

APRIL 2

MONDAY. Morn, taught class. Aft to Corps for equipment and clothes for my party. Cdnt see Mr. U. Evg tea with Pip in San Martin. Home 8.30 by moonlight.

APRIL 3 '19

TUESDAY. Awoke amazed to driving blizzard and 3 ins snow. Appalled. Remember where I used to call for papers---little shop on right with Pa in blk lpacca jacket and polie puffy face, and his son, the spit of him on Sunday in black cordsl This man used to sell magas like the Smrt set. All Magas and papers of England were to be got in a half doxen shops or so in Pop.

Riding to Ramparts with birds on bike, the snow melted. Aft, class. Evg wrote. Sncw melted and fine. Tempted to go to Corps but didn't .

APRIL 4 '19

WEDNESDAY. Morning to Horse drawn Mobiles (The new ones drawn up at Kruisstraat?) Aft. class. Evg, tempted to Go to corps but didn't. Instead, cleaned and overhauled bike. At 7.30 drinks in Marie's. Flemish soldiers make merry in simple style with home made banjo. MARTHA!

Anxious about training new Ho rsedrawns and seeing O.C.

APRIL 5

THURSDAY. The round of the new Mobiles with stock b skets. I try to be modest but am conscious of sneaking importance. Saunders aloof and uncompanionable and indifferent. His cheery Pioneer with the Chinese medal. Wallace, red and and more anxious to fall in with my suggestions, and his pioneer the great Baby Bailey, who had a parcel every other day. Lastly Andy Butler who spoke to me aboyt Tom Hardacre, with whom he had been at Wesgoutre until Sam Mayo came there to the other loft.. Andy was working at fixing his loft on wood supports as the wheels were sinking into the ground and the men had drawn him in htere and left him. Aft to Corps re demands of new lofts, Quarter and O.C. Wanted to replace my petrol pipe leaking but shop closed.

"Why don't you borrow Price's?" said Hunter. He's on the counter.

It didn't cross my mind that Price was Bill Price, D.R. I figured him by one of those overdights, as a linesman or O.T. on the counter with bike laid by.

"Which is the bike."

"There you re," pointing to shed.

I got the pipe off, or was doing so, when Bobby Brown, artificer's mate came up.

"What you doing, Oswald?"

"I wanted a new petrol pipe forto-moorrow, the tiffy's shop is closed, and Hunter suggested borrowing Price's."

"You begtter put it back, my lad", said Bobby grinnin kindly, and in his creamy boice. "I'll get ye a pipe. Wait ye a min nit."

I fexed on the pipe he gave me.

Evening San Martin. I was warned at chip shop that Price was rampant.

"Safter your blood, my boy," said White, scenting a contrst. "He's going to mske you sit up. Oh, my." He threw his great head back like a dog baying and laughed. "I should7't like to be in yiur skin. Oswald, our good boy, who never "wins" anything."

I went up to the billet and as soon as I entered Price spoke.

I saw the cardplayers at the ramshackel tables vovered with a blanket on which were piles hf ration: cigs for which was staked. On beds lay the boys reading or medning tubes. the light came from pendant incan carbice light, and various candles stuck on tin sconces and niches.

"His voice was quivering.

"Oh, Davis, have you got my petrol pipe?"

"No."

"Who e have you got?"

"My own."

"Where's your broken one?"

"In the workshop."

"Whose is on your bike, then?"

"A new one, Bobby Brown gave me." Who made you grand inquisitor?"

I like Price, was vibra ing in voice, now ma te how cool and self-possessed I desired to be. I hated his magisterial way not then divining it was only the armour by which he shielded his own sensitiveness in what he deemed a just cause.

Brown was bent kneeling over his bed.

"I thought you said---" began Price to Brown.

"No,," said Brown colouring, "I caught him taking your petrol pipe, but I got him another."

I went into Pip's and Vic's room. and fumbled about there. Came back and watched the card games with set face and felt un-
APRIL 6 1949 directing.

FRIDAY. Y U p to Ramparts with birds on the car and stores and petrol boxes.. Home late. Aft. wrote this and report. Next day Pip Boyd joined me in work. Why have you come Pip?

"Oh, Dave Hunter was making a song saying he was coming and glad to get away, so I thought that swipe shouldn't have it. What was good enough--he seemed so sure of it I thought I'd let him know I had first refusal."

APRIL 7

SATURDAY. Caseby to Hallebast Corner. I at S.O. phoned Casby Caseby to "Come in" to go home for commission. Hust like him to get away with stunts coming off, we commented. By phone with Mr. U. me to go down to Corps at 2.30.

