

DIARY
of
3/469 Cpl
Thomas Ernest
Hutchinson



1918

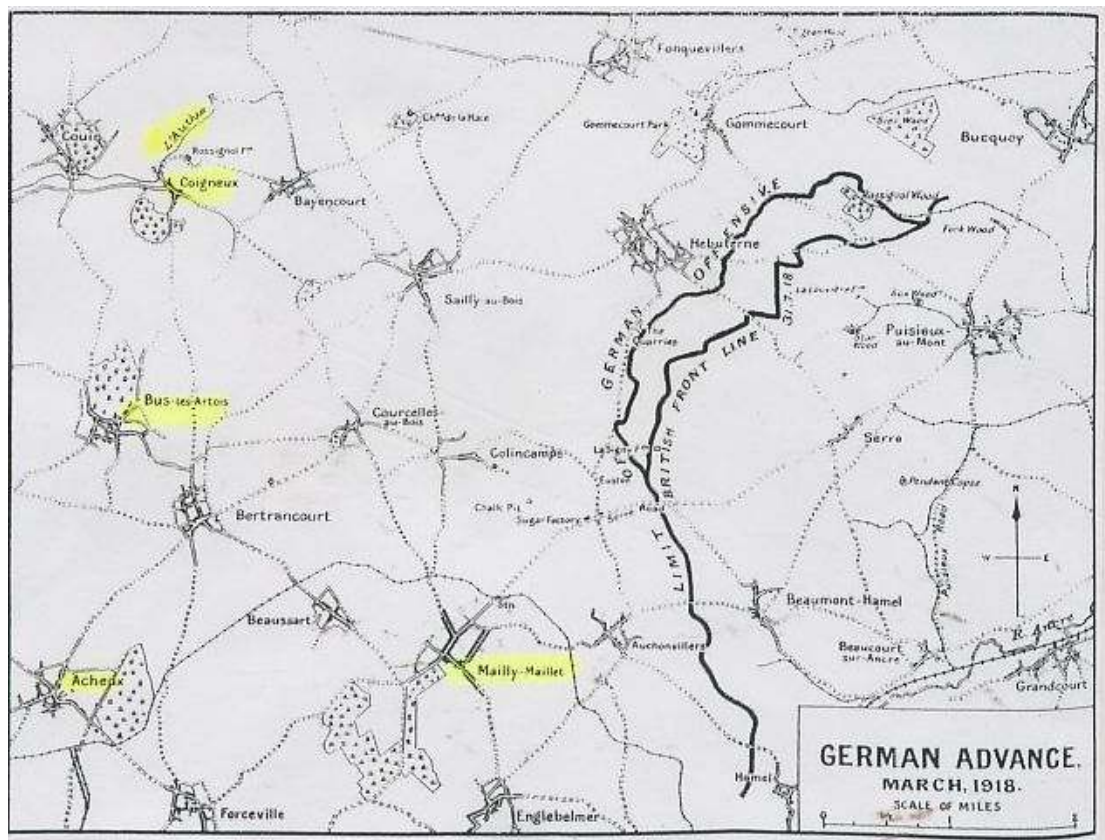
NOTES

This diary measures 8cm x 5cm (about half the size of the palm of my hand - see copy at back) and has one week per opening, therefore little details on a daily basis. Unfortunately quite a number of illegible words.

Period entered only March-September 1918.

Photo is of Tom with his niece, presumably in England.

Transcribed by Ngaire McGregor (daughter) and Wendy Cadigan (grand-daughter) - 2002.



*Map of Western Front area in France.
Highlighted are place names mentioned in diary.*

MARCH 1918

Monday 25

Trip round Cassil. Castre Godesweaneldi with Capt Childs. Saw Jim at Cassil and George at Castre on the move.

Tuesday 26

Left Penny Siding for Reinforcement Camp Abiele.

Wednesday 27

Sold canteen stores. Trip to pub in time for bombardment.

Thursday 28

Squad drill route march. Coy alt. 9 Coy 2nd Entrenching Battalion.

Friday 29

Route march. Promenade at night.

Saturday 30

Rain. Prom pm.

