

WOULD BE RIDING AT NIGHT AND THOUGHT MY OWN JOB NOT SO BAD AFTER
AKL.

MARCH 1

THURSDAY. Wiah car to Ramparts. Returning we were just coming round elbow frc Nouveau Marche au bois to Rue de Boeshinghe when in front of us, on the cathedral close, 25 yards off, a mass of grey and black and block stones shot forward like a wall in transit thro' the air. We ran on and then right, out of harm's way. Nothing fell on us, tho' bits spattered near. We shot up the road, you bet at high speed, Vickery, the driver, quite cool. Aft wrcte at S.O. and eveningpork tea at Marie's and wrote at Talbot Hcuse. Then debate at S.C. with beer circulating in enamel mugs. Beautiful Spring day and sat in bsly sun.

FRIDAY

Morning to get early to Corps, was hindered by change of men and pay. To corps workshop. Aft., Aft. wrote at 66 new cafe room built of wood behind shop. To Pop for wages and met Mr. U. Back to San Martin for tea.

Good news from Mesopotamia and the Somme. Home 9 p.m.

SATURDAY

MARCH 3 Morn Caseby with car and birds up. Work at Dupont's various for me. Afc. to 2nd C.C.S. re new plate. The men waiting there for attention, from all parts of the line. Neat spacious collection of huts with drives up and boards painted white.

A watchman at hut who instructs you. After waiting in wood annexe you see a sergt who has had your Medical Inspection form from Orderly. The N.C.O. passes you on to the doctor, who after cursory confirmation of N.C.O. gives the latter instructions which he carries out. Doctor young and jaunty, hands in pockets, but capable and nasal. Young men in white jackets work on plates at bench round room. DULL DAY.

SUNDAY

MARCH 4 BRIGHT DAY. All day till 4 working on bike. Evg. cin.

MONDAY

MSRCH5. Up with birds on car late coming. Snow and thaw. Aft.

TUESDAY to 3 C.C.S, dental plate replacing.

MARCH6 & .To H.C. morn. Aft. in hut, and evg. cinema. Caseby

MARCH 7 to Ramparts.

WED. VERY COLD AGAIN AND WINDS. Roads dried. Caseby to Ramparts with car. I to H.C. Aft to CCS and saw there the fat smooth Henson at neat Signal office and the boy who was always calling on a bike at our S.O. Henson's quiet clenched utterance behind teeth closed.

THURSDAY

MARCH 8 Aft, hut, evg to corps re lost Abeele birds.

FRIDAY

MARCH 9. I to Ramparts with car, Caseby to H.C. I, evg., to Corps re lost Abeele birds at civvy lofts.

After drink and treating host, only stout available, he there cutting hair for clients, and assembling for cards,, we went up ladder to loft with bougie and hunted for my birds, with little luck. Conversation downstairs about war events--Somme retreat?

SATURDAY

MARCH 10. Caseby's off day. (Mine was an off day last Wed.) I to H.C. Six birds still away, and would Caseby go up to Ram-parts? No, he wouldn't. Just as I was resting, was called up to phone re the missing birds. WEATHER WARM AND DAMP AND THEN AFTER-NOON COLD AND SNOW.

EXTRA WORK DURING LAST WEEK.

3 visits to Corps for Trewartha's losses, seeing Tailor and Barber at the Pigeon Rapide.

Saturday, 10-3-17, attended concert, Capt. Mudge's farewell, he going to England to give special course of instruction there. Asked Seabourne to come but he didn't want. Pip was to come but didn't. Held in a big hut past Eileen's on right of Watou road, a men's recreation or mess hut. We sat on benches and beer was passed round to all who cared for it, in mugs from buckets. The same old items always heard by the Corps---

Zanazi, called Zanzig, on OLD IRON:

You look a treat,
From your napper to your feet,
Yer father's new brown tie on,
But I don't care
For the chain you wear,
OLD IRON OLD IRON.

or

ZANZIG'S SONGS.

Down in our street lived a girl from America,
She rides a bicycle day and by night.
One summer night she was riding her bicycle,
The moon shone bright and I had a good view,
View--oo--oo--oo-- ad lib.

All of a sudden she fell off her bicycle,
I saw her stars and I saw her stripes too.

"Zanzi" sang with blotched red motionless face, red, berry-clownish, with creases from wide nose to mouth-ends, while his audience shrieked with laughter and applause.

