

A. Hindle James
R.F.C.

30 I 17

Went on board ~~the~~ "Northbrook"
at Suway "en route" for Rubegh, Arabia.
Ship excellent, & my quarters — a
large cabin to myself — very comfortable

31 I 17. Spent a pleasant &
quiet day on board. The naval
officers a very & pleasant crowd,
who do all possible to make
me feel comfortable & "at home"

1 II 17 Reached Yembo, &
went ashore with two of the
naval officers. Explored part of
the town, & passed through the
bazaar. The natives were quite
friendly in their attitude, tho tho

town is usually ^{hostile} ~~friendly~~ to
Christians. We were taken
into ~~a house~~ ^{certain houses} to inspect some
Turkish prisoners, recently captured
by the ~~old~~ Grand Sherif's army.
These men appeared to be cheerful,
tho they had previously been
very poorly treated by their captors.
They were now waiting to be
conveyed on board the "Northbrook"
to Jeddah. Amongst the
prisoners was Ashraf Bey, a
Turkish General, who had
formerly been the governor of
Yembo. He was much hated
by the people, who all turned
out to see him passing from

his house of confinement to
the ship. An armed guard of
native troops — a queer looking,
wild crowd of Arabs! — guarded
him, & kept the town people from
showing their dislike too markedly!
We did not stay long ashore
as the town was most unwholesome
& odoriferous in the heat of the
day, & full of flies. The
bazaars, or ~~shops~~ were however
most picturesque — like a
picture of the Arabian Nights
— white houses, queerly carved
balconies, & narrow, awning
covered streets. It was
^{strange} ~~new~~ to see quantities of
English covered in use in
the bazaar — part of our

gift to the Grand Sheriff
doubtless! - a gift not properly appreciated I fear.
Spoke to Had a conversation
with Ashraf Bey later in
the day, through an interpreter.
He was dignified & most polite,
& presented me with a
handsome Arab headdress -
similar to one he was ^{himself} wearing
- as a memento. ~~He said~~

Ashraf Bey is a fine handsome
man of about ~~35~~⁴⁰ years of
age, but with hard features
& cruel eyes. He had
travelled ~~much~~ in England
Germany & India, tho he
could speak only Turkish &
Arabic. ~~He said~~

Left ~~Yeniy~~ Yumbo at 4.30³
p.m., & I ~~heard~~^{heard} that the next part
of call ~~is~~^{is} to be Raleigh, my
destination.

2 II 17 Reached Raleigh, & joined
the flight stationed there. Received a
very cheery welcome. The Mess of the
R.F.C. is on board the "Al Kahira", of
the Medway Mail line, in near time voyaging
between Alexandria & Constantinople, a
quite comfortable little boat, whose saloon
& cabins make ~~it~~ a very excellent
& agreeable officers mess. The aerodrome
& hangars, & a few tents are on land,
about 10 minutes walk from shore. One
only sleep ashore however when ~~it~~ due
for an early morning start. The local
prejudices do not permit of Christians making

a habit of sleeping on the Holy Land
of Islam more than absolutely necessary!
— so I am told. Our new ~~old~~ D's absolute on board.

3. ~~II~~ 17. Did a test flight
of 30 minutes, & had a look at
the country in the immediate vicinity.
Rabigh village lies in a belt of
palm trees & cultivation about 2 miles
from the shore. All round about
is flat sandy country, but farther
inland began to show low rocky
ridges, with high mountains beyond.

~~the~~ Rabigh is a place of
no little importance & sanctity to
the Mohammedan mind. It ^{was} ^{once} ~~is~~ ^{one}
of the landing places for pilgrims
to Meccah ^{at Medinah}, & here they performed some
of the preliminary rites. ho

European is now allowed into ⁵
the village — except on rare occasions
by special permission of the Sheriff Ali who is
in charge of the warlike operations in
this part of the world — & then only
on condition that the native Arab
headress is worn & not a hat.

4. ~~II~~ 17. Slept on shore last
night, & did my first run this
morning, starting up at 6.30 am. *
Floyd ~~also~~ came on this run with me,
the two machines going together on
account of a report of hostile aircraft
~~at~~ ^{visiting} Abud, near which the Sheriff Ali has
his advanced camp — about 96 miles
inland from here. The country here
over which one has to fly is wild &
strange in the extreme — bare rocky
mountains, with jagged peaks, & ridges
* Note 1 at end of book

7000 ft + ~~down~~ 8000 ft high.
I flew through one pass, my machine
at an altitude of 6500, & there
were still great rocky crags & precipitous
lowering on each side of me —
a situation distinctly ^{peculiar} ~~foreign~~ &
imposing! I have been
surprised however to observe the
comparatively large number of
quite extensive villages, ^{in the valleys}
amongst the mountains. In
many ~~places~~ ^{rocky} sandy localities one
suddenly comes upon an extensive
patch of green palms & cultivation,
with ~~many~~ a large village grouped
about it. We accomplished
our run quite satisfactorily &
dropped messages ^{at the camp of our}

7
"noble" ally Ali! ~~and~~
Wilkinson & Forrest today left
here for Egypt on board the
"Northbrook"
5. II. 19 Did nothing in particular;
went for a short walk on shore,
& found some queer large shells on
a coral reef.
6. II. 19 Did our usual evening
stroll, & I bought a rather
handsome — the ancient — sword
off a native for the vast sum
of 5/-! Also bought an Arab
headdress from a native shop near
the shore. Afterward's we partook
7. II. 19 Went ashore again
of ~~some~~ coffee at the invitation of
some Arab officers, in their tent. These

men were polite & amiable. ^{could speak a little French} They are
having articles of interest sent
down for us from the village
— swords, daggers, etc — as they
knew we wish to purchase good
specimens of these things.