Met Mr. Underwood.

"What's this about you pinching a petrol pipe."

"Pinching one? What I did was quite open, sir." I explained, and finished, "It's funny that's the only time I've come near to scrounging anything off a bike and I get pipped at once."

"Well, the O.C. wants to see you. Wait here a minute."

He announced me to Capt. Steevens, who had the reputation of being an absolute shit. *By the way - the O.C. was a J.P. in the past*

O.C. came out with absorbed face. "Follow me."

We went to bike yard. He pulled out a sheet of foolscap.

"Your're charged with stealing a petrol pipe from the bicycle of Corporal Price." I haven't entered it as a crime What have you to say for yourself? I just wanted to talk it over with you."

Hunter told him, and concluded: "If you want a witness, sir, Cpl. ~~will corroborate what I say~~"

I told him and concluded: "If you want a witness, Cpl. Hunter can corroborate what I say."

'N . But you should have spoken to the Sergeant. You must do these things through the regular channels. Do you have any difficulty in getting stores?"

"Well there is a difficulty in getting spares as a rule, but I've no complaint to make. It's not the Tiffy's fault." (It wasn't it was the sergt's, who was always getting drunk and running after women instead of getting in spares for us.) "There are no stocks

"If you cant get things, come to me," said Capt Steevens, and th interview finished.

He a gentleman to me.

Price had reported to S rgt. Bruce and Bruc , the dirty dog, had run me because he was annoyed I was so free of his authority Strange I shoul have got "pegged" or "clocked" the only time I half pinched. Back to Pop with Pip. Evg. wrote belated.

SUNDAY APRIL 8

I to Ramparts on the car with birds.. Chased by shell-spurts.? Pip to Corps. Easter Sunday. A beautiful day.

MONDAY APRIL 9

I to Mobile Np.V. Wrote indents and reports. Evg to Corps.

TUESDAY APRIL 10.

Unexpectedly the car came. Pip and I with the birds up. On the Brielen road shell spurts left. At Ramparts had to wait with the car a bit. While doing so the tower surmounting the building in which was situate the 55 div right flank bde H.Q., quivered to a shell before our gaze, waggled sleepily and lazily fell. So instead of going back past this, our usual route, we went ^{toward} ~~into~~ the Cloth Hall Square,, first turn left, and then wound round to station and off, several hits being made left and right of us. Suspense rather hateful. Cold. Got a sack of coal from Belgian sell it in big cart bay Debyses Loft. For 25 francs. Fetched it in our valises on our bikes.

WEDNESDAY APRIL 11 17.

Morn, Pip to 2 mobiles. I to hut and stove, etc. Af . hut and wrote reports. Pip read. Evg. received instructions for special stunt next morn at 8. Pip and I warned the loftmen. To bed at 9.30 but slept only at 11 thinking things over. Gale of night wind woke me twice. Rose 5.30 and dully got the birds up the line.

Bright vivid morn. Met ~~Wrestl~~ ^{@olsty} going with birds. Naught cahnced. 15 minutes blizzard. Strange we should have had warm work the instant Pip started work-

ing with me and he doesn't like it. Back 1c but no breakfast. However, some coffee at that stall by the Mill dressing station, Vlam, Church army van. Cleaned bike. Aft wrote while Pip valiantly and cunningly stoked. He a great hand at sleep and fires. Evg wrote. Pip to Corps for equipment.

FRIDAY ~~THURSDAY~~ APRIL 12.

Pay day. Met Sergt Edmonds and conversation. Lugubrious Forster.

SAT APRIL 14

With Pip, birds on bikes, to Ypres.

SUNDAY APRIL 15

Morn, wrote. Rain again. Aft., nap.

DURING PAST WEEK CONTINUAL NEWS IN SIGNAL OFFICE OF ADVANCE

BY VIMY RIDGE ARRAS 13000 PRISONERS 126 guns, 156 machine guns

captured.

MONDAY APRIL 16.

To Ypre with pigeons on car. Aft. reportd. Evg in hut with stove

on. Pip to Hallebast corner. Rain set in about 5 p.m. cold.

TUESDAY APRIL 17.

My off-day. To Corps. Found there that 4 men were returning to base so it was suggested I change my bike for Fuller's. Fuller,

oh, he'd no objection. He sat quaffinf malaga, with florid face,

round, plump, gentlemanly and specs--a fine piano player.

After giving his consent he disappeared, and I arranged with Glennie to return at six with spares, but he phoned me to come at 2.

