

Earle Willis Bunker (3/9/1897 – 8/1974)

Diary for 1917-1918

Lincolnvile Historical Society Collection

Scanned & Transcribed 2023 by Kim Clark

*Underline indicates where original writing was difficult to decipher,
so transcription may not be accurate. Refer to original scanned page.
Transcriber's notes are set off with [brackets].*

DECEMBER 1917**Monday, December 31**

At 4 o'clock two trucks arrived & we had our blanket rolls & instruments ready for a two day trip to [blank] After our supper we went to the Y.M.C.A. where we played a concert. Much to our disappointment we were called out to play the old year out & the new year in. Most of the fellows were feeling pretty gay & the officers too. We marched across the Meuse river & back to the barracks where we bunked on the floor.

JANUARY 1918**Tuesday, January 1**

Strange to say we didn't have to get up at reveille. Nothing doing until after dinner when we went down in front of the hospital & played for the patients & nurses. At 7 we began our second concert & between selections the Y.M. put on some very clever boxing bouts. Later on a fine lot of nurses came in & we played for them to dance. It was only an aggravation to us to watch those girls & not even get a dance. The dance closed at 11 o'clock & we were glad enough to hit the (feathers) floor.

Wednesday, January 2

The truck was ready to bring us back as soon as we'd finished breakfast. Altho this wasn't too bad we were glad to get back to Liffol le Grand. On my return I found 4 pkgs from home so didn't care about going to dinner. The afternoon I spent reading & playing cards.

Wednesday, January 2

As usual we had our regular morning rehearsal; after dinner Furgeson had a sectional rehearsal which proved very beneficial. At 7 we gave a fine concert at the Y.M.C.A. & the boys enjoyed dancing at the rear of the hall.

Thursday, January 3

Regular rehearsal in the morning & sec rehearsal after dinner, no retreat. Played a concert at the Y.M.C.A. at 7 o'clock

Friday, January 4

Rehearsal as usual; signed the payroll. Went up to the officers club for a lecture on 1st aid but the doctor didn't show up. Much to my joy I received 2 Christmas boxes & several letters from home. One box contained a helmet from Ohio St the other a box of chocs, a knife, 2 pkgs of sugar wafers & a fine handkerchief from Prov. R.I.

Saturday, January 5

After standing reveille I came back & got my own breakfast; Heated water & made cocoa. I got some salmon & Fancy cookies & with toasted bread & cheese I got along very well. After supper Carl & I went to the Y where we saw five fast boxing bouts.

Sunday, January 6

The band played for church at 9 o'clock. At eleven, Barker, Brad, Fergy Myron & I had a rehearsal in preparation for tonights services at ? The Chaplin called after us with ambulance car. It was a fine night & we had a pleasant ride out to Velixcelle.

Monday, January 7

Rehearsal at 9. Sectional for an hour after dinner. I played poker the rest of the afternoon. No retreat. At 7 we went to the Y & played for a dance. The boys seemed to enjoy it so imagine it will be continued. Had a heavy rain all day which melted most of the snow. I bought some felt slippers & rubbers to keep my feet dry

Tuesday, January 8

At nine we had instructions on the gas mask & its function by Lieut. Cook. After the lecture we had our band rehearsal. At 1:30 we had our sectional work under C. Furgeson's supervision. Bloude & I practiced putting on our masks in 6 sec. Played for retreat. Spent the eve writing letters. Ans. the note I found in my respirator, a warworker in England.

Wednesday, January 9

Before rehearsal Cook gave us another lecture on the mask & gas attack. Section work after dinner & played Retreat. After Supper Fellows & I went up to the Y.M.C.A. & had a little practice with the gloves. About 8 o'clock her & I went up to see the school teacher & played cards the rest of the eve. When we came out there was a big blizzard on.

Thursday, January 10

Awoke at 7:30 & much to my surprise the other fellows had been up to reveille & breakfast. Went to the mess shack & had a Co. meeting at nine Short rehearsal after dinner. Played retreat. Pulled off another concert at the Y.M. Big Snow storm.

Friday, January 11

Rehearsal in the forenoon & sectional work after dinner. On account of the nasty weather we didn't play retreat

Saturday, January 12

Short rehearsal in the morning. No work after dinner so spent my time reading & playing cards. Went up to the bouts at the Y.M. Rained all day.

Sunday, January 13

We all played for church in the morning. "Fergy" made a mouse trap & got two mice during the night. After supper about 20 of us were transported to Vilouxel by Ford Ambulances. We played for church services & afterwards played a concert for the boys.

Monday, January 14

Had enough for breakfast so didn't go up to the mess shack. Made some cocoa & bought a loaf of French bread to go with my jam. Had a lot of new music to try over this morning. I tried to play a solo; come to find out my horn was filled with a rag someone had put in for the occasion. As usual we had our practice after dinner. We played for a dance at the Y.M. at 7 o'clock. Came home & read the rest of the eve.

Tuesday, January 15

Ans Reveille in a rain storm. It kept up all day too. A rehearsal was called at 9 o'clock. On my way back from mess met a din of French soldiers going through. Had the same work after dinner on our folios & exercises. No retreat. Played cards after rehearsal. I didn't go up to supper but got my own supper in the room with several others.

Wednesday, January 16

Another rainy day. After breakfast I wrote letters until 8:45 & then went to rehearsal. Had onion soup, coffee & bread for dinner. Following our afternoon rehearsal we had drill with our gas masks. Played checkers & cards during the evening.

Thursday, January 17

Had my breakfast in the room. Rehearsal at 9 o'clock. Only had 30 min. of longtones this afternoon. Played cribbage for the first time today. At the concert I played my first solo. "The Serenade" by Victor Herbert. Got a hair cut tonight.

Friday, January 18

Rehearsal as usual. Had hamberg steak, biscuits & coffee for dinner. At 1:30 our afternoon work began. No retreat on account of rain. I was so interested in a game of cribbage I didn't go up to supper. Went to the Y.M. at 7 to a vaudeville show. It was 1st class & I had a good laugh. Following this program we heard a wonderful speaker from Nebraska. Dr. Titus Lowe's subject was "Kaiser Bill's Gamble" & believe me it was worth hearing.

Saturday, January 19

After rehearsal we expected to have the rest of the day to ourselves but Hack came in soon after dinner & informed us that a truck would be around in a few minutes to take us to Bazoilles sur Meuse. On our way out we witnessed a number of bombers having the grenade drills. Had supper with Co. A & Went to the Y.M. Directly after giving a short concert a fine minstrel show was pulled off. We played for the officers & nurses to dance. Brad & I slept together on the floor.

Sunday, January 20

Turned out at 8 & took breakfast with K. Co. Played about an hour where the boys were at work constructing more hospital huts. Bloude & I went into a Café to get a drink. There was nothing doing on the drinks but the 2 girls which were exceptionally good looking detained us for some time. Some of the other band fellow came in later & we played a while for the girls & several French soldiers. The latter part of the afternoon a truck came for us & we were sure glad to get home again. Found 5 letters from home waiting for me.

Monday, January 21

Morning rehearsal as usual & a short one after dinner. Wrote several letters & played cribbage. No retreat. Played for a dance at the Y.M. after supper. It was a swell eve & hardly a cloud in the sky. It was a big night at the front by the sound of the guns too.

Tuesday, January 22

The companies went to the trenches at B. so we had no reveille. The guns could still be heard when I awoke this morning. The rehearsal was a bad one this morning. Got paid off soon after dinner. Played retreat. Went to the movies after supper at the Y.M. These were the 1st pictures I'd seen since leaving the States. I bought a bag of peanuts & just enjoyed myself. This after I received a box of candy from unknown girl in Auburn.

Wednesday, January 23

Bacon & black coffee was the menu for breakfast. Our morning rehearsal went very well. Had onion soup for dinner. Played cribbage until rehearsal. Wrote some letter & put several new pads on my sax after supper. Had a meeting at the mess shack on gas again.

Thursday, January 24

After finishing our breakfast the sun could be seen just coming over the horizon. It turned out to be one fine summer day. Set out in our shirt sleeves for a good part of the afternoon taking a sun bath. We started our concert but was interrupted. It was a cloudless night with a full moon. A great night for a raid. A number of planes went over & the lights were ordered out. The eve was spent watching the movies.

Friday, January 25

Rehearsal in the morning & sectional work in the afternoon. Set out in the back yard & wrote a few letters. Fergy Brad & I went to the range for a little while. After supper Brad & I got a front seat at the Y.M. Three men & a young lady entertained us for nearly 2 hrs with readings & music. The girl was dark & exceptionally good looking so I had to go up & (hold) shake hands with.

Saturday, January 26

Regular work in the morning but no rehearsal after dinner. Played retreat & also a march afterwards. Got a couple letters at supper time. I went up to the bouts at the Y.M. They were fast ones, two of them weren't finished "too much a do pip I guess [??]"

Sunday, January 27

As the company was away we didn't have to stand reveille. We all played for church in the morning & got excused until retreat. About eight of us got a lunch & put in our music pouch & started on a hike. On our way we had to pass a German prison. It was a splendid day & I even had to take my coat off. An hour & thirty min. found us in the ruins of a castle probably built something B.C. This castle was on the top of a high mountain & as I stood on the parapet I could see for miles & miles. I spent several hrs exploring the old place; There were underground passages & many things of interest. I followed a pair of winding stairs which took me into a black dungeon. Several planes passed over us during the time we were up there; we could hear the guns & the front very distinctly. Saw the machine Gun Co. off in the distance practicing "barrage firing". Got back just in time to play retreat. About 7 letters came in for me which pleased me immensely.

Monday, January 28

Wrote a couple letters before morning rehearsal. Went over a number of pieces for the dance. A short rehearsal after dinner. Played retreat & march also. A couple of the 101st Eng set in at the dance. After dinner we had our gas test. We were informed that the gas was 7 times stronger than it was the day before & that it would effect the eyes. Of course that made us feel real good. We entered the gas chamber with our Eng. Respirator & in a few min the serg. in charge ordered us to change to the French mask. A chill went through me because my French mask didn't fit any too well. I made the change in record time & gave a sigh of relief when it was done. Fortunately, all of the band came out. My eyes were a bit sore but other than that I was alright.

Tuesday, January 29

Rehearsal in the morning & afternoon as usual. Fine day so we played retreat. Wrote a few letters & got a fine box from Reynold. After supper I went to the Y.M. There were 3 fine acts & a short drama pulled off. The fellows got their costumes somewhere in town & they sure were good. Had several reels of moving pictures; saw Charlie Chaplin & Maurice Costello featured in a very thrilling two reel picture. Really this would put the Bijou in the background.

Wednesday, January 30

We had our morning & afternoon work in our rooms. Went up to "Hacks" room & help tear up music [?]. Retreat & march afterwards. Played cribbage & read during the evening.

Thursday, January 31

Morning & afternoon rehearsal; played retreat. Gave a concert at the Y & had pictures afterwards so I stayed.

FEBRUARY 1918**Friday, February 1**

Usual rehearsals. Phil Jones & the rest of the scouts arrived. Got about 25 Bangor Papers & a few letters & of course they all had to be read before going to bed.

Saturday, February 2

Had inspection in heavy marching order. The Capt. Took us out the road & we played the company back with our packs on. After dinner we played for Reg. review. It was carried out to perfection; We played "Waterville" march 12 times in succession. Gen Cole must have been proud of the 103rd as they passed the reviewing stand. After playing retreat we felt as if we had done a good days job. Took a bath & turned in early.

Sunday, February 3

Played for church. The chaplain took several into the church & communion was observed also. Fergy got a corn popper & some corn & we soon got our fill. I stayed up until 11:30 packing my clothes so I wouldn't have to hurry so fast in the morning.

Monday, February 4

Didn't have to ans reveille so slept until 7:30. Orders came out that every squad & barracks bag had to be packed at 9:30. I bought considerable care stuff, candles etc. to have on the trip in the (Sidedoor Pullmans). Expect to have a 3 days trip. No retreat because the Bass horns were packed. Most of the fellows got a pretty good "feel on" as it was the last night in Liffol. The two cafes were pretty well smashed up. Had a big fire in the stove & the fireplace which made it very cheerful. We emptied my sleeping bag & didn't sleep very good. Got up about 2 & crawled in with Brad.