These officers are I believe really
Turkish by origin, but have
been captured by the Sherif,
& are now serving with him.

One told us his home ~~is~~ is in
Bagdad, & he had been in
the fighting at Kut el Amara.

7 II 17 Slept arhem again
last night, & set off at
6 am — dawn — on a bomb
raid. Two others took part in
this raid also, each marching with

8 bombs. The Turkish camp
we bombed is among the mountains
at Ghayor, & is 4500 feet up. We
were flying at 6000 ft, so were only
1500 ft above the camp, & within
easy rifle range. The surrounding
mountain ranges are over 7000 ft in
height. The bombs dropped
quite effectively on the whole, &
the raid was a success. This
camp is roughly 90 miles distant,
& is the nearest enemy position within

* our reach. ~~I placed my last bomb 200 ft from~~
~~the target, 200 ft above the peak 4500 ft high, at which I was aiming~~
I have recently heard further details
concerning Ashraf Bey. He is
apparently a considerable scoundrel,
having been a leading organizer in
the Armenian massacres, & being the
*(additions to be made) Note 2 end of Book

here of other similarly
discreditable incidents. It
seems more than probable that
he will now meet with a fate
not pleasant but well deserved.
— rumour has it that he is
to be hanged.

8. II. 16. Performed the
duties of orderly officer, but
had an afternoon quite uneventful
day. Went for the usual
evening stroll with Fordham
& Floyer. Wrote to old
Freeman this morning.

9. II. 16. Nothing at
all eventful occurred today.
Wrote my mail letter home.

11. II. 17
"Northbrook" left with
mails for Suez.

12. II. 17. The water ship
"Barakus" left here for Port
Sudan. We have moved to
her anchorage, & now act as
water ship for the camp in
her place. Heavy storm
of wind ^{& rain} last night. We
— those of us who were sleeping
on deck, had to make a
hasty descent to our cabins,
carrying our bedding.

13. II. 17.
Heard today that Hughie Fordham
and myself during our boat raid

on the Turkish camp at GHAYIR,
below an ammunition depot.

This report came from Arab
agents. Ali is delighted! Weather still
dull & very windy. H.M.S. "Lamie"
left here today. She will
probably be away two days.

A rec. was done today by Bevan
& Watson to locate the advanced
landing ground at ABU DHIBAA,
being prepared for us by the

Sheikh Ali — something of
a concession, on this very
"Holy" land! Landing ground
was located, but did not
look very satisfactory.

In distance it is about 35

13
miles inland from here.

14. III. 16.

~~Nothing of~~
~~special interest.~~ This morning

two cuttle-fish were seen swimming
round the ship. Henderson fired
at them with a revolver, & hit one.
It was badly wounded, but dashed
round in circles near the surface.

Eventually an Arab diver in &
caught it. It gave out great
quantities of dark fluid as soon
as it was touched, ~~also~~ colouring
the water all around. It proved

to be a nasty looking beast, with
tentacles about 14 inches long.
Wrote to French-Mullen.

Sheikh Ali arrived back in Ralegh,

15 II 17

Went on a bomb raid to the Turkish camp at Khurayat An Rim. Ross & Bevan also took machines on this raid, & we dropped 8 bombs each on the camp, with quite good results. Bevan made two particularly good shots. N.M.S. "Lama" returned, also the "Arthur".

~~Letter of~~

Letter of 19.2.17.

16 II 17

Went on shot in the morning, & received an invitation to go over to a Gymkhana at the ^{camp} Egyptian camp, in the afternoon, Major Joyce offering the provided horses for us to

ride to the camp - about three miles¹⁵ away. According to arrangement the party left the British camp at 3 pm - Major Davenport, Major Joyce, Major Machonachie, two officers from the N.M.S. "Lama", Thomson, Montgomery & myself. Davenport & Joyce who were going in an ~~semi~~ official capacity, wore Arab headdress. We were all duly provided with horses, & all went well at first. However my steed proved to be very restive, & full of spirit, & I discovered just when I most needed control over him, that the bit & curb had worked loose! He went off

at a great pace, & all
I could do was to keep
him going in a wide circle,
hoping he would tire himself
out. Eventually I did
get him ^{temporarily} under
some sort of control again,
but just as we were
approaching the camp he
spied his horse lines, &
was off one more as he
could go. I luckily
turned him from the lines,
& over to the open desert,
but he then did a ^{an}
unexpectedly violent "spiral"
off I came! However ^{all}
was ~~well~~, & no damage to

