

24 III 17 Reached Suez soon after  
noon. Caught the 5 p.m.  
train for Cairo, after <sup>having had</sup> ~~looking~~ at the  
Suez club. Arrived there about  
midnight, & took up my abode at  
Shepherd's Hotel.

25. III. 17. Phoned the Brigade, but was  
informed that I need not report myself  
till tomorrow. Spent my day ~~very~~  
quietly - not much shopping possible, as  
most shops are closed owing to  
it being Sunday. <sup>came to see me</sup> ~~met~~ <sup>Mr. Mackenzie</sup>

now a captain, & am M.C. with bar.  
Changed my room for a large & comfy  
~~single~~ <sup>suite</sup> with bathroom & balcony, on  
the first floor.

26 III 17 Reported myself at Brigade H.Q.  
Received orders to proceed <sup>once more</sup> to the  
Palestine front <sup>immediately</sup>, where apparently there  
is a big "shape" on. Left Cairo  
at 6 p.m., & reached Kantara at

10.10. Put up for the night at the  
K.A.P. aerodrome. It always seems so  
strange at the Kantara aerodrome now! The  
place has so many associations for me /  
associations strange, happy - & some too  
~~happy~~ that are sad, & hurt me.

27 III 16 Arrived at Kilo 143 - just  
short of El Arish at about 3 p.m., having  
travelled since 5 ~~am~~ <sup>am</sup> in the  
appallingly comfortless military train, with  
only a cup of tea & some bread & butter at  
4 am to sustain me thro: the journey.  
I arrived feeling considerably weary, &  
found the camp in all the disorder of  
removal - most officers, & machines here  
already moved on to Rafa. Wilberforce  
is the only officer that I know who is  
left in camp - the few others here are new  
to me. He gave me <sup>quite</sup> a kindly welcome  
& a corner of his tent to place my bed in.  
This evening I flew for the first time on



submitting to a husky auster brought!!  
I am to fly the "Tinsyde" again early tomorrow  
morning. They seem rather nice machines  
to fly in some ways, & have plenty of  
speed. They are rather bumpy to land,  
but I think it my need's practice to feel  
quite at home. They are however more  
clumsy on the controls in the air than I  
expected - not nearly so nice as a Bristol -  
& they throw back an uncomfortable  
heat from the engine - a very great heat, &  
really not agreeable in this climate!

23 <sup>III</sup> 17 My flight this morning  
was not a great success! & I crashed  
on landing, - not seriously, but still  
quite sufficiently to be annoying. I  
must have landed a trifle across wind  
I think, & then one of the wheels came off  
- result a smashed undercarriage & prop,  
& the leading edge of one wing damaged.  
15: was very nice that it - he is

O.C. here just now - but I feel  
angry with myself. However this is  
my first crash since I have been a  
pilot, & I have done 150 hours in the air,  
so I have not made myself very costly so  
far. Spent most of my day  
superintending the repairs to my machine.  
It is now practically ready again.

The British attack on Gaza does  
not seem to be progressing ~~very~~ so  
quickly as was expected. We have however  
captured 1500 men & a complete Division  
H. <sup>(including German & Austrian Staff Officers)</sup> ~~Y.P.~~ R.F.C. casualties continue!  
Dale-Clark has been brought down by  
a shot. He is safe but wounded in  
the leg. The Australian Sydney has  
also lost a pilot & observer - both  
seriously wounded. It has  
been very hot today - not so hot as  
at Aden, but one feels heat more being  
under canvas on a sandy desert!

29. III. 17. No special event today. I flew another "Tinsyde" this evening & she seemed a much more correctly rigged & pleasant machine to fly. I practiced firing the machine gun etc. over the sea, & made a decent landing.

Kingsley & a man named Follows arrived by air from Helopolis this afternoon with two BE2C machines.

