with them on the ground that I treated fairly those who worked well but was severe on shirkers. Crossed the Line today at 12:45pm. Neptune visited the ship at night. I was condemned to take a soap pill, lathered with tar and tallow, shaved with a wooden razor and ducked. We had a concert first and then the initiation.
- 20/2/15 Nothing unusual. On duty until 1am.
- 21/2/15 Sighted Ceylon early this morning. Coast looked very pretty and interesting with numerous villages. Reached Colombo at 7:30pm. The approach about dusk, was just perfect. On duty from 1am. Caught a sentry asleep. Wrote letters home also to friends.
- 22/2/15 Awoke early this morning (6am) dressed, and as soon as I was on deck was greeted by a native who salaamed almost to the ground and told me he was the wash man. He named his price but was immediately cut down by another native. They kept jabbering away until a ship's Officer came along and he promptly lifted one off the bridge with a kick and belted the other with a stick so I was left in peace. I then went down on deck and was pestered all the morning with these Nigger's who were endeavouring to sell me gems, clothes etc. My first impression of the native was, thus one of disgust. He is such a servile being, one that you can say anything to no matter how humiliating and insulting; he will only laugh, so that is no wonder that the white man puts his foot on his neck and keeps it there. Sent the 1st batch of men (50 altogether) ashore at 9 am. Capt. Johnston and I remained aboard and completed stables with the remainder. We went ashore at 1 p.m. We were to meet the Chief Engineer and Capt. ?, the pilot who brought us in the night before, at 1:30. We went to the Grand Oriental Hotel or better known as the G.O.H. This is a very large Hotel in which natives seem to be lurking in every conceivable. You cannot hear them with their noiseless walk but you have only to sing out

"Boy" and the place is alive. We had Tiffin at the G.O.H which included Curry - a wonderful dish consisting of about 12 different ingredients - and ended up with drinks and cigars. The five of us then hired a motor car and motored to the Gallface Hotel, then to the Cinnamon Gardens. Cinnamon Gardens is a most wonderful place. The natives, Dutch and English live here. It is just one maze of roads running in all directions. You would hardly think that there would be any space at all after you had traversed the enormous numbers of roads in it. It is littered with Clubs, Golf Links and a Racecourse. The natives live in one and two room shanties along the side of the road with the front door level with the road. The more wealthy people live in palatial bungalows. It is extremely beautiful driving along the roads. They are hardened roads lined with beautiful trees and hedges. There are a large number of commons, you might call them, in Cinnamon Gardens and on these the native adult lolls under the trees and the children play. Horses seem to be very scarce here. I have seen altogether about six in carriages and a few racehorses. These horses instead of being ridden out to exercise are led by a native who has to walk at the horses head during it's exercise. The native and his Rickshaw takes the place of cabs. These beings seem to be tireless. They will trot for hours and pull you up and down hills until you marvel at his endurance and all for a few pence per hour.

The wagons with their leave cover things or thatched roof are drawn by very small bullocks with large lumps on their necks. They are controlled by a string or rope passing through the nostrils and are yoked by large heavy poles - young saplings - which you would think would break their necks. They are treated very well. Nearly all of them are decorated with beads and they are never ill - treated. The natives wash them every night.

The natives take a delight in wearing various coloured dresses. You see displayed before your eye every colour imaginable. Capt. Johnston and I found great difficulty in telling the sexes of natives at first. It was some hours before we saw any women and then very few. The natives divide themselves into various classes or sects and you distinguish one from the other by some being shaven, some wearing combs, colour of dress etc. The natives have beautiful teeth but after they eat beetle-nut - of which they are extremely fond - they look horrible. Their teeth and lips are covered blood red, like as if their mouth was bleeding.

We then motored through the native quarter in the city and there received an education. It is hardly creditable that such a number could live in so small a place. Everywhere seems confusion. Fruit stalls, sweet shops, curio shops, clothes shops and dozens of other shops seem to have become mixed up and require sorting out. It is beyond me to describe this place.

The Hotels here are beautifully large and well equipped. The harbour is simply littered with small craft and natives. There is a wonderful breakwater at Colombo. It is a splendid feat of engineering. The Barracks at Colombo is large but it did not impress me much.

It was very amusing when the first ballet of men were going ashore. The Major had arranged overnight for a large steam launch to call for

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- the men. In the morning there were about 50 small boats waiting to earn a few pence in rowing the men ashore. Well you can imagine their consternation and chagrin when they found the launch robbing them of their chances. They babbled and screamed and yelled long after the launch disappeared and one of the ships company told me what they called the natives on the launch was unspeakable even for him. We were going all night and I must say the natives can work when they have to.
- 10/3/15 I have not opened this book for some days now. The day we left Colombo I was shot in the leg by one of the Officers who was examining an automatic pistol. It accidentally went off and shot the mate of the ship in the neck and me in the leg. Ten shots were fired altogether.  
see over 3 pages (2-3-15)
- 23/2/15 We left Colombo today.  
I was having a smoke after dinner today when one of the Officers was examining his automatic revolver and showing it to the Chief Mate. He pulled the trigger not knowing it was loaded of course, and fired off 9 shots, one of them entered the Mate's neck and another entering my leg in the front and coming out by the side after striking the bone. I hopped about at first not knowing I was struck but when I pulled up my trousers the blood was spurting out about two feet each side, so I immediately put a finger over each hole until the Doctor dressed it. He painted it with picnic acid to kill all germs, which it did most effectively. They would insist that I was going to faint and kept my head between my legs, although I was never more sensible, I wish to heavens I could have fainted, then they made me drink that vile stuff called Brandy, oh how I hate it. There was some doubt at first as to whether, I should lose my leg; but fortunately I was allowed to keep it.
- 2/3/15 Came out of hospital today. Had a very weary time of it with the noise of the engines going all day and night. Can walk slightly.
- 3/3/15 Paid all men today.
- 4/3/15 Nothing unusual during the day. A most remarkable scene was witnessed in the night time. The sea was as smooth as glass but it was extremely phosphorescent as the ship cut through it. Oh it was beautiful to see the sea illuminate like this. Even the fish when they would skim along the top would leave a track of light behind. It was just like a scene you would read in a fairy tale.
- 5/3/15 The sea was just like a sheet of glass this morning, not a ripple or swell disturbed the surface. Oil in stationary basin could not be smoother. I forgot to mention that we are now in the Red sea.
- 6/3/15 ?
- 7/3/15 Expect to be in the Gulf of Suez early tonight.
- 10/3/15 Landed at Alexandria today and commenced un-shipping horses immediately.  
1st train containing Mr Kelly and 6 men together with 180 horses left at 2 p.m.  
Capt. Johnston and 18 and 57 men together with 180 horses left at 5pm. I with the remainder of the men (14) and horses for the Generals were left behind. Slept on boat. We went to Rest Camp A on 11th.

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Very hot, windy, awfully dusty and miserable camp. Received orders at 8pm to entrain at 6.40 the following morning at Alexandria. Rose at 3.45am 12th marched 2 3/4 hours to station (the wrong one of course) had to requisition for special train and after a very exciting but interesting trip arrived at Cairo at 1.30pm. Had dinner in Cairo at the Continental Hotel. All my men but two were ordered to 'mend' with the horses. I was sent to Palais de Cuba and arrived there at 5.40pm, went into camp. Removed to Capt. Johnson's tent on the 13th. Went to Cairo nearly everyday. Cairo is a vast city but it is also a horrible 'sink of iniquity' where the vilest of the vile consort and most dastardly and inhuman crimes are committed. Some of the buildings are palatial but the others are uninhabitable hovels. It is an extremely expensive town where your money runs like water.

17/3/15 Capt. Johnston order to Mena. He took all his own men and wanted mine also. I gave him all except two batmen the other (Dawson) wanted to remain with me.

21/3/15 Went to Heliopolis to see Capt. Brown. Stayed to dinner and was introduced to Miss Sargent (a nurse from Guyco Hospital London) and the matron from one of the Government Hospital. I was invited to Tennis and Dinner at their hospital on it 24th ins. Accepted. Also went to Church and confession.

22/3/15 Rose at 7.45 and wrote a letter home and completed my diary to date.

27/3/15 I am now encamped at Mena to which I was ordered on 23/3/15. This is a very much larger camp than Abbossa. We have the pyramids to the South and very imposing they look. They appear to be 1/2 a mile from us but in reality they are 2 miles. Work is much more systematic here. We rise at 6am and retire when we are tired. There are plenty of amusements here for the men, including cinemas and vaudeville shows. The Officers generally gambled at night until 1 or 2 am. On the 24th ins. I went to the Hospital at Kasna El Ina and was introduced to all the sisters there (12 in all). They all conspired to give me a really good time. We played tennis all the afternoon and had dinner at 8pm. After dinner they handed round sweets in the centre of which were spirits such as Whiskey, Rum, etc. On the 25th we went for a manoeuvre in the desert. We did not do very much work. On the journey home to camp we saw a tremendous "willy willy" soaring over a mile high. It was very interesting as it was the first big one I had seen. Of course there are innumerable small ones everyday. The next day (26th) we went out for the day in the desert to carry out a Brigade exercise. We went about 4 miles out and then rested in the broiling hot sun. About 2.30 we commenced to return and got back at 3.30 and at 4.30 we had a conference and discussed the days work. To-day (27th) I am brigade orderly officer. There is a lecture at 9am to-day but I am unable to attend owing to being on duty.