no horse or human
anyone, or to the horse. 9 17
Then mounted another steed, &
rejoined the party!
The Gynkehana was graced
by the presence of the Sherif Ali,
his War Minister, & other Arab
dignitaries, who had come
over from ^{an} the adjoining Arab camp.
We were received with much
ceremony, & there was much
~~stately~~ ^{stately} bowing & saluting on
all sides. The Sherif Ali
is a ^{rather slight} ~~smallish~~ man, bearded, so
are all the arabs, dignified &
revered in manner, but with a
rather nervous mannerisms, & ~~was~~
somewhat weak-charactered features.
He was dressed in flowing ~~and~~

robes — silken under garment
& headress, & a brown camel hair
cloak embroidered with gold.
His sword ~~was~~ ^{had} of its ^{silver} sheath handsomely
engraved, & ~~was~~ on an ivory hilt.
The entertainment went
excellently, & we were provided
at intervals with refreshment
— lemonade, or tea!

~~At the end of the~~
All through the afternoon
an ~~very~~ excellent Turkish
band entertained us wth
selections of Turkish, Egyptian
& Arab tunes — some of them
not bad, some very weird.
This band was captured complete
with personnel & instruments

when the Grand Sheriff of Mecca¹⁹
captured Taif, & wiped out
most of its Turkish garrison.
This band is now kept at
Sherif Ali's headquarters here
at Rabegh, & plays on all
ceremonial occasions!

At the close of the proceedings
there was a lengthy period
during which various national
anthems, Arabian, Khedival,
& British were played, all
the company present standing
at the salute the while.
Sherif Ali & his ^{personal} retinue then
entered their Ford motor car
— a ~~new~~ ^{recent} vehicle for a state
occasion in Arabia! — & drove off.

We all then returned
to camp once more on
horseback.

The

17. II. 16.

Went for a walk with
Fordham & Floyer this morning.
We crossed the desert to
the end of the lagoon, &
then on to the sea-shore proper.
It was delightful down by
the sea, & very interesting,
as there were quantities of
strange shells, & sea-beasts
of a different sort, including
a most surprisingly large
number of big pink crabs.
The coral-reefs & shore were

21
swarming with them in
places. I much
enjoyed the walk - about
3 miles - tho it was a bit
hot walking at that time
of day.

18. II. 17. Performed riding official
duties, nothing of interest
occurred. Majors Joyce, Davenport
& 19. II. 17. Mackonachie & Dobson, with
Capt. Gledhill ~~wrote mail letters home~~
came to dinner on board.

19. II. 17. Wrote mail letters home.
Heard rumors that Ali is
shifting his headquarters elsewhere
probably to Wey or Yumbo. This
may mean a move for us also
before long.

20. II. '17.

Steyer & Fordham left for Egypt on board the "Lama". Siddons, Bunting, Sam & Lovendge arrived on board the H.M.S. "Harding". Took Montgomerie (our little doctor man) up for a joy ride in my machine.

Took over ^{temporary} command of the flight this evening from Major Ross, who is going away for four days to inspect new aerodromes. Slight difference of opinion as to the with Henderson as to my seniority settled by reference to the

army list!

21. II. '17

All went well today. Sent up S. & B. in the morning on final flights. Our wireless apparatus out of order, but corrected within a few hours. Tested my new machine, No 5421, in the evening, & took Sgt. Wright up with me for a joy ride. Machine flying very well.

22. II. '17.

Went on recon at 6 am this morning. Bunting also took his machine, in order to learn the country. Found Turkish camps at El Ghayri & Khunajat el Rim apparently evacuated, about which fact

There was a good deal
of excitement upon my return.
Had a long & interesting chat
with Major Davenport this
evening, on his experiences in
228 ~~the~~ strange countries & amongst
wild tribes. I hear that
the Sheriff Ali was greatly interested
in the ~~new~~ photo I took of
Ghazir camp, to prove it's evacuation.

23 II 17

All has gone well today. Sec. Court
of inquiry held on certain stores that
had become damaged. Attended
to the new order with regard to
equipment of machines.
In the afternoon received a most
unexpected message by wireless,

urgently summoning me and ²⁵
Corporals Muller & Fulton to report
ourselves to Major Bannatyne at
Suez. I suppose this means that
a detachment is being formed for
some new "sketch"! Have
sent a ~~mail~~ message in reply
stating that the earliest date
at which a boat leaves here
for Suez is Feb 28th. Gave the men
a half day off work, as there is very little doing, & they need rest.
24 II 17.

Nothing unusual. No reconnaissance,
but all machines are ready & in
good order. Major Ross arrived
back on board the "Hardinge" ~~today~~
this evening, so my duties as O.C. of
the flight ^{now} cease. Ross has been
to Weigh & Yumbo, & reports no very

suitable site for an aerodrome
at Wejh. The landing ground
prepared some time ago at
Yumbo is still in good order,
but is unsuitable as it is now
unprotected.

Part of Sherif Ali's troops left
here today for Wejh on board
dhows. They took with
them the captured Turkish band,
— ~~not~~ ~~even~~ making it play
lustily to cheer them on their
voyage!