30. III. 17. At 9.15<sup>am</sup> left Kilo 143 in <sup>BE2C 4395</sup> one of the new machines - to proceed to Rafa aerodrome. The new aerodrome here is indeed a wretched affair, - I don't now feel any surprise at the tale of crashes. The bad reports of this landing ground have not been at all exaggerated. - It is saucer shaped, sloping steeply to the centre, & has

camp's, hangars, fences & similar obstructions all round its edge! The country here is quite pleasing with <sup>barley</sup> fields, & grass all around - a delightful contrast to the desert wastes of Sinai. Our camp is right amidst the old Turkish fortified positions, near the main redoubt which was the scene of the final <sup>fighting</sup> struggle. There are still traces of the battle - shell cases, shrapnel, & torn clothing. - also I came across the shattered shields of a German machine gun. There are ~~also~~ a number of graves, both British & Turkish. It is curious to be camped on this spot! I have spent so much time <sup>in the</sup> over this place, taking photographs of the trenches & being fired <sup>upon</sup>. It was from here that the bullet which cut in half my belt

was fired. Things look  
very different now, & our remaining  
units right past here & on beyond  
Khan Yarus. I have very  
little left with me — I had a passenger  
in my machine, which left small space  
for baggage. However I have a  
grand sheet & sleeping bag. It  
has turned astonishingly cold this  
evening, & looks like rain coming.  
It was so very hot at El Bush yesterday,  
& the contrast is trying! I shared  
my tent with Fellowes — I find he  
is a brother of the Fellowes who was  
up at Oxford when I was <sup>there</sup> & afterward I  
was in my regiment. This man  
is however a much nicer chap than  
his brother, who suffered not a little  
from shelled head — & in consequence  
used to get ragged <sup>to a certain extent</sup> by his brother officers  
& ~~to a certain extent~~.

31 III 17 Nothing of special note has  
taken place. A Hun machine visited  
us in the afternoon, & was heavily shelled.  
— Three <sup>Hun</sup> machines came over yesterday  
also, but in neither case have bombs  
been dropped. This evening the Fellowes &  
I went for an interesting ride. We visited  
the old police barracks at the boundary  
of the Palestine & Sinai. There we saw  
the charred remains of Munich's  
Hartwegde machine — the engine, &  
some bomb racks etc — whether they  
had evidently been carried by the Turks.  
Munich had his forced landing quite  
close by here, some three months ago.  
He burned his machine & was picked up &  
taken home by Freeman, for which F got a  
Military cross. It is ~~my~~ <sup>my</sup> charge  
to see the old engine again.  
We heard the sound of intermittent firing  
from the direction of Gaza this evening.

but apparently our attack is still  
temporarily at a standstill while new prep-  
arations are made. Poor old Bevan crashed

the undercarriage of a Markysyde while  
landing today on this beastly aerodrome

201. IV. 17. New machines again  
passed near this place; ~~but~~ there  
is no new development in the situation.

Fellows & myself rode again this  
evening, this time about three miles out  
in the direction of Wali Sheekh Nunan. The country  
out there becomes even more fertile, & there are wide  
views of grassy land & fields of ripe  
barley & wheat. The country is gently undulating

in character, & at some points one could  
almost imagine one's self back in <sup>the corn fields of</sup> England.

This delusion however could not last for long at my time, owing  
the frequent appearance of Bedouins, camels & similar  
extremely un-English adjuncts to the scenery! It  
was finally definitely shattered when we suddenly  
came upon a large Bedouin encampment - a  
very quaint & picturesque affair ~~with~~ <sup>some</sup>

The encampment consisted of a large  
number of ramshackle canvas shelters, some  
in groups, some isolated. All around were  
grazing the animals belonging to the camp,  
goats, sheep, cattle, camels, & a few horses.  
About the shelters were gathered groups of  
women & children, the former dressed in  
picturesque dresses, & mostly veiled over half the  
face, & decorated with ~~silver~~ bangles & quaint  
ornaments. They seemed to be for the most  
part engaged in preparing the evening meal,  
& the men were just returning by twos &  
threes from the fields; a few youths were  
driving in goats, & queer sturdy little donkeys.

<sup>Bedouin</sup> These men are fierce looking individuals, wearing  
the usual Arab headress & robes, mostly <sup>apparently</sup> ~~being~~  
very dirty & not a little ragged. We noticed

no evidence of hostility as we rode through ~~the~~  
this place, tho: numerous dogs of savage aspect  
& noisy bark rushed upon us from all sides.  
Their bark was however far worse than their bite  
& they kept a respectful distance from our horses

hills. A comely & smiling demurel came up & offered us eggs for sale, but as we had no convenient means of carrying them we could not buy. I believe however, that

our reception by the Bedouins is not always friendly, & some <sup>of our</sup> fellows the other day had to fire shots into the air to impress upon the natives that they were armed.

