

Papers of Hugh Dalton:
Original Manuscript Diary

Volume 2:
23 October 1916 - 5 February 1917
(30pp)

Reduction Ratio:

8 x

1/
23/10/16.

Boat leaves Folkestone 10.15 am. in
Boulogne soon after 12. ^{good crossing} No train till
7.26 am. tomorrow. Put up, with Blyth,
at Hotel Maurice. In afternoon a
Tante flies over. Much ground fire, but
no apparent result. 6.30 go to a
Cinema with Blyth & 2 Red Cross
Sisters, whom he has met & one of
whom he seems to have known before
he was. The other has more stuff
in her & is ten more attractive.
But both are very respectable, & neither
is very exciting. Dine at Hotel
de Louvre, the whole interior of which
is very dirty & smells like an
ill-kept animal. Travellers should
note this.

24/10/16.

Waked at 6 am. No time for any

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breakfast. Train crawls to Etaples,
where we change at 9 o'clock. At
Hesdignent, on the way, we pass
several trainloads of Belgians in khaki,
looking, rather well. I have been
Duffie's account reading of them in today's Petit Parisien,
I don't think they hold 35 kilometres of
line in Belgium, the French holding 5
dwe 20. At Etaples I buy 3
small cakes & a bottle of Vin rouge
(rather poor.) No time to get coffee.
From Etaples to St Pol I sleep. Here,
arriving at 11.45 we have 2 hours
to wait. We make a large lunch. It
is thickly raining. Arrive at Aubigny
about 3.15. Car meet us. Back at Gours
by 3.45. Move to billet over 3 Co's
mess. Received with universal friendliness
& sympathy. Here with ^{present} "increased
demand for Nyl. Officers" is for
Mesopotamia as well as Salonica.

25/10/16.

Wet. Return to duties of B.S.O.

105th BDE. Write to P.S., Cammerdalen.

26/10/16.

R.P. is at comfortable hour of 11.30

these days. Expect quiet & mild.

Go for a ride in the winter afternoon

~~then~~ ^{along} muddy roads & over

toddled fields. Meet Steady, whom I

have not seen since the Somme. Still

with T.M.'s & still alive & less pale

than when in Somme. He has had

flu & leave & is now convalescing

with Stabely, who feeds him up on

poor. An attractive little wild animal.

His blue or white grenades have

been faded ^{with} by powder off several

affectedly rubbing cheeks & noses!

The Sherwoods, he says, made a raid

last night in which they strayed outside
 on "box barrage" & lost 3 officers &
 6 men, & only brought in one prisoner.
 Grouner opinion of our infantry continues
 scathing.

I learn that Tanks are primarily
 for street fighting. That some are
 fitted, inter alia, with liquid flame
 projectors, & that the crews have orders
 to blow them up rather than surrender.

Having a bit of a cold, as everyone
 has on returning from leave, I
 take 2 laxative tablets

27/10/16.

A day of bleak winds. Laxative
 tablets, as I suspected, ^{are} no cure
 for a cold! I visit B.H.P. in Area.

28/10/16.

My cold having been troublesome

in the night I stay in bed. Acting
 Train doctor, a fatish man, with rather
 Jewish features & a Scotch accent, tells
 me to remain there for the day & send
 meat & vegetables. He is gloomy about the War,
 & its effect on married women separated from their
 husbands.
 No mail, no papers.

Sleep a lot, eat little & finish Vittoria,
 which greatly moves me. Write to
 P-J about it.

29/10/16.

Cold a bit better, but stay in doors. Expect
 a note of condolence on my condition, not help to
 Munich we move next month, either
 northwards or into a rest area.

Sensational tales about German
 destroyers & submarines look into
 channel. Meanwhile all leave is
 stopped. Those who were are those
 in England, whose leave is up, but
 who can't get a boat to bring

them back!

Nicholls comes back off leave in the
 afternoon. He says that boats
 are sailing again. The Queen, with
 the German sunk near Boulogne, had
 onboard a Staff Major with despatches,
 but no other military. This S.M.,
 when the trouble began, ^{was} ~~was~~ ^{throwing his uniform overboard!}
 changed into an engineer's top &
 was put off in a boat with the
 rest of the crew, the Germans not
 spotting him & thus losing the
 despatches!

30/10/16.

Cold better, but decide to stay in one
 day longer. Write several letters,
 read some of "Sappers" Men, Women &
Guys. The stuff is of great realistic
 power, & occasional patches of real out-

7/

The latest rumour is that this Division is going back to England for 3 months to the E. Mesopotamia. I believe this ^{may have} originated in a chance remark of mine the other day about A.S.C. going to Mesopotamia.