25 II 17

Passed the morning quietly on
board the "El Mahira". In
the evening watched a football
match — RFC v Officers of the

27
Egyptian Battalion; quite a
good game. RFC were the winners
four goals to nil. Heard from
Ross that there is a chance of
my getting on a rocket to Medina
the day after tomorrow! I do
hope I shall accomplish this
before leaving Rabegh!

26 II 17.

Went on shore in the morning &
arranged to with the flight
carpenter to have some walking
sticks made out of a ~~to~~ damaged
propeller blade in my possession.
Planned ~~instead~~ to walk in the
afternoon with "Spud" Thomson &
the Doc. to the shell beach, but
as we all felt lazy we only

went as far as the old stone
water tank just beyond the
aerodrome. Watched some
quaint old Sudanese women
— the slaves of local Arabs —
drawing water. One of these
women gave Major Joyce an
account of her life the other
day, describing how as a young
girl she had been captured
& carried across the sea to be
sold for \$5 as a slave to
an Arab living near Raleigh.
It is strange to find one's self
in a region where such things
are still possible. One somewhat
comfortably imagined that slavery
was a thing of the past; yet

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here most of the Arabs
own slaves, male & female.
After dinner I went with
Ross to see Major Duranport
& Joyce. From them we learn
that Ali cannot guarantee
that our petrol etc. is ^{still} at
the forward landing ground
at Abud — 95 miles from here —
where it is essential we
should refill the machines if
we are to fly to Medina.
Also: therefore postponed for
one day.
Ali & all his Arab troops left
here this morning en route
for Bir Abbas.

27. II. 17.

Performed duties as Orderly Officer.
Went for a short stroll in afternoon.
Accomplished most of my packing
up in readiness for my departure on
board the H.M.S. "Northbrook" tomorrow.

Strong gale blowing all day.

It has been decided that I had
best not take part in the long
exc. which is to take place tomorrow
morning, in case it might cause me
to miss my boat. This is extremely
disappointing.

28. II. 17.

Held myself in readiness to go
aboard the "Northbrook", but for
some unknown reason she has been
delayed, & has not yet arrived here.

It is ^{now} even rumoured that she may
not arrive till the day after tomorrow!
The much discussed exc. of today
was not a great success after all.
It was found that Albad had been
completely evacuated by the Sheriff Zaid's
troops, who have gone on to Mijiz, & left
our advanced landing ground at
Albad unattended, & without the
supply of petrol etc. sent out some
time ago to be kept there. Seeing
the place deserted the pilots
did not land, & returned ~~there~~
home after only flying as far
as Mijiz. These Arabs
are very erratic allies to work with! They
seem unable to keep to ^{any} arrangements made.
Watched a football match this afternoon,

R.F.C. v H.M.S. "Hardinge".

R.F.C. won the match by 3 to 1.

Sent a note to Major Davenport this evening asking if he would provide Thomson & myself with horses tomorrow evening, — if I have not left by then!

During the afternoon a large shark — quite 7 or 8 feet long — appeared close to the ship. Several of us, including myself, had a shot at him with revolvers, but failed to hit him. In the evening however he appeared again, & Stafford got a bullet into him with a rifle. He dove at once, & disappeared.

24 I III. 19.

33

Developed a slight attack of "Gippy Tummy". Did nothing special during day. Went ashore with Thomson on the evening for our ride, but found that owing to unforeseen circumstances Major Davenport could not let us have the horses. We went for a walk instead. Had a talk with a couple of captured Turkish officers, & then walked on toward Rabeigh village. Greatly daring, we walked right up to the mystic village itself before returning — forbidden ground really! but I felt I must just peep at this village before leaving. We met with no stray bullets, & ~~the~~ ^{were} ~~not~~ ^{surprised} by quite friendly looks from the very few people at Sate. We gave them the salutation "Lail Saeed" & they replied in friendly wise.

I III 17

"Gypsy Tommy" almost cured
after the skilled treatment
of the "ice doctor". It is very busy now ^{near the top}
a large number of sick ^{prob. S. Turk. Red. program} ^{franked plan 10 US by A. G.}
they are all on a ^{dreadful} ^{stupid} ^{he tells me} ^{of}
just scheme set on foot

This morning for me to go
back to Egypt via Port Soudan
— on the "Racypster" starting
this evening. This would have
meant one night by sea, &
about 7 days by train & over
up to Cairo. It would
have been exceedingly interesting
& all plans were working out
well — Major Demanport was
to send a wireless message
to Port Soudan, asking an
English Colonel ~~the~~ in command

* especially the prisoners, some of whom have been tied with
their thumbs together till first the thumbs, & then the whole
arms have rotted — & the people who can do these these things
we have to call our "allies" here! It goes against the grain!

then to have all arrangements
made for us as to trains etc, &
it was almost definitely decided
that I should go, when on
my way to make final
enquiries on board the R.I.M.S.
"Hardinge", we were informed that
the "Northbrook" is expected to
arrive certainly tomorrow. As
the sea route is the quicker
one, I shall have to go that
way. Most disappointing!
Shot another shark this evening
III 3 III 16.