Sunday 31

Nothing doing

APRIL 1918

Monday 1

Ditto.

Tuesday 2

Mobilised for false alarm. Walk at night to Godesvelsh. Lost on Mont il Cats. Home 10.30pm. Wet through.

Wednesday 3

Little Arthur died. (?) Rain. Runebrghelst for stores in afternoon.

Thursday 4

Breschepe in evening. Fell in with Sgts. Wet day.

Friday 5

Orderly corp. Wet again.

Sunday 7

Spent pm on Mont de Chato. Lovely view.

Monday 8

Evening out with Bill Hartman. Prom round Breschepe. Two letters from Lil.

Tuesday 9

QM Fatigue. Fritz captured Messines ridge.

Wednesday 10

Fritz took Boc St Mum. Heavy bombardment for last three days.

Thursday 11

Mont de Cats pm One of our planes came down in flames. Fritz still advancing.

Friday 12

Infantry moved out in a hurry. Fritz in Baillene. No leave. Bombing at night.

Saturday 13

Chess with Andy all am. Letter and paper from Lil.

Sunday 14

Nothing doing. Letter from E.R.

Monday 15

Left Abiele 12 N.C.O's with train load of refugee including forewoman of laundry at N. Eglise. Spent night in train at Calais.

Tuesday 16

Arrived Etaples. Saw Jack Broad Paris Place in afternoon.

Wednesday 17

Left Etaples 7 am. Arrived Doullens about 9 pm Marched to Seville and slept in paddock.

Thursday 18

Reached Lovincourt per lorry. Found No. 8. Posted to No. 1 at Mailley Maillet.

Friday 19

Snows. Night duty. Dressing room.

Saturday 20

Cricket with improvised gear at M.D.S. Our guns busy. Annoying Fritz all day.

Sunday 21

All quiet on Western Front. Several Fritz shells this way. 2 killed at Y.M.C.A.

Monday 22

Advance party arrived to take over.

Tuesday 23

Moved to Bus. (*possibly Bus-les-Artois*) Camped in a wood. No. 2 alongside.

Wednesday 24

Working on building of canvas M.D.S. Dull weather.

Thursday 25

ANZAC Day. All quiet. Working operating tent.

Friday 26

Still dull. Very few casualties.

Saturday 27

Nothing doing. Fair number of casualties. Fritz firing. Our ammunition captured when he advanced.

Sunday 28

More rain and mist.

Monday 29

Mist and rain for a change. Camp a mass of mud.

Tuesday 30

Quiet day. Very few casualties but plenty of rain. Letter and photo from Lil.

MAY 1918

Wednesday 1

Still wet weather.

Thursday 2

Lovely day. Rather hot. Letter from Will.

Friday 3

Another fine day. Nothing much doing. Letter from mother.

Saturday 4

Very few cases in.

Sunday 5

Blast from Sgt Eye.

Monday 6

All quiet on the Western Front.

Tuesday 7

Walk to Lovincourt. Saw George.

Wednesday 8

Nothing doing.

Thursday 9

Walk to St Legere and Authie.

Friday 10

Walk to Corrin and Pas (*possibly Pas-en-Artois*) am. Working cases tent pm. Sgt Eye went to Blighty. Cheers.

Saturday 11

Nothing much doing. Saw about 20 propaganda balloons go over to Fritz.

Sunday 12

Walked to Coigneux. Around St Legere.

Monday 13

To Lovincourt am. Dinner with George. Wet day.

Tuesday 14

To Acheux am. Rotten road. Wet pm.

Wednesday 15

Lovely day. Loafed in wood all am Wrote to Mrs Miller. pm Jim arrived home and said he has seen Bert. Got pass. Left per MGC midnight. Arrived Gejoicourt 2 am. Not there. Found 32 at Doullens 6am.

Thursday 16

Got back 5 pm.

Friday 17

Long letter from Lil.

Saturday 18

Nothing much doing. Wrote to Lil.

Sunday 19

Lovincourt in morning. Saw George.

Monday 20

Strafe from Col. Jam tin left out.

Tuesday 21

Dug bivvie. Excitement pm. Wind up. Prepared for rush of patients.