It is very interesting to see the different units water. You see one long line of horses being led from every unit and there is great competition to see who will get to the trough first as there is only one long trough for each brigade and the last there always finds it empty.

The horses are very well trained and will lie down quite contentedly by the man who looks after them. They have a young donkey as a mascot

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- in this brigade (1st) and he is extremely interesting in his antics. He makes us laugh until the tears run down our eyes.
- We were visited by myriad's of locusts on Sunday 21st. They almost shut out the sun's rays. The men amused themselves all day by throwing stones at random and knocking the locusts over. The locusts are large yellowish insects having long slender bodies. They do not make a noise like the Australian locust.
- 28/3/15 Went to Mass. In the afternoon I went to Kass el Eine Hospital, had afternoon with the nurses (12 of them) and went to church in the evening. Stayed to dinner which was at 8 and arrived home at 10.15pm. The Tommies had a review in Cairo yesterday.
- 29/3/15 Review of the L. Horse and Artillery in the morning. The Infantry was also inspected during the day. We had a lecture in the evening.
- 30/3/15 We went for a Brigade exercise into the desert returned 3 o'clock.
- 31/3/15 Took Lt Turner with me to the hospital where we had a very good afternoon's amusement playing tennis. We went to Cairo in the evening and dined at St James. Met Dr. Mulhead. Today was pay-day. The other evening we went to Paltas Cinema which is combination of a picture show and Vaudeville. The show was most entertaining, the singing being either in French or Italian.
- 1/4/15 All the men were turned out this morning at 3am by the S / Major. They were all told to stand by their horses and to have them harnessed some were suspicious at this and then it became known that it was the 1st of April.
- I was fortunate enough to remember. The column was taken out for a route march along Pyramid road to exercise the horses. In the afternoon I went to the rifle range.
- 2/4/15 I am Orderly Officer today. Nothing unusual occurred during the morning, but in the evening whilst at the picture show I was suddenly called out and ordered to hand in at Bde H'Qs and leave list of all the men for the day on leave. The day had been declared a holiday in all the camps and a very large number of troops were in Cairo. They went to their usual haunts and some of the men who had contracted venereal diseases went to the houses where they contracted it. They were bent on mischief. Some of them demanded money that they had spent on themselves to effect a cure, it was denied them so they got roardy and one had his eye gouged out by a native attendant. That fired them to extremes. They then went out, collected their mates and commenced to wreck all the house of ill repute in the street. Furniture, pianos etc. were heaved out the windows and smashed in the street the remains were collected and fired. The fire brigade was then called but the troops out the hoses. The red cops (native police) then arrived with rifles, revolvers and ball cartridge. They tried to quell the troops but only infuriated them the more as they were now all extremely drunk and hated the police very heartedly for the way in which they were treated by them from the beginning. When they refused to disperse when called on the police fired a volley into the air, then the troops (several hundred of them) charged the police with the consequence that about five were shot - 3 killed the troops then took command of the street and wrecked every Cafe and shop in it completely. Full bottles of



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- whiskey and barrels of beer were thrown about everywhere, the troops were now an insane mob, not a native was insight and the women were terrified. The Light Horse and Infantry were ordered out from Mena but it was many hours before order was restored. I think the fact that we had received orders to embark for the front also had a good deal to do with it.
- 3/4/15 Nothing unusual occurred today. The same old monotony. Today was also proclaimed a holiday. I drew money to pay my men their ships pay.
- 4/4/15 Paid the men. Did not go to Mass as we were too busy. I visited the Pyramids today, also the Sphinx and the guide gave me a very interesting account of everything, showing me the place where Napoleon camped. I rode over on a donkey - my first ride on one. We struck tents today and are going to sleep in the open tonight. Had a very very busy day going all the while.
- 5/4/15 Had an awful experience sleeping out. The weather was very hot and exceedingly dusty. Whilst sleeping we could feel the fine sand being piled up inches thick all over us, so that in the morning we were completely covered with a thick coating of dust, even including our head and face. In the morning whilst trying to shave the water dried on our face as soon as it was wet, nevertheless we endeavoured to shave by instalments - a few inches at a time. I went to Cairo after breakfast and returned after lunch. We left Cairo at 6.30pm arrived at Cairo Railway Station at 8pm and finally left Cairo for Alexandria at 3am arriving at Alexandria at 8.30am after a very fitful sleep and a very cold night.
- 6/4/15 Hung about the boat all day and went ahead at night.
- 7/4/15 Nothing unusual today, marched about all day doing nothing.
- 8/4/15 Same as yesterday. Went to the opera. El Traveller in the evening. It was played by an Italian in the Alambre Theatre. Very second rate show with about two really good singers. We roamed round the town afterwards until 2.15am arriving back at the boat at 3am.
- 9/4/15 We sailed today at about 12 noon. Nothing unusual occurred during the voyage. Capt. Johnston and I were in charge of the "hold party" comprising 26 men. We arrived at Lemnos our Rendezvous on 12th.
- 12/4/15 We are in one of the prettiest harbours I have ever seen or imagined. It is surrounded by beautiful green hills all of which are cultivated. There are several villages and they look very well planted in the side of the hills. A large number of transports are here with us together with a small fleet of ships of war including the Queen Elizabeth. We expect to be moving any day now.
- 16/4/15 Nothing unusual has occurred since the 12th. We are still in Lemnos Harbour.
- 26/4/15 This is the first day since the 16th I have felt inclined to write, although in that time many exciting events have occurred. We left Lemnos Harbour on the 24th and stayed the night outside the North of the Island where we all collected. About 12am we sailed for the Dardenelles and arrived there, while all of us were asleep, at about 5pm; at about 5.15 they commenced to bombard and to land the Infantry about 6pm. The Navy were bombarding all day long and the

Infantry were fighting very hard also. Our men drove the enemy about two miles inland and judging by the tremendous heavy fire someone was getting a very hard time.

All the time the Infantry were advancing the Navy were bombarding very heavily a point called "Kaba Tepe". They were firing upon it from both sides and also from the fronts. The bombardment was so heavy that our ship was trembling all the time and you would think that not an inch of ground was left uncovered.

In the late afternoon the Artillery from the enemy got busy and drove our chaps back as they have no artillery on shore. Our men were driven back to the ridge overlooking the beach, they were being pressed so hard that a message came back to all ships about 3am to stand by with all boats to take our men off, but fortunately we made a counter attack and held on until

morning. In the morning - today - about 12 ships (battleships) collected and opened fire. It was a magnificent sight and one that very few have been privileged to see. The big 15 inch guns of the Queen Elizabeth were booming, the reports of the guns were almost deafening but the roar of the explosion from the Lyddite shells busting was greater. Shrapnel busting were booming all along the ridges, then our artillery landed and we drove the enemy back capturing 9 machine guns, 1 battery of mountain artillery and 2000 prisoners. The second battery went ashore this afternoon but were ordered back as it was said by H.Q. that there were enough guns ashore to blow the Turks to H--- and besides there was no room for anymore guns.

The Navy just belched forth shells this afternoon. When I commenced to write I was on top of the bridge (SS Indian) and had a splendid view of the bombardment. There is no doubt that the Navy are remarkable shots. They can drop shells just where they like and in the same place every time. We saw them bombard a fort on the shore today that had escaped their notice yesterday and it was extremely interesting to see them blow it to pieces. Today the ships were lined all along the beach and they were all firing at the same time. The transports were all outside the line. The landing place is continually under fire, but nevertheless our men do not seem to take any notice; they are all in little dugouts of their own. Tonight we were watching the Turks trying to locate our batteries by the aid of star shell. The navy fired three or four broadsides and that effectively silenced their display. The effect of the Turks fire was very similar in sight to a huge fireworks display. The display of the Queens Elizabeth's fire to-day was truly magnificent. She fired time and again, broadsides from her 15' inch guns clear over the heads of our batteries and troops and busting the shells right in the enemies quarters.

27/4/15

We were awakened this morning by the sound of shell firing. At first we thought it was our ships firing but we were very soon disillusioned by the shells busting all around us and splashing our decks. The Turks had moved up their Artillery Brigades during the night and they peppered the landing stage very heavily. We were ordered out of range and shortly after breakfast we moved right out and sailed along the coast. It was a very interesting trip sailing amongst the islands. Seven

transports, two cruisers and two destroyers comprised the outing. We have on board an Infantry man from the 6th Battalion who had a nervous breakdown after the engagement and was ordered back to the base. Our doctor said that he is deranged. The following is some of the reports which corroborates what we had already heard:

On first landing, the Turks were right on the beach with machine guns. Our men did not fire but charged with the bayonet where upon the Turks fled, they could not stand the bayonet.

Our men drove them back over the first two ridges to the third where the Turks were strongly entrenched, we were unable to shift them as they were too strong. The Turks then drove our men back with their Artillery.

The Turks have twigs on their clothing and are also covered with bushes, consequently it is very hard to locate them in the thick prickly scrub. He told us tales of men with their entrails blown out, their knee caps off and many other mutilations.

He said our Officers were suffering very heavily. Our men are all heroes. Many of the Infantry are taken prisoner.