Then the old Irishman McGuinness came on and sang

HIS OULD WOMAN

10-3-14 CORPS
SAT CONCERT.

His old woman used to fight him, the police and then the soldiers who were brought out under the riot act. Then he sang "KHAKI",
"Khaki here, khaki there, khaki faces, khaki aces," and finished up with "THE PANTECHNICON MAN."

Clifford Davis, my namesake D.R. sang his Rag-time songs, thinly and pathetically gesticulating on the platform:

Right home in Tnessee
That's where I long to be,
Right on my mother's knee,
She thinks the world of me.

All I can think of to-night, is a field of snowy white,
Banjos ringing, Darkies singing,
All she world seems bright.

The roses round the door, Make me love mother more,
I'll see my sweetheart Flo, and friends I used to know.
They'll be right there to meet me,
Just imagine how they'll greet me,
When I get back, when I get back,
To ma home in Tnessee.

There was Stan ~~Ma~~ Brown with the Song he used to sing in the San Martin:

"Oh, I love the dear silver that shines in your hair,
And the brow that's all furrowed and wrinkled with care,
And ~~the~~ I love the dear hands that are toil-worn for me,

God keep you and bless you, mother Macrae.
How that used to move us in the San Martin!
and Stan Brown's

"When we come to end of a perfect day
And we sit alone with our thoughts."

Also fatty Wright sang "Glorious Devon."

He was half tipsy, his eyes rolled, but he was handsome and florid. At last, laughing bemused at himself and scratching his head, he did with another fellow, a a skit on:

"If I were the only girl in the world,
And you were the only boy,
Nothing else would matter in this world to-day,
We could go on living in the same old way.
A garden of Eden just built for two, with nothing to mar our joy
I would say such wonderful things to you,
There would be such wonderful things to do,
If you were the only girl in the world, and I were the only boy.

The two chaps, miauling this at each other were fine.
Capt. Mudge made a sporty speech regretting keenly his departure and thanking us all. Some audible comments, noticeably those of Shooey (bottmender) (Snob) were repressed by the ear-holing virtuous indignation of Bruce who was, as usual, to fore.

At the concert don't forget Fat beery Jones with dark eyes soft-voiced humorist, afterwards canned in our S.O. The sentimental man whos closed his eyes and yelped. The two men from "The Crumps"--great abplomb but absolutely flat. Finally the earnest reciter with fair hair and glushed face, reciting with earnest etiquette "Gunga Din" and "Mad Carew" and some edifying pieces, pausing and forgetting in the middle but picking up with brave smile and prude conceit of himself. Home midnight.

MARCH 11

SUNDAY I to H.C. Caseby with car to Ramparts and saw aerial combat 2 to 1. Aft work. Evg cineam after waiting $\frac{1}{2}$ hour.

MARCH 12

TUESDAY Morn worked details at S.O. Aft to C.Q.M.S. White had asked for stripes. Quarter: "You bloody D.R.s are like kids with a new toy.." "Don't be so bloody unreasonable. You don't have to pay for them. We've got to have stripes."

I got my ---- chewed off.

("I indent and get only $\frac{1}{6}$ th of the stuff.")

"What indent and get only $\frac{1}{6}$ th of stuff?"

"Stationery. If I come and asky y u say I must indent. If I indent and don t ask I hear nothing further."

"I don't keep stuff here. I have to indent, too."

"No, well I'm only trying to get it." "Trying."

"One way or the other, if I only know I'll do it."

He calms down from his suppressed passion and then becomes embarrassingly considerate. Evg. losses search. Draughts with Adrienne, at which she easily whacks me. Home 9:40

MARCH 13

TUESDAY. To Ramparts with cargo and back. WQuiet. All round the wrekin. Evans bad and well again. Aft. re stray, Zanazi etc. Evg. worked all night at S.O.

MARCH 14

WEDNESDAY .Tele, 5 men for training. Men arrived and were trained. Aft. Message to take extra birds to Tamparts and K. Did so in growing dark. Wind up but Ypres quiet. Road crawling and thick with traffic as dusk came on. No light. Nearly hit lorries several times. Glad to be back and went to Jack Evan's cafe with brazen music-box and metallic call of thin girl and hurly-burly crowd.

MARCH 15
THURSDAY

1917
Next morn special test work with the birds I took up yesterday.. I away with bike and cargo. Shells falling on the left. Aft to Corps to see Shooley. S. a character. Sat in his wooden shed at end of Corps flagged yard, bike sheds right. Here saw, black-haired, with anvil-clang voice he intimidated every caller. "Those won't mend. Take 'em back." "He'll have to wait: he's not the only pig in the sty.. If he can't wait take 'em back. No they're not : there they are and likely to remain." I was courteous and submissive dreading his ferocious spleen.