Suddenly remembered that it
was my birthday ^{the day before} yesterday! Had
forgotten all about it.
The old "Northbrook" turned up

all night this morning at
about 1.30, & we left Raleigh
at 3 p.m. I was given
a very ~~and~~ warm & kindly "send
off" by my fellow aviators; I
am very sorry in many
ways that ~~this~~ my share
in this expedition is now
over, & am sorry to ~~have~~
say goodbye to many of the
fellows. However I shall
probably run across them again
before very long & the best of this show is over.
~~It is~~ It is pleasant to
be ~~off~~ long my return journey
on the "Northbrook". Having
come out on her I know
most of the naval officers

on board. ~~Mr~~ Meyer is
still here, & gave me a cheery
welcome.

There are quite a number of
passengers on board, including
the officers from a wrecked
boat which ran on the rocks
down beyond Aden — & some
French political men.

I share my cabin with a
poorly French priest! He
is however & cheery & ~~an~~ interesting
old fellow, & quite amusing to
speak to. We chat alternately in French & English!

184111 17

Arrived at Weh at about 4 p.m.
^{and anchored close into the shore}
this evening. It appears to be
the usual type of Arabian town,

— small ^{gray} mud houses with a few larger white ones, 4 mosques, a fort, & a watch tower. There are still obvious signs of the recent British bombardment when the place was captured from the Turks some 8 weeks ago. The fort has been reduced to ruins, & the watch tower is in a precarious condition with two large shell holes at its base.

I hope we may be able to go ashore tomorrow, as we are remaining here the night, but I fear it is very doubtful. I got the doctor to look at my throat this evening. It

has been uncomfortable for the³⁹ last three days, & he now tells me I have tonsillitis. Beautiful nuisance! I hope it won't get worse.

The Sheriff Feisal, who is D.C. the Grand Sheriff's force at Wajh, came aboard this evening, but I only saw him in the distance. He is the G.S.'s third son.]

§ III 19

Left Wajh at about noon. Nothing of much interest took place during the day. Fairly strong wind getting up.

§ III 19 Quite rough last night, but I slept well. Throat much better today.

Arrived at Suq at about 4 p.m.,

was on shore soon after
fire. Discovered from the
E.S.O. that I am about to
transfer to another ship taking
an R.F.C. detachment down to
Aden! So I shall voyage
back again all the way. I have
come a bit more! Am not
quite sure whether I like the
idea of Aden or not! I hope
it will be interesting. Anyhow
we shall not have to go so
far afield to discover the
Turk, as we had to do at Raleigh.
He is in position only 9 miles from
the port it seems! I find
that Billy Long is O.C. of this
detachment, which is direct order

the Brigade, & not a part of my 41
Squadron. I know Tony Regall,
who was with me all the time I
was out here on the canal front last
year. Met him later in the
evening & went off to dine with him
at the "Bel-Air Hotel". There I also
ran across Major's Bonnatyne & Bradley
& also Kingsley. I hear that
Barlow is ~~now~~ a prisoner in Turkish
hands, captured at Bir Saba.
I also hear that Sizer is reported missing
since the day before yesterday. I do
hope he is not ^{skilled or} a prisoner. It will be
such hard luck on his poor little wife,
who is already ill. He is such a good fellow.
I slept the night on shore at
the Bel-Air Hotel in Suez.

rose at 4:45 a.m., ^{with} Billy Long
~~and myself~~ then proceeded on board
the "Chupra", & saw to the
final loading operations & the
embarking of the detachment.
There are also a number of
Indian troops on ^{the} ~~board~~ ^{ship}. Long
is senior officer on board is
O.C. troops. This ship
is fairly large, but is primarily
a cargo boat. Passenger accommodation
is limited, & not exactly luxurious.
Owing to lack of space we are
rather overcrowded. I have
a cabin, not at all a large one,
which I have to share with two
other officers — an

Englishman proceeding to join ⁴³
a regiment in India, the
other an Indian doctor —
the latter a very quaint little
man, thin & small, with a
queer little squeaky voice.
He is however quite a nice fellow,
& is interesting conversationally; he
speaks English perfectly.
Barratyne came on board at
about 9 a.m. & I handed over
various documents from Rabegh
to his charge, & had a pleasant
chat.
Captain Corbett — who is the
brother of Roland Corbett, &
whom I met when stationed
at Suez, also came on board,

having somehow heard of my
presence. He told me
all the latest news of poor
old Roland. He is a
prisoner in Germany, wounded
severely in six places, but
is recovering & has written
cheerful letters. I must
write to the poor fellow —
his brother has undertaken to
forward my letter through
the proper channels.
We steamed from Suva at
about 3 p.m.

8. III. 17.

Nothing of particular import.
Discussed plans for this

expedition with Long, &
delivered a mild "talk" to
the pilots & observers of this
detachment on artillery observation.
Long tells me I have been
personally chosen by the General
for this show owing to my
experience in artillery work —
it sounds ~~as~~ an exaggeration
I am afraid! ~~or~~ wish of the General!

9. III. 17.

Not feeling very fit! It was
appallingly hot & stuffy in the
cabin last night! I must contrive
to sleep on deck from now onwards. I
can't get along without fresh air at
night! We had a boat
drill this morning, life belts & all

complete. Precautions are now
having to be taken in the Red Sea, as
in the Mediterranean, owing to the
report of lurking Arab raiders!

One is not forbidden all lights at
night yet tho, thank heavens!