2/3/15 The reports of cruelty are not true I have never yet met a man who has actually seen anyone mutilated. I was on the Reninould for six months and found the Turk to be the cleanest fighter it is possible to meet. I have since found out that some of these reports I have heard from the men are untrue.

28/4/15 Our little excursion to-day took us right up to the end of the Gulf of Saros. There are two or three little villages here situated in the hills. About 4.30 am we had a feint landing and shelled part of the shore. The object of this trip is to make the Turks believe that we are going to land forces at different parts of the coast and so cause them to concentrate troops there. At 3.45 we gave another feint landing demonstration but this time we did not do any bombarding. I was a member of this second party. The commander of the Torpedo boat "Ribble" told us today that the AE2 was through the Dardanelles and that the Queen Elizabeth had sunk a Turkish Transport on the other side of the Peninsula.

29/4/15 Last night was a most dreadful one. The wind blew a tornado almost and the rain came down in torrents. It was bitterly cold with the rain blowing right under the awning and covering our beds, but luckily we had waterproof sheets. It got very warm after breakfast, so warm in fact that we could not bask very long in it - the changes in the weather are very, very sudden. Early this morning we passed the place (Kaba Tepe) where our troops have effected a landing. During the night we travelled back as far as Lemnos. Our trip today was back again to the head of the Gulf of Saros where, at 4.15 p.m., we made a feint landing. We were fired upon by a fort that had been wrecked (it is called Fort Napoleon). The shells fell about 50 yards either side of us but fortunately none of the bullets hit us. Immediately after their last shot it was noticed that two shells had hit the fort right where the battery was firing. They were beautiful shots but so far we do not know who fired them. When the firing commenced, we turned round on the spot and sailed back, as quick as we could to the ship.

30/4/15 We came back to the landing to the landing stage (Kaba Tepe). Last night, we arrived to see a magazine, which was set on fire by the warships, blazing merrily. Our Infantry have made good advances, there are no sounds of rifle firing now. The Queen Elizabeth has left us and gone up the Dardenelles and has set fire to the village of Midas the blaze of which can be seen from our ship. A destroyer during the morning espied a battery or a trend in the side of the hill, she became very excited and fired as fast as she was able. The 29th division (English) have made good progress. They landed in four places, two of which were opposed the men who landed then turned and took the enemy in the rear.

The Revenge is going to join us. Col. Christian and Capt. Lloyd have left us to go ashore. One of our trawlers has been sunk by a chance shell from the Dardenelles. Early this morning we were very much surprised by having spent shells fired amongst us. Firing was very spasmodic today. We could see our batteries firing and also the shells bursting from the enemies guns. The war ships were not very active. I was suffering from a headache today.

1/5/15 Awoke this morning to the sounds of fierce gun firing and rifle firing. I got up and witnessed a magnificent sight. The enemies shells were busting in hundreds on the top of the crest. Our guns were replying together with the Navy and the Infantry. The noise was awful but the sight was very impressive to see the shells busting in the dark. This was about 4am. The Navy kept up their firing all day. The Turks are disembowelling our wounded, (not true) consequently no quarter is given or taken and no prisoners are being taken on either side. The enemy are dressing up in our uniforms, getting into our trenches and giving false orders such as "cease fire" and telling our men not to fire on certain spots as they are occupied by our troops. Of course they are false so our troops are not to take written orders unless they are certain of the officer who issued them. The hills are also honeycombed with dugouts in which snipers from the enemy entrenched with a thousand rounds and food for a week. We are rooting them out gradually but it is very hard owing to the nature of the ground, them being dressed in our uniforms and speaking English well. The enemy forts from the Dardenelles are dropping 14 inch shells near our landing stage but fortunately doing little damage. Our troops are looked upon as heroes by the Navy. Our progress so far has been beyond expectations. We have destroyed several batteries but owing to the ground being very precipitous there are very few gun positions and we cannot get all our guns ashore. The Infantry went mad when we landed the first guns. They prayed for them.

The wounded as they passed our boats used to say, "For God's sake get the guns ashore". There is enormous amount of war material scattered about the shore such as rifles, bayonets kills etc. Our men have a very poor opinion of the Turks. They will never stand a bayonet charge. To date there are about 600 killed and two or three thousand slightly wounded.

The mail arrived tonight and we stayed up until 11pm sorting out letters. I received four - one from Mother, Lily, W. McKevilly and El.

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2/5/15 Today is Sunday. Nothing of importance happened this end of the beach during the day. The Navy were heavily bombarding the other end. At 7pm tonight at a given signal from an aeroplane all the Navy (about 12 ships) commenced to bombard the ridges. They fired as quick as they could and were supported by our field guns. The sight was very impressive while it lasted which was about 35 minutes, then the forces on shore commenced a general forward movement, the result of which will be known tomorrow. Sgt Larkin M.P from NSW has been killed and disembowelled by the Turks. We have decided to take prisoners. A field battery came into position in the open on a ridge behind Kaba Tepe the Navy sighted it, one of the war ships fired four shots and when the smoke disappeared so had the battery; it was blown to pieces. The shooting of the Navy is simply marvellous. It is beyond me to give a picture of the bombardment tonight. It was a beautiful day fairly warm in the sun and cold in the shade.

3/5/15 The cannonading and rifle firing was continued all night, we awoke to the sound of it this morning. We always rise at 6am as shortly afterwards the decks are washed down. We are all sleeping on deck as cabins are very scarce.

I will give some idea of the scheme which we are working out:-

Three forces are to land, (1) The Australians and New Zealanders to land at Kaba Tepe; (2) The English to land at Saddle Bahr; (3) The French to land somewhere in Asia.

We mistook our landing place by 1 1/2 to 3 miles and it was extremely fortunate for us that we did so. The Turks and Germans had prepared for us a huge maze of barb wire entanglements extending far inland. On either side of these entanglements are ridges on which many field batteries were concealed. If we had landed at the right place this batteries would have been able to enfilade us to their hearts contents, we would have had them pouring lead from the front and both sides. The mistake occurred through one of the tugs getting out of line and instead of getting back it remained where it was consequently the others dressed on the left of it instead of the right so that we landed in the wrong place and where it was least expected. When the boats got within 15 yards of the shore they were fired upon, this incensed them to such an extent that they jumped out of the boats and when called upon to halt by their officers they shouted "Halt! be -" and charged. When they drove the Turks back and took trenches, they just heaved the bodies out on the top of the bayonet, it was just awful but I am sure that if our soldiers were thoroughly trained that no troops in the world would bear comparison with them. It is hard to believe that this is their first time under fire. Thousands are swimming in the water after coming out of the trenches.

4/5/15 I was interrupted in the writing of this diary by huge shells bursting amongst the transports. One of the transports or rather callier, was hit on the after deck and a hole blown in. At first we thought she was finished but she was only damaged. This afternoon we were ordered ashore. Passed the Hessian on the way and every one of them turned and cheered us.

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- 5/5/15 We were encamped in dugouts. Shrapnel is bursting all around us unfortunately we are stationed in the most exposed part. The beach presents a scene of great activity. No one seems to mind the bullets flying about but occasionally we are stirred up by one of the men being killed. Yesterday a man had his leg blown off by a piece of shrapnel not 20 yards in front of my dugout. We have numerous shells of the Turks here. They are using three different kinds of fuse and we have samples of each. Last night we were digging ammunition shelters and stacking them with shells. Bullets were whizzing and bursting all around us; we were right against the first line trenches. We completed our work about 3:30am and then returned to camp. Dead and dying men were being carried past all the while we were working.
- 6/5/15 We were subjected today to the heaviest shell fire we have had so far, mules were simply slaughtered everywhere. We dare not leave our dugouts for fear of being shot. One man had his head completely blown off. It was very cold during the night a Turkish officer surrendered himself today. We have a number of them cut off on a peninsula and they can neither get water nor food nor can they escape. Sent cards home.
- 7/5/15 We landed the 5th Battery today and whilst unloading we were fired upon again this time shrapnel pierced the waterproof covering over Capt. Johnston and I but fortunately no one was injured. The 4th Battery had two guns put out of action during the day.
- 8/5/15 We were ordered to help the 4th Battery in digging gun pits. Whilst on the road up we were subjected to a perfect hail of shells and a bullet from one of them hit Capt. Johnston in the hip and another in the arm. Fortunately he was near a Red Cross Station and was soon fixed up. He is at present on the hospital ship. We were digging near the 4th Battery guns when they told us to take cover whilst they opened fire. They fired about 40 shells and were replied to very heartily by the enemy. Bullets were flying all around us. The enemy then enfiladed the beach and wrought havoc amongst the mules killing nine of them. A W. Officer was in his dugout quite close to the beach when a shell struck it and pierced it blowing him to pieces.
- 9/5/15 The shelling of the beach was very heavy today. One man was shot through the head right in front of our dugouts. This is the forth day that the beach has been enfiladed by a battery on our right and which the warships cannot locate. We spent the morning in strengthening our dugouts as the shell fire is getting more deadly.
- 10/5/15 I caught the 8.30 picket boat to go aboard the Indian. We first went to the Queen then to the Seang Bee where we charged over to a trawler. After visiting nearly every ship in the bay we at last arrived at the Indian at 1.45pm. I had to get lamps and some forms for DH2 and also the remainder of my kit. As no trawler called to take me ashore again I had to stay the night on board. The 2nd Battery has left leaving the Ammunition Column only on board.
- 11/5/15 I remained on board all day being unable to get ashore. The bombardment of the beach today was something awful. Three of my