Wednesday 22

Rush failed to turn up. Posted photos to Lil. Very hot day.

Thursday 23

Working in gas masks for 1 hour per day for practice.

Friday 24

Gasbags 9.30 to 10.30 pm.

Saturday 25

More gasbags pm.

Sunday 26

Still more gasbags.

Monday 27

Walk to St Legere and Authie am 1st Auk near Bus looked for Ben but out on parade. Fritz brought down co..... balloon.

Tuesday 28

Ben Cox came round pm. Face is slightly bent. Had long yarn about old times.

Wednesday 29

Fairly busy day. Lot of sick coming through. Not feeling too good on it.

Thursday 30

Nothing doing.

Friday 31

Wrote to Lil.

JUNE 1918

Saturday 1

All quiet.

Sunday 2

Rumours of French advance.

Monday 3

More rumours of advance. All wrong though.

Tuesday 4

Billeting party sent out. Blue went to prepare the way for No. 3.

Wednesday 5

Quiet day.

Thursday 6

Tommies arrived to take over.

Friday 7

Left Bus. Went with billets at Henu. Quiet little place.

Saturday 8

Training. March to Pas and swim.

Sunday 9

Church parade am. Wandered around pm. Very hot and dusty.

Monday 10

Light showers. Settled dust. Orderly corps.

Tuesday 11

Drill. Letter from Lil.

Wednesday 12

Drill and lecture. Sports in afternoon. Wrote to Lil and Annie. Lovely weather but dusty.

Thursday 13

Wrote to Annie and Eth. On Guard 6 pm.

Friday 14

Happy hour with dentist. Evening spent with 11 men to 1/2 8 L.F.A. Lovincourt to build sheds at railway siding.

Saturday 15

Building sheds with 4R.E. Not too strenuous. 3 E.R. good crowd. 42 Div billeted in school. P.C. from M. Descampes.

Sunday 16

Still building. Walk to Authie. Saw No. 3.

Monday 17

Walk to Authie in evening. Pierrots playing in woods. Very good.

Tuesday 18

Authie again. Had a long yarn with George. Arrived Lovincourt 11 pm

Wednesday 19

Rain all day. Fine in evening.

Thursday 20

Fine day. Applied for transfer to No. 3. Turned down stiffly.

Friday 21

Finished job. Unit moved to Vauchelles. Found Ben Cox in Lovincourt.

Saturday 22

Days loafing. Spent evening with Ben.

Sunday 23

Returned to unit with good report from Hosp Div. Sports pm.

Monday 24

3 letters and snapshots from Lil. Sent to Pelman. Night duty dressing room.

Tuesday 25

Slept all day. Walk to Raincheval pm. Duty at night. Jim Martin in hospital. French Fever.

Wednesday 26

Applied for transfer to No. 3. Turned down. Three letters from Lil. Jim Martin to CCS.

Thursday 27

Wrote to Lil, Mother, Annie Olsen.

Friday 28

50 patients arrived from No. 3. Officers stunned. Lively couple of hours. No spare gear.

Saturday 29

Fritz planes over all night, bombing. 5 cases in.

Sunday 30

Hospital very full. 140 patients. Fritz over again.

JULY 1918

Monday 1

Massey and Ward inspected the troops. Interviewed applicants at night. Many from Amb. re tour of duty. Good hearing from Gen Richardson. Gas shells over at night.

Tuesday 2

Afternoon C Section moved to wood near Marieux, to run influenza camp.

Wednesday 3

Nearly 400 NZ patients in camp. Commenced bivvy. Pelmas lesson (?) arrived.

Thursday 4

Fair time. Most fatigues done by infantry. Walk to Sarton (7½ kils) in evening.

Friday 5

In evening went to Orville (4 kils) with Stapely.

Saturday 6

Jim Thompson went to Rest Camp. Took his place in hospital.

Sunday 7

Over 400 patients. Fairly busy.

Monday 8

Epidemic apparently dying out. 340 cases.

Tuesday 9

Rain. Went to Cinema at Marieux in evening.

Wednesday 10

Walk to Thieures in evening. Quaint little place. Rain and wind.