10. III. 17.

Spent a quiet & pleasant day. I slept
on deck last night, & was quite comfy. Am
feeling much more fit today, but still not
quite well; possibly I am a trifle run down.

The Captain says we shall not reach
Aden before 13th, so we shall have had
about a week at sea. Strong wind
blowing this evening.

11. III. 17.

There was another boat-dull this morning.

At 11 a.m., I delivered another mild lecture on

Artillery co-operation, this time rather more
detailed, to the officers of this detachment.

In the afternoon something went wrong with the
engine, & we were held up for about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an
hour. There was quite a high sea running, &
when we drifted across wind - as we did almost
at once, we started rolling with no inconsiderable
violence. It was almost impossible to stand
upright without holding on to something. No
one was prepared for this, as we had been
running purposely head into the wind, with
only a ^{slow} steady pitching. Hence there was ~~some~~
consternation amongst the quartermen of the
saloon crew, & in our cabins also, bottles
& glasses & baggage were washing merrily around.
A large motor factor almost broke loose ^{on deck}, &
two of our men fell down a hold - fortunately
without much hurting themselves - so we had
quite an exciting 45 minutes!

12 III 17

Nothing particular to write about. Spent a quiet day. Expect to reach Aden tomorrow morning.

13 III 17

Reached Aden at about 12 noon. Heard from the authorities ~~that~~ that we may not be disembarking here at all! There seems a possibility of our proceeding to India. Most surprising tidings! We are now anxiously awaiting the formal word to decide our fate. I don't think any of us want to go to India. One cannot even pretend to be on active service there, & I at any rate do not want to be ~~in~~ ^{under} peace conditions so long as this war lasts; & so also are the sentiments of the rest of the detachment I think. Of course in some ways a transfer to the Indian Wing is very advantageous, & the pay is very good — roughly £400 a year for a subaltern, as

compared to our present £470. But if we do go to India, I fear there will be no chance of coming to England for at least two years. In any case, even if remaining in Aden, we should get the Indian rate of pay, so that is not a reason for making the change desirable. The only thing is that there would be more openings for a permanent commission in the Indian R.F.C. after the war — & it is certainly a very good show to belong to I believe, & much sought after. Navies I await events with an open mind. Bully Long & I went ashore this morning, & interviewed various Staff Majors & Colonels & such like personages. Then under the guidance of old "Daddy" Forrest — an observer who was with ~~me~~ ^{me} at Rubegh, & is now the advance-guard of the R.F.C. enped. to Abyssinia — [also a show that is now temporarily postponed] — we were motored out to Sheikh Osman, & examining en route the aerodrome & camp that ~~it~~ has been prepared for us half way down the isthmus. The camp

the proved to be quite excellent & well placed. At Ottoman we went to visit the kite balloon section - the same one that used to be at Kantara when Long & I were there last year. They are a very lot of chaps. I was taken up in a perilous ascent to the look-out post on the top of the balloon shed, & saw the country where the Turks are holding their position, only about four miles away. It seems a quaint war here! Neither side is sufficiently strong to carry out a decisive attack, & the artillery of each side is ~~inadequate~~ & scarce! If the war is carried out it seems in a quite amiable spirit, & it ^{almost} seems to be recognized that bombardments etc. shall only be carried on at certain periods of the day! The opposing

forces use exchange stores & medical comforts through the agency of neutral Arabs, & when the Turks capture any officer of ours, they let us know, & have his kit sent for! An odd state of affairs! At one time, however, nearly two years ago, the position was most serious, & the Turks almost captured Aden, advancing right up to where our new aerodrome now is! The present line is some 12 miles from the town. Sheikh Osman is still ~~often~~ ^{occasionally} bombarded at times. It is quite pleasing to find a place where there is ~~still~~ a real feeling of chivalry between the opposing forces, tho' the situation here is now almost ludicrous! We dined this evening in the Mess of the R. G. A. & spent a pleasant evening. I hear that a mine layer with a crew of 25 Germans, & about 40 Chinese has been destroyed not far from here. She was intercepted by the patrol boat "Fox", near Perim Island.

There are still other rumors about
the; & all transport traffic is held up
for the time being, & no ship is allowed to
leave Aden eastwards

14 III 17. Went ashore again
this morning, & on going to G.H.Q. were
told we have definite orders to proceed
to India! Long has wired to General
Salmond in Cairo. It is possible he
knows nothing of this, & it is the Indian
Government who are trying to get hold of
us behind his back. Anyhow we
can't leave port yet, so there is a chance of
reprieve. My little camera was
confiscated this morning at the landing ^{stage} by
an officious civilian inspector. However through
the agency of Colonel Alexander, the G.S.O.I. here,
I recovered it almost immediately! I hear
a rumor that Ross has at last accomplished
the Medina race: from Rebeqh!
Lucky fellow!