By the by, I have recently heard good news of Floyer. He is a prisoner with the German flying corps at Rumleh, but is well, & quite ~~well~~ well treated. There are about four of our R.F.C. officers held as prisoners in this same place, & a Hun machine came over our aerodrome at Hilo 143 (El Anish) some time ago, flying at only 2000 ft, at grave risk to himself, & dropped information concerning each officer; & also a number of letters - including mail letters for England, from all of them. It was a most sporting action, & one of our machines went over to the Hun aerodrome next day, ~~at~~ at a

very low altitude, & dropped a message of thanks & appreciation. Apparently our fellows

are really knowing a very chery time in the German flying corps mess! The ~~the~~ <sup>German</sup>

here dropped in a photographer group showing Floyer & his observer Palmer standing amongst the German officers. Floyer wears a rather <sup>stern</sup> ~~stern~~ reserved expression, but the group is quite a

chery & pleasant one. I'm coglad the dear old fellow is safe.

on BE2E2775  
The 17. Went for a flight this evening, with  
with Bevin on a Martinsyde as my escort  
Walton as my observer. We left the ground

at 4.15 pm, & made a run: via Tel es Sheria  
Bairat, El Meidat & Gaza. We were "orchid"

a certain amount - some dozen or so shells - over  
Sheria, but only a few came uncomfortably close.

We stayed in the neighbourhood of Gaza some  
time, but observed no great activity near the

Turkish trenches. The Turks however were  
shelling our positions round Deir el Belah with

quite ~~the~~ <sup>big</sup> big Lyddite shells. Most of them seemed to  
be landing in <sup>unoccupied</sup> ~~the~~ ground, but I saw one  
explode right in our own horse-lines - I

was flying quite low at the time. The new aerodrome to which 'B' flight - my flight - is moving on a day or so is close to Belah, & will be ~~at~~ within range of bombardment it seems! We returned from the recs: at about 6.45 p.m. Dusk had fallen, & there was a ground mist, so I did not much enjoy the landing on Rafa aerodrome - not pleasant to negotiate even under the best conditions, but I got down quite satisfactorily.

My kit arrived last night - at last! & I spent quite a comfy night. Also I now possess some warm clothing which I have been greatly needing as the weather has turned so strangely dull & chilly!

Have today seen some Egyptian news papers containing glowing accounts of our advance on Gaza. Of course ~~no mention~~ <sup>the</sup> is made of little delay in proceedings that is now occurring. It is a bit foolish not to make any mention of these ~~delays~~ <sup>delays</sup>; according to the first plans we should almost have been in Jerusalem by the end of this week! However ~~in~~ <sup>in</sup> spite of the unexpected ~~things~~ <sup>circumstances</sup>, things go quite

well ~~as~~ <sup>as</sup> the whole. (The Turk is a crafty fellow & does unexpected things). He is a plucky fighter, & offered ~~as~~ <sup>to a considerable extent</sup> by Germans, he is no mean adversary to drive back, & ~~must~~ must be methodically & cautiously tackled, if at all wish to avoid unnecessary loss, & confusion of arrangements.

3. IX. 17. Sounds of heavy bombardment all this morning from about 5.30 a.m. to 10.30 a.m. Our recs: machines brought in reports that both sides were shelling continuously, & that both our own artillery & the hostile guns were doing accurate shooting. Eventually a body of between 500-1000 Turks who had advanced to the Wadi Ghuzza, retreated again to Gaza itself.

4. IX. 17. Nothing <sup>of</sup> ~~of~~ interest. Went for a short walk with Gardner & Fellowes in the morning. We are moving on to Des el Belah tomorrow, & the majority of my kit has been packed & sent on already. Our tent too also gone, so Fellowes & myself are having to sleep on the ground in the Mess tent tonight - not particularly cosy!