Did so. The usual orgy, new to me, of madly stripping the bikes going back to base of wheels, magnetos, gear-boxes, etc.

I got some spares. Evg to San Martin and after there was noise of a dc at 66. Chocolat, eggs and peas round with mbb in the large new wooden room at back. Everybody flushed. Pip creamy, and laughing openly at Harold Wordley as he sang with retreating chin and mouth contortions. "Look at him, a --- parrot." I was afraid Wordley would come and hit him. Then into Bruce's room --talk of champagne. About 6 bottles came out, Bruce, myself, Lilley, Vic, Glenny and Pip away. (Wtuh their girls?)

Jimmy, the quarter's bloke, as pissed as an owl, saying, "in m undering style, like man asleep," F--- the army, F---my king and ---my country. The lit room, the two beds, covd with blankets, the gumboots, and equipment. I felt ashamed of myself joining Bruce's party because I detested him, and I felt a cringer. I had looked to a bright "fizz" party: instead here was Jimmy just drunk like a muddy beast. There were present stylish Gunner cpl who satirically with Bruce nodded assent, and Wilson and Pip. Jimmy an old sweat. "Not have me again," he muttered in stupro. Sad initiation into the rites of "fizz."

Scene in yard. The boys driving the delapidated old box car, awful din, all drunk or half so.

WEDNESDAY APRIL 18

Pip with car to Ypres with birds. I very late fitting up changed bike of Fuller's didn't start till 11.40. Met Hesletine. Good-looking superior cheery fellow. Home 1.30. Aft. friggd abt wit, Pip repairing bike.

APRIL 19 THURSDAY 1917.

To H.C. on changed bike thro' mud. The full round. Aft work on bike. Evg. wrote.

FRIDAY APRIL 20.

I woth car and birds to Ypres Ramparts. Bal my day. Things quiet.. Aft. reports. Evg. tuned bike. To Marie's for chips and beer after hours. Her going to gate and asking for password wh when old Seaborne came.

SATURDAY APRIL 21

Morn to Mobile 5. Clrned bike rest of day. At tea met Munro, the champion wangler, who was temp. with second army. He was plump and well and immediately told me of the girls he had been compromising himself with in the environs of Cassel. Bill Hritchard at nine, after cinema, came into chip supper at Marie's.

SUNDAY APRIL 22.

Fine day but cold. To h.C. twice and to Wright's. Aft. foot- led with odd jobs. Glennie came down. Evg. band and cinema. Dad and Crossley well oiled.

MONDAY APRIL 23

TRAINING BIRDS TO-DAY. Mr. Underwood wished us to push on urgently with the training and was set back when I told him how long Saundrs and ors said it would take before ready to train, i.e. to end of Spril.

THE TRICKS OF D R CLERKS AND DESPATCH RIDERS
PAUL MANTLE LOQUITUR.

"D . R. Clerks are full of tricks as monkeys. I always flipped my packet o' stuff down, see if any "Specials" stuck in half-way down, that our chaps wd have to take our end, once we accepted 'em. Th t's against the rules to slip specials on to a post man. But our chaps 'd flop 'em down, run down the steps and off home before they could notice the specials in their packe et they'd brought. Of if the D.R. clerk started rumbling it--- "Where 's that D.R???" "He's gone to lock at his bike a minute -- it's dis." They'd never see him again. But I tell 'em: "You want to do your business before you "sling it through the trap." That won't do. There's two specials here. "No one in," young man "Not this child."

PAUL MAITLE OF D R CLERK TRICKS. 23-4-17.

Once, on a circular, I took a letter for a Town Major, and they complained to our S.C. it was undelivered, when I got back. "Rubbish," said to the clerk. "Lock in your pack," he said. "It's no use locking in me valis, I know it's not in. You've got the docket signed." "That's nothing." "If it's nothing, why do we have it. "I'll see the officer." I always believe in going to the head--no use arguing with understrappers. "What about it, sir? If the receipt on the docket's nothing, then I've signed for nothing, and am not responsible for any letter."

Another D.R. clerk handed him a sack. "Here, where 'm I going to fix this? Besides it's not signed by an officer. " While he went to get a signature, I buggared off. The next one of our chaps said---"What about a lorry for it,? Then these maps and big square parcels, they're above G.R.O. size. They can't force you to accept them or take responsibility. They give you nothing to carry them in."

"That's alright," says Bill, "but you've got to give and take. If they stick to the letter of the law they can make it unpleasant for you. It doesn't pay, Gro or no GRO. If you're told to take a thing---

"Yes by an officer, not a bloody sapper. . ."