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- men have gone to the hospital ship and my dugout is almost covered in by dirt thrown up by shells bursting almost on top. An officer had his shoulder blown away on the corner of my dugout. The cook house was almost completely blown away. Capt. Chester in a dugout next to mine, has gone to hospital suffering from nervous prostration. Three spies (our own soldiers) were captured during the afternoon. It has been a cold, misty and rainy day. The "Indian A16" sails for Alexandria at day break tomorrow. We got some sand bags tonight in order to strengthen our position. A good deal of rifle fire was going on during the night but very little gun fire. I lost my great coat yesterday, it fell overboard.
- 12/5/15 It was almost untenable and around our dugouts this morning, shells fell fast and furious. Three times I had to clear my shelters out of sand that had been thrown in by shells busting within a few yards of us. It was living hell. Our blankets and coats were riddled with shrapnel bullet holes whilst they were out airing.  
This is the 19th day we have been held this place and I think that it will be some weeks before the fight abates and a much longer time before we are safe. One of our ships of war was sunk last night by a torpedo from the shore. We remained in our shelters all day.
- 13/5/15 The shell fire was not so intense today. We stood by all day waiting for orders I took a trip up to the top of the hill and had a look at the surrounding county. It was a beautiful morning and the view very good. In the evening we received orders to carry timber to the trenches. It took us until about 3am to finish. We had to take it to the very front through our trenches. The men were sleeping quite soundly not withstanding the fact that bullets with exploding overhead continuously. The odour from the bodies of the dead Turks in front of our trenches was most revolting. The enemy keep firing all night long in order to keep our men awake. Whilst I was up in the trenches the enemy commenced sounding bugle calls so if in preparation of a charge but nothing ever comes of it. A lot of rifle fire was coming from Gaba Tepe but what the cause of it was I don't know.
- 14/5/15 We remained in our dugouts all day. The beach was being shelled all the while the enemy tried to sink some lighters with provisions on board. They fired about 150 shells, sinking one empty lighter and hitting one full one about three times. They also went very close to a trawler, sending showers of water into it but not doing any damage. We did no work during the night.
- 15/5/15 We were digging two guns pits today under shell fire all the while. We dug them for the guns on the extreme right flank and finished about 5:15pm.  
We could hear most of the shells coming but some half dozen shells were fired from a long range and we did not hear them until they were on us.  
They did no damage but caused us to be very careful as they were very large shells (lyddite) and burst with a great deal of noise. I had a good view of the surrounding country and could see the warships firing from Cape Hellas. The warships in our vicinity again bombarded the ruins on top of Gaba Tepe.

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- 16/5/15 We remained in our shelters all day. The enemy continuously shelled the beach and also a trawler which was hit in the bows and a shrapnel shell burst over it. A 6 inch howitzer was landed today. Five more are to be landed tomorrow. It was officially announced today that Italy had declared war was marching against Austria. Tried Driver Wilkinson today.
- 17/5/15 The enemy are still shelling the beach and the trenches are getting a particularly hot time. We did nothing for the greater part of the day but in the evening we built a platform for a 6" howitzer. It took us until about 1am to complete the job as we had to run the gun in when we finished the platform. It is very hot in the afternoon and the water is particularly enticing but dangerous owing to shrapnel and stray bullets.
- 18/5/15 Things were exceedingly quiet today. We worked on the howitzer gun pit until about dinner time. In the afternoon I strolled round our position and was very much surprised at the advance we have made. The troops seem to be very comfortable. When I returned from going round the defences I went in for a swim. The water was cold but refreshing. About 6.30 the enemy commenced to bombard us very, very heavily. They were firing large shells and highly explosive shells. Shells of all sizes were bursting everywhere. The enemy attacked us during the night but they were driven back with very heavy loss. Our machine guns simply mowed them down. There are hundreds of dead Turks in front of our trenches. Our troops did not budge an inch. The rifle fire tonight is very fierce. The enemy must be very heavily reinforced to take the offensive because this is the first time they have done so.
- 19/5/15 The fighting continued all night and for the greater part of today. The men are completing the gunpit for the howitzer. Two of my men have been shot. One of them, the cook, was shot whilst I was talking to him by the fire. A number of Turkish prisoners were captured today. They seem to be very neglected, their boots being almost worn out and their clothing very old. The enemy had given us until midnight last night to surrender. Needless to say we ignored them and when they did attack we killed between one and two thousand.
- 20/5/15 This morning the enemy shelled the beach and the landing stage. They tried very hard to hit out trawlers but fortunately they got away without being hit. In the afternoon things were extremely quiet, hardly a shot being fired. The enemy hoisted a large white flag with a red crest on it. Our Officers went out and held a conference with them. It appears with them. It appears that they asked for an armistice to bury their dead but instead of doing so they gathered in all the rifles they could. Prisoners have been arriving all day and are being treated very well. At one time we were under the impression that the Turks were going to surrender, nothing came of it however. I went through all the mail for the 1st Brigade today and only got one letter (B.McT) for myself and a few for the men. A shell fell right on top of my dugout today with the consequence that it all fell in and I had to shift my quarters.



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The warships kept on firing for the greater part of the night. I visited the N. Zealanders today and very narrowly escaped being hit by a sniper.

Went in for a swim in the afternoon. The water was just lovely but, owing to shrapnel falling continuously it was none too safe. A German Hawke flew over us today, dropping one bomb but doing no damage. One of the warships fired two or three shells at it.

My I.M.S. had to go to hospital yesterday owing to an abscess in the hand.

21/5/15 Today seems to have been a special one. First of all we had the morning off, then about midday a white flag was waved on Gaba Tepe and a German Staff Colonel was led in blindfolded and had a conference with our Generals and lastly we were supplied with fresh beef - the first since we landed. The Staff Officer was shot, solid little fellow wearing top boots and well dressed. He occasioned a great deal of curiosity.

I went in for a swim in the afternoon and completed my dugout in the evening. There was very little rifle - firing today, the artillery was also very quiet.

22/5/15 We were working in the dugouts of our head quarters in the afternoon. Things were very quiet all day, very little firing going on. Mr Clowes stayed with us all day. The Staff Officer came in again today to ask for an armistice but it was denied him on the ground that he was using it as a means to get up reserves and attack us. It rained early this morning and in an hours time the whole place was like a quagmire, it is extremely hard to walk owing to the clay being so slippery and in the trenches it is awful.

There was a submarine scare today. To see the way in which the destroyers cruised about was wonderful. There were seven destroyers and they were like a lot of very angry ants whose hill had been destroyed. I went in for a swim in the afternoon and we played cards in the evening.

23/5/15 Very quiet today. Mr Clowes still with us. I went through 6 bags of mail today and got some letters from home. Went in for a swim in the afternoon and played cards in the evening. I have been suffering from a severe headache all day.

This morning H.M.S. Albion ran aground at Gaba Tepe. She was fired on by field batteries and hit a few times. Whilst she was aground she fired her guns as fast as she could load them, she simply blew a place called "The Olive Grove" to pieces. Eventually another battleship towed her off.

24/5/15 An armistice is declared from 7.30 am to 4.30 p.m.. Today is looked upon as a general holiday and thousands have come down from the trenches to indulge in a swim. They all appear to be very happy so that you would hardly think we were at war. The men from the beach also took the opportunity to have a look round the trenches and to see the enemy. I went up to the howitzer and stayed for lunch with the Officers.

We went in for a swim in the afternoon.

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- 25/5/15 Nothing unusual occurred early this morning but about 11 o'clock we were all horrified to hear a loud explosion and to see a great blaze on the 'Triumph'. She was seen to immediately take a heavy list to starboard and in seven minutes she completely turned turtle, sinking altogether from sight in twenty minutes. Immediately after the explosion you could see destroyers, pinnaces and trawlers going to her aid from everywhere. Her decks were crowded with men and they were being taken off very quickly. The sea was exceedingly calm so that there should not have been one casualty if the men could swim but, unfortunately, some could not so about twenty were drowned. The 'Triumph' was the most favoured ship here as her fire was always very accurate and seemed to silence whatever battery she fired at. After she was sunk the destroyers patrolled all over the place but I don't think they caught the submarine. although one of them fired several shot and a submarine was reported sunk some time after at the entrance to the Dardenelles. The enemy seems to have very good observation because every time a trawler comes in close, shells burst right over where she is but, fortunately, does little, if any damage. The men had no work to do today so I went in for a swim and had a good read afterwards.
- 26/5/15 It was posted up on the notice board today that Italy had declared war on Austria and that she had already had a brush with the enemy on the northern frontier. It has been rather a quiet day except for the booming of big guns down at Cape Helles. A few shells were fired from the enemy and one of them exploded over my dugout covering Mr Clowes and myself in dirt. We heard it coming but could not get away. If it had exploded, we would most certainly have been killed as it landed within ten yards of us. Three destroyers full of troops arrived today and landed them about 4pm. They were shelled by the enemy. I went in for a swim in the afternoon and we played cards in the evening.
- 27/8/15 It is very quiet today. Capt. McLaughlan came ashore from Lemnos last night. The enemy fire a great number of shells out to sea in the hope of hitting one of the trawlers. Sounds of heavy firing are coming continually from Cape Helles. One of our aeroplanes dropped bombs on the Turkish trenches this afternoon. We were in swimming this afternoon and had only just left the water when shells commenced to arrive, fortunately I escaped unhurt but two others were hit. A destroyer opened fire on the enemy this afternoon. The Majestic was torpedoed early this morning.
- 28/5/15 Mr Clowes left us this morning. Very little firing is taking place. We had a good look at the Turkish prisoners this morning. They are all in good condition physically but their clothes are in tatters. One of the destroyers again opened fire on the enemy batteries. The weather is very warm. I went in for a swim in the afternoon. The men did no work today.
- 4/6/15 I was attached to the 6 " howitzer gun on Sunday last to relieve Lieut. Crick. I had a party of men up to dig a shelter for myself on Sunday