Tuesday, February 5

Arose about 8 and began making my pack & cleaning up. We had to draw 3 days rations & after getting our packs on we had "some load". Besides having an exceptionally large pack I carried my sweater, blouse, overcoat, slicker, sidearms, canteen mess kit & extra pair of shoes, music pouch, a small bag & a box containing some of our rations, two gas masks, toilet articles & my Sax case which was packed as full as possible. Left Liffol le Grand about 12 o'clock. The whole band (28) & instruments were packed in one small box car. I believe it was the longest night I ever put in. I was tied in a bow not with instrument cases on one side & 4 fellows had their feet across my legs & stomach; when one moved the whole bunch would have too. The square wheels kept the cases continually falling down on my head; the only pillow I had was my old Sax case. In spite of all these hardships & the fact we were on our way to the front most of the fellows were in the best of Humor.

Wednesday, February 6

Arrived at Mercin about the middle of the forenoon. It was a big artillery base; there were all kinds of shells & artillery pieces. It was a common thing for the Germans to shell the station whenever a train came in. The G's got the range when they retreated so made some pretty good hits. The houses were all shot to pieces & the guns could be heard at the front. Got under way

about noon; my pack weighed no less than 150 or two hundred pounds. Came through Soissons & it was completely shot to pieces; it was a large city but it did look as though it had seen some hot fighting. The Hike was a terrible one for me; I had on my new high boots & they blistered both feet; the sweat was just rolling off my face; thought I'd have to fall out several times but managed to stick it out. I changed my shoes & if someone hadn't taken pity on me I think I would have dropped. Arrived at Crouy at the middle of the afternoon where we got into barracks. This hill where we are now stationed was held by the Germans for over 2 yrs. I went through some of the trenches made of concrete & railroad irons. Most of the dugouts were blown up by the "bosh" before leaving them however they had electric lights & a good many conveniences. I saw some human skeletons & several graves two of which belonged to officers. Was some glad to turn in after supper. Several of the fellows went on guard during the night.

Thursday, February 7

1st call at 4:50. Everything was to be in readiness for the march at 7 o'clock. It was darker then Egypt when we came down to breakfast. The firing at the front was pretty active from 5 until daylight. The whole sky was lighted up & the guns sounded like distant thunder. After a good nights sleep we were ready for another hike & at 8 we got started. We passed through several deserted villages which had been almost completely destroyed by shell fire. Arrived at our destination about noon. On our arrival we were taken into an immense cave which was originally built by the "bosh". There were a great number of exits from this dugout which were all named. Some of them were as follows: New York, Brooklyn, Santa Fe, Sacramento & many others. It looked to be dug out of solid rock. There was room for hundreds and hundreds & light in this cave was furnished by electricity. When the Germans left this stronghold they under-mined it & blew up about two battalion of Frenchmen. Of course I had to get lost several times but someone was kind enough to show me the way out. At 4 we fell in expecting to go directly to the trenches but the Capt. informed us that we'd stay here for a day or two. Not enjoying the cave we decided to find a place somewhere in the ruins of the town. Some of us finally decided to make the church our sleeping quarters for the night. There were a number of large shell holes through the walls & the windows were all blown out besides part of the tower missing. Brad & I made up our bed in front of the altar on the marble platform; guess that was the first night I ever slept in a church.

Friday, February 8

Got up about 8 & had breakfast about half past. We were ordered to find other sleeping quarters as light could be seen & would serve as a great target for some German airplane. Brad, Cooly Fergy & I finally found one which had previously been used by some French soldiers. We found a stove & after making our beds it looked quite cozy. Of course the rats which were nearly as large as cats didn't bother us; every had them. In case of a bombardment we had a underground dugout to shelter us. After getting settled I went prowling around some of the ruined buildings. I discovered several German helmets & the skeleton of a Frenchman half decayed with his gun & helmet at his side. I also dug out a F. rappier out of the ruins which was in fine condition. After dinner a bunch of us went over the mountain & into what used to be the German trenches. As the "bosh" retreated they cut down all of the trees & the ground was just covered with large shell holes. I went into several of the dugouts; in one I found 3 large boxes of hand grenades. The field was covered with barbed wire entanglements & a network of trenches. Several times we came across areo [?] bombs that didn't explode as well as shells. The largest of these shells were nearly two feet long. I spent all the afternoon walking over this no man's land; there were rockets gas bombs & many other things of interest. I could see the Artillery firing into the German lines from where I stood. I also saw a captive dirigible go up for observations. It only stayed up a few minutes & disappeared below the hill again. One thing of int. was the little narrow gage which wound around the mountain & up to the trenches. Between the rats & the bullets I didn't sleep an awful lot. The rats carried off nearly two pkgs of hardtack besides some bacon we had. I slept with my head in a large hole & was disturbed by more than a Reg. of rats. The bombardment from the German lines were quite active as well as near during. We could lay in bed & hear them

whistle & then explode. They were intended for the road nearby; the rest of our company had to turn back on account of shelling the roads.

Saturday, February 9

Arose at 8 & had breakfast soon afterwards. It was a beautiful morning without a cloud in the sky. We expected to see some air fights & were not wholly disappointed. A German plane came flying over our lines but the French soon had their anti-aircraft guns upon it. White puffs appeared all around the plane, but it didn't discourage the aviator; it wasn't long before a French aviator appeared on the scene who made for his opponent. The German's then turned their guns on his machine & black puffs of smoke appeared around the French machine. I expected any minute to see one of them fall as the shots were pretty close. I learned that the French made the white puffs while the black was made by the German fire; in this way one could easily distinguish whether it was a For G as soon as it was fired upon. It sure was a thrilling picture to us as we had never seen anything of the kind before. A number of similar raids occurred but were finally driven off by the French machine. I watched them until nearly noon when it clouded up & made it impossible to watch them any longer. At 10 o'clock we went up to the cave for another gas test which was given by a Frenchman. He took about 40 of us into a chamber & shot off a pistol which contained a gas shell; he then closed us in for ten minutes & we changed masks again before coming out. Had a fine breakfast as well as dinner; one thing very noticeable since coming to the front was the improvement in the meals. The fellow must & do get fed well while at the front. Two large balloons were up nearly all the afternoon taking observations. The one just back of us was fired upon several times but wasn't damaged. The band was on detail most of afternoon at the Commissary. Went to bed soon after supper.

Sunday, February 10

Got up at just 8 o'clock. We had griddle cakes, syrup bacon & coffee for breakfast. The cook had considerable dough left over so I got some & fried them myself. I did nothing but read until dinner time. Our menu for dinner was hamberg, potatoes bread & coffee & for supper a generous piece of steak with potatoes. I almost forgot I was in the army with such feeds. The artillery fire was pretty heavy the latter part of the afternoon. Tonight the Germans have been shelling the roads just over the hill. We could hear them when they were fired & again when they exploded about 20 sec. after they left the German guns.

Monday, February 11

It was cloudy all the morning so didn't see many planes up. No detail work so did nothing but read & play cards until dinner time. After dinner "Fergy" & I went over the hill to watch the firing. On our way back we got quite a reception; several big shells struck the side of the field upon which we stood. Scrapnel rained all around us, but as luck would have it none got us. After supper I busied myself constructing a Rat Trap. I managed to get 2 in the trap but they got out before I could kill them.

Tuesday, February 12

Had breakfast at 7:30. Tore away nearly all of our roof for firewood & stored it away. Last night several of the Band fellows went up to the front by supply wagons. I then made up my mind to go as soon as there was a chance. Saw several air raids. A German plane concealed in the clouds flew just over our heads & attacked an observation balloon on the side of the our dugout. The "bosh" swooped down, turned his machine gun on the balloon which immediately took fire. The German plane put on all its speed and zigzagged out of the way before the French could fire him down. There was a French & American officer in the balloon but they came down in a parachute without further mishap. I went over to see the wreck & while there another German from above the clouds dropped a bomb at the crowd who had gathered there; fortunately for us it struck soft earth & didn't explode. I was elected to go on guard & ans Tel. calls. I set up until 3 o'clock when I was relieved by Brad. When I got back I found that the boys caught a rat in my new trap.

Wednesday, February 13

Read & played cards all the morning. Fergy & I played, Coolie & Brad winning 3 out of 5 games. We made no trumps & Took every trick in one of these games. Wrote home, made some hot choc. & went to bed.

Thursday, February 14

Not much doing in the morning. Played cards & read most of the afternoon. At 5 I started for the trenches. All the supply wagons had left but I was determined to go so set out on foot. After going about 2 miles I met Bloude who was also on his way out. We met the wagons & kept with them because they had French guides. The first few miles of road was camouflaged but the last of it was unprotected. We passed through what used to be a good sized village but now was nothing more than a heap of rocks & ruins. After walking for nearly 2 hrs we made our destination. Just before we got to the cook shacks however the Germans shot several light rockets just above our heads. They gave off a very brilliant light & gave me quite a start. We were so near that every one was speaking in low tones; the Frenchman said that in the daytime signs could be read from their lines. I saw an old "pealer" of a gun [?] behind a group of trees & the gun crew lived in a dugout just beside it. While the team was unloading I was taking in all I could; the "bosh" were just beyond the hill & we could hear their machine guns & see the old flash when the big guns spoke. The mess sergt wanted to start back at once as it was nearly time for the Germans to shell the place. We had no more than started when bang went one of the big guns it shook the ground in great shape. The very first one fired was a close one; I could hear it whine & it seemed to be making right for us; fortunate it did not but it struck just off the other side of the road, not fifty feet away. Believe me it gave me a shaky feeling I'll admit. The Frenchman said "marches plus vite" & he didn't have to say it twice. We set out at a quick pace but the shells were whistling pretty close, the next one landed on the opposite side of the road & struck the ground with a thud. The other shells went over our heads & we were quite relieved when we got on to the road again. We made good time coming back & I was pretty tired but thankful to crawl into my little bed. Walked all the way out & back 16 miles with about 20 min stop to unload the wagon of supplies. I believe I did more praying during these few hrs then I ever did before.

Friday, February 15

I was on detail most of the morning & worked at the commissary a while after dinner. It was a wonderful afternoon, not a cloud in the sky. The sky was almost black with machines all the afternoon. Another observation went up here in place of the one that was destroyed a few days ago. It had been up hardly 15 min. before a German plane made for it; the two in it came down in separate parachutes & the balloon was quickly taken down. The German was soon driven away. At one time two German & 3 French planes had it at close range. We could see the fire from their machine guns as they worked on each other. I expected any minute to see one drop but they did do some wild maneuvering. Hundreds of shots were fired from another air craft guns & on the whole we had a most exciting afternoon. After supper we could hear the numerous machines over head & the sound from their machine guns. Flash lights were soon busy picking them up & the shells could be seen as they rose like a ball of fire to get a enemy plane.

Saturday, February 16

Fine day and many area activities. The allies had 5 observation balloons up most of the day. Saw a German balloon up early but it soon disappeared. At 5 I was furnished with a hospital kit & a red cross arm band & followed Co. H for the trenches. The 2nd battalion went out every night with their picks & spades. Each man had a certain amount of work to do & when this was completed would return. One night the Germans opened up on them killing one & injuring several; others were thrown to the ground by the concussion. The hospital men didn't come out after that but the band was called on to take their places. The men worked very good and were well under way for home when they started shelling.

Sunday, February 17

Played cards most of the morning but the afternoon brought more excitement. It was a perfect day & I guess there were hundreds of planes up. There was a group of six or more who were doing some very spectacular work. First one would dip & another would follow; the deadly sound of the machine guns could be heard very distinctly. Finally one machine started on a downward plunge & we well knew that two unfortunates were on the quick road to death. After falling some distance the wings took fire & it sped down leaving a long trail of smoke behind. A large piece of shrapnel from one of the bombs struck so near that we heard it coming & later picked it up. F & C went to the trenches & Brad & I kept house.

Monday, February 18

It was a wonderful day & we saw the French bring down another German plane. Played cards as usual most of the day. After supper I took my red cross kit, bag & went to the trenches again with H. Co. Rockets & signals were continually going up. A German plane passed over us several times while we were at work. A number of shells whistled through the air but fell short & struck in the valley below us. It was pretty hard digging but the fellows worked hard & we soon were on our way back. The Co. Brad started out with didn't have such good success. The shell fire was too hot for them & they returned.

Tuesday, February 19

Exceptionally fine day. Saw a great many planes up during the day. Went up to the Y.M. in the cave & got choc, milk, candles etc. Played cards during the evening.