"You got to take it and get courtmartialled if you lose it. That's what I say a D.R. isn't a proper cpl when a pioneer can order him to take so and so, two telephones, or fetch six kilos of butter for the officers' mess. That's what I don't hold with. One day they sent old Sammy Briggs out with 3 sets enough to kill a camel. . . Old arguments followed.

APRIL 24 TUESDAY

A lovely day. With car and birds to Ramaprts.. Changed while in hot area. Aft. read in sun. Evg worked at reports etc. Supper at Marie's. These suppers at Marie's kept us late, Bed 11.

APRIL 25 WEDNESDAY.

Morn, in beautiful weather, out to Kruisstraat and trained birds. Pip's ready hand to mend my puncture when I hang hesitating over it.. Aft. cleaned hut and selves and fixed stove. No tea, worked in lieu thereof.

THURSDAY APRIL 26.

Pip up with birds on car to Ypres and he had two narrow escapes at crossroads.. I cleaned hut thro' with cresol. Then bike. Evg, after hesitation to Corps for tea at San Martin. There, were Jamc and Jock. Pip came. Evg spent at San Martin. Saw "wives" of P. and G. Back at 9.

April 27 FRIDAY.

Sgt. Edmunds said he had ~~be~~ "gone off the deep end" with Trewathat, because the latter had said to Capt Waley, that "his birds were redy nd only waiting for Cpl. Davis to train" thereby intimating I hadn't been inent on training his birds. I explained to E. we had waited for T. to take them a walking distance first and were ready any time, but he wouldn't let birds go if weather at all doubtful. Edmonds agreed and said he knew I worked, and he had rowed Trewatha. next morn I taxed Trewatha with this treachery to me (Edmonds said he never trusted him, the bus stank so) and T. defended himself, redly and rath r lamely.. Too dark for training, so to E N Lofts for figures of losses during settling these new mobiles.

SAT APRIL 28 1917.

I to Ramparts with birds in car. Pip for straggler to Kemmel. Aft. bearded the Quarter at Corps. Away smart and then reports. "Often wonder if I'm a bloody navvy. Who else would cart these gasbags a cut like this?" as I bent under great sacks of heavy gasbags for the trenches, which I left at Mcbile No. 5 when at Abeele to take up later on the car.

SUNDAY APRIL 29.

FINE DAY, Morning, trained in pearly skies. Aft reported to O.C and made arrangements for getting the trained birds into trenches for two times before using. Got his permission to go to Cassel. There met Billy Pritchard and Paul.

Afternoon on the Casino Hill, looking down on the wonderful green Flemish plain, and the straight road to Wirmhoudt, which I had never ridden. That way to Bergues, ancient and beautiful, and the G.Q.G. ride. Splendid tea of peaches and pastie at Jeanne's and then walk to San Marie Capelle. I telling Billy what my job was and how I had prospered. Drank in full pub at S.M.C and walked back happy together. Beautiful egg and soldiers gay about as if no such thing as war. Home in dusk. Chip supper and bed.

APRIL 30 MONDAY.

Pip to Ramparts with birds on car. I to H.C. and round. Aft. school and found there in a grouser a smart cock named Scott. Evg. worked at reports and weather fine.

MAY 1 TUESDAY

I to H.C. Shells (fpr first time on La Clytte Hallebast Rd. or in the field in front of far, where dump was set on fire and an aeroplane brought down in smoke and flame or fluttering like a piece of paper?) Aft. finished class. Evg. wrote. FINE DAY.

MAY 2 WED.

I to Ramparts with car and cargo. Great day's work training. Round all spots. Aft and evg. work. Chips for supper.

THURSDAY MAY 13.

I overhauled bike. Pip to H.C. Mix-up with Wright, who was finally training birds from his loft by Whittle's at E.N.11 and orderlies of batt and brigade at ~~V~~. Vic 13, that is Burgomster farm near, each asking for the other without knowing they were addressing the men they sought.. Aft Pip took my engine down and cleaned it and evg. we finished same.

FRIDAY MAY 4.

I to H.C. after seeing Pip off on long round with car. Aft and evg wrote till 8 on army work while Pip to corps.

SATURDAY MAY 5 1917.

To H.C. and round, Pip off duty. Aft. wrote, evg. cin. FINE WEATHER ALL THE WEEK HOT AND CLEAR&

SUNDAY MAY 6 1917.

PAUL SPEAKS.

Went round on car with cargo, all satisfactory. Something in the wind with all this training of new lofts and birds. Rumours of our army going to do something.