15 III 17. Feeling energetic, Long
& I sallied forth before breakfast
this morning, & motored over to Sheikh عثمان
to pay a visit to the Kite Balloon Section
once again, in the hope of finding the balloon
up. As a matter of fact however, when
we arrived there at 8 a.m. we found
all the officers still in pyjamas, shaving
or leisurely strolling about prior to
dressing. It appeared that this morning
happened to be one when there was nothing
doing, & they ~~were~~ ^{had} just ^{been} taking a nice
long morning in bed! However they
greeted us right heartily, & invited
us to partake of breakfast. As
luck would have it, there was another
visitor to their camp that morning also
namely the G.S.O.I., who rode up
to have a look round. The poor
fellows looked a little abashed, ~~being~~ there
being no one, nor C.O. nor orderly officer, in

more dignified & official attire than pyjamas &
~~to do~~ to interview this personage!
Just the kind of ^{vacation} ~~thing~~ that always happens if
one ~~is~~ ^{should} be unprepared!

After breakfast & a pleasant chat,
Towers & I went to Dar el Emir, a large
house about two or three miles nearer the
Turkish position. On the roof of this house
we have an observation ~~station~~ post. There
was a good deal of heat-haze, but none the
less it was possible to see most of the
main Turkish positions, & even the palace at
Lahij which is the H.Q. of Saïd Pasha the
Turkish general. There had been a few shells
fired that morning, but all was quite quiet at
the time we were there. The distance between
our outposts & the enemy's looked very small!
& there seemed to be no definite trench line, only
isolated redoubts. The house from whose
roof we were looking is a queer rumbly old
Arabian building, with walls many feet

thick, & composed mainly of clay like mud.
After this, we were driven back to Aden in
the P.M.A.S. car. We have been promised "joy
rides" in the balloon, if this can be managed
before we leave! Went ashore in the
evening to do some shopping, & later on, after
dinner went to see "Hello Aden" at the garrison
theatre, - an amateur revue ~~with~~ ^{composed} &
staged & acted entirely by members of the
H.Q. Balcon section, - a very sporting effort. It
was ~~quite~~ an excellent show. The theatre was
crowded, the audience including all the very few
members of the European fair sex ~~still~~ ^{still} resident
in Aden.

16th 17. Instructions received by ~~by~~ ^{by} wireless
this morning for myself, Chamberlain, & all
the wireless & photographic sections to be detached
from this flight, & ~~to~~ return to Egypt! Evidently
the General is annoyed at this change of
plans by the Indian Government, & is recalling
this section of the flight as having been
individually chosen for Aden, & recalled from

other service squadrons for ~~the~~ work
on that particular front only. That is implied
by the wire, & emphasis in my case it certainly is
true. However we don't take this by any
means as the final order. There is time for
many contradictions yet! All this
muddle is very hard lines on Long. His
detachment will practically cease to be
an individual unit at all, if this order
does remain good.

This evening we did some shopping, & then
took a taxi - a hired car - of which ~~there~~
& vehicles there is a surprisingly convenient
abundance in Aden - & motored out ^{to} the
Tanks. These form the "show" place of
Aden. They are situated on the farther
side - from here - of Crater Town, whose
name is taken from the fact of it's being
built within a deep hollow ^{in the} center of the
mountain ^{which is the crater of an extinct volcano} of this particular,
or reservoir of which there are eight or so.
in number, ^{are} of uncertain, & unknown origin

They have a total capacity of twenty
million gallons, & are skilfully arranged
within a deep gradually ascending cleft in
the mountains, in such a way that when the
highest is full, the water overflows into a channel
leading to the next, & so on. The light
was all wrong for photography, so we must come
again to take photos. Crater Town is
really the main town of Aden, & is approached
from the harbour either over a highish pass, or
by a more roundabout route along the shore,
& then through queer long tunnels through
the mountain side. We came via the pass, &
returned via the tunnels. /

17. III. 16. Performed orders officer's duties.
The "Raven" turned up here today with
Commander Sampson & his crew. Two of
them were up this morning. I wonder how
long Sampson & Co are remaining here.
Our ship has moved today from the very
inconvenient anchorage near the shore to a remote
position in the outer harbour. This will

make it much more difficult to get ashore in
future. Had intended to go ashore this
evening, to watch, & if possible take part in
the usual Saturday dance at the Adm. Club.
I could not go, owing to there being difficulties
about reaching the shore. The dance I
sure say is not a very ideal type, and there
are not above a dozen European women in
this place.

18. III. 16. ^{went ashore early & made}
~~went ashore early & made an~~
~~appointment with the local dentist~~
~~appointment with the local dentist.~~ Lunched
at the club, & afterwards met Long &
the chief officer of the "Chuyra". We went
again to the Tanks, & took photos. Spent
a pleasant afternoon, & then had tea at
the club.

19. III. 16. ^{with J.} Went ashore early & made inquir-
ies as to the latest wire. It is definite
that I am to return to Egypt. Long wanted
me to go on with him to India, but General
Salmond won't let me go.