Thursday 11

215 patients only. Gas drill for 1 hour in evening. Every pm for 6 nights.

Friday 12

To Souastre in afternoon. Gunner in mess. Capt Sandham leaving tomorrow. Big jamboree. Pictures at Marieux at night.

Saturday 13

Not much doing. Only 170 patients in hospital. Capt Sandham going to new hospital for Officers in Yorkshire. pm long walk Marieux, Raincheval, Vauchelles and back to camp.

Sunday 14

Saw the Belter Oll (?) at the Marieux cinema. Not bad. Wet day and wetter night.

Monday 15

Quiet day. Wrote letters.

Tuesday 16

Violent thunderstorm in morning. Prisoners going through section dinner in evening. Heard Cpl Brush gone to Blighty on tour of duty.

Wednesday 17

Quiet day. Pictures in evening. German offensive commenced 16th. Not going too well for them.

Thursday 18

Some thunder and rain show in evening. "Passed to you please". French advanced 6 miles. 12000 prisoners (?) *sic*

Friday 19

Stayed in camp and played "tennis" in evening. 150 patients in hospital.

Saturday 20

Spent the evening in Marieux canteen playing chess with Stapely. French, Italians and Yanks still going strong. 19000 prisoners and 360 guns.

Sunday 21

Went to cinema at night. Air raid at night. Air full of Fritz planes for 2 hours. No damage done around here.

Monday 22

Dull day. Stayed in camp in evening and played quoit, tennis and chess.

Tuesday 23

Wet day. Only 83 patients left. Allies putting it across Jerry from Ch. They're to Rheime.

Wednesday 24

Trip to Souastre for inoculations.

Thursday 25

Pictures at Marieux in evening.

Friday 26

Walk to Beauguesnes in evening. Wet through coming home. Spoilt diary.

Saturday 27

Sent for to Souastre by col. Rec. for tour of duty to N.Z.

Sunday 28

Pictures at Marieux.

Monday 29

Trip to Frechevillers in evening. per M.A.C. car back Ordered to report at Souastre.

Tuesday 30

To Souastre in morning. Arville in pm en route for UK and NZ.

Wednesday 31

Left Arville 10 am. Arrived Bolayse 9 pm. "Marched" to Rest Camp per lorry.

AUGUST 1918

Thursday 1

Arrived London 2 pm. Got 14 days leave. Escorted across channel by dirigible. Saw the Bay at Adelpy at night.

Friday 2

Ordinance in morning. Naval pictures in afternoon. Bus ride to Tulol Hill at night. Funny times.

Saturday 3

Steady rain. Arrived Wolverhampton 5 pm. Met by Will. Went to Dunsleigh.

Sunday 4

To Comm.... Day in West Park. Very hot. Saw Mr and Mrs Miller.

Monday 5

Rode to Rays, Stratton and Masons (?) Wheat in Aston 9 ??
Walked back from Garley.

Tuesday 6

To book from Rugby St. Pictures in Agricultural Hall in evening.

Wednesday 7

Back to London.

Thursday 8

Arrived Swansea 4.30pm after pleasant trip.

Friday 9

Trip to Mumben with Mother and Eth. Lovely day.

Saturday 10

Town with Eth and Cis in morning. With Gert and Eth to see Daisy. Billy and Tony in afternoon and evening.

Sunday 11

Walter Road Church with Mother and Eth in morning. Was good.
Cumdonlyn Park in evening.

Monday 12

Town in morning. To prom with Eth, Gert, Mother and Auntie in evening.

Tuesday 13

To duck and pier with uncle of Daisy's in evening. Had supper. Home 11.30. Wrote to Lil.

Wednesday 14

Park in morning. Crib in afternoon. Rain.

Thursday 15

Left Swansea 8.35. Two hours in Bristol. Arrived Torquay about 10 pm.

Friday 16

Drew clothing rc ? Walk to town in evening. Pavilion in evening.

Saturday 17

Bathing at Babbacombe in afternoon. Paignton in evening.

Sunday 18

Babbacombe and walk round lovely ward. View from Teignmouth to Paignton.

Monday 19

Tepid baths in evening and club.

Tuesday 20

Boating at Oddicombe in evening.