and whilst They were working the enemy opened fire, they seemed to have got our range to a nicety for shells were bursting right in amongst us and blowing our kits and utensils to pieces. We took cover during the bombardment and it ceased after about three quarters of an hour so we resumed work but after about ten minutes the enemy let us have one more shell. The shell did more damage than all the others. Two of our corporals were hit in the leg very badly. So also were two other men higher up the hill. I sent the men back after this. One of the bullets from this same shell went between Mr Crick and myself, piercing a bucket between us. Both of us had very narrow escapes. I am with the gun by myself now. It is very monotonous being here by myself all day with no one for company. You very soon get tired of reading and smoking and then time hangs very very heavily as I cannot leave the gun because we might open fire at any minute.

The men I had charge of on the beach left for Cape Helles this morning. Yesterday was King's Birthday and we all received an issue of rum to celebrate the occasion.

The Turks have kept very quiet during the day lately but in the evening we got busy with our mortars and bombs, the Turks then open a heavy rifle fire. It is very hot during the day and to see the sea within a few hundred yards and not being able to go for a swim is very exasperating, the more so as I've seen hundreds of men going down regularly every day to swim. It is very pretty in the evening strolling along our lines. You can see lights coming from all directions, some straight up from the earth and others out of every mound and the side of every hill. These lights from the dugouts remind one very much of fairy tales. The name of these dugouts are very amusing. Some are called after big helots such as 'The Sydney', 'The Australian' etc. others have more typical names such as 'Splinter Villa', 'Shrapnel House' and so forth.

Col. Rosenthal has cabled over to Australia for the Battery of 5 inch Howitzers which will come in very handy indeed if we are to keep operating in country such as this.

This morning seems to have been set apart as the time to commence a general bombardment of Cape Hellas and the firing was something terrific down there. Not a second elapsed without hearing the report of some big gun. It must have been like hell let loose. The hill this side was just one long line of bursting shells. Operation at this and almost ceased altogether, both sides seemed to be awaiting the result of the battle at the other end. Even with the naked eye we could see shells bursting all along and over the ridge. I am sure that nothing could have lived within that zone of bursting shells. This awful bombardment ceased at 4 pm and we are all anxiously awaiting the results.

7/6/15

The official result has been posted up of the bombardment but we have heard that thousand of Turks have been taken prisoner besides many hundreds being killed.

It is reported on our notice board that a Peace Conference is being held at constantinsple from which German officers are excluded.

We fired a good number of rounds during the last few days. It was rather ticklish shooting at times as we were shelling Turkish trenches

which are only 40yds away from our own. The enemy have not been very active lately although at times we get a pretty hot time from them. Prisoners continue to be taken and from all accounts and appearances they are not having too good a time in their own lines.

It is getting awfully monotonous remaining here day after day with the gun and having no-one for company.

I felt very sick on the 5th. I had a terrific headache and was troubled with pains all over and my bodily and not being able to eat or smoke, I feel much better today.

15/1/16

It is such a long time since I entered anything in this journal and such a lot has happened since I arrived in England. That I will have to rely on my memory and write a letter.

Contracted violent - Headaches on 14/10/15, unable to eat or sleep for a week when the General found me and said I would have to leave the peninsula consequently I was ordered away to hospital the following day suffering from Enteric Fever. I was very disappointed to leave as I had grown to like the life very well and had also made elaborate preparations for the winter all the men were living in strong weatherproof huts with bunks in them, we had plenty of warm clothing and blankets as well as ample wood and at this time the food was good and nourishing.

We were very happy little family and all were happy and contented.

The men were so satisfied with their lot that we could not get them away for a spell. I arrived on board the hospital ship 20/10/15. The ship was ordered to Lemnos Island then to Malta where we were supposed to disembark but on the way we were ordered to England.

We called at Malta and Sibrallar and arrived at Southhampton 8/11/15

I was taken to 3rd London General Hospital where I have been ever since I was fairly well when I arrived but shortly after got a relapse which delayed me many weeks. About the end of November.

They gave me little a bread and butter instead of milk which I had been living on for about six or seven weeks. During all this time I became frightfully thin and weak so that when I was allowed to get up about 18/12/15 my legs were absolutely useless. I had only been up for a few days when I contracted jaundice; consequently they put me back in bed until 28/12/15 I was then allowed up and became gradually stronger.

They allowed me to go for motor trips now and it was by these trips that I saw some of the English country. I was particularly struck by the lovely country roads which were bordered by hedges instead of fences, also the large fields and commons. London is also surprising in the number of commons and parks right in the city itself.

About this time (January) I began to visit London and also to accept the kind invitations of the Aristocracy. One day we would go to Lord Lindsay's house another day to some Lady's residence and so by this means we met many wealthy and nice people. They could not do enough for us. We were taken to theatres and trips everywhere. There were so many invitations that we had to refuse many. After travelling all around we get in with a certain set and go everywhere with them. This is very nice as you very shortly get to know them very well and so have a good time. We have been to many very exclusive houses and

some of the customs amongst the upper classes seem very peculiar to us. The Australians are a source of great interest to the London people. They are so outspoken and converse with a Lord or a Countess as if they were brother and sister, it is the same way with the King and Queen wherever they meet them. The Australians never indulge in the small talk so common at these meetings.

It is only after you have been in London for a few weeks that you realise what an enormous city it is. I travelled for two hours and twenty minutes one day and during the whole trip I never went out side of London although I was going in a fairly straight line. There are a very large number of famous & historical buildings to see. I have visited a few including Westminster Abbey, St Pauls, Madame Tassauds Waxworks, The Strand, Wellington's House, Hyde Park and so forth. I have also met many exceedingly nice people who want me to go around with them but unfortunately. I have not the time as lavish to visit Ireland and Scotland. There are a large number of Australians resident in England and these look upon us as their special change. I have been to the principal theatres including Luxury Lane. We get about one day of sunshine a month here.

28/1/16

Left London 19/1/16. From there we went to Caythorpe Court in Lincolnshire where we spent one week. Had a most enjoyable time and during our stay we visited Lincoln Cathedral and Vattersall Castle in Lincoln, all the villages within a radius of about twelve miles and we also went to Grantham. Whilst staying at the court we attended a meet of the hounds but unfortunately were unable to procure horses 'so followed the hounds' in a motor car. The meet was at Hough and timed to start at 11am. We arrived there about 10:45 so to fill the interval we visited a very old English Church which dated back to the 12th Century. The old round tower was still standing and one could see the old windows hewn out of solid stone also the winding staircase. This tower was used as a kind of lookout and when any invaders were seen coming, all the villagers flew to this tower with their valuables where they were perfectly safe. The entrance was through a large window about 30 feet from the ground. They entered by means of a ladder which was pulled up after them. It was now time for the hounds to arrive. We saw them coming along the lane - about 60 hounds - at a trot with their tails pointing away up in the air and all waving to time. The meet then went to the wood where they expected to find a fox. We followed behind them to the edge of the wood. The hounds and the huntsmen entered and soon we heard much shouting and cry of 'forward'. The fox escaped from the wood just near us - I was the first to notice it - and had a start of two fields. Well they chased this fox for about three miles across the fields and we watched them from the hills. This particular fox got away so we followed the 'meet' - to another wood where a fox was found but it also escaped. We now returned to the court feeling very cold and very very hungry. We went for our usual walk in the afternoon, played billiards until midnight then went to bed. We put in every day in a similar manner "only, of course, instead of attending a 'meet' we walked the fields. We had a big

cycling tour all one day, that was quite sufficient for us as we are not quite strong enough in the legs.

Wednesday 26th Jan was Anniversary Day and a big "Corrobaree" was held in London by the Australians. I made a special trip to London in order to be present. There was a very large gathering and I did not get home until 1:45am feeling very tired.

The following morning I awoke at ten minutes to nine and had to catch the 10 o'clock train to Edinburgh.. I arrived at one minute to ten.

Arrived in Edinburgh the same night. The following day (28/1/16) we fortunately made the acquaintance of an Australian Professor also a good writer. He showed us all over the University, the castle and explained the all old historical buildings in High street also the places mentioned in Scots' novels. We saw the Law Courts and the principal Churches.

29/1/16

We went to Queensferry and saw the famous forth Bridge. We walked along it and saw the British fleet at anchor. The "Australia" was in the particular squadron stationed here. In the afternoon we went to tea with some Australians (Mr and Mrs Young) and after that to the cinema.