31/10/16.

A fairly decent day. I resume my duties. Swart solicitors for my health.

Read some Walpole. - very readable.

The Mesopotamian rumour strikes me as quite baseless, but probably we are missing soon from this bit of line.

1/11/16.

Fine & normal.

2/11/16.

Normal. Trouble with the people at our mess. A man to mess with No 2 Coy. Beat Debraas twice at chess. (part) Dinner with Fawcett & de Vire.

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3/11/16.

Visit Anras. See Fawcett, for first time since Somme, young Harwood & Kedmore. Fawcett is being put on a course, because junior Brigade Commander. Funnies! Says the war will be over by next October. Strafes Landau & Stabely. Lunder v Watson. But praises Pinney. Aghalled at the way we throw away men. Contrast with French. Field gun out of scale with modern war. Heavily tanks. A vision of open fighting once again & a battle decided in 3 days. Like a well "romance". One Anglo-French Army will reach, but not cross, the Rhine. A British General of divisions may yet be thrown up.

12th Battery at Dainville comes into action at 4 pm & fires 10 rounds at German front line in retaliation for

9
 men knocking in of 200 yards of our
 front line last night with T.M.'s. (but
 does this sort of use of ammunition really
 help to win the war?)

Runners gather here we were about the
 16th to rest area.

"Buntam" Division to cease to be, shifting
 of regular N.C.O.'s, & normal sized drafts.
 A wise decision, if true.

4/11/16.

Normal conference at 6 p.m. with
 Ewart over straw. Much wind! 23,200
 lbs. required daily, etc. Incochaste.

5/11/16.

High wind again. This morning dry but
 wind still some a bit. Join in in
 general hunt of straw. Tea with
 106th Field Ambulance.

A chestnut officer the other night,

being buried in his dugout, blew his
 brains out to escape death by
 suffocation. He was finally dug
 out dead.

6/11/16.

Straw panic still reigns. Accompany
 Raten in car to Achiecount, just
 south of Anras. Curious little place,
 well shelled & population reduced
 from 2500 before the war to 800
 now. Various children there.

What must their life be! Vegetables,
 collected & sold to the troops.

7/11/16.

Visit from Husted & Gill on the dump.
 Both very friendly. Very different to
 Ewart, always a comical spectacle,
 when Red talks about.

Motor to Duisam in the afternoon. The
 man a slow, unthinking man.

L'Horsine tells me the Division won't
move back till, at earliest, the end of
the month.

Play 3 games of chess with Stewart,
he winning one. Patchy but
occasionally m/fle. Take 2 boxes of m/fle.

8/11/16.

Wet & windy. Patch train 3 hours late. No
mail for second day running. Play 4 or 5
games of chess. Swank on leave, & a great
peace reigning. Slight blisters on left heel.

9/11/16.

Normal. Fine. Letter from Cannon.
Drought, returning from leave, speaks of
universal fears in Dublin of another
Irish Rebellion.

10/11/16.

Ride into Arras in the afternoon.
"Reciprocal artillery activities" going on.

on Heavies doing the bulk of it.
Dine with 106 Field ^{at Hattancy} Ambulance, a
pleasant evening. Play 2 games
of chess with Col Fairbairn,
winning one & losing the other.
Satisfied, for now at 1 hour, that
German prisoners in Corps Camp
are very well treated.

wonderful full moon.

11/11/16.

Normal, except for a greatly
large mail.

12/11/16.

Normal.

13/11/16.

Normal. 4 men out of every 100 to
be nominated for Commission. Alleged
but 120,000 more trained officers

wanted by 1918. Officers for Gallipoli
to be raised to 40. scandal of
Thomas Clayton & Styles, who was
partly blown up in Thessalonica.

13/

14/11/16.

Normal. I take a bath. Every day of
107° F.A. joins can mess. Medical
red tape about redressing wounds.
Sometimes 4 times in 2 hours. Needless
amputations. Different value set on
life of "Temporary" & "pucker" doctors.

15/11/16.

Ride into Arras, & have tea with B.H.P.
Good news from the Ance. Heavy gun-
fire at night from the same direction.

16/11/16.

Delightfully cold & dry. Order that
steel helmets shall always be
worn on duty! Personally, I find
them quite comfortable, but others
don't.

17/11/16.

Frost, sun & the sound of much bombardment

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An intimate conversation at night
L.B.N.

18/11/16.

Normal.

19/11/16.

Normal.

20/11/16.

Normal. Johnson sick, Fenton sent
hospital.

21/11/16.

