Album

15th Batt.n London Reg.t



Prince of Wales Own

Civil Service Rifles

My first turn in the trenches was in our old trenches before we made any advance in the Loos district. At that time we were about four or five hundred yards from the trenches of the Bosches. From these trenches Saps were dug to bring us nearer the German front line + it was from these saps that the great attack was made. My battalion was in the reserve during the attack + was only required

to take up fresh supplies of bombs to the battalions who went over the top, as they could hold the positions without reinforcements. Later we ~~of~~ relieved one of these battalions in the captured trench. This was the first action I was in. Some time after this I was in an action opposite Hulloch. Here we were in support to the Black Watch. They were unable to advance so we did not have to go over the top but went up at night and relieved them next morning. These are the only two engagements I was in, as, not long after this whilst near Loos, in a trench along the La Basse Lens road I got frostbitten feet. That was why I was sent home & to Reading, & now write in this book.

Yours sincerely

J. H. Raymentt.

15th Batn London Regt

My adventures in the trenches and the leaving of all Blighteys shore on the 25 of October. 1914.

3. 1. 1916

It was on the 25 of October the old fighting fifth, or the old 34th the pride of the north were order to stand to the guns in dear old Barrow, well the boys were in the pink of condition, and they were going to make a name for there country. So we left dear old Barrow on the 27th for Southampton, and left the same night, for a country we did not no, but we were all out to kill, well they landed us in France the place the boys wanted to be, at old Le Havre, well we were put into tents for the night, 30 of us in each, and we were swimming on tap of one another in the morning, well in the morning the order was boys get on your packs for the trenches, we left Le Havre in the train for Saint Omer, and we march from here to the trenches, and it took us three days, to get there before we went into action on Messines ridge, and the old 34th did not forget to show what they were made off, well my first night under shell fire I slept the wind up me all night, well the boys were all use to the pick and spade, and were not long in getting them selves dug in, and we thought we were right for the night, well the next thing I was the worst of the lot, stand to arms boys said the officer and keep up the name of the Old 34th, the next hard of command

was get on the bayonets and
over the top the old 3rd
went, and our brave lads
were falling one by one, but
we went on like British
boys till we took three
lines of trenches, and when
the roll was called all
we had left of the old 3rd
was 200 men and 8 officer.
Well we held the trenches
all day, but no reinforcements
came so at night we had
to retreat to the second line.
But we did not let the
Boches take any more. Well
about 4 months after we
were order to make again,
to the shell trap of the
line were all the boys like
to be good old Ypres well
we had a big bombardment
here in February but
nothing compared with the
24th of May, the day of the
big Gas attack well we
had just left the trenches
on the 22nd for a rest.
on the Yser river, and the
wind blows up all right on
the 24th about 4 oclock in
the morning who comes along
the dugouts pulling the boys
out shouting get on your
resperators boys, Gas gas
gas, that was a awful day
some of us had no resperators
and we had to face it we
were order to get into the
trenches on the Yser, for
fear they break through
our lines, well we had
to stop here for about
one hour, and then we
got the ward to advance
and take back the trenches
the poor boys had lost well
they broke up my Battalion
into four to reinforce
different Battalion in the
good old fourth Division,
well my company 120

of us was sent along with the good old Jocks the Seaforths. Well it was a awful Bombardment, and it lasted all day and part of the next it was a awful sight to see our comrades falling round about us as we were advancing, but we took back the trenches all right. This was the place that brake my heart last winter up to the stomach in mud and water, and going out for rations we had four mile to go for them and the Prussian Guards they had the range of ever inch of the road. Well we were order to move again after we had been there four months to La Basse, but this was cancelled, and we went to Ypooge Wheatau, and what a awful time we had here, we were only about 10 yards from them, and we just landed in time for another charge and over the top we all had to go again, and we took 2 lines this time, and the poor Liverpool Scottish got an awful cutting up here. Well we were allways on the move, we went from here to Armentieres, and what a grand time we had here with the Saxons for a day or two we would not fire a shot they use to shout over to us if you dont fire, we wont, well we thought we would have a bit of fun, as soon as it got dark, the order came along, what about putting the wind up the Saxons tonight,

well the rifles would
start and then maxims,
and then they would
start sending there
flare lights up thinking
we were going to attack,
and we were more on
again the big move at
Loos, and I had a letter
from my pal the other
day and we are back
into hell again, Ypres,
it is a nice place allright
up to ~~neck~~ neck in muck.
Well I had to leave the
Battalion a few times
with sickness and allways
had the luck to get into
hospital but never had
the the luck to get to dear
old Blighty, well I
kept up a good heart,
and try hard to get there.