The people are very kind to us here and endeavour to make our stay enjoyable. A peculiar thing about all Australians I meet here is that I personally know friends of theirs in Australia. The Professor is a particularly nice chap and is giving us a royal time. I intended to stay only one day in Edinburgh but I am meeting such nice people that I intend to spend a week. One can easily tell when one is in Scotland. There is no mistaking the accent and the solid, heavy type of people. I do not admire the Scotch type of beauty at all.

Edinburgh is a fine city with many old historical buildings. It is very old fashioned and slow place for a tourist. They have the old cable trams which travel about five miles an hour. Motor cars are very scarce and the old hansom cab or rather the four wheeler cabs are very much in evidence. There seems to be no poverty no have I noticed any unemployed about the streets. The principal streets are paved with stones about the size of our wooden blocks.

When you leave the city the roads - at present anyhow - are very bad and muddy. They are not nearly as good as the roads in England. Princes Street - in which we are staying at the Old Waverley Hotel - is a magnificent street and exceeding pretty. It is only lined on one side with shops, on the other side are beautiful parks extending right along it. Scots Monument is on the park side and opposite our hotel. There are very few theatres and the city seems to abound in Temperance Hotels. The people strike me as very slow and very unenterprising. They don't seem to care whether they sell their goods or not. Col. Abbot the M.P. for New England N.S.W. is staying at this hotel and he & I went sight-seeing today. I have met Australian soldiers in everyplace where I have been.

5 /2 /16

On Monday (31/1/16) I went to see Nelson's Monument and climbed to the top of the tower from which we got a very fine view of Edinburgh also Holyrood Palace. After that I went all over Holyrood and saw all the rooms in which Mary Queen of Scots and the Nobility lived. I even saw the bed in which she slept also the room and place

where Rizzis was murdered. I thought Holyroad was the most interesting place I had seen. We then went and saw Edinburgh Castle which was also very interesting.

We were shown a closed door in the wall which had only been discovered a few days previously and so far they did not know where it led to but suspected it was another entrance to the chamber where the Crown Jewels were. In the evening we dined with Dr. and Mrs Young at the Carlton Hotel. After that we went to the Panto. "Babes in the Woods". Next morning we caught the 10.10a.m train to Inverness. After a very enjoyable trip through Perth and the Highlands we arrived at Inverness at 6p.m. I think the railways in this direction are about the worst in the world. We stayed at the Royal Hotel and had a dinner there in the evening at which I met a very fine old Scotchman named Capt. Mackenzie A.S.C. We had a very enjoyable evening and retired at 12 Midnight. The following morning we motored to Invergordon. We started at 9.30. The morning was very clear but Cold. Our ears and nose were slowing freezing when we arrived at Dingwall, about 20 miles from Inverness. We had tea here and completed the rest of the journey (15 miles) in comfort. Arrived at Invergordon we met Major Gordon & Fleet Surgeon Parker. Together we went all over Invergordon including the slaughter houses. Major Gordon & Surgeon Parker invited us to lunch after which we met Rear Admiral Pears who kindly put his launch at our disposal. We went all round the fleet and saw the hull of the ill-fated "Natal" which was blown up in Cromarty Firth. We got back to Invergordon about 4 o'clock, had tea at Surgeon Parker's Hospital and then motored back to Inverness. We had travelled close on 80 miles that day in the motor car. The same evening (2/2/16) Capt. Mackenzie gave us a dinner at the Station Hotel. I have been to a few dinners in my time but never to one like Mackenzie gave. There was Champagne, liqueurs and cigars galore. We had a magnificent time and got home at about 2 o'clock - I was the only one sober.

Next morning we explored all Inverness and caught the 1.10 train to Aberdeen where we arrived at 5.15 p.m. We went for a short walk before inner and were then entertained until about 1 o'clock in the morning.

We went all over Aberdeen on the morning of 4/2/16 and caught the 1.20 train to Edinburgh, arriving there at 5.20 p.m. That evening we were invited out to Capt. Leightons place and stayed there until 11 o'clock when we returned home to the hotel feeling just a "little" tired. During our whole trip, from Tuesday until Saturday, we were never in bed for more then six hours at a stretch. Capt. Leighton A.S.C. (a Professor of Edinburgh) is the man who organised and managed our whole trip. He ave us a splendid time and if it had been for him we would have had a very low time in Scotland. He is the finest old man I have ever met and wants us to stay another week and go for a trip to Glasgow with him but I don't like to trespass on his hospitality so I am thinking of touring on my own as the others are going to wait.

12/2/16

On Saturday night (5/2/16) we gave a dinner at the "Carlton Hotel" to the Leightons & Youngs. The dinner was a hugh success and everybody seemed to have enjoyed himself. No expense was spared so

that, by the end of the evening, the majority was very merry. On Sunday morning we went to Church and in the afternoon we went on a motor trip (arranged by Mrs Young) to the Forth Bridge where we had tea. The evening was spent at Capt. Leighton's house. Monday. Dr & Mrs Young arranged for us to go with them and see the picture film "Cabiria" and then to have tea with them. In the evening we took two boxes at the Kings Theatre and took the Leightons and Young to see the opera "Carmen". On Tuesday Capt. Leighton & I went to Glasgow on the 10.10 train from Edinburgh. It was snowing very heavily when we left and everything was covered with snow. I thought it was a wonderful sight perhaps because it was the first time I had seen so much snow or been out in it. We arrived in Glasgow at 11.15 and stayed at the Central Railway Hotel. It was a miserable day so I stayed in the hotel until the evening when we went and dined at the A.S.C. mess and then played bridge for the remainder of the evening. They were a very decent lot of people at the mess and gave me a splendid time.

9/2/16

Wednesday. During the morning I crossed the Clyde River and was shown all over the Main Supply Depot A.S.C. of Scotland. The rest of the party arrived in the afternoon. In the afternoon Lt. Gordon & I travelled all over Glasgow. We went out towards the University and after we had been wandering round for a couple of hours, we had no idea where we were. We eventually reached the hotel after riding on about a dozen different tram-cars--most of which were going in the wrong direction. In the evening we took a box at the theatre and saw the Panto Fort "Little Boy Blue." Glasgow is a big city and reminds me very much of Sydney. It is by no means pretty nor is it interesting to a tourist. It has a splendid system of electric trams. I did not like Glasgow at all, perhaps it was because it was winter time and the ground was wet, muddy and slippery and the city generally had a dark depressing appearance. I left Glasgow at 11 o'clock on Wednesday night, caught the midnight boat from Ardrossan for Belfast arriving there about 6 o'clock on Thursday morning and stayed at the Midland Railway Hotel.

During the morning called on Mr W Robb and remained with him for the rest of the day. During the morning we visited all the big dockyards. It commenced to rain in the afternoon so we got a motor car and motored all round the city & suburbs. In the evening we went to the early house of the Panto. "Forty Thieves and when that was over, we went to the late house of Empire Music Hall. I arrived home about midnight after a very strenuous but interesting day. Belfast is the same as all other commercial cities. It is supposed to have one of the largest ship building yards in the world also the largest linen mills, rope works and tabacoo factory. They certainly are huge concerns. The country round Belfast is very pretty. It is the prettiest country that I have seen during the whole of my tour. Everybody in Belfast seems to be earning good money and I noticed no poverty or idleness there.

The society of Belfast seem to be nearly all middle-class people who have made money by the industries which flourish there. I left Belfast by the 10 o'clock train on Friday morning and, after passing through



some beautiful country, arrived in Dublin at 1 o'clock. Left Dublin by the 3 o'clock train for Cork where I arrived at 8.30pm. I stayed at the Imperial Hotel for the night. Saturday morning I walked all Cork and saw practically all the interesting sights. Caught the 12.45 train for Killarney & arrived there about 3.20. Nearly all the poor people of Cork- old women and young girls- wore shawls over their heads with just their eyes showing. Another peculiar thing about them was that they spoke Irish - of course I could not understand them. Cork is like every other seaport and town differing only in a few customs and being Irish, it is also not as clean as other townships I have been in. Arrived at Killarney on Saturday 12.2.16 and stayed at the Lake Hotel where I was the one and only visitor. The Hotel is very prettily situated on the shore of the lowest lake. In the ground and right opposite is the ruin of a very ancient Castle with Shamrock growing all over it. Saturday afternoon was rather cold and blowy so I remained indoors and smoked. In the evening there was a dance, amongst the farming Class, called the Biddy Dance. It is a very old custom to hold this Biddy Dance in honor of St Brigid. On the 31st Dec. every year all the boys dress up in all kinds of weird dresses, wear masks and dance. They Collect money on this night and the proceeds are devoted to a dance about 12.2.16. They buy cakes and tea and commence the dance about 11 o'clock then finish up about 3 or 4am. I was invited and intended to go but as the guests had not commenced to arrive at 10.30 I went to bed. Sunday morning I went to church. When I arrived at the village it seemed to me that all Ireland was there. There were thousands of people all going in the same direction. I thought at first that there must be about a dozen churches necessary to accommodate them but they all went to the one church - the Cathedral. Never in all my life have I seen so many people going to the one church at the same time. Ireland is truly religious. In the afternoon I met a very nice young Irish girl who consented to show me around the sights. I went and inspected Muckross Abbey and walked along the side of the lake towards Colleen Bawn, arriving back, after a very enjoyable walk, at 5 o'clock. It rained in the evening so I remained in. Next morning I went for a walk round the lake and came back through Muckross village. Caught the 2.39 train for Dublin, arriving there at 7.25pm. Killarney is a very pretty place - abounding in hotels - and really worth the visit, It is only a small place and very queer.