Wednesday, February 20

No detail work so spent most of the day reading & Playing cards. The artillery just over the hill was pretty active the 1st part of the evening. We could see the fire from the guns.

Thursday, February 21

Brad & I went on K.P. Had a Band rehearsal in the afternoon; first one for two weeks. It was a fine afternoon & the aeroplanes were pretty active. There were 4 or 5 observation balloons up also. Got several letters & some papers. Wrote R & Ma & went to bed early.

Friday, February 22

Cloudy all day. Had doughnuts, bacon bread & coffee for breakfast. Spent the afternoon playing cards. After supper we (the band) gave a concert in the cave.

Saturday, February 23

On wood detail in the morning. Worked a while at the commissary after dinner. At 2:30 we had a short band rehearsal.

Sunday, February 24

Turned out at 10:30. Had a fine holiday dinner. Turkey dressing mashed potatoes cranberry sauce, bread & coffee. Got a letter from Ma & one from R which pleased me very much. Wrote to my blighty girl. Got an issue of Job.[?] from Bay City Mich. Read until nearly 11:30 & then went to bed.

Monday, February 25

On detail for a while in the morning. The Germans located the French battery & were pretty active all the [remaining entry too light to read].

Tuesday, February 26

[Entry too light to read – revisit to see if anything can be pulled out]

Wednesday, February 27

[Entry too light to read – revisit to see if anything can be pulled out]

Thursday, February 28

[Entry too light to read – revisit to see if anything can be pulled out]

MARCH 1918**Friday, March 1**

[Entry too light to read – revisit to see if anything can be pulled out]

Saturday, March 2

[Entry too light to read – revisit to see if anything can be pulled out] The two officers made their escape in separate parachutes.

Sunday, March 3

Dull day & Fergy & I stayed in & passed the day with our straw [?] battles. We emptied hundreds of machine gun shells & had considerable excitement.

Monday, March 4

It was snowing when I got up so stayed around the stove the great part of the day. Had a good book & read until 10:30.

Tuesday, March 5

Another stormy day. Not much doing for excitement. Got a box of candy from Ethel which pleased me up. The band gave another concert in the cave.

Wednesday, March 6

The 1st good day we've had for nearly a week & believe me we appreciated it. Saw a number of airplanes in action but none brought down. Was on detail most of the morning. Had a band rehearsal at 2:30. Received 4 letters today. After ans a few I went to bed.

Thursday, March 7

After breakfast 10 of us reported with our packs to go to the trenches for sanitary work. Reported at Reg P.C. about 11:30 & after dinner went out with a French Lieut & started fumigating M. Co's dugouts for Scarlet fever. It surely was a big job had to clean them all through spray them over twice & bury the rubbish. The trenches were awfully muddy & my shoulders were all raw after carrying so many cans of solution. We were in sight of German territory all day the villages on that side were all standing & I asked the "Frog" why the French didn't shell them he said French women & children were in them so prevented them doing it. We were under fire all day both sides were pretty active all day. Was glad to turn in after supper. Spent a sleepless night in the cave.

Friday, March 8

It was a wonderful day. Had breakfast at 7:15 & started out immediately thinking we could finish before night & go home. The shrapnel was falling all around us & we could see when they broke.

One struck so near that I felt the concussion from it. The aeroplanes were pretty active all day & we witnessed several fights. Saw a lot of Germans shell on ammunition dumps [?]. Ran across several German breast plates. At 5 we thought we were finished & came down to supper. The French Capt. said we hadn't sufficiently cleaned the dugouts so would have to stay another day. Fergy & I didn't care about sleeping in the cave so hiked home. About 8 o'clock 12 or 15 boche planes went over head probably on a raid. Powerful lights were turned on them & a good many shots fired. After the excitement was over I struck the hay & didn't stir until 9 o'clock the next morning.

Saturday, March 9

Had griddle cakes for breakfast. Sergt Dole Fergy & I started back for the trenches again at 10. Got out there about dinner time. After mess we all went out & with the help of some Frogs we managed to complete the dugouts. Just about supper time the French Capt came around & inspected & said they were O.K. It was a perfect day & the aeroplanes were quite active in the afternoon. One going into No 20 [?] to complete it we found that it had been blown up; the only reason we could think of was that one of the aviators might have dropped a bomb there during the night. Played cards awhile in the evening & went to bed. Finished reading my testament.

Sunday, March 10

The four of us started out directly after breakfast on an exploration. Went over no mans land & into some German trenches. We found them just as the "boch" left them. There was an awful stink so we lit our candles, put on our masks & climbed down into a dugout. One G. was in a heap on the stairs and another sprawled out at the foot. They both were in fairly good condition. Had their boots & helmets on & only about half decayed. There were several on the floor of the dugout where they had been gassed probably. One was on his back with his mouth open and a look of agony on his face. The boots looked pretty good but didn't dare take them off for fear of taking some of the meat with them. About 5 I heard a couple planes overhead, they both were blazing their machine guns at a lively rate. Finally the German won out & the Frenchman sped to earth defeated. The plane fell into a trench & the engine was driven down out of sight; nearly all of the plane was destroyed by fire. The pilot was dug up by several "Frogs" & was in pretty bad shape, both legs were burned off & his head crushed in. He was buried near his machine.

Monday, March 11

Read most of the morning. Had a haircut. Tried over some new stuff at rehearsal. Got 6 letters from home.

Tuesday, March 12

Turned out at just nine o'clock & after breakfast went on woods detail. Got 4 letters from home. At noon 8 of us got orders to make our packs and be ready to leave for the trenches with the ration wagon. We got out to the trenches just about dark. Found some fine bunks with the hospital corps & turned in early.

Wednesday, March 13

We had breakfast at 7 & worked on a Lieuts dugout. After dinner a few pioneers arrived & we spent the afternoon lugging rocks & sawing trees to reinforce the roof. Wrote a couple letters during the day. About six o'clock a "boche" flew over us. He was so low that one could almost "thru" a bomb into his machine. He was too low for the antiaircraft guns & machine guns made little impression on his armored plane. He took terrible chances to get his information. It wasn't long before the woods were full of sharp shooters awaiting his return & the whole wood rang with the put, put, put of the machine guns & the report of rifle fire. At 2 Brad & I went on guard to notify anyone of an attack of gas. We were relieved at 4 and went back to bed.

Thursday, March 14

Had a lecture on gas by the Lieut. in the morning. After dinner we evacuated several cases of mumps to the hospital at Pinon. Got a piece of the stairs of an old guillotine which was used to behead people in the days of the French Revolution. Made a paper knife as a souvenir. The boche had a number of planes up during the afternoon about 6, another boche came down and flew just above the trenches. We opened up our machine guns & he came back with a volley from his gun. Had a quiet night.

Friday, March 15

About 10 o'clock F & I took a couple fellows to the evacuating post. As soon as we got back two others were waiting to go down. One had to be carried on a stretcher, he burned charcoal in his dugout at night & was found unconscious at 12 noon. Artillery was pretty active on the German Front. We watched them break in the road. Two machine guns surprised me when they opened up at a "boche" plane. They took their position after dark & it surely gave me a start. Went on gas guard at 12 and was relieved at 2 A.M.

Saturday, March 16

We had little to do during the day so wrote a few letters. After supper we got orders to pack up as some others were coming out to relieve us. Just as we got started the Germans started what I thought to be a barrage which later proved to be a gas attack. We had to go up a road for about 3 hundred yards in plain sight before we got to a trench. It was a very comfortable position as the shells were coming thick & fast the boche had been shelling the road most of the afternoon. After we got into the trench we stood where we could watch the gas shells explode on the two sides of us. White fumes soon hid the buildings in the valley from our sight. Over two hundred Frenchmen were gassed that night. We went along a little farther & noticed a French battery flash in the distance. We got near enough to hear the commands and shouts of the gun men. The big 1055 sure did have a [??]. We could also see the flame from the german artillery as they returned the fire from a distant hill. One of our guns must have hit a munition pile [?] because there was a big fire of some kind in the distance. We got home about 8 & soon tumbled in.

Sunday, March 17

Slept most of the forenoon. After dinner Bloude & I went about 6 miles to take a bath. We got clean clothes in place of our old ones. The hot showers surely did feel good & we came back feeling a 100% better.

Monday, March 18

Fairbanks & I were on K.P. but the cooks went out to take a bath with most of the fellows so we had a pretty easy day. I did a small washing & wrote a few letters.

Tuesday, March 19

Was busy most of the day getting ready to leave. Left Nanteul la Fosse about 6 o'clock & arrived in Bucy le Long where we put up in barracks for the night.

Wednesday, March 20

Slept until 10 o'clock & laid around until dinner time. Played cards after dinner. It rained all night & most of the day. Read awhile & went to bed early.

Thursday, March 21 & Friday, March 22

Went up to breakfast & came back to bed again & slept until 11:45. Played cribbage in the afternoon. About 8 we got orders that we would leave at 10 so got to our packing immediately. We were ordered to extinguish our candles not less than 6 times as the aeroplanes were

continually passing over. We were going thru Soissons but had to take a roundabout way as they were bombarding the place. We passed thru the outskirts of the city & made a halt just one side of the R.R. It was fortunate that we did halt because a shell struck exactly in the middle of the road. It was of large calibre & tore up the track as well as a few wires. It sure gave us a surprise. We soon were under way & hiked until 3:35 the next morning. It was a hard hike & the officers were all in too when we reached the station at. It must have been at least 17 miles. Hot coffee was served to us & we were packed into "side door pullman". It was the longest night of suffering I ever put in. There was 30 of us in the car & really there wasn't room for 15 to be comfortable. We set up all night so didn't get much sleep. About 12 o'clock I was aware that aeroplanes were overhead & they seem to follow us for nearly 2 hrs. Finally we stopped entirely to wait until things became more quiet. We were closed up in those box cars while the aeroplanes dropped bombs all around us. It was very uncomfortable as we thought the planes were wise to the train of troops. We could hear one plane come over & after dropping its bombs would move on & was followed by another. There was an endless chain. The bombs were dropping on both sides of the track & with the machine guns all going it was almost deafening inside of the box car. The concussion of the bombs jarred the car every time they struck. This was the first air raid I was ever in & the last one I ever hope to be in.

Saturday, March 23

Morning found us at our destination & although it meant another long hike it was more welcome than the box car. At nine o'clock we were on the road again. Had our breakfast about 10 (a mess tin of crackers & tomatoes & a little coffee). At two we made a stop & had a few hard bread biscuits & continued our march. I had to dress my feet several times & pulled through OK. At 5 we had a light supper & pulled into Blaise about 6. This was a 15 mile hike & as I had only a couple hrs sleep last night & none the night before there is little need to say how glad I was to hit the hay.

Sunday, March 24 (Palm Sunday)

Had Breakfast at 7. It was a beautiful day & we enjoyed a good rest in the morning. Played 2 concerts & retreat. After dinner our feet had to be washed & inspected by a doctor. Played for a short church service at 6 o'clock.

Monday, March 25

Had breakfast at 6:30. At 8 we started out again & were followed by the 2nd battalion & the Machine Gun Co. Wore our tin helmets all day as the Gen. wanted us to look uniform. We made a line over two miles long. We made a short stop at noon & had a few hard biscuits. After a long & wearisome march we pulled into Bologne about 3 o'clock. At 5 we played for Retreat & a short concert. About 100 of us we billeted in a barn & I sure enjoyed a good nights sleep in the hay loft.

Tuesday, March 26

Had breakfast at 8 & were ready for the march at 10. We hiked until the latter part of the afternoon. It was very cold so we didn't mind the march. Halted about noon & had corned beef & hard tack. We were "tres fatigue" when we entered Manoir. We bathed our feet & had an inspection by the doc. as usual. We slept in barracks. It was a cold night so Harold & I slept together.

Wednesday, March 27

Turned out & got an early start. The roads were hard on our feet were getting pretty sore but we trudged on with a good spirit & made Liffol about 12:30. It seemed like coming back home again when the people came out to greet us. We got our old Billet back again & spent most of the afternoon in making it comfortable again. Took a bath & changed my clothes a felt like a new man.

Thursday, March 28

Not much doing in the A.M. Got a box from home, canned chicken etc. Played retreat & a short concert.

Friday, March 29

Packed & passed in our barrack bags at noon. At 1 o'clock we fell in for pay. H.F. & I celebrated by having a big feed in the billet. We had canned peas, fruit salad, oranges, grapes, egg omlet, coffee & beer.