5. IV. 17. Left Rafa at about 9.30 am, &  
flew over <sup>in BE2E 6979</sup> to the new aerodrome at Deir el Belah  
— or "Dear old Bella" as it has come to be called! —  
Fellows had already arrived there after completing  
the morning tactical recs, but there was small  
likeness to a landing ground in the aerodrome  
as I first saw it — men, waggons etc  
strolling or driving leisurely across it, hardly  
deigning to regard any unbidden 'plane making  
frantic searches for a clear spot upon which  
to perch! However F. cleared a passage  
for me & down I came — he had had no  
assistance of his arrival, & had narrowly  
avoided a waggon which wobbled right  
across his path as he landed!

Shortly after the machines turned up, & <sup>also</sup> ~~the~~  
~~out~~ ~~the~~ light-tenders & carriers, which  
had come by road, carrying our tent,

camp fittings, tent, hangars etc.

Then began a busy period of pitching  
camps, & everyone, officers, N.C.O.'s & men  
were kept actively occupied for the remainder  
of the day in the strenuous matter of erecting the  
hangars & tents — a rather ~~to~~ <sup>an</sup> ~~unpleasant~~ <sup>unpleasant</sup> ~~process~~ <sup>process</sup>  
during the heat of the day! By evening things  
had taken on quite an orderly appearance, &  
the main part of our labours were satisfactorily  
accomplished. We then settled down to arrange  
our personal kit, & partake of refreshment.

W. I. & I share a tent again, & are fixed  
up quite comfortably already.

6. IV. 17. This camp & aerodrome, we all  
agree are a considerable improvement on Rafa.  
To start with, it is always pleasant to be  
on detachment duty, away from the "hot air"  
& bustle that Headquarters always seems to  
gather round itself. Also this landing  
ground is flat & with a good surface.  
It is at present rather spoiled by

some inconvenience telegraph wires & persistent hesitations, but these defects are shortly to be remedied by the local <sup>military</sup> authorities.

In the first time since I ~~left~~ left France I am living <sup>at an aerodrome</sup> within easy sound & sight of exploding shell. This ~~aerodrome~~ <sup>camp</sup> itself is said to be just beyond range of bombardment except from certain advanced points to which the Turks might bring up guns at night.

We ~~have~~ continue to have frequent visits from their machines, & are entertained at various periods during the day by displays of aerial gunnery. Not only can we hear & watch the shelling of hostile aircraft, ~~by one~~ but also the shelling of our own machines over & around Gaza.

The shooting, on both sides is often quite ~~good~~ excellent, tho: it varies greatly from time to time.

I was up for an hour this evening, from 5:55 pm to 6:55 pm on BE2E by way of carrying out a "flash" patrol, i.e. locating gun flashes, & my machine was shelled to no inconsiderable extent, both with shrapnel & HE. The shooting however was only moderate,

& the machine was not hit at all. It was almost dark during the latter part of the flight, & the shell explosions showed up with a glare that gave a trifle startling at close quarters! — The people on the aerodrome seem to have found not a little interest in watching us being shelled. At one point my observer — Gardner, who is a very excellent fellow — opened fire with his machine gun on a Turkish bomber which was directed to us by an unusually large camp-fire. As we returned home the moon was just rising, showing up the country in a kind of mysterious haze that was ~~rather~~ <sup>quite</sup> beautiful ~~night~~. I landed ~~quite~~ successfully by flares, in the dark.

17. I did not fly today; ~~nothing~~ <sup>nothing</sup> very noteworthy has occurred.

Fellowes went up on the evening tactical recon — the tactical recon is just over the neighbourhood of the Gaza trenches — & I watched him being shelled all the time — some of the shooting was undeniably good, & his machine was

but in several places. One wing well rare  
to be renewed before the machine is serviceable again.  
Wilberforce left her by air for Rata at noon leaving  
me in charge of the detachment. ~~He~~ <sup>had</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>look</sup>  
<sup>out</sup> ~~for~~ <sup>for</sup> a night bomb raid on the Hun  
aerodrome at Ramleh.

I & the orderly officer  
had to remain about the aerodrome from 8-30 pm  
till 2 am ~~with~~ <sup>without</sup> ~~any~~ <sup>without</sup> ending the look-out &  
flares etc. — a somewhat drear & chilly job!