15/2/16

Dublin.

Arrived here last night. This morning I visited Trinity University and went all through the famous library there, saw, amongst other interesting and old books, the famous book of Kells or Calls. Wrote a letter to Capt. Leighton in the afternoon and the evening went first to the pictures and then to the second house of "Excuse Me"

16/2/16

In the morning Father Murphy and myself motored out to Cabra where we visited the Dominican Convent which is the headquarters of the order. It is a very fine institution surrounded by many acres of ground. The Mother Prioress took us all over the buildings. They have a day school in which all the children of the poor people are educated. Then there is the boarding school and attending it are children from about 5

years old to pupils who are studying for the University. There is also a deaf and dumb institution. This I found to be the most interesting of all. Little kiddies are received there long before they come to the use of reason and how they are taught to read, write and converse with their hands and by signs, beats me. There is absolute silence in the room but one sees them talking everywhere with their fingers. They can talk with their fingers almost as quickly as I can with my tongue. They gave us a silent recitation and one of the Sisters said the words aloud. The pupils range from babies who are being taught to read and write and talk, up to old women who are taught to make lace and fancy goods. I also visited Kingstown one afternoon. In the evening of 16.2.16, the priest and myself went with the inspector of police to an Irish play "The valley of Sighs". It portrayed typical instances of Irish life.

- 17/2/16 My two friends, Bulter & O'Reilly, arrived to-day from London. In the morning we visited Christchurch Cathedral and St Patricks Cathedral. The latter was the most interesting. In it we saw the well from which St Patrick baptised this converts, also many other relics of his day. We also saw the well in the church from which Cronwell's horses drank. After that we went to Phoenix Park but after looking at Wellington's Monument we returned to the city in order to get a motor-car to drive us round the park. We got a car after lunch and went for a magnificent drives round the park. It is a wonderful place and easily the biggest park I have been in and one would travel a long way to find a prettier one. In the evening I caught the 9.20 boat from North Wall for England. After a very tiresome boat and train journey I arrived in London the following morning and put up the Imperial Hotel.
- 18/2/16 Just roamed about London for that day and stayed in the Hotel in the evening.
- 19/2/16 Visited Wandsworth hospital in the morning and went to afternoon tea with some friends.
- 20/2/16 Went to Brompton Oratory to High Mass. The singing was exceedingly good Brompton is a very fine Church building with about nine side Chapels in it. It has one large dome and then a number of smaller ones. Invited Capt. Mosely to dine with me, then we went for a walk round the district. Caught the 5 o'clock train for Caythorpe arriving there about 8.30.
- 2/3/16 My first day on returning to Caythorpe was a perfect day. The next day it commenced to snow and did not cease for a whole week. We had the heaviest fall known here for many years. Of course all the grounds and surrounding country was covered to the depth of about two feet. Every morning a man had to come and dig the snow away from the doors of the court. We used to go for walks round the grounds and have snow fights and races. It was very interesting and amusing to play about in the snow, in places it was up to our waists and should one fall down in the deep snow it was very hard to rise owing to there being nothing to put ones weight on. The village is about 1 1/2 miles from the court & one day we endeavoured to walk there through the snow but had to turn back before we were half-way.

The snow way too deep for us to walk through. Towards the end of the week it stopped and tracks were cut and I went for long walks to Fulbeck and Leadenham way. The day before yesterday I walked through Caythorpe

Village to Normanton then to Normanton Heath and home through the fields. I must have walked about 8 miles and the latter part of the journey-Through the fields- was most laborious. Unfortunately they were ploughed fields and, as I could not see the ground, I kept walking into deep mud holes and sinking right down in them - my word I did "enjoy" it. Yesterday I motored to Newark a distance of 11 miles.

Newark is a very old English town little bigger than a large village. I visited the ruins of the old castle there where King John died. The castle was built by the Bishop of Lincoln about the 11th Century. It is a very interesting old place and deep down underneath the ground are the gloomy old dungeons from which it would be absolutely impossible to escape. The entrance to them is through the roof and the walls are 15ft thick with tiny slits in them to admit air and light. There is also a subterranean passage ( it used to be a secret passage)

Connecting the castle to the Cathedral about a quarter of a mile away. I then visited the old Cathedral and saw the hole made by a cannon ball during the siege. After that I went to the museum and saw the cannon ball which was taken out of the spire. I then inspected the town generally & Returned home about 5 o'clock.

2/3/16

To-day was devoted to a long walk to Normanton Heath about 4 miles away returning by way of the fields. I walked about the equivalent of 20 miles because in returning I had to walk through snow about two feet deep and over ploughed fields so that after sinking through the snow my feet sank into deep mud Oh that walk home was enjoyable especially as I had a heavy coat and was as hot as h---.

4/3/16

To-day I went for a very interesting walk to Leadenham and returned by way of Fulbeck. It was snowing all day except during the time I was walking. The weather is very uncertain and Cold.

5/3/16

To-day I set out for Wigtown at 7.30am. Arrived at Grantham at 8.10, had to wait until 9.30am for my next train to Leeds, arrived there 11.30am waited two hours for train to Dumfries, waited one hour for train to Newton Stewart, waited one hour twenty minutes for train to Wigtown and arrived there at 9.30pm after travelling for 14 hours. During my two hours stay in Leeds I saw as much of the city as possible. It is a large town but not at all interesting. The people are very busy as it is a manufacturing town. There is a great deal of smoke and the building are blackened by it. Dumfries is a small place. I was very much surprised by it being so small. I walked round the town and the people must have thought I was a new species of wild animal as they all came out to gape at me, often standing in the middle of the street to see me pass, so I promptly fled back to the station where I was safe. When I arrived at Wigtown I was very tired and hungry. We sat down to a good real scotch supper of potato scones, soda scones, ginger bread, Haggis, cheese, and various other scotch breeds of eatables of which I forget the names.

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- 6/3/16 Got up about 9.30, had breakfast, went to church and then took the dog for a run along the bank of the river. In the afternoon we walked to the Monument which was erected in honor of the martyrs who were tied to stakes and drowned by the incoming tide. I also saw the stakes and their graves. Wigtown is a very quiet village and one can see all over it in half an hour. The houses are very small and mostly built of stone, one would think, to look at them, that they were meant to last forever. The people are very poor.
- 7/3/16 Visited the Margarine factory and then the brewery. The factory is very clean, up to date and very interesting. The tide at Wigtown seems to be an extraordinary one, for in half an hour it comes up over land for about a mile and completely covers it. There was no snow at Wigtown itself but it was cold enough to freeze any fire. I never felt the cold so much in all my tours as I did in Wigtown. I was staying at the McClellands and met Mr and Mrs also Marguerite the daughter, Bobby the son and the mother of Mrs McClellands.
- 8/3/16 I set out for "Barwhillanty" at Crossmichael. This place is the country seat of Mr Yerburgh: It is a fine old place with many thousand of acres belonging to it. There are numerous lochs in the vicinity and the view of the surrounding country is very impressive. I went for a long motor drive in the afternoon.
- 8/3/16 Caught the 11.46 train back to Caythorpe and got there at 9.30pm.
- 9/3/16 Caught the 2.20 train to London. Went to see "L'Infant Prodigue" in the evening.
- 10/3/16 Went to see the dentist in the morning and visited St. Pauls Cathedral in the afternoon. We went down to the Crypt and saw the tombs of all the old celebrated Soldiers & Sailors then we went up to the famous whispering gallery which is right at the bottom of the great-dome. The guide stays at one place, puts his mouth near the wall and whispers; You stand opposite him and listen with your ear against the wall and can hear him very distinctly. Another feature of St Pauls is the stained glass windows. Some Australian ladies spoke to us whilst we were in St Pauls. We got lost when returning from the church. We kept walking on until we were hopelessly at sea when we at last deciding to call a taxi when we found we had taken a short cut & were quite close to the hotel.
- 11/3/16 Had our photos taken this morning at Harrods. In the afternoon I visited a lady in Wandsworth. She is the sister of the lady who was our hostess at Caythorpe. In the evening we went to the theatre-"Please Help Emily" at the Playhouse theatre.
- 12/3/16 Went to church at the Brompton Oratory, met I.Elliot walked through Hyde Park & reached the hotel at 10'clock. Went to the Albert Hall Concert in the afternoon and then to dinner at Mr Grew's house. in Cleckenwell.
- 13/3/16 Dentist in the morning, Horseferry Road for letters in the afternoon and to see "Bric-a-brac" at the Palace in the evening. Mrs Barraclough, Capt. Bulter & I went together.
- 14/3/16 Butler & I went to lunch at Mrs Buckley's and Gordon and I went to Surrey in the afternoon. Played Ping Pong in the evening.