The carpenter, also, a man of might, to be soothed over, small and wrinkled, in his den when you wanted a handful of nails. Either drink to follow or a bob now was the rule. for Shooley and chips.

Met Trewatha and Sam Bowah, and had tea at the San Martin. To my amazr, Sam Booth, illiterate, conversed fluently in dog-Flemish with Mrs. Vaneste. Tales of Huns 14 days' stay. Julie's graphic narrative. Window shutters up, Huns going by in moonlight. Law-abiding here, and paid for goods, but in Watou several outrages, the breast cut from a woman, etc. Foraged in the farms around for food. They had to go back and the French came creeping up the sides of the village street. Pip and I and circle in the Martin. Wally Jones who used to come in at eleventh hour in brown oilskin mac. accept drink in the round and not pay himself but swallow his stout at a gulp.

"Still swinging it, Jonah."

Jonah's brown eyes gleam.

"My boy, when you work as hard as I do, you can write out an order for the undertaker shit-hot."

FRIDAY

MARCH 16 .Morn completed class. Various work and bath. At ration sa sell re 10 extra men.. Cleaned bike and got pay. Evg. a pub-crawl Hut at 8.30. Rumours re Russia from Sergt. Edmonds. Czar reported in quod and a revolution going. etc, which I didn't believe.

1417
SATURDAY
MARCH 17. Up with car and birds. At Brandeek Mobile No. 5 Roberts in glib possession of facts re Russia. Then Sergt. Edmunds gave pars. Paper (Only the express left) confirmed this. Times (evg) at shop Pop Sq. a full account. To me, a miracle. absolute. Perhaps it will quicken the war's end. St ATRICK'S DAY. Cally, TYSON AND JONES had got drunk in the Foul pub over the road. Cally soothing and striving to keep the others under his wing, Tyson stumbling and vociferous, and imbruted, while Jones laughably maudlin but sensitive to your laugh. Evg. to cinema.

SUNDAY
MARCH 18. Morn cleaned bike. New Somme advance news arrived twice as Billy Pritchard called. He was working at Corps temp? ft. a nap Evg. cine. At 10.30 as sleeping Sergt. Barnes came in with wind up re missing orderlies Buckley and Deering who had, I supposed, got drunk. I soothed him. Galloway burst in with news re the Somme advance on 45 mile front. Too excited to sleep for half an hour.

MONDAY
MARCH 19. Morn, all knew the news everywhere. To H. C. Aft. reports. Evg. wrote. Shelled, blackspurts rising away over the field in which was our hut, seeming towards R n. Rd level crossing.

TUESDAY
MARCH 20. Morning to Ramparts with cargo on bike.. Quiet. Aft to Corps and saw Mr. U. Evg saw Eileen and missed bird. Sat in the Martin. "You want to be careful of Eileen 's brother Os. He's a hefty bloke. She'll be pleased to see you. They live only just round the corner." Home 9

WEDNESDAY
MARCH 20.

THURSDAY.
Mar 21. To H.C. with birds. Aft. reptd, read, slept. Snow and fine in turns.--cold. Evg cards,--first game since coming to France.

FRIDAY
MARCH 22 To H.C. with birds on bike. Aft. reported. Evg wrote.

SAT
MAR 23. Up to Ypres with cargo in car. Aft reptd. Evg to Corps, happy.

SAT
MAR 24. Morn Caseby to Ramparts on car. I cleaned bike in fine sun but cold wind all day. Evg. cin, all pictures.

SUNDAY

MARCH 25. I to H.C. birds on bike. Aft nap and work. Evg band and cin.

MONDAY

MARCH 26. Morn men arrived. Aft. class. Rvg cin and left half-time

MARCH 27

TUESDAY. To Ramparts via K. with birds on the bike. While putting bike on stand, "Run," I heard Jack Hilton call as he bobbed out from ramparts. I finished putting bike on stand, and as did so, soft earth from the shells drop in go nt eh ramparts fell on the bike and me and all around. While talking with Kack it rattled several times around and on the corrugated iron of roofing of dugouts and cockhouses. H's gotten terrible lately," sd Jack. "This shop's goin' to be hot, I make it."