Well I will give you my
Idea of Abilitary life
in hospital out there they
think more about the
bed than the man, well
the food is not to bad,
but what use to get me
mad was the orderly
coming round in the morning
at half past three with
cold water to wash with
and rise and shine and
what this cold water
well he brings the night
Sister, well Cain what
up this marning, I got mad
and flung a pair of
putties at her and hit a
Sergeant belonging to the
Rook tell Sby Comrades,
you will na wuh I mean the
good old ~~Sister~~ Matron. Well
in the morning when the
doctor came round, well
Cain you will have taga

well that all right Sir
I will be in again before
the week-end and I wds
too, well he had to send
me to Blightey. Well I
am now in good old
Reading, we were sent
to Reedlands the place
I long to be, and not
the place where they
give you bread and bread
Yours Sincerely
Pte J Cain
5th Border Regt.

you will have to excuse
me for what I finish of
with, but I thank Kate
Arnold for the kindness
and what she try her
best to get it for me.
Yours Tinkesby
Jeremiah Cain.

as done me and

A Terrier's Little Bit

After ~~out~~ eleven months soldiering in Malta and Cairo we received orders for the Dardanelles. Three days journey from Alexandria we reached the Isle of Lemnos. After four days stay we were taken to the battlefield, a four hours sea journey. Landing at Cape Helles, Gallipoli, we managed to reach our dugouts in safety. Next morning the enemy shelled us and a few men were hit by shrapnel whilst digging new dugouts. Rough graves

could be seen everywhere. Soon we were taken up the trenches and in the firing line we could see the realities of war. Between our line and the enemies many of our men lay unburied, cut down by machine gun fire, whilst making an attack. Flies and the heat made things uncomfortable During the day we had to do periscope ~~duty~~ duty, clean rifles & trenches, get water, cook meals & rest if we could. At night we started work. Every other man had to look over the parapet and fire across to the enemy's trench. So we continue throughout the night, one hour on watch and one hour rest alternately The lookout man must give warning of the direction the bombs thrown by the enemy are liable to fall. Of course the enemy reply to our rifle

fire and it was whilst on
lookout duty at a later date
that I received a bullet in
the right eye, which
necessitated my stay in
the Royal Berks. Hospital.
With many thanks to the
owner of this book for her
kind attention.

Pte B Stowers
2/2 London Regt

My Experiance after I was wounded

It was on the 2nd of Oct 1915 that I
got wounded at a little Place called
Loos, after Being picked up by an
Officer who quickly sent for the
Stretcher Bearers & in about 10 Minutes
was taken away through the
trenches thinking I was going to
the Dressing Station, to have my
wounds Dressed, But after going
along for what seem to me to
be about a couple of miles the word
was sent along the trenches for
all S. Bs. at the double & instead of
taking me as they should have
done to the Dressing Station they
ask me if I would mind being
left in a Dugout till they went
and got some more poor Chaps
who had got knocked over
running they wouldnt leave me
their Long. So of course I said

7/1/16

Royal Berks Hospital
Reading

I went over to the front on 13/9/14
& after going through various battels
including Ypres & Ploegstert.
I got wounded at a Village called
Braylein 1 mile from Ypres on 15/6/15.
1 shrapnel bullet in left leg &
9 pieces of shrapnel in my right
arm which shattered the bone above
the elbow.

Gnr L & McShayne
135th Battery R.F.A.
32nd Brigade
4th Division
B E F
France

P.S. Please excuse left hand writing.