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- 15/3/16 To-day is my 23rd birthday. Walked with Gordon to the station in the morning. Played Badminton in the afternoon & bridge in the evening.
- 16/3/16 Raining to-day. Played Badminton in the morning & went for a motor ride in the afternoon, Bridge in the evening.
- 17/3/16 Went for a long motor trip through Surrey. Saw the place known as "Devil's Punchbowl" the old rendezvous of highwaymen.
- 18/3/16 Remained in the grounds all day & played the usual games of Badminton etc. We had a Cinema Show in the house in the evening.
- 19/3/16 Went to church with Francis in the morning. Walked to the Gibbet in the afternoon & played bridge in the evening.
- 20/3/16 Went to London to go before a Medical Board and was passed fit for General Service again. (became acquainted with Mrs Evans of Enton Hall in Surrey). Met a man from Waverly known as Kingsmill. Knew him very well about fourteen years ago. The N.S.E.F. all met at the Imperial Hotel in the afternoon. We had a grand reunion & a fine night at the theatre (To-night is the night). Went to bed 1am.
- 21/3/16 O'Reilly and I returned to Moorhill.
- 22/3/16 Played games during the morning, Went for a motor ride in the afternoon and then to tea at Enton Hall.
- 23/3/16 Motored to Aldershot.
- 24/3/16 Played Games all day. Motored to Boxing Tournament at Aldershot in the evening. Arrived home at 11.30pm. We were nearly frozen when we reach home. It was an extremely cold, clear, pitch-dark night. The motor's lights were dim and the officer drove at a great pace so that I imagined, at times, that the road rose up and hit me. It was the weirdest ride I ever experience.
- 25/3/16 Went for a motor ride round the district and wrote letters in the evening.
- 26/3/16 O'Reilly & I caught the 4.40 train for London. Visited Mrs Young in the evening.
- 27/3/16 Visited the hospital this morning & said Good-bye to the sisters. Caught the 10.30 train from Paddington for Weymouth. Had a very interesting journey down. We passed through a German Camp just near Dorchester. It commenced to rain very heavily when we reach Weymouth. It was also bitterly cold. I reported at Monte Video Camp and was then stationed at Westham Camp.
- 28/3/16 Raining very heavily and snowing when the rain stops. There is a March wind blowing which is slowing freezing us. We are experiencing one of the worst storms I can remember. Of course there are no parades and we put in our time playing billiards, Cards, and reading. Weymouth is a very pretty place. The beach is about two or three miles long and there is a promenade right round. It is certainly the longest promenade I have ever seen. The town itself is only a small place with very narrow streets. It is a fairly busy place and judging by Hotels etc, it must be a popular seaside resort.
- 29/3/16 Remained in camp during the morning. Went into town in the afternoon and joined the Yacht Club. In the evening we saw "Oh Susannah" at the Pavilion.
- 30/3/16 Went to town in the afternoon and played snooker.
- 31/3/16 Orderly Officer to-day. Nothing Interesting.

Major Sydney James Walker's World War Diary

- 20/5/16 I am rather behind hand in this journal and hope my memory will not fail me in trying to bring it up to date. On the 16th April I was ordered to attend a School of Gunnery at Shoeburyness for five weeks. I went up to London 14.4.16 and stayed there until 16.4.16. Caught the train to Shoebury in the afternoon at 2.5pm. Arrived there at 4.40pm. They never had any notification of my coming and did not know what course I was on. I had applied for the Heavy Gun course and that did not start until the following week. I tried to get a bed in Shoebury for the night but the hotels were full so I went to Westcliff-on-Sea and stayed the night. Returned to Weymouth on the 17th. On the 18th a wire came from H.Q. in London ordering me to report at Shoebury at once. I arrive there at 10.15pm and after a great deal of trouble secured a bed in the mess. For the next five weeks I had to work as I never worked before. We were doing practice work from 8am until about 4pm. After that we had lectures and had to study. The theoretic a work was very, very hard. We had four weeks at Shoeburyness in Essex and one week at Okehampton in Devon. During the time at Shoebury we worked about South end, Colchester, Benfleet and surrounding towns for about 10 miles. On the 12th we had to get ready for Okehampton. I got leave to spend the night in London and met the rest of the school on the following morning at Waterloo in time to catch the 1.15 train. On the night of the 12th I went to see "My Lady Frayle" at the Shaflesbury Theatre. The same night I met an Australian Nurse from Sydney. On the 13th another Officer and I went for a row on the Serpentine with the Australian Nurse. That night we reached Okehampton. It was cold, wet and miserable. We had to climb up to the camp about 1500 feet high in the clouds. For two days this miserable weather lasted and then cleared. We had to shoot with the guns during this rotten weather and there wasn't one cheerful man amongst us. After the weather cleared it was like Paradise. I never saw such beautiful scenery. It was perfect. We eat a lot of Devonshire cream, in fact we eat all we could buy and that was no small quantity. We had our written exam at Okehampton and I was fortunate enough to secure second place with another regular British Officer. We both got 95%. On the night of the 18th we were digging gun pits until 12 o'clock and had to open fire with the guns at am in the morning. Everyone of us had great big blisters on our hands. We were very, very tired when dismissed about 11am on the 19th. We rushed back to camp, packed and caught the 1.21 train. I arrived back here last night about 5.15.
- 20/5/16 Later.  
Attended the sports meeting at Monte Vides this afternoon and went to the show at the Jubilee Hall in the evening.
- 21/5/16 Orderly Officer to-day. Received a letter from Cousin Daisy.
- 22/5/16 Went for a route march.
- 23/5/16 Went up to Monte Vides for dinner and after that we went to see the Revue "Honi Sit" at the Pavilion Theatre.
- 24/5/16 Went for a ride this afternoon Capt Kennedy rejoined us to-day.
- 25/5/16 Remained in camp all day.
- 26/5/16 Went into Weymouth in the afternoon and had a row round the bay.

## Major Sydney James Walker's World War Diary

- 29/5/16      Orderly Order to-day. Nothing of an event happened the last few days except a draft going to France (27th at midnight).
- 8/6/16      The last few days drafts have been leaving for France every day. There are not many Officers left now. Last night J.H. Gordon, who is a member of the famous Scottish Expeditionary Force, left us to go to France. He is the first one to leave us. It is a strange thing but this little force of four Officers kept together from Jan. 19th until last night June 7th. We have had many rows but nothing very serious. We travelled England, Scotland and Ireland together. After coming back from Ireland separately and did not think we would be together again. We all went in different directions for a week and then went to London. No one expected to see the others so you can imagine our surprise and joy to all meet accidentally in the lounge of the hotel one night. By a coincidence we all chose the same hotel to stay at. Our furlough was then about up and we were all sent to Weymouth within a week of each other. It is now broken up and I only hope we will meet once again and have a grand re-union in France. A few days ago I was thrown from a horse whilst galloping across some fields. In saving myself and pulling the horse up I wrenched my knee and back and am now temporarily on the sick list. Bernie, George and I correspond regularly. B & G are both in France where I expect to join them shortly. The weather at this time of the year is very uncertain. One day is quite hot and the next we have to light fires to keep us warm. We played the Whitehead Torpedos Company cricket last Saturday and were beaten by 75 to 35. I got the bowling average of 4 wickets for 8 runs.
- 13/6/16      Quite well again. Last Friday night we held a "Barrack Room Court Martial", on one of the Officers. We held Court at 11.30pm and I was President. We were all very Solemn and charge him with the most absurd charges. Of course he pleaded not guilty but we found him guilty and sentenced him. One of his sentences was to have his head well lathered with common soap and the whole court proceeded to carry it out. When he struggled we pushed a sponge into his mouth. Last Saturday I rode over to Portland on the horse I spent the afternoon over there and visited the villages (Easton & Weaton), the Castle, Prison and quarries. I also saw the famous Portland Bill. Portland is a very quiet and bleak place. A fit spot to send prisoners. The quarries were very interesting and large. There was very little life and the whole atmosphere impressed one as being lonely. It would certainly make any prisoner meditate on his misdeeds. I would not like to live there for anything. The road leading over the hill is exceptionally steep but when one gets to the top, a splendid view of Weymouth and the surrounding districts is obtained. It overlooks Portland Bay which is one the big harbours where the fleet congregate. At the present time there is a number of battleships in the bay. The roads are very well made and will last many years. The people who live there seem to be old retired seaman.
- 22/6/16      Nothing of any consequence has happened since last writing in this book. I went to Upurey wishing well last Wednesday and had a Strawberry tea there. I rode over on the horse and met another Officer there and we spent a very enjoyable afternoon. All the fit Officers and

men are being shifted to Salisbury next week. There is some talk of sending the Artillery to Bath but so far nothing official has come through. There is a boat sailing for Australia tomorrow and taking a lot of permanently unfit officers and men back. I am going to give this book to one of the Officers and ask him to register it when he arrives in Australia. I was detailed to accompany the draft the Plymouth and see them safely on board but, Unfortunately, they stopped all Officers from this camp from going and are sending them from Monte Vides I have made friends with some very nice people in Weymouth, called Devenish. They have a fine old English house from which a magnificent view of Portland Bay and Weymouth can be obtained. Although it is adjoining the town they have their own cows, fowls, farm etc. and have no need to buy anything. It is the same thing with all the big English homes. They are very self contained and the luxurious way in which the people live is surprising....