Saturday, March 30

Rained most of the day. No retreat. Got nine letters, which helped pass a pleasant evening.

Sunday, March 31 (Easter)

Stood reveille at 6:30. Cleaned up & went to walk with H.F. Had peaches & cream for breakfast. Bought a scarf for Clara & some wooden shoes for V.W.

APRIL 1918**Monday, April 1**

It was raining when we stood reveille. Played cards nearly all the morning. Our instruments were shipped so we stood retreat with our side arms. Went to bed early.

Tuesday, April 2

Had breakfast at 4 o'clock. Took out our bunks & cleaned out our billets. Fell in at 6 o'clock but didn't leave until 7:30. The companies fell in & marched out beyond the track where hundreds of trucks were waiting for our transportation. The long line of trucks got started about 9 & we road until 4 o'clock. Went through Domremy, the birthplace of Joan of Arc & also Commercy, both of which were good sized towns. After a short hike we came into Connieville [?] & were billeted in dugouts.

Wednesday, April 3

Didn't turn out until noon. Went down to the Y.M. & spent the most of my spare time writing letters etc. It was the 1st pleasant day for some time.

Thursday, April 4

Moved into barracks where the 5th Reg. Band moved out. It was a fine place. After getting settled we had a rehearsal & gave a concert at 6. Just before turning in we got orders to leave at 8 in the morning.

Friday, April 5

Loaded our instruments & packs on a team & Left Connieville [?] for Vetuzey. We arrived just about noon. We were put into a billet that a bunch of coons just left. The two small holes in the wall gave us a little fresh air & less light. The odor was terrible but as luck would have it we found another billet & changed. I believe it couldn't be improved upon in the town.

Saturday, April 6

Had breakfast at 7:30 & a fine one at that. At 9 we had a rehearsal. Cauty of the machine gun co played the Bass Drum. At 3 we played a concert in the square & had a very appreciative audience. After supper we played another.

Sunday, April 7

Another dull day. No church. Rehearsal at 9. Played cards until time for concert. Our two concerts & rehearsal every day makes quite a day of it. Joined in a game of poker & won a little.

Monday, April 8

Rehearsal at 9 & concert at 12:30. Another rehearsal after dinner & concert at 6:30. Played poker the rest of my spare time.

Tuesday, April 9

Tried over some new music & played it at concert. Played cards awhile after dinner. Got a letter from Pa & a few snap shots. Played another concert after supper.

Wednesday, April 10

Morning rehearsal as usual. Concert at 12:30. Went over to hear the Eng. Band in the afternoon. They had one clarinet & he couldn't play at all. They all beat time with their feet & it did sound like a circus band just organized. The Alto Sax couldn't read his music. After supper a few of us played for the pictures at the Y.M. The pictures were fine.

Thursday, April 11

Awoke & found the sun shining; 1st time for a week. Regular program; 2 concerts & rehearsal. Found time to play poker. Got a fine letter from mother.

Friday, April 12

I got the lady "corfew" to shave me & she did a fine job. As Hack wasn't feeling well, we had no morning rehearsal. We didn't stand retreat or have a concert. Wrote a couple letters & spent the rest of the day playing cards.

Saturday, April 13

Had a short rehearsal in the morning. Concert at 12:30 & another at 6:30. Played retreat. Heavy bombardment was on most of the night.

Sunday, April 14

Played reg. two concerts & had rehearsal as usual. It was a fine day & a number of fine looking girls were out walking. Played cards most of the afternoon.

Monday, April 15

(Left Vertuzey)

Had rehearsal in the morning. Got the girl to shave me again so felt fine. Band Concert at 12:15. Wrote a few letters. Received orders that the 1st sqd would be ready to leave at 6:30 for the front. At 6:30 we started out with the Co. C. At 12 we pulled into our destination. Got to bed about 2.

Tuesday, April 16

Didn't turn out until 10 the next morning. Lieut Blood sent us out to get familiar with the roads that we would have to use in evacuating sick or wounded. It seems to be a very quiet front.

Wednesday, April 17

Traveled over some different paths in the morning. In the afternoon Brad & I went into the 1st line trenches. Everything seemed to be peaceful enough. I could look right into the boche trenches. During the past 2 days it had been cloudy thus giving us more freedom to go out around. It cleared off about 6 & we were ordered to sleep with our clothes on as a raid was expected from the boche. Nothing disturbed our sleep however.

Thursday, April 18

After breakfast I came back & went to bed. Got up about 10 & played cards until dinner time. At 8 I went on guard at the hospital. Got about 8 letters which helped pass the eve. Wrote some letters & read until 2 when I was relieved.

Friday, April 19

Nothing happened of much importance during the day. Just as I was going to bed the guard came in and shouted gas; I made a dive for my mask & got it on in record time. After wearing the mask 15 or 20 min it was found to be a false alarm much to my joy. I slept with my mask on.

Saturday, April 20

At 3:30 the boche started a barrage just above here which lasted an hour or two. It was one continuous roar. About 4 the guard came in & told us to get our shoes on as we might have to get out any min. I didn't stir from my bed however but had my shoes where I could jump into them in short notice. I went down to the front line again this morning & run into Bob. Got back just in time for dinner. Wrote 4 or 5 letters after supper & turned in with my shoes on. We made our packs up the 1st of the afternoon in case we did have to evacuate. The art was active all day.

Sunday, April 21

Slept all day. Got out of bed just long enough to eat my meals. Bloude came in about 2 & awoke me up to go on guard. I took in some cocoa & cookies & we had a little lunch. Bloude stuck around until about 4 o'clock so the rest of my time went very quickly.

Monday, April 22

Got my breakfast & turned in & slept until the latter part of the afternoon. After preparing for my departure, I wrote a few letters. About 9 o'clock the 3rd squad came in to relieve us & at 10 o'clock we shouldered our packs & started [faded out - illegible] where we arrived at [?]. We found barracks where [faded] for the night.

Tuesday, April 23

Went over to the Y.M.C.A. & wrote a couple letters. Brad & I took a walk around the town & found it to be quite a place. I got my foreign service stripe & had it put on. It was a nasty night but some letters came from home which cheered me up a bit.

Wednesday, April 24

Not much doing. Rained most all day so spent most of my time in barracks. Got a little more mail. Being pretty tired I turned in early.

Thursday, April 25

Had a lecture at the hospital by Lieut Blood. Owing to the late dinner Coolbroth & I got a French lady to cook our dinner. It was a fine dinner which was much better than waiting for a mess tin of soup. Went to the Y.M.C.A. after supper & listened to a fine lecture by one of the Y.M. men. Heard a number of good recitations & good music as well.

Friday, April 26

Rained most of the day. No lecture after dinner so took a hot shower. While taking the bath our clothes were put into steam boilers where they were freed from the cooties. Came into the Y.M. to pass the evening. Met Gilbert & he let me take his pass to Commercy. Gave the town the once over & went into several cafes. No 37 in particular was quite popular.

Saturday, April 27

I slept until noon time & got up in time for dinner. Read a book most of the afternoon. It was "Nothing But the Truth by Ishaw. I finished supper & Coolbroth & I got an early start for C. again. As we couldn't get a pass we had to invent some other way to pass the guard. We followed along the canal until we came across a canal boat. We got over in time to see some of the place before it closed. Came back early & guess it was just as well. Part of C & D Co.'s were in trucks already to go to the trenches & Lieut Blood was looking for us to go with them. We got our gas masks & helmets & soon were off for the trenches. The Co.'s were going up to dig out the 1st line that had been evacuated the night before because of the heavy art. Fire of the "boche". The ground was nothing but a heap of disheveled rocks. The trees were all shot to pieces it was the worst looking sector I'd seen and guess it was the scene of several hard fights. We stayed in a dugout in the 1st line but couldn't go to sleep; stood up most of the night. At 3 o'clock things began to liven up & I forgot all about being cold & sleepy. The German rained over shot & shell for an hour & they also sent over a number of gas shells & we had our masks on for about an hour. Our big naval guns (14 in) were certainly pounding the German lines & when they exploded they actually shook our dugout. Each shell seemed to have 3 explosions. About 4:30 the firing stopped a bit so we started back. The valley was pretty bad with gas so had to put on our masks again. After going about 2 miles, trucks met us & carried us back to Vignot.

Sunday, April 28

Got into Vignot at just 6:30 & after having "flap jacks" & Syrup for breakfast we turned in to get a little sleep. Had a fine dinner. Read most of the afternoon. I bought some supplies at the Y.M. for my next trip to the trenches.

[Left Vignot]

[3rd Trip to the Trenches]

Monday, April 29

Read most of the morning. Made my pack after dinner. Got a box from home just before leaving with some candy, candles & a book. Left for the trenches about 6:30 in trucks (35 to a truck) I really think it would have been easier walking as we all had our packs on. The trucks took us within a couple Kil. of where we were going so we soon found the 3rd sqd & relieved them. Our sleeping quarters we found to be very comfortable & we soon turned in. (St. Agnant)

Tuesday, April 30

Had breakfast with Co. A. Spent most of the morning cleaning up around the quarters. The Sun was out nearly all day & made it very pleasant. Saw a Frenchman with a pair of shell vases & bought them to send home (20 frs). Met H. Gilbert & Went up to see his machine gun replacement. Said they could see the boche patrol several times during the day with the glasses. After supper I went into the Lieuts Room & he played his violin for an hour or two. At 10 o'clock I went on guard at the hospital.

MAY 1918**Wednesday, May 1**

After eating a mess tin of soup I went back to bed. Since we were getting but two meals a day we prepared a feed in the hospital. We had Coffee, bread & butter, bean soup, rhubarb sauce & cake. The artillery was very active the middle of the afternoon. Went on guard again.

Thursday, May 2

The sun was bright all day, so spent most of my time outside. Saw a number of planes during the day. A number of shells were fired on the hill side of us; several struck in the road & some others fell around the dugouts. Spent the greater part of the afternoon building a latrine.

Friday, May 3

Went on guard at 4. I had two or three fellows come in before the Lieut got up but fixed them up alright. It turned out to be another fine day. About noon Coolbroth came over from battalion P.C. & brought me a box from Aunt Muriel [?]. After dinner I took my blanket & went out under the trees & read "Chip of the Flying U". The aeroplanes were quite active all the P.M. Went to bed early & tho't I'd have a nice sleep as I didn't have to go on guard. At 12 Bloude & I were called out to get a wounded man. We tho't it was just a short distance so jumped into our shoes & struck out with a guide. After going to my knees several times in the mud, I didn't give a d--n. We finally left the front line & started across no man's land & through the barbed wire. We got out about a hundred yards when a number of light rockets were shot out over us; we all dropped to the ground as if we were shot down. My Eng. Mask was at the alert & I couldn't get close enough to the ground to satisfy me; felt as "tho" I want to burrow. Guess our M.G.'s weren't wise to our presence out there because they opened up their "gats" on us. Several shots struck not ten feet away from us while the others swept the line of barbed wire. I "thot" of home & wondered if I'd ever get back alive. After laying there for 20 min or so we got up cautiously & silently followed our guide. We passed "thru" several lines of barbed wire & came to a R.R. track which we followed for nearly a quarter of a mile. I was aware that there was someone coming down the track & waited. The guide got his rifle in readiness & took out some hand grenades from his pocket & then we crouched still lower & awaited their approach. I could just make out 5 or 6 black forms & they seemed to be having a consultation; minutes seemed like hrs just then. Finally our guide gave a low whistle, but got no one, he did it the second time with the same result, he then prepared to toss a bomb at them when one of them spoke & much to our relief they proved to be one of our patrols. We soon were under way again but had to be careful not to stumble as there were probably "boche" patrols out there too. After some time we reached our destination, a listening post, which was about three fourths of a mile from our line & about a stones throw from the boche lines. We went into a shelter & found two fellows who were the victims of a German raiding party. One fellow was pretty badly shot up; got a wound in the head in the leg & a number of pieces struck him in the back. The other fellow got a piece of the exploded bomb in the leg so of course couldn't walk. Another stretcher was on the way out so Bloude & I took the worst one. HC was a big fellow but a game one. He didn't have a word of complaint all the way in & it wasn't a very smooth ride I'll admit. We managed to get a fellow to help us & with the help of the guide we succeeded in getting him into our first line trench without any serious mishap; I took my coat off & put it over him & went the rest of the way in my shirt sleeves. After getting into the trench it was still worse. There was a board walk most of the way but unfortunately many strips were broken thus leaving bad holes. I fell into a number such places & went into the slime & mud up to my knees. The fellow on the stretcher realize what a time we were having I guess so didn't say anything. At just 3:30 we pulled into the 1st aid station where his wounds were dressed by the Lieut. That was the longest 3 hrs & a half I ever put in. The other fellow arrived a little later & after fixing him up an ambulance took them to the hospital. After we got the fellows off got some hot drink & removed some of my wet rags. Turned in at 5:30 to get some much needed sleep.