My Experiences in Suvla Bay. Gallipoli.

Entraining at Chatham we arrived at Devonport after a 18 hours journey and immediately embarked on the S.S. "Scotian". Leaving Devonport a day or so late we had a fairly decent journey. On two occasions a submarine was sighted but we managed to give them the slip. On our way out we stayed at Malta for the purpose of coaling. We were all anxious & eager to be allowed to go ashore and have a look round but unfortunately this privilege was not granted and we started again, in none too good

a spirit. After several more days on the Wakes we arrived at Mudros Bay (Isle of Lemnos). After staying there 14 days, we disembarked on to old Small pleasure steamer & taken to Suvla Bay. We anchored outside all night and at daybreak the following morning we taken aboard a small lighter & eventually landed. We were then taken to some old dug outs, remaining there till dusk, then we were marched to some reserve trenches, & lay there all night & the following day. During the day several of our company had been down behind the firing line, digging out the ground for our dug outs. At dusk the whole company took spades and started for this open ground for the purpose of digging our dug outs which were to be our future "Home Sweet Home". It is quite evident the Turks saw our fellows putting in the pegs during the day, for no sooner were we all out of the trench, than we were greeted with a hail of bullets. We kept on for a few moments, but it got too hot, we were ordered to lie down flat on the ground & take what cover it was possible to get. After performing this feat four or five times, we eventually arrived at the desired spot; and I may say we lost no time in making cover for ourselves,

for the bullets were still whizzing, being much too near to be comfortable. As I think of those few nights, I am amazed at the few casualties we sustained & really it is remarkable for it was a continual rain of lead. Being in the Royal Engineers, our work consisted mostly. Viz:- Mining, sapping, barbwiring, repairing parapets sandbag Retirements & any other little job that came our way. Naturally I had some very narrow escapes and who hasn't, who has been out there. It was on the 26th Nov 1915. that the flood started, followed by intense frost & snow.

I managed to hold out till Dec 1st 1915, but was finally taken to a field ambulance on the beach, suffering from frostbitten feet & rheumatism. From there I was taken to Mudros West, remaining there about three weeks. From there I was put aboard the "Aquitania" bound for "Blighty" & my delight knew no bounds. Arriving at Southampton we were sent by Hospital train to Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading. What a sense of gladness to get into a real bed and to think how near

we were to our loved ones at home. My joy knew no bounds. It was like heaven to get good regular meals & fine treatment & to feel that one is getting better.

Sapper Frank Hickmott.
1/2nd Kent, Royal Engineers.

My Experience in France.

I landed at Le Havre last July. where we stayed the night & entrained for St. Omer next morning. & from here we marched to the trenches which took three days. We first went into action at Richebourg. where we joined up the good old 4th Division, how well I can remember the night when we went

in with the 2nd Rgt. I was very
soon sent over the top to repair
barbed wire in front of our trenches &
we soon got a shot thro of it & had
to return to our trenches again. We
stayed here a few days & were moved
to Festubert where we had a very
easy time of it as our opponents were
Saxons they called over to us not
to fire. we were here for 8 days &
had it very wet. Our next move
was to Vermilles. where we spent
some time in the trenches. We came out
& went to Windy Corner where we had
a very rough time of it up to our
waists in mud & water. We went
back to Vermilles again to prepare
for an big advance. we spent
night after night digging trenches
when one night while out in front
digging I got wounded in the
Right thigh. I was taken to the
dressing station after laying out in
the open for 12 hours. to have my

wound dressed, when it was found
a bullet had penetrated the right
side of the thigh & had got out on
the inner side of the thigh. I was
sent to Calais on hospital & then
to Boulogne but was not lucky enough
to get to England. after I got better
I was sent to the base & then
to the firing line again. after being
five days in at Festubert with
mud & water up to our waists.
I was taken sick with Influenza.
& was sent to Amiens. C. C. Stat.
from here I went to Rouen to 5 General
Hosp. & from here to Dear old Blighty
& was taken to the Royal Bucks
Hospital where I got every care
& attention from the nice Nurses.
& plenty of good meals. when
I was very thankful for after
only having Hard & Salty Meals in
the French Hospital.