Stewart returns from leave, affable
& affable. Further crockings.
Bury at the box, J.F. Stewart
to hospital, Robinson in bed!

22/11/16.

A glorious sunny day after morning
mists. Ride to Arras in afternoon
& have a haircut & 2 haircuts &
tea at officers' club. Concert in

15

evening. great success.

23/11/16.

Normal. more crocking!

24/11/16.

Supply Train late, owing, it is alleged to accident to yesterday's leave

Train from Aubigny to Boulogne, in which 126 were killed or injured.

There's also a rumour in the air that 100,000 tons of coal have been sunk in the Channel, which accounts for our temporary fuel shortage.

But his rumour comes from Ewart, just ~~back from~~ ^{back from} leave, with wild imaginings of the Clubs.

Dinner with 106th Field Ambulance.

A long & stubborn game of Chess with Fairbairn, ending in a draw.

He favours a State Medical

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service, with Salaries, ^{in proportion}

with (a) time & (b) results, on ^{the basis of} (c) exams & (d) reports by Superior officers. Also with

supervision & Courts of Enquiry into (e) grievances & complaints. 9. p. of

districts & specialities for large districts, according to population.

This scheme is already making in media in Civil Medical

Service. It involves ~~an~~ agreement

by public to waive right of choosing own doctor & (2) by ^{the} profession to supervision.

Also discusses French radical research, which tends to show that

a man going out into the cold can resist it better if he comes

from a warm room than for a cold one

3/12/16.

Move in evening from GOUVES to
LE QUESNEL, just south of ST-PIERRE -
Amen road, 1 1/2 miles W of Tiquipon.
I ride over & get in about 8 pm.

Bedroom on mess. People have
been badly treated by previous
occupants but are quite friendly, if
approached properly.

Old man was in the Engineers &
was decorated in the War of '70. A
great admirer of Ribot.

4/12/16.

I have a heavy cold & stay in
bed to 11-30 am. Refill in

front of my billet. Very convenient,
Dunk. Bordet's with
old man. Conversation
about the appearance of Dunk.
No civility. The birds.
5/12/16. (about) (sum of) (Virgin) (birds) (story of)
Strahan & Mal.

Rather wet.

Swart fully wind over fuel & straw.
Drive round with him to Martin

Loss way coming back. Now on
detailing away from to Cent coal.

6/12/16.

A quieter day, but cold better.
Weather beastly. Write to P.F.

7/12/16.

Normal. Swart in a state of mind over
Sheward's political complaints regarding fuel.

8/12/16.

Wet. Monsieur has a bad cold. Very
emphatic over news from Greece, &
British crisis. ^{at} Have I attentively
read the paper this morning? ... He
brings them home, & reads parts of
them aloud. We must have more
vigorous action.... Il faut châtier
ce Constantin, toute ~~de~~ suite; nous
avons été trop doux.... Il faut
des munitions, il faut des canons....
il faut, il faut, il faut, il faut,
il faut!!

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All Q. M.'s, stined up by Div' 2 & 103
 orders, visit me successively. Small
 tells very well how Ewart visited in
 C.O., who didn't know him from Adams
 & subsequently said that "a man
 came round last afternoon to ask if the
 rations were all right. He was ^{very} affable,
 & said we could have anything we
 liked. He said he was the S.O.S. or
 something like that." ^{S.O.S. will} stick.

Monsieur says he is sure I am always
 well received in France, because
 I am so "convenable". Some

Other officers... in the course of
 his ^{in public matters,} ^{flow} his wife sometimes interrupts;
 he hushes her with an imperious
 "Tais-toi!" & she is hushed utterly.

Remember (1) that the British are taking
 over the line on ^{French} ^{Scor} Scor now, & a bit

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further north of Ypres, now Belgian
 & French.

(2) with a ^{visit to} ^{France} to the Secretary of Affairs
 is imminent. Certainly they were
 missing from there when we left.
 TALK ^{to} L.B.N. about Cyprus.

9/12/16.

invited to lecture on A.S.C. work
 at officers school of instruction at
 LIGNEREUIL next Wednesday.

Talk to L.B.N. about Italy.

10/12/16.

Normal.

11/12/16.

Supply Details move to Penin.

12/12/16.

Snow & discomfort.

13/12/16.

Successful lecture at Lignereuil on System
 of Supplies.

14/12/16.

Normal.

15/12/16.

Normal.

16/12/16.

Normal.

17/12/16.