Wednesday 21

Fine pin.....

Thursday 22

Evening at Paignton.

Friday 23

To Coastguard Station in evening.

Saturday 24

Walk round Anstey Cove way.

Sunday 25

Heavy rain. Babbacombe and Torquay with Peter Philsnos.

Monday 26

Rain. Appointed O.C. mess room.

Tuesday 27

More rain.

Wednesday 28

Fine. Evening in Torquay. Heard Remuera postponed.

Thursday 29

Went round Bishops Walk in evening.

Friday 30

Rock Gardens all evening.

Saturday 31

Bishops Walk in afternoon. Tea at Ansties Cove and walked on round Babbacombe and Oddicombe.

SEPTEMBER 1918

Sunday 1

Babbacombe in afternoon. Tea at YMCA. Walk round Ansties Cove and Bishops Walk am.

Monday 2

Walk around Lincombe am.

Tuesday 3

To Maidencombe am. In evening.

Wednesday 4

Over the downs. On Boat Roll.

Thursday 5

Bishops Walk and Lincombe Drive.

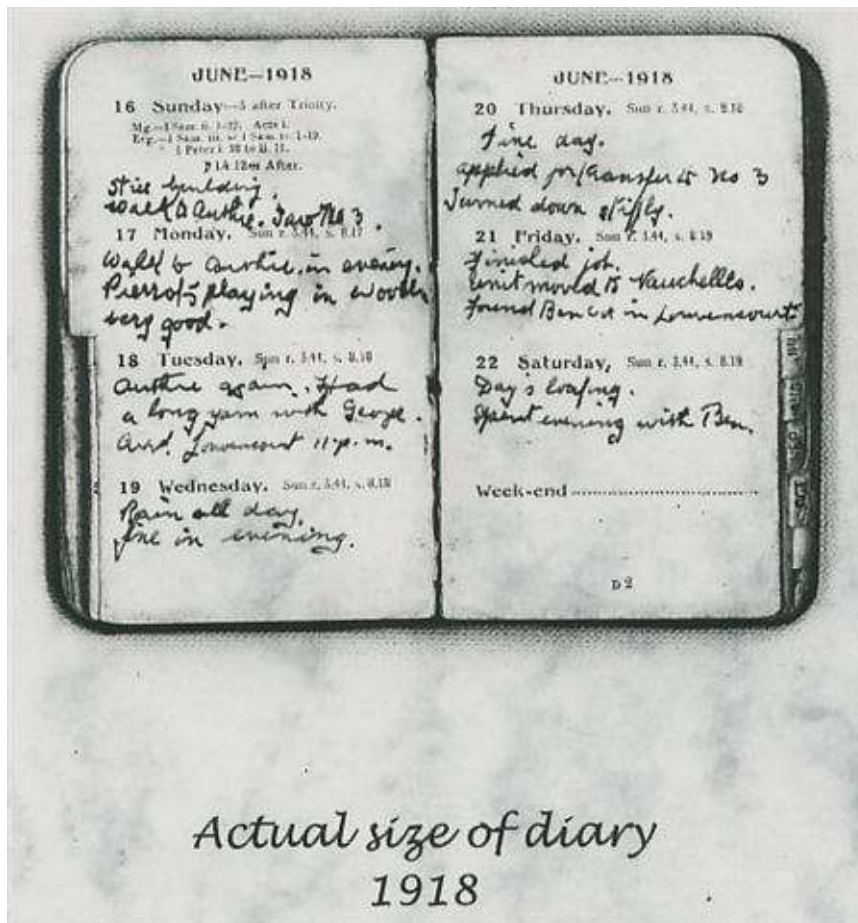
Friday 6

Medical examination in morning. Left Torquay 10 pm.

Saturday 7

Arrive Liverpool 10 am. Went aboard Remuera 10.30. Dinner 1. White bread. Pulled into stream 1.45.

End of Entries



*Tom,
Taken in France*



*Tom's mother,
Annie Hutchinson*

*Tom's sister,
Ethel Hutchinson*



*Will (older
half-brother)
Tom
Bert (brother)
- taken in England
while on leave*