Yours
Sincerely
Pte. C. H. Lee.
9th Devons.
Jan 27. 16.

To Nurse Arnold in Remembrance

I dare not ask a kiss.
I dare not beg a smile
Lest having that or this
I might grow proud the while.

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.

The only one

The Ladies try to catch the eye,
With hats and dresses new,
The College lad is just as bad,
And airs his fashions, too,
But after all, in Spring or Fall,
This truth remaineth still,
The Soldier boy's the only guy,
That's all dressed up to kill.

Yours sincerely
No 2029 Pte J C-ain
5th Border Regt.
January 28th 1916.

Royal Berks War Hospital,
21st Sept 1916.

My past life in France is so full of unpleasant recollections, that I would gladly like to forget all about it, & my personal achievements there, if truthfully stated, are too insignificant to bear record, & this fictitious version is not worthy of this shrine.

My present life in this above hospital is made pleasant by the cheerful devotion to duty of the nurses in Sidmouth Ward, & were it not for their unselfish attention, life here would not be quite so agreeable.

My future aspirations are to participate in a long-looked-forward-to good feed when I get back to "mi ain folk". Surely this depraved sense of gluttony is excusable in a person after several months on restricted army rations, & though we do ourselves ill in gratifying same, Remember it is stated by the immortal poets "It is better to have eat and burst, than never to have eat at all."

Ever mindful of the many little worries we have sometimes caused the nurse & very often the sister. Permit me now to sign as

Yours gratefully W. Booth
(Pte 4771, 5th Y & L.

Sept. 21st 1916.

Royal Berks Hospital

My Experence in France.

Well to begin with and to make a long story short. I enlisted in Canada in the month of December 1915. Left the the month April 1916 and landed in Bramshott Camp England May 6th 1916 where I had a few weeks training and was shiped off to France with a draft, to the 1st Can. Battalion. Now the first trip I had to the front line trenches was in Ypres, I witnessed a pretty rough time during the term we were in those trenches, one of the Worst the Battalion was ever in according to what the Old Boys, of the Battn. said. We came out of there and went back to Billets for a rest. The second time we did not go into the front line, but we were in reserve and did working parties every night for ten days

Royal Berks War Hospital Oct 3rd 1916
Reading

Enlisting in may 1915 in the far off province of British Columbia. Canada. Training there for a few months sent to England to complete our training & finally found myself in La Havre. France one beautiful morning in June 1916. From there we were sent up the line to the 2nd Battn 1st Brigade 1st Divn Canadians. who were then holding a part of the line known as the Ypres saliant. Our reception was anything but pleasant as the enemy controls all the points of advantage in that neighborhood and can see any movement of our troops in day time. That made us do all our work at night. after about two months in Ypres and having held the line on famous Hill 60 one of the most historic places of this war. We were sent down to the Somme battlefield to take our part in the great offensive. My experience there will never be forgotten the terrible bombardments and explosions all round you was like a fearful night mare which one would like to forget and cant on Sept 9 after being under constant fire for 10 days we were again put into the front line to get ready for an attack which we were to make at 4.40 that afternoon a busy time was ahead of us getting ready so time passed quickly and we were glad when the word was passed to be ready to make the dash over no mans land and take the German trench. Over the top we went and took our objective in doing so I got wounded in the left shoulder from trenches to dressing stations from there to clearing stations from there to Boloage and last to dear old Blighty. Royal Berks Hospital Reading where the nurses are kindness itself and ever ready to help you in every way

signed Sgt J J Scott
2nd Battn
Canadians

My Motto

Do unto others as you would they should do unto you.

Jesse Z. Arnold.
86011. 5th Brig C.E.F.
C.E.F. France.

Be charitable.

To Nurse Arnold
Just a little verse in
remembrance

When the Golden sun
is sinking, and your
mind from care set
free, while of others
you are thinking, will
you some times think
of me.

Yours Sincerely
Jeremiah Cain.