Bouchez give me a comic article, I
 him a bottle of whiskey. We conversation
 the French High Command, (Joffre is old,
 he has done no big thing wrong (but...)
 Partir au front in ^{dispar} lack of energy.
 the Dreyfus case, the English habit, in
 cooking, the variety of tongues (L'Espagnol
 la langue des femmes, le français la langue
 des hommes, l'allemand la langue des
 chevaux; maintenant on devrait des
 cochons.) French lawyer + judge Meillan
 D - a flamand, was addressing him ^{court} ~~for~~
 in a murder charge said "you are

cutting of my client's head. when a year
 hence you find it was not he who shot
 the throat of Marie - it is you who will
 be the murderer. will you then be able to
 put his head back on his shoulders? It
 will be too late then."

18/12/16.

Normal.

19/12/16.

Normal.

20/12/16.

A bright, frosty day. Begin my study of
 the Dreyfus papers

21/12/16.

Finish Dreyfus papers.

22/12/16.

Wet. Typical Ewartism on 107th F.A.
 carbide.

23/12/16.

Still wind. Chaos & excitement
 over shifts of officers from one
 job to another.

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24/12/16.

Normal. "Il a le rhumatisme le Bon Dieu"

25/12/16.

"Celebrate" Christmas with cheerful
recklessness (-1 in S's' Mess, (6) with
107th Field Ambulance at LIGNEREVIL.

26/12/16.

Arrive back in car from LIGNEREVIL
at 3 am. Day otherwise normal.

27/12/16.

Interview at D.D.S. & T.'s office regarding Pinder
Board. Bourdrez on English "sans ^{illatit} ^{of N's} ^{imitation} ^{to 1000} [?]

28/12/16.

Move to HANBARIQ, bad weather &
& shocking Gillet's, especially for meat
horses. Sleep in Nissa Hut.

29/12/16.

Shocking dump & bad weather

30/12/16.

Ride out + LG QUEBEC.
Wet & wind.

25

31/12/16.

Normal.

1/1/17.

Normal.

2/1/17.

Normal. A numerous, in Northants Territory,
Court & dinner. A nice fellows.

3/1/17.

Johnson has been awarded D.S.O. I
am reminded of the Talk Cople on the
statue of your Prince at the bottom
of the 100 steps.

Set out to interview on 16th allein W.

4/1/17.

Dinner to Mess Waiter, & explain
to several idiots the gain from
circulation.

5/1/17.

Mess, ord, money, water, etc.

26

Ride into Messem, I leave my hair cut.

6/1/17.

Normal.

7/1/17.

Event mentioned in dispatch!

8/1/17.

Normal. Great concentration of troops in Corps area.

9/1/17.

Normal. Portuguese Corps refused to be concentrated just behind.

10/1/17.

Normal. Six new British DPs said to be recently come, a few coming out. Kaffir coming working parties here about. Said to have rotten work but not want. American railways making fine progress.

~~GENERAL 15/1/17~~

27

11/1/17.

Normal. Bad weather.

12/1/17.

Normal.

13/1/17.

Lunch with B.H.Y. To move back in a fortnight. Story of men ordered in some need.

14/1/17.

Normal.

15/1/17.

Repeat lecture at Lipharenit.

16/1/17.

Normal. Richardson, intelligent S. African Q.M. in to dinner. Discuss railways & commercial prospects in S.W. Africa & Rhodesia. First encourages hoped earlier offensive.

17/1/17.

Snow fall. Ice in occluded heavy for first all night.

23
18/1/17

Spent a day of official tickness.
Keefy heading N. Paul.

19/1/17

Normal.

20/1/17.

Normal. Demouge North. H. are
rainment at ^{early} several of have
present since stuck one or two
uncovered.

21/1/17.

Cold. Dried champagne & smoke
cigar with Monsieur Benquet, on
his. A clerical, wine merchant.

22/1/17

Very cold, but fine.

23/1/17.

Ditto. Visit SS. 9th & 2nd
Frank Avenue.

Central Lecture - 1/2/17

24/1/17.

Normal.

25/1/17.

Arrived & proceed to England
to Paris for transfer to summer.

26/1/17.

Ride to Aubigny, after London
train services. Leave by
4 o'clock morning train.

Arrive at Boulogne at 4 am.
After 10 hours at S^r M. L
Stylos, lying in the car
Lisieux, etc. ^{from 7 am at 7th M. L.} ^{Hotel} ^{at}

Take 2nd breakfast at officer's
Club.

Boat leaves about noon.

Arrive 19 Marguerite Terrace
at 3:30. No one in the
with 2 hrs. 2 Lake Windings
5:30.

In London West on
leave not only file

5/2/17 when proved

to Horsham boys

School,