Saturday, May 4

Turned out at 1:30 & got a little lunch. Brad came over from Battalion HDars [?] & brought a few papers. Eddie Banks came over also & handed us over a months pay. Bloude [or Blondy?] went back with Banks who issued him some under clothes. We each got a set & we sure needed them too. Went on guard at 10.

Sunday, May 5

Dick Rounds & I spent most of the morning looking for rhubarb. Got enough for a sauce. Wrote some after dinner. Read awhile after supper & went to bed early.

Monday, May 6

Washed my head, shaved & cleaned up my soiled clothes after coming in from "no mans land". I felt some different. About 2 I went over to Bat. Hdqs to see some of the fellows there; I spent the afternoon & stayed to supper. I spent the eve. until 12 o'clock playing poker. Was on guard from 12 until 2.

Tuesday, May 7

Slept until noon. Got a few letters from home. Spent the P.M. reading & writing letters. Went down to the Y.M.C.A. & bought a few supplies. Played cards until about 12 & after having a feed turned in.

Wednesday, May 8

Had some patients so had to get up early. About noon two shot up fellows came in. They were dressed & sent to the hospital by ambulance. Washed a few clothes in the P.M. Didn't feel very well so went to bed about 6. Was on guard from 2 to 4.

Thursday, May 9

Turned out about 8:30. Split some wood & built a fire as it was cloudy & rather damp & cold. Lt. Blood came over from battalion hdqrs. & brought a little mail. Played poker until 12 & stood guard from 12 until 2.

Friday, May 10

As soon as I got to bed, gas alarm was given & I put on my mask for about an hour when we all were ordered out. The "boche" started a gas barrage about 2:20. At 3 there seemed to be an endless chain of stretchers coming in with gassed & wounded. About this time our art. Started up with a gas barrage in return. It was just beginning to get light when the hill side of us seemed to blaze. The gas & shrapnel were coming pretty close; the ground seemed to tremble under the two barrages. Our first few patients were pretty bad off; they were black in the face & some of them seemed to be unconscious. We fed oxygen to 3 of them but they were too far gone, two more were brought in dead. We telephoned for ambulances & got very good service. It wasn't long before six dead lay by the roadside & it sure was a terrible sight, the front of the hospital was just lined with litters. In spite of the fine amb. service they began to get ahead of us, at times there were 15 or 20 waiting for transportation. Co. D. was all shot to pieces & the Machine Gun Co. as well. N. Dow came in badly wounded in the head & was sent immediately to the hospital, he didn't live to get there however. Many of the stretcher bearers soon began to get the affects of this new gas and we all were rushed to death up to 2:30 in the afternoon. (Just 12 hrs.) The afternoon wasn't quiet at all; stretchers poured in & at 6 o'clock some fellows from Batt. Hdqrs. came over to relieve us. As we had little time to eat during the rush we now managed to get a little something to eat. At 7 we turned in completely all in. Jennings was feeling pretty bad so we sent him off. We all got more or less gas working around the patients but managed to pull thru alright. Reports later showed that we had evacuated about 175. According to reports things

hadn't been so quiet on the other side. Our art. surely did remarkable work. From a ft. nearby, we could witness all the proceedings behind the boche lines. Guess they were even busier then we were.

Saturday, May 11

Fortunately for us it was quiet most of the day. Played poker most of the afternoon. D. Co. & M. Gun were both relieved at night. The Lt. slept part of the day so made us go to bed while he stood guard. Gas alarm was given twice during the night but was a false alarm in both cases. I slept the rest of the night with it around my neck.

Sunday, May 12

Turned out about 8. Tubby made some flap jacks & they went very good with syrup. Evacuated a couple of Co. E. fellows in the A.M. About 4 a fellow was brought in on a stretcher with his head split open & his shoulder smashed. Evidently he had been dead all of an hour because he was cold. The Lt. went up to investigate & it looked very much like a suicide case. Went on guard from 2 to 4.

Monday, May 13

About 7 o'clock the boche took a couple shots at our kitchen; they came very close landing just the other side of the road. Not much doing in the afternoon. Made some fritters for supper that tasted very good with syrup. Played cards & read most of the eve.

Tuesday, May 14

[Left St. Agnant for Vignot]

Got up early & cleaned up around the quarters & made our rolls. About 10:30 the boche put about 6 shots over; evidently they sighted the smoke from our kitchen. They came so close we were obliged to move up to the other end of the town until they got "thru" firing. Bloudy & Dick went put after dinner & got enough rhubarb for supper. Soon after supper we left St. A. & went down to the Amb. Hdqrs where we waited for transportation. We piled into trucks about midnight & arrived in Vignot about 2 o'clock.

Wednesday, May 15

Got out at 7 & after breakfast went down to Hdqrs officer & got a little mail. Saw the Sax & bassoon that just arrived from Paris. Spent the rest of the A.M. writing at the Y.M.C.A. Coolbroth, Blondy, Brad & I got a lady to cook us a feed of F. Fried eggs beer etc. It tasted pretty good after so much sipu. The 101st F.A. Band gave an hours concert in the square.

Thursday, May 16

It was so warm I didn't have ambition to do anything. Got several letters from home. Spent most of the A.M. making boxes to send my shells home in. The 101st Band gave another concert at 7 which I attended. Played cribbage until nearly 12 o'clock.

Friday, May 17

At 9 I reported at the hospital where I was to be on detail for the day. Helped the doc. fix up the sick by bandaging etc. Went out just before dinner & got a fellow who got in a fight during a drunk. Was alone in the hospital all the P.M. & Had quite a bit to do. I did leave long enough to get paid. Quite a lot of mail came during the afternoon. Played cribbage ("apres soupe") won 3 straight games from Esmay.

Saturday, May 18

Did little but lay around all the morning. The griddle cakes & Syrup didn't lay very good I guess. Went for a swim for the 1st time; the water was very good too. Went down to the Band concert at 7. After the concert I went into the Y.M. & did a little writing. Played cribbage until 12 & then turned in.

Sunday, May 19

Brad & I went to Catholic church in the morning, we then came up to the Y.M. & Heard Chp. Moody. Following this service we said to communion. It was a fine day so went in for a swim after dinner. The band concert was broken up when a shower came up.

Monday, May 20

Another wonderful day. We got to gather (1st squad) and had a German band down to Hacks. After dinner we went in swimming again. Played cards most of the afternoon.

Tuesday, May 21

Did some packing down to "Hacks". Took a swim again after dinner. Went down to the concert after supper. "Hack" told me that I was promoted to 2nd class musician. Several fellows congratulated me & I sure felt very much pleased. At 8 the Y.M. put on some pictures & they were fine too. Sidney Drew Charlie Chaplin were the actors.

Wednesday, May 22

(Left Vignot)
Spent most of the morning packing & getting ready to leave. At 2 we pulled out of Vignot. Managed to dispose of my pack so didn't mind the long hike as much as some of the fellows. About 7 the teams pulled up in a field where we had an hour for eating & resting. The moon was nearly full & a wonderful night for hiking. At one o'clock we entered Lucy where we got some fine quarters. Was sure glad to turn in after a 26 Kil. hike.

Thursday, May 23

Didn't get up until about noon. Did a little playing in the P.M. Esmay & I played cribbage for some time. After supper I went down to the S.A. Tent where Am. Girls were serving doughnuts & cocoa. Came back to the billet where I spent the eve. playing cards.

Friday, May 24

Got up at 6:30. Played cards & did a little practicing. The rest of the band with the 2nd Batt. Came in about 3 o'clock. It seemed good to get the bunch back together again. At 4:30 we had supper & boarded trucks & went to give a concert. At 7 we began our concert; it went very well for not having been together for over a month. Elsie Janis came in later entertained us by singing, dancing, reading etc. She asked if anyone cared to dance with her & all the band fellows pointed me out & they finally got me up on the stage. I was so excited that I didn't know hardly what I was doing. She took the part of Miss Springtime in Miss 1917 so I felt quite honored. She looked very much like cousin Ruth C. After this entertainment we returned to our billets by trucks.

Saturday, May 25

Played cards awhile & then got in a couple hrs practicing. Had a rehearsal in the P.M. At 7 we gave a concert in the square.

Sunday, May 26

At 9 we had a band rehearsal for an hour. Took my Sax. Out in the summer house & practiced for the rest of the forenoon. After dinner did a little writing. At 7 we started a concert near the station where a platform had been constructed for Miss Janis. While we were playing an Am. aviator came over & did some exhibition work, he looped the loop & did some very daring stunts. About 7:30 Miss Janis arrived in her touring car, she recognized me & asked me later on if I'd dance with her; I didn't hesitate but went up on the platform before Co. Lt. Co. Major etc to say nothing of the hundreds of enlisted men civilians & French soldiers on the bank. I got along fine as "a kittens eyebrow". After this splendid evenings entertainment we came back & packed our instruments. Got orders that we'd leave early in the morning & we got everything ready but making our rolls. Good night.

Monday, May 27

(Left Lagny)

At 9 we left Lagny. We got out packs on the teams so didn't mind the hike much. Arrived in Royaumeix just about dinner time. Fairbanks, Canty & I went into the café & ordered a dinner. Played retreat at 5:30 & at 6:30 we gave a concert in the square. Spent the eve writing.

Tuesday, May 28

(Royaumeix)

Turned out to Reveille at 6:45. Had a short rehearsal in the morning. Got some news from R. I knew he arrived safely as it was mailed on this side, Spain. Miron & I went down to the next town after dinner where we got a real haircut & shave. Played retreat as well as a march. Gave a concert after supper. Wrote a few letters before retiring.

Wednesday, May 29

Had a rehearsal in the morning. After dinner I went down to the barracks & spent a couple hours practicing. Played retreat & a concert after supper. Art Lambert & I went down to Meuil La Four after the concert; the 101 F.A. Band was playing for a dance for the nurses & officers.

Thursday, May 30

At 9:45 the band assembled & marched to Meuil La Four where we played for memorial exercises. Got back just in time for dinner. Bloudy & I practiced a couple of hrs this P.M. Got a number of letters from home. Played a concert on the new platform behind the Y.M. After doing a little writing I turned in for the night.

Friday, May 31

Rehearsal at 9. After dinner I went down to the barracks & practiced a couple hours. Played retreat. Played for the officers in front of their chateau. After the concert I went to the Y.M. to an entertainment.

JUNE 1918**Saturday, June 1**

After breakfast I went down to the wash house & did a small washing before rehearsal. Rehearsal went very good this morning. Retreat as usual. Played another concert down by the chateau. Went over to the Y.M. & saw a couple good bouts pulled afterwards. Bought some can peaches & had (peaches & cream) with fancy cookies. Took a bath & had an issue of clothes.

Sunday, June 2

At 10 o'clock the small Band played for church. Had a rehearsal at 2 P.M. Played retreat. Concert at 7 as usual in front of the chateau. Wrote a few letters before going to bed.

Monday, June 3

Rehearsal as usual in the morning. Went out in the woods after dinner & spent a couple hrs. practicing. Wrote a few letters before supper. Played a solo at the concert. Woodman had some gloves & the fellows had some real interesting bouts.

Tuesday, June 4

Rehearsal at 9. Went down to rehearse after dinner & Sid & I played a few duets. Played retreat & concert at 7. After concert I went to the Y.M. & saw good vaudeville which was followed by moving pictures.

Wednesday, June 5

Morning rehearsal as usual. Wrote a few letters & practiced after dinner. Played for retreat. Gave a concert at the Y.M. from 7 to 8. Then we had the privilege to listen to a couple American artists. One played a harp while the other sang. They both were fine & entertained us for over an hour. After the program the Gen. gave us a nice little talk about our furlough etc.

Thursday, June 6

Another beautiful day. Broke up our rehearsal to go after pay. Went over to the Y.M. after dinner & wrote some letters. Sid & I spent the latter part of the P.M. practicing. After supper we all took trucks for a nearby town where we gave a short concert & heard the lady artists once more.