"It's been gradually gatherin force every day. I should chance it now before it gets worse. If he starts like he has a few times recently ye'll never get thro'."

I raced round the back way thro' slush, got along the front of the barracks(?) which had been pounded so, and up the narrow sinister sareet at side, and shot obliquely towards the street going to station when I hit, submerged on a pool of water, some bricks jagged with my crankcase, and screw-plug was wrenched out, compression gone and oil hissed out. I stopped--wind up. In a small panic. Didn't know what to do, but as I saw men running and heard shells falling behind me, I got her going with low compression and quitted as quick as possible. Kept on as far as goldfish chateau, and then, feeling safe, I descended and plugged up the crankcase with wood.

Aft. to Corps, but no spare crankcase. Upset but Pip plugged the case well up with wood, I helpless to do so well myself at first.

At San Martin forgot troubled. Ddrienne coquettish. She said I was proud and wouldn't speak when I met her (in the street). Did this refer to the time when She and Julie passed in black shawls and I was talking with Mr. U. and I didn't like?... Moved from table to join large party as she moved to my table and then I regretted it.

Went round to the chip-shop (later we used to go in the yd^{ad}.) In the shop, a narrow long room, and immediately on left a glowing stove where Mathilde was cooking ceaselessly chips. At top fat old mere and thinner girl ceaselessly cutting. Old beardrd ruffi an gesticulating in French.

ALGY was there. and being chi pped by White.

" R.N.D.--those chaps who swing the lead up and down l. of C.-- or goriding in lorries from Calais to the baths and back again.

"We weren't in Calais, we were in England, but I got fed up and wangled out, but when I got to Abbeville cdd Jeff hung on to me. I siad I wanted to go up the line. He said:" "You can't go. T You're a bocdy sailor.. They wcn't have b---y sailors up the line "But I got away at last--said I'd got a cousin here."

Charley's solemn hoarse voice.

"More likely 'cause the. could7t stand you in the mess. Five francs a week wouldn't go far for what you eat --they way you' re ^{loving} ~~worshiping~~ that."

"Eh?" siad Algy, hard of hearing, turning his chips over dub- iously.

"There used to be a good table down at Abbeville, but I shouldn 't have cared to squash in at yours."

"He's trying to pull your leg, Algy," shouted a pal in his ear. Algy gave that unrancorous laugh that made us all love him. His girlish face wreathed into smiles.

"I can't hear. It's really because I'm deaf old Jeff wanted to keep me back. At home I could hear quite well half way up the church--not that I wanted to hear--to damned uninteresting..

But it's got worse out here."

At that moment A D.R. came in.

"There's two specials and the waiting man's gone out. Who's next?"

The dread word specials, especially dread when a shop was getting warm, thrillf thro' us. "I'm on," said White. . Where's it to?"

"Ypres."

"Damn Ypres," sd Charles, making to go.

"Let me take it," pleaded Algy with the emotional keenness of a schoolgirl. "I want to have a look round. I should love it."

"Don't be a jay," said Charlie.

"No I mean it, awfully," said Algy more like a giglet than ever.

"Oh, if you're looking for trouble, take it, and I'll have your run in your shift to-norrow."

Algy left the room precipitately.

"He's thw bloody limit," chorussed the room. "Funny kid, Algy."

MARCH 28 1919.

WED. Pigeon Class. Reports. Evg, new Revue at Pop. theatre, called "Thumbs." Dull spasm going home. At Marie's was told that Hunter had wanted me for Spates List and visited Jock at Cinema. Like a fool in the rain ran down to Corps with List. Going back after handing same to Bruce, found filler cap missing, and like a fool went back to D.R.s billet and announced the loss., suspecting Corps.

MARCH 29

THURSDAY. Found filler cap wedged between e. haust and chaincase.

How? Wire undone from tube. Morning to Ramaprts via K. with cargo on bike. Aft reports. Evg wrote. Rained nearly all day. Rotten cursed.

MARCH 30

FRIDAY. My off day. Lit fire in hut. Pay day and list for Sergt. Edmonds.

MARCH 31

SATURDAY. Morn to Ramparts with cargo on car. Aft. Sergt Edmonds put the wind up me with refference to new offensive. Evg. estam inet near station. On Sat and Sun the low gaiety of Pop there with nondescript girls and one night crushed dancing and conce tina and wailing and drunken song.

APRIL 1 1919.

SUNDAY. Morn, clerical clean-up. Aft. do and nap. Evg., band and cinema.