I lunched again at the club ^{with three}
of the R.N.A.S. flying men, ^{two of whom I had met at Suva previously} Also met
~~the~~ young Johnnie Blunt & Towers —
of the R.N.A.S. Balloon Section
both very ~~fine~~ ~~the~~ good fellows, &
they asked me to spend the night
with them in their camp, & have a "joy
ride" in their balloon tomorrow morning.
It did not, of course, need much pressing
to cause me to accept. Longie was also
invited, but was doubtful if he could come
as he had duties on board. I went to
the dentist after tea, & then Johnnie called
for me in one of their cars, & off I went.
Long did not turn up, so I suppose
something has prevented him. It's a
pity. I knew he wanted to come.
By the by, I saw this morning the famous
"mermaids"! These are the stuffed figures
of strange half human looking creatures
with fish tails, caught in the net off
Aden. They are some 6 or 7 feet long

when fully grown, & have heads with grotesquely human faces, little short arms, & big five fingered hands. There are three specimens

male, female, & a young one. They have been stuffed with a distinct lack of propriety & discretion, ^{but} wear little red petticoats, with a large warning notice forbidding the general public to glance beneath them!!

They are altogether rather a displeasing show, with displeasing & grotesque likeness to human beings, but rather interesting! I expect, ^{how ever} to some small extent anyhow, they have been "touched up" in process of stuffing.

20 III 17. Have had a distinctly full and interesting day! I rose at six a.m. & went, with the K.B.S. officers over to the balloon shed. Firstly I ~~rest~~ ^{stayed} with the ground receiving station, & watched a couple of observation ascents, and then at about 9.15 a.m. I went up in the balloon myself. Towns came up with me, & instructed me on all the points

of interest in the surrounding neighbourhood, from a height of some 2000 ft. It was a clear morning, & I had an interesting view. ^{I took several photos} The balloon was very steady, & the basket unjerked now & then. On a squally day I dare say the motion might become ^{more} unpleasant. I don't think I should in the least relish being under shell fire in a captive balloon, or under machine gun fire from a hostile ~~airplane~~ ^{airplane}! One would feel so helpless!

I am awfully glad to have had this jaunt. I was persuaded to spend the remainder of the day with the K.B.S. - not that I needed a great deal of persuasion! - & did not return to Aden till 4 p.m., when I had an appointment with the dentist. The day passed most agreeably. They were all very nice to me, & Johnnie Blast was in excellent form - he is a cheery good looking boy, & always full of beans. Towns is ~~an~~ ^{an} awfully good fellow also, tho' of a quieter manner. In due course I accomplished my dental

visit, & then went on to the club. Here I found strange tidings. In my short absence, orders had come for complete transferment of the detachment from the "Chypra" to another & even more comfortless boat, & the move had already been accomplished. I also heard that a P & O was due to leave Aden for Egypt this evening, so Chamberlain & I ~~asked~~ ^{hastened} to the Brigade H.Q. & asked if we might have passages allotted to us on that boat. This was permitted, & within $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour, we had collected our kit, & were aboard the "Moua". We have now left Aden, & are speeding seaward! Pretty quick work! We should not have caught this boat only she was held back from sailing this morning owing to her ship having been mined just outside Aden. We are voyaging in darkness this evening, & have orders to carry our life belts always with us.

21. III 17 / Slept well in my very large & empty "stateroom", & spent an enjoyable if lazy day on board. It seems curious to be on a ship when practically all the men are in civilian attire, & when women & children are amongst the company. Amongst the first saloon passengers are a dozen Turkish prisoners of war from Kut - one of them the ex-governor of Kut. Of these prisoners two have their wives with them, & there are some children. I became acquainted this morning with a lady who knew Mother in Calcutta. She seems an amiable little woman, & has been most polite & kindly. I find there are about 18 fellows on their way to ^{Egypt} India to learn to fly. Most of them are subalterns from regiments in India. One young gunner sub: named Eastley I find is the brother of a man I knew well in my old regiment the 6th S.L.I. I changed my cabin this morning, there

have a cabin to myself. It is slightly smaller than the other, but quite empty & with a large window.

22. III. 17. Did nothing particular; but had a pleasant day; sea calm, & weather rather cooler. Have been introduced to several members of the fair sex — quite nice dames & damsels, but I fear I do not take so keen an interest in female society as would be most complimentary to it! — ~~under the~~
~~representation happens to be~~
Mary, ~~is not alone~~ ^{regarding that she should be} ~~the only~~ ^{one} ~~of the~~ ^{same} ~~type~~
~~is not alone~~ ^{is not alone} ~~of the~~ ^{of the} ~~type~~
~~is not alone~~ ^{is not alone} ~~of the~~ ^{of the} ~~type~~

23. III. 17. All goes well & pleasantly; there was a fancy dress dinner this evening, which was quite a success. I donned my Arab costume, & there were many &

various varieties of ~~costume~~ ^{reimment}, considering the short notice given. Some costumes were amusingly original. Several men impersonated the fair sex — ~~of the~~ in costume alarmingly ~~de~~ ^{de} ~~de~~ ^{de} ~~de~~ ^{de} in some cases! & two daring damsels appeared as boys one in the borrowed raiment of a middy — dangerously attractive she looked too! Sir Harry & Lady Barron presented prizes for the most original dress, & Lady B. made a little speech — Sir H. is a Major General, & lately governor of Western Australia, a very cheery old fellow, but almost childishly desirous of impressing his high status upon all & sundry. Almost his first remark ~~to~~ after ~~any~~ introduction seemed to be "and do you know who I am!" ^{have} I had several chats with him & he was very pleasant & forthcoming, even if a little pompous.