Friday, June 7

Rehearsal as usual. Wrote to Paris to get a few particulars on a new Sax. Spent the most of the P.M. polishing my instrument. Played at the Y.M. & Co. C. put on a pretty good minstrel show in the evening.

Saturday, June 8

Practiced some new music this morning. Had an early dinner & went down to the chateau to play for the col. & his guests. Major Achworth was there & enjoyed the music so much that he presented the band with 50 Francs. We played for about two hrs. We did not play a concert at night so went over to the bout at the Y.M.C.A. Woodman went on for 3 rounds & made a good showing.

Sunday, June 9

After breakfast we all cleaned up & had the instruments all washed. At 10:30 we ate dinner & at 11 two trucks came for us. These Eng trucks with side seats were very easy riding & could certainly cover the ground. It was a beautiful afternoon & we enjoyed the ride immensely. Reached our destination about 12:45. Upon our arrival we learned that the aviators were going to have a field day. After having another dinner & beer on the side we went over to the ball game where we played a number of selections. Next we went into one of the hangers which was the reception hall. As the guests came in they were served refreshments of olives, sandwiches, punch, candy, fancy cookies, cigars, cigarettes etc. There were several American girls & some very classy French girls. A good many of the girls smoked cigarettes I noticed. After playing a short concert we went out & watched an aviator do a little exhibition work. Following the flight was a wrestling match & several bouts. The main bout was a prize fight with a 150 frs ups [?]. We played between rounds. This finished our engagement & we went back to the cook shack where

supper was served & Beer to all those who desired it. At 9 o'clock 3 trucks came for us & carried us back. They sure gave us a good fast ride.

Monday, June 10

Had new doughnuts for breakfast. Rehearsal took up the most of the morning. After dinner we played for a ball game back of the Y.M.C.A. Played for retreat & also a concert at the chateau after supper.

Tuesday, June 11

Rehearsal for about 2 hrs & went out in the field to practice for the parade & presentation of the croix de guerres. It was a pretty hot day & we sure were warm before the thing was over. Got back just in time for dinner. Fell in at 1:30 & went out again. It was rough ground but we did a pretty good job passing in review after the presentations. As soon as I got back I went down & took a bath & had a change of underclothes. Some mail came in & I got 5 letters; one being from a man in England. At 7 we had our regular concert down at headquarters. Bout a quart of milk & Had doughnuts & milk before going to bed.

Wednesday, June 12

Had fritters for breakfast. After eating I went to the wash house & did a good sized washing. Just before rehearsal time Hack Geo Dole & Barnes all were taken sick & had to go to the hospital so we had no work to do for the day. Blakeney went down to Hdqrs & got some passes for Toul & we started out about 11. Couldn't get a train so started to walk but much to our joy a truck came along & took us the greater part of the way. Had dinner at a Y.M.C.A. The menu was: Salad, fried eggs, beans, bread, chocolate, pie & lemonade. After dinner Cooly & I went to a French Theatre. They had a fine orchestra & the play was very good. Spent the latter part of the afternoon looking around. Went into the cathedral which is next to the largest in France. Had supper at the Y.M. Spent the evening looking around & at 9:30 we came to our room where we spent the night.

Thursday June 13

My bed felt so good that I didn't get up until 9 o'clock. Went over to the Y.M. & had breakfast but didn't dare trust ourselves out on the streets as our passes weren't good. About noon soldiers began to come in from the station so we took a chance & gave the town the once over before leaving. Went to the cathedral which is the 2nd largest in France. It was 200 yrs in construction & built in the 14th century. Before leaving Toul I got a shave haircut & shampoo. It was fortunate that we caught the noon train as the company had received orders to move at 7 o'clock. Made up my pack as soon as I got back. We were lucky to have our instruments & packs carried to didn't mind the hike so much. Started our hike at 7:30 and arrived in Roulecourt at just 1:30 where we put up for the night. Was glad to sleep on the bare floor after our long hard march.

Friday, June 14 & Saturday, June 15

Didn't move until 1 o'clock. Had dinner at 3 & made up my pack. The 2nd & 3rd Batt are in the trenches so the 2nd & 3rd sqds got orders to pack up too. Owing to some of the fellows being sick, Blondy & I were chosen to go in their places. At 9 two ambulances took us to Rambucourt. Hiked about a mile or two where we put up for the night. On our way in a few shells were put over but fell short. The dugouts were pretty damp but I enjoyed the rest. Got up at 10 o'clock & Had breakfast. Read most of the afternoon. After supper we went down to the front line dressing station. It was pretty crowded so I slept on the floor.

Sunday, June 16

About 3:30 a heavy bombardment started & the guards gave the gas alarm. We put on our masks immediately & stood on alert. Several large shells struck our dugout but it held fast. Just when the thickest began runners came in & said they had several wounded so 4 of us went out with

litters to help get them to the dressing station. The trench was blown to pieces in several places but we managed to get to our man & bring him back without mishap. Shrapnel & dirt was continually dropping around us & the exploding shells made a terrific noise as they buried themselves not ten feet away from us. A. Stowell went down to help in the front lines but "got his" before he made it. He had 3 compound fractures but was as game as any one could be. Soon the fellows began to come in more rapidly but they received good care from the H. men. Several were brought in dead & some of the wounded were in very bad shape. The men had no dugouts to jump into when the barrage came over so there were quite a number of wounded. As soon as the 1st man was dressed we started off immediately in the thick of the shell fire. Our evacuating post was at least 2 ½ miles & seemed a great deal farther before we got there. The trench was so bad that we couldn't carry them without considerable trouble so we went out on top where we made much better progress. We seemed to be going into the thickest of the shelling. The ground all around us was smoking & the flying pieces were singing all around us. We had to rest several times so got our patient into a trench; we were covered with dirt & smoking pieces of shrapnel several times & once a piece struck my helmet. After two exciting hours we finally made our destination only to find the aid station had been shelled out. The Y.M.C.A. was upstairs & the aid station down; the building was completely destroyed & the hospital corps had to dig their way out. They got most of their supplies & set up across the road. We took some dressings & Several litters & made the round trip the 1st time. The barrage had lifted so we didn't mind the 2nd trip as much. We carried our patient in plain sight of the "boche" but weren't bothered in the least. Several Boche prisoners were carried out on litters. We all were busy until the latter part of the afternoon when we got time to eat a mouthful. Two of the band fellows were feeling pretty bad so we sent them back & P.C. & with A.S. gone we were three shy. If anything happened the next morning I think we wouldn't have been much good. I slept on the floor & had chills & cramps all night. I think I heard every shot that was fired; our nerves were all strung pretty high as we were expecting another attack in the morning. Found out later that all the town around us were shelled Sun. except Roulecourt. Connieville, Royaumeix, Menuil la Four & Boucy were all shelled killing some soldiers & a number of civilians.

Monday, June 17

At 2:30 much to our relief we got relieved by some fresh litter bearers. We immediately made our packs & at 3:30 we were on our way back to Regimental. We had breakfast with the S. Motors at Rambucourt & took a short cut home. Got back at 6:30 & went to bed and staid until noon. Got up to dinner & went down to Y.M.C.A. & spent the afternoon reading.

Tuesday, June 18

It was pleasant but spent most of my time at the Y.M. & S A huts either reading or writing. I didn't sleep very well in the barn so went out in a pup tent with some of the fellows. Got word the latter part of the day that A. Stowell had died at the hospital which was quite a shock to all of us.

Wednesday, June 19

Rained most of the day so took my writing tablet & book & started for the Y.M.C.A. Wrote several letters home. Got an issue of clothing in the morning. Hot tea was served at the Y in the afternoon. Went to a meeting at the S.A. Hut after supper.

Thursday, June 20

Rained as usual so spent most of the day at the Y. Finished "The Flight of the Eagle". Hot choc. was served at the Y.M. in the afternoon. Heard reports that Royaumeix was shelled again during the night. The 1st shell fired into the place last Sun. knocked the clock out of the church tower. Boynton of the scouts was struck by a piece of shrapnel while eating dinner & died from the affects. Michaud got a horse shot out from under him on Sun. too.

Friday, June 21

After breakfast I went back to bed & spent the forenoon. Cleared up & was real pleasant after dinner. Saw 3 liquid fire tanks that had been captured in a recent fight with the "boche". Had flap jacks for supper. New doughnuts & cocoa were served by girls at the S.A. hut at 7. Spent my eve. reading out under the trees.

Saturday, June 22

Spent most of the morning writing at the Y.M. Had a good mag. so didn't mind the rainy day. Hot choc & cookies were served at the Y after dinner. At 9 I went on guard at the cemetery & was relieved at 11. After 4 hrs of sleep I went on again. Things were pretty quiet until just before daybreak; both sides were pretty active with art & machine guns.

Sunday, June 23

At 9 o'clock I went on guard for 2 more hours. The 2nd Batt. Came in & the companies relieved us of our duties at noon. Read the "Auction Block" in the afternoon. Before going to bed I made some cocoa over a alcohol lamp which tasted very good.

Monday, June 24

Pleasant day so spent the day out of doors. Had supper with Co. G. Read The Man & the Moment in the afternoon.

Tuesday, June 25

After breakfast I did my exercising & then took a good hot water bath out under the trees. Found a good book so spent the afternoon & eve by reading. Found some cherry trees where I satisfied my greedy appetites.

Wednesday, June 26

Turned out to be an excellent day. Read the Hornets Nest in the morning. After dinner I went down to the Y.M. & wrote a few letters. At 9 o'clock I went on guard at the church. Was relieved at 11 & went on again at 3. About 4 o'clock a number of shells came into the edge of the town & I was on the point of ringing the old bell to spread the alarm but found it wasn't necessary.

Thursday, June 27

(Left Roulecourt)

At 5 I was relieved again & went to bed directly. Went on again from 9 -11 & again from 3 - 5. Took a little time & made my pack. At 9 we were relieved of our guard duties. We pulled out of Roulecourt at just about midnight. We waited beside the road just outside of Connieville for the flat cars.

Friday, June 28

(Arrived in Toul)

At 5:30 Several trains pulled up & we boarded them. We were on the cars nearly 2 hours. 34 of us on a car. It was a very pretty ride. Arrived in Toul about 8 o'clock. After finding our barracks & cleaning up a bit Brad & I went down to the business section. Ate dinner at the Y.M. Went into a number of stores & did some purchasing. Got a lady barber to shave me & came home the latter part of the afternoon. Several of the fellows went down to the theatre but I was so tired that I turned in soon after supper.

Saturday, June 29

(Left Toul)

After some difficulty I managed to get by the guard & went into Toul again. Bought some camera supplies & went back to the barracks for dinner. I spent the afternoon printing pictures. After supper made my pack & at 1:30 we all went to the station. At 2:30 we boarded horse cars & were soon underway. I managed to steal a little sleep now & then.

Sunday, June 30

It turned out to be a beautiful day so the trip proved to be quite interesting. Most of the morning we road on the top of the cars, in fact we ate breakfast there. We passed "thru" many large cities & saw (beaucoup des jolie filles). Had corned beef hash "hard tack" & jam for our 3 meals. At Wassy we stopped 45 min & had hot coffee with a little rum. After dinner went back on the flat cars & road on one of the wagons. About the largest place we passed "thru" was Troyes. Saw electric cars for the 1st time since in France. About 10 o'clock we detrained at [blank] & took autos to Citry. At 4 o'clock we billeted in a chateau where we soon turned in.

JULY 1918

Monday, July 1

Spent most of the morning in dreamland. Looked over the chateau & its beautiful surroundings. The walls were decorated with old trophies, statues, costly paintings & wall mirrors. It had a pool table & also an organ. Many of the chairs were finished in gold & the plush chairs were very elaborate. In front of the chateau is a beautiful lawn with a flower garden & hot house on the right & a park with artificial ponds etc. At the rear is a fine garage & the servants quarters. The artillery was busy most of the afternoon & evening. At 7 we played a concert for the officers. Wrote some letters & turned in about 10.

Tuesday, July 2

Beautiful day & we spent the morning rehearsing out under the trees. Took a stroll up the road & saw some 220 m. guns after dinner. I got my printing. Set out a finished up some more pictures. Played concert from 7 to 8.

Wednesday, July 3

Had a field inspection at 9 o'clock. This broke up our rehearsal. We spent the afternoon rehearsing & at 7 we played for a concert. I wrote letters until 12:15 & went to bed.

Thursday, July 4

(Left Citry)

Rehearsed out in the park in the morning. At 4 o'clock we gave a concert in the square. The town mayor passed drinks around the band & his daughter gave the chief a bouquet of flowers. At 7 o'clock we gave another concert. At 9 o'clock we left our beautiful home to an artillery bunch. We had a long hard hike; got on the wrong road twice but finally reached our destination about 2 in the morning. Before turning in we had to back all the wagons into the woods & camouflage them. The only shelter we had was the woods & we had to make our bed in the dark. It was pretty rough but found little difficulty in sleeping.

Friday, July 5

(Montreuil aux Lions)

Had dinner about 11 & went back to bed & slept until 4 when we had supper. After supper we made our pack & at 8 Uncle Sam's traveling circus was on the road again. About 10 we pulled into Montreuil aux Lions where we put up in a hen house.

Saturday, July 6

Scouted around town after breakfast & got a room at an abandoned café. Brad & I struck it rich. We got a chamber on the second floor with two double beds with clean sheets & pillow cases. Found a wash stand bureau, a large mirror, 3 chairs & a writing desk. The whole set including the beds were black walnut. When we tumbled into the feathers that night we forgot there even was a war. Brad got orders to go to the front with several other fellows.

Sunday, July 7

Spent the morning printing pictures. In the afternoon I did considerable practicing. After supper I set up until 12:30 cooking flap jacks & Making coffee etc. Ben T. moved down so we had to have a little feed.

Monday, July 8

Ben & I spent most of the morning rehearsing. The lady of the house came back just before dinner; she felt pretty bad to find her house occupied. She was kind enough to let us stay in the room however. After supper I packed up & went up to Reg. Hdqrs. on the ration wagon. Reg. was completely surrounded with artillery & with the addition of the "boche" art. It sure was a bad place to sleep. I didn't get any until about day break. A number of fellows were wounded at the 1st line. The only protection the fellows had was a shell hole in the corn field or perhaps they would dig a hold large enough to crawl into.

Tuesday, July 9

Got up about 8 o'clock & had breakfast. Laid around most of the forenoon in order to make up some lost sleep. Found a nice room with a double bed & moved in soon after dinner. I planned on going out with Brad on guard but Roberto told me the adj. wanted me to report back to Montreuil at once; I made up my pack & went out with the ration wagon.

Wednesday, July 10

I made up my bunk on the floor & turned on about 2 A.M. After breakfast I moved my belongings into a spare room & got in a couple hrs practicing before dinner. Practiced awhile after dinner. Got some mail from home so spent the latter part of the day ans. some of them. 15 letters.

Thursday, July 11

Put in most of the morning taking my Sax. Apart & cleaning it. Got in a couple hrs practice after dinner. Built a fire in the open fireplace & wrote letters until about 11:30.

Friday, July 12

Played horse shoe & cribbage until about 10, then practiced until dinner time. Rained most of the afternoon so I spent my time inside. Wrote to Paris for some Sax supplies. Read until about midnight & turned in.

Saturday, July 13

Had a fine breakfast of mashed potatoes & meat balls, bread, butter & coffee. Came back & spent the A.M. writing letters. Spent most of the eve playing whist. One game lasted all night & we decided to turn in about midnight.

Sunday, July 14

Soon after breakfast I got to writing & caught up on some of my correspondence. Practiced a couple hours in the P.M. After supper I boiled some of my clothes & did quite a washing.

Monday, July 15

Not much doing except practicing in the A.M. Played cribbage after dinner.

Tuesday, July 16

About the same schedule practiced & played cards.

Wednesday, July 17

Slept most of the morning & guess it was a good thing as was chosen as one to help load ammunition that night. They expected something to happen that night & we worked all night loading trucks with all kinds of ammunition. About 9 o'clock a heavy shower came up which later turned into a fierce thunder shower. We got soaked to the skin but finally got the teams loaded. The boys went over the top & gave Fritz quite a surprise. After coming in Brad & I built a fire & dried out our clothes.

Thursday, July 18

The boche shelled the town & struck several buildings. One landed not 10 ft away from where Hack was staying just across the road so we all lit out for the fields. I stayed up in the fields about 30 min after the shelling & returned just in time to hear several more drop in the town. One went through the P.O. & into a room where some of the fellows were sitting; it broke nearly all of the windows but didn't trouble the boys in the least. I was elected to go up to the front on a ration team as guide. Everything went fine until we got most up there. There was about 12 teams in our team & guess Fritz heard us arrive & began to shell the road. [faded - illegible] was breaking not a hundred yds a head of us. We stopped about ten min & the St. gave orders to proceed as things had quieted a bit. The teams tore down the road at a gallop & the enemy began to swipe [?] at us with an 88. Fortunately the shells fell just short of the road & didn't last a [?]. It sure gave me a terrible fright. Some 370 pulled in just after we passed & silenced the 88 before we came back. I passed through some woods that were completely destroyed & the roads had damage rough [?] holes in them. I walked in front of one team & guided them thru bad places. We finally reached our directive [?] where we all unloaded. I was on the 1st team [?]. We got shelled pretty heavy coming back & lost two horses. The shells were bursting all around us & I took to the ditch for protection several times. I sure felt relieved to get back to Montreuil & slept in a wine cellar the rest of the A.M. (Left Montreuil aux Lions)

Friday, July 19

Since I didn't get in until about 2:30 I spent the morning getting a little sleep. Brad was on K.P. & he fried 3000 doughnuts to send to the boys in the lines. He brought a couple by to me & they sure tasted good. The boche put in a few more shells but did little damage. Soon after supper we got orders that we were to report to Reg. P.C. We packed up with heavy hearts as we knew that we were going in as stretcher bearers once more. Brad & I got in & made our bunks on the floor.

Saturday, July 20

Laid around until 2 when we pulled out of P.C. for the front. Passed through Lucy & run into gas once. Arrived at our dressing station about 4 & began carrying litters at once. The boche began to shell the 1st aid station & we got as many of the wounded into dugouts as possible. There were many shell shocked besides considerable wounded. Bob was one of the 1st fellows I helped out. We worked until dark like beavers & got pretty well caught up. Brad & I found a brush covered hole & crawled in to get a little rest. When we went to bed we were very close to the lines but at 3 A.M. the fellows went over the top again & drove the boche back a number of kil.

Sunday, July 21

Got orders to move early in the morning. We moved forward across the wheat fields that had been taken from the Germans but a few hrs. before. Saw a number of fallen boche as well as Am. Woodwright turned over a boche in the field & found a nice watch on him. Were on the go most of the day. At 4 we got orders to go in as Co. stretcher bearers. Our Co. pulled out before we rec'd our orders so we set out (4 of us & Sgt. Blakeney) to find them. We wandered all through the woods until midnight & finally gave it up & slept in a culvert under the road.

Monday, July 22

Got up & after eating some of our reserve rations we started out again. Were on the road all the morning without any luck. I didn't know the Germans could retreat so fast. The latter part of the P.M. we found out where Reg. was so came back there where we saw some of our crowd. We also learned while at supper that a number of our boys had been sent to the hospital several shell shocked. Regardless of the big guns (155s) in the valley, we stopped our ears with cotton & slept in the culvert as we did the previous night. Those guns hammered away all night & at 4 they started up in double time. Each gun put over two shells a min. These six inch guns weren't a hundred yds away so you can imagine what a fine sleep we had.

Tuesday, July 23

Went up to breakfast only to find they had moved during the night. Hunted around all the morning in the pouring rain but luck was against us. We begged a cup of coffee & ate some of our H.B. Went over in the field & got a souvenir of a boche plane that had been brought down. We finally found our kitchen in time to have supper with them. The boys had been sleeping out in the wet grass & as the shells were coming over once in a while I liked & preferred my culvert under the road even tho it was a 15 min. walk. The 6 in guns kept us company during the night & at 4 they started to speed up again.

Wednesday, July 24

Put on our packs & went up to breakfast only to find they had left us again. It seemed to be our luck. We found a half can of Caro & with a few H.B. we made our breakfast. "Shaky" Myron & I hiked all day trying to find the Co. Went to Belleau & nearly over to Torcy. Found the supply Co. & had dinner with them. Much to our disappointment we learned that the Co. didn't come out so after dinner we retraced our steps & found that the Co. hadn't moved more than 3 or 4 kil. Put up for the night in some woods. Hack went to Paris to take exams for 2nd Lieut.

Thursday, July 25

Fine day. Brad & I went to the sales commissary & bought a few sweets. Rec'd a little mail which pleased us very much. Dole & Trundy who had been missing for several days returned.

Friday, July 26

Spent most of the day in my little dugout as it was raining a quite disagreeable outside. Fortunately I got several mag. in the mail so got along very well.

Saturday, July 27

Had breakfast about 10 & Sid & I went down to Chateau Tiery. There were some very pretty places & also some badly ruined places. Found a Y.M.C.A. & got a few supplies. Got back at 4 just in time for supper.

Sunday, July 28

I moved from my one man D.O. into a larger & much better one. Read & played cards most of the day. Got a letter from home.

Monday, July 29

The Co. began to drill this A.M. & we began a 3 meal schedule also. Just before dinner a plane flew over us and landed in the field just beyond. I went over & found the machine in flames. According to reports the two aviators ran into a number of boche planes where they both received wounds & a punctured gas tank. They made the landing just in time; the plane was entirely destroyed & the aviators sent to the hospital.

Tuesday, July 30

Made up my pack before going to breakfast. Pulled out soon after eating. Hiked all the A.M. arriving about 1 Kil. from Montreuil aux Lions at just noon. Made my bed in the woods where we stayed for the night. At 7 the 104th Band put on a concert which was followed by a fine entertainment given by the Supply Co.

Wednesday, July 31

Were on the road again at 7 A.M. & hiked all the forenoon. Passed through La Ferte & on to Tay where we found billets. I was pretty tired but cleaned up & went back to La Ferte. Went all over the town & at 6 Cooly, Shaky & I went into a private house & had the lady cook us a real feed. Came home & went to bed with a full stomach.

AUGUST 1895**Thursday, August 1**

I felt [?] all day. Did nothing but sit around all day. Wrote one letter after dinner. Went to bed without any supper.

Friday, August 2

[Blank]

Saturday, August 3

Got a big bunch of mail in the A.M. At 2 o'clock we got together & had a short rehearsal. As "Hack" hadn't returned, John did the directing. Went down to La Ferte with Cooly, Ben & Burnett & had another feed cooked. First we had Egg omelet & lobster & lettuce salad next came some wonderful steak & French fried with new bread & butter. Last of all hot choc. was served. It cost us about 12 frs. but we were satisfied.

Sunday, August 4

Went over to Usay where memorial services were held in honor of the boys that have fallen since our arrival in France. We played a couple times & the Col. Spoke & also Gen. Cole. Found some mail for me when I got back. Went swimming in the [?] after supper.

Monday, August 5

Formed a new squad with our new men & tried most of them out in the morning. After dinner Brad & I went to Usay to hear the 26 Div. Show. They 1st put on a real good minstrel show. Following that a number of good acts were pulled off. A cornet soloist was the 1st to appear. He played a couple triple tongue solos 2nd. A sketch artist entertained 3rd. An orchestra of Violins, banjoes & a number of other stringed instruments rendered some very good music. 4th a quartet sang a couple new songs. 5th we had a slight o'hand. The whole show was a grand success & very interesting. After supper we all got together & Played a few R.B. Halls marches.

Tuesday, August 6

(Went to Paris) Burnell & I went up to the tops office after breakfast & got a 24 hr pass. Shaved & cleaned up & went out to the "Paris" Metr. Road for a truck. We fortunate in getting one immediately. It took us "thru" Meaux to Esbly where we took the train. At Le Raincy Ville M. we took the electric trams into Le Place du Republic. It seemed odd to see the women conductors. After B & I found a room we went out & took a tour around the city. I saw the largest store in Paris, the Eiffel tower & many beautiful buildings along the Seine. I continued my tour until it was too dark to see any more so went into a theatre for a while. I had a place in the balcony. The theatre was very pretty. Finally managed to find my room after inquiring several times. About 10 shells were fired into the city during the P.M. I happened to be quite near when one landed so went over. The streets were crowded & everything was excitement for a while. Went to a café & got a good feed before turning in.

Wednesday, August 7

B & I didn't get up until about 9 o'clock. We soon found a café where we enjoyed a good breakfast. Traveled around on the trams & taxi until 10:30. At 11 o'clock we pulled out of Gare da Nord. Just missed getting pinched by the hair of our teeth. Two M.P. guards pinched a crowd just in front of us. Fortunately we arrived in Meaux with mishap. At Meaux B & I hired a public carriage to take us as far as St. Jeanne. We walked the remaining distance about 8 kil. Stood retreat at 6. Got a couple mag. but no 1st cl. Mail. Went to bed early as I was pretty tired.

Thursday, August 8

Had flap jacks for breakfast. Spent most of the morning writing letters. Went down to La Ferte to the commissary & got some can fruit & cookies.

Friday, August 9

Laid around most of the morning & wrote a few letters. Went down to Le Ferte again. Played cards all the evening.

Saturday, August 10

Not much doing during the day. Played for a boxing bout at Ussy after supper. We played between each bout. About six good matches were pulled off.

Sunday, August 11

Got paid in the morning. Rec'd my first full mos. pay since my promotion to 2nd Cl. Mus. "Brad" & I went downtown after dinner. Got something at the Y.M. & went out in the park and ate. Met quite a number of pretty girls on the street.

Monday, August 12

Burnell & I went down town to dinner. We also took a bath in a real bath tub. Came back the 1st of the P.M. Got a couple letters from home.

Tuesday, August 13

Put in a little individual practicing in the morning. Played poker most of the P.M. Played another concert after retreat. Spent the eve. writing letters.

Wednesday, August 14

(Left Fay)

Soon after breakfast I made up my pack. Played cards again in the afternoon. Had an early supper & pulled out of Fay about 6 o'clock. Arrived at a station about 3 kil this side of Meaux at 9 o'clock.

It was a bad place to load the wagons so didn't finish until midnight. At one the train pulled out. There were about 40 in our car so we had to take turns sleeping.

Thursday, August 15

Road all day on the train. Passed through Chalons Sur Marne again & within sight of Chaumont. It was about 6 o'clock when we detrained at Poincou. Ate our supper beside the road & started out at 9 again. At 10:30 we arrived in Laguers. Ten or a doz boys came out at least 2 miles to walk in with us. When we got into the town many civilians held lights out the windows & Gave us a glad welcome. We slept in a barn the remainder of the night.

Friday, August 16

Scouted around & found a room after breakfast. It has fine polished hard wood floors, a double bed, plush chairs, wash stand, closets, a large mirror & everything to make it comfortable. At 10 o'clock we had a rehearsal in the town dance hall. Had dinner at 4 o'clock.

Saturday, August 17

Rehearsal as usual in the morning & another after dinner. Little mail came in but I didn't draw. Played a concert in the square at 7. Had a large & appreciative audience.

Sunday, August 18

Met in the town dance hall for rehearsal at 9:30. Had the afternoon off so spent the time in my room writing a few letters. Gave a long concert tonight. Had a fine crowd.

Monday, August 19

Tried over some new music this A.M. A fellow played base drum (Am. Co.) & Bill played the snare. Got a haircut after dinner. Bought a watch from "Sid". Had the usual rehearsal in the afternoon. Played another concert at 7:30 which was followed by 5 reels of motion pictures.

Tuesday, August 20

Had rehearsal at 9:30 & another at 1:30. Wrote a while after the concert & went to bed in fairly good season.

Wednesday, August 21

Had doughnuts & rich milk for breakfast. Rehearsal in the morning & another short one after dinner. After the concert I came back & got my milk as usual. Had a cup of milk & a few cookies just before turning in.

Thursday, August 22

Polished my horn a bit before rehearsal. No rehearsal after dinner so I spent the time cleaning up. Had supper at 4 & at 4:30 we were in trucks to go to Div. We worked pretty hard & the concert went off very well. Played "Raymond", "The Dollar Princess", "Amina", "Autumn Voices" (valz). Mussy Sur Marne was a big town so had quite a crowd there. After we finished we had the pleasure to listen to some fine music from the violin, cello & piano. They were all French, 2 ladies & 2 men. It was a beautiful ride back in the trucks with a full moon. Went thru Chattelous sur marne going back & left Geo. D. He was going to Liffol le Grande on a little business trip. The ride was 60 Kil in all.

Friday, August 23

Rehearsal in the morning. At 2 we left by truck for the 2nd battalion. Played several pieces during the ball game. At 5 o'clock we played for Battalion parade. Had supper with G. Co. The rain interfered with our playing in the eve, so we left Larry [?] about 7:30. Got home about 9:30.

Saturday, August 24

Had doughnuts & rice for breakfast. Tried over some new stuff at rehearsal this morning. Had sectional work after dinner. Had supper at 4:30 & at 5 we started out for the 3rd battalion. It was only 12 kil so didn't take us long to go. Played for battalion review & afterwards a concert. The civilians were so pleased that they passed drinks around the band.

Sunday, August 25

Rehearsal at 9:30. Spent most of the P.M. writing letters. Bought a new safety razor. M.H. & I went for a walk in the afternoon. At 7:30 we gave a concert in the square.

Monday, August 26

Washed & had a shampoo after breakfast. During rehearsal Geo. D. returned from Liffol where he had been spending several days. Hack had a short rehearsal after dinner. After supper we took another trip. There was a good audience at the concert & the leader was presented with a bouquet.

Tuesday, August 27

Rehearsal as usual in the morning. Expected to go to the 1st battalion to play for parade (battalion). The truck didn't show up so we played our last concert in Laigues at 7:15.

Wednesday, August 28 & Thursday, August 29

Left Laigues

Made my pack up in the morning & paid my room rent. Packed the instruments after dinner. At 9:30 we said goodbye to the folks, they sure felt bad to see us go. We hiked to Poincon about 9 kil and laid around until daybreak. It was pretty cold so we built fires to keep warm. At daylight our train pulled in & we loaded in short order. We road all day on the train & detrained at Longville about 5 kil from Bav le Duc. at 9 o'clock. We hiked until daylight a distance of 25 kil. Made our beds up in Rosnes. We slept all day getting up only for meals. At dark we pulled out again & hiked all night.

Friday, August 30 & Saturday, August 31

Brad & I made our bed under the trees where we slept most of the day. It began to rain along towards night so we pitched our tents. Picked some blackberries for supper. Built a fire under the trees & got dried out before going to bed.

SEPTEMBER 1918**Sunday, September 1**

Had a tomato with bread syrup & coffee for breakfast. Built a fire in front of the tent & set around & talked all the morning. Rolled up beside the fire & took a nap after dinner. Had soup for supper. At 7:30 we fell in with packs but didn't leave the woods until 9:30. After about a 7 kil. hike we found billets in Issoncourt. It was nearly 1 o'clock before we got our beds made up to turned in.

Monday, September 2

Our breakfast was bread & coffee. Shaved & cleaned up before dinner so felt some better. Had another rehearsal after dinner. Found a better billet so changed; about 20 Frenchmen live on one side of the barn while we on the other. We have good bunks & electric lights.

Tuesday, September 3

Rehearsal before & after dinner as usual. Got a paper from home but no 1st class stuff. After supper a graduate from a conservatory of music played a number of selections on the clarinet while another Frenchman sang to us. Went to bed but was routed out at 11 o'clock. We packed up & left Issoncourt just 2 hrs. later.

Wednesday, September 4

We hiked until daylight & made a halt in some woods. Slept most of the day getting up only for meals. Had a fine supper, beef stew, steak, tomato sauce bread & coffee. Soon after supper it began to rain. Made packs again & fell in at 7:30. Hiked all night.

Thursday, September 5

We drew barracks this time & at 5 A.M. we turned in. After dinner I went blackberrying & got a good mess for supper. Some of the boys went out hunting. Pulled out again at 9 o'clock. We only went a short distance but was on the road all night.

Friday, September 6

As we were only 4 kil. from the front we had to find a place to lay our heads without a candle. I scurried around in the woods & found a fairly smooth spot where I made my bed. Got out about 6 A.M. & had bread & coffee for breakfast. Slept most of the day & had supper after dark. Got a little mail in the P.M. About 6 a thunder shower came up so Brad & I pitched our tent & was all set for the night. Aeroplanes were pretty active all day.

Saturday, September 7

Got up feeling much better after a good nights sleep. Planes were pretty busy most of the morning. Had a light lunch of bread & coffee about noon. Rec'd 3 letters from home. Played cards most of the P.M. After dark supper was served, bread, butter coffee soup & rice wasn't so bad.

Sunday, September 8

It was pretty fair during the A.M. but rained most of the P.M. Had bread & coffee at noon as usual. Played cards until it began to rain. Rec'd some Sax. supplies from Paris which I had been expecting for some time.

Monday, September 9

Breakfast at 7. We had no dinner but a fine supper of boiled beef, beans, bread, coffee & doughnuts. It rained off & on most of the day. Played "Fan Tan" until it was so dark we couldn't see the cards.

Tuesday, September 10

It rained hard all night & continued all day. About the middle of the forenoon our tent began to leak and it was pretty disagreeable. After dinner I went out scouting for a dugout. As I had no rain coat I got soaked to the skin. I doubt if it ever rained any harder. Finally Brad & I found a shell proof dugout which was fairly dry so we made it our headquarters for the night. It was only a 4 x 4 so we didn't get a very good nights rest. Brad & I were doubled up like jack knives & it was almost impossible to move. Considerable shelling was kept up during the night.

Wednesday, September 11

It was raining when we got up which wasn't surprising or pleasing to me. Played cards which helped pass the morning. For dinner we had one slice of tomato with bread & coffee. Had salmon & baked potatoes with bread & coffee for supper. Made our packs & left the woods about 7 o'clock. Hiked about 8 kil. to the next town where we found billets. The bunks were all taken but we slept on the floor which was better than staying out in the rain.

Thursday, September 12

It seemed rather queer to have only 50 at mess. We had flap jacks & jam for breakfast. At 1 o'clock all the guns opened up & there sure was a bunch of them. At 8 the boys went over the top. Our boys met little opposition & took 8 kil before dinner. Nearly 1500 boche prisoners were brought into this town during the morning. One of our boys had a talk with one of the prisoners; he was an elderly man & said he had nine children at home, but didn't know how they were getting along because they very seldom get mail. He asked how much longer this beastly war was going to last. This prisoner said posters were up all over Germany telling how we killed all of our captives. All the band went out blackberrying this A.M. "Sully" promised to make us a big pie if we got the berries. Got a chance to go up in a lookout this morning where I could see the big guns in action. Had soup & two big pies for supper. About 9 o'clock I went up in the lookout to take a look at the lines once more. It was a beautiful night & I counted 12 fires on the horizon. During the afternoon while up on the hill I saw one of our balloons break away from its cable. One fellow jumped but there was such a gale blowing it failed to open. The two remaining must have had a wild ride to Germany. About dusk a boche plane came over our barracks but a couple of our planes took after him in hot pursuit & finally brought the intruder down.

Friday, September 13

Ate with the Supply Co. all day as our kitchen pulled out. "Stony" was left behind, so made some flap jacks for us for supper. We had butter & sugar on them & it is needless to say they would melt in your mouth. A whole German Band was captured & brought into this town today. This hundred piece band had their instruments with them; they were all brass. We got a new bass drum today.

Saturday, September 14

(Left Rupt Woever) [??]

Had bacon & Baked potatoes for breakfast at the Supply Co. We came back to our kitchen & "Stony" had Blackberry pie & flap jacks for us again. We pulled out about 9 o'clock. It was a fine morning & the roads were pretty good. After hiking about 10 kil we made up our beds beside the road in a patch of woods. Brad & I got a couple wheels & took a ride before supper. Played cards awhile after supper.

Sunday, September 15

Coolbroth & I took a trip into the Boche trenches. The ground was surely chewed up some but the cement & concrete dugouts stood the bombardment very well. Some of the officers dugouts were pretty elaborate. Found a few souvenirs & got back just in time for dinner. One of the teamsters brought in a boche wagon full of salt cod & potatoes. "Hack" had a short rehearsal after dinner. We ate supper with the Supply Co. but had some blackberry pie at our own kitchen. Played cards after supper but it finally got so dark we lit a couple candles. It wasn't long before we heard a plane overhead. It sounded like a French plane so we paid little attention to it. All at once the motor stopped & a volley of fire issued from the machine. It repeated this several times & farther on dropped from 15 to 20 bombs. Needless to say we didn't play cards any longer.