At about 10-30 pm Ellis — one of the pilots of  
the Australian Sq<sup>dn</sup> — landed here with engine  
trouble, & could not proceed onwards, so I  
gave him refreshment & settled him <sup>in</sup> ~~the~~ tent  
for the night. He was carrying on his bomb rack  
eight converted 4.5 howitzer shells — <sup>quite</sup> ~~an~~ <sup>affair</sup>  
that caused a "some" explosion — & with one of these  
we had certain moments of excitement. The vibration

of the aeroplane had caused the "safety" pin to work  
~~up~~ <sup>out</sup> leaving the shell in a distinctly uncertain  
condition. Ellis "worked" it out ~~with~~ <sup>with</sup> the shell, but it did  
not seem safe to leave it there, so near to the machines.

No one knew much about these converted shells, &  
there had already been accidents <sup>through</sup> ~~through~~ <sup>mistakes</sup>.

so I decided to rouse one of our pilots who is a genuine  
captain, & find his opinion on the matter! Beyond informing  
me that it was in a most unsafe condition, he would not  
however give much advice. So the only ~~thing~~ <sup>course</sup> left  
was ~~to~~ to carry the beastly thing over to the other  
side of the aerodrome, where no harm could result  
if it exploded. And so — gingerly & with no great  
feeling of enthusiasm for the job — I picked it  
up & conveyed it out of ~~the way~~ <sup>harm's way</sup> ~~of~~  
~~the~~ ~~stall~~ ~~etc~~ — & I was not very sorry when I had  
one more ~~step~~ <sup>moved</sup> out of range of the thing myself!

As well as the shells, Ellis had been carrying a large  
parcel of clothes etc, to be dropped at Ramleh for  
Heathcote, one of the A.F.C. pilots who is a prisoner  
there — he will not get his parcel this time I  
fear!

Wilberforce returned to the  
aerodrome at about 1 am, but as our phone had  
gone "dead" he had to go up again & drop his  
message on H. by at Rata — then at about 2 pm  
we all retired to sleep — & I was not sorry  
to get to bed! Poor old W., by the ~~way~~ <sup>by</sup>, did not  
find his way to Ramleh, owing to clouds etc, & had to

drop his bomb elsewhere.

8 IV 17 Went on a flight in Martinside No. 9  
this evening, & was flying for two hours. I, with  
~~another~~ Bevan in another "Inside", were acting as  
escort to the reconnaissance BEE machine. Every  
rec. machine has if possible two escorts now,  
owing to the increased number & activity of the  
Nazi flying corps.

We followed the route  
Tel esh Sheria, Huj, El Foluje, El Mejdol, Garga.  
We were not very badly "arched" at any time & my  
machine was not running well however, which made  
the rec. less pleasing than it might have been.

I was flying at 8000 ft most of the time, & it  
was pleasantly cool up there, counteracting the heat  
of my engine. Just as I required to put

on my engine, ~~after~~ to assist my landing after the  
glide down to the aerodrome, I found the pressure  
pumps had gone wrong, & I could get no power!  
However I made a safe & satisfactory landing  
after all.

The bomb raid last night  
does not seem to have been an unqualified  
success! Several machines seem to have lost

their way. However there were two direct  
hits on the German hangars, & a train on a station  
was also bombed.

The "dud" shell was to-day blown up — as  
being the safest means of getting rid of it! It  
went off with great "clat".

Spent for a walk with F. through the village  
this morning & took several photos. ~~Take up~~  
~~on 8th no flight seen~~

9 IV 17 Tealed No 677 of this morning. Not very good  
either ~~on flying~~ regard to engine or rigging.

Took up an artillery officer this evening, to see how  
his battery positions looked from ~~the air~~ <sup>above</sup>. Had an  
engine failure just as I ~~got~~ <sup>rose</sup> into the air, &  
only just succeeded in getting safely back into  
the aerodrome! My unfortunate passenger did  
not, I think, greatly enjoy the episode!

Went for a walk with F. & had a look at  
the ~~regiment~~ "The Majesty's Land Ship" — the mystic  
"Yanks" that have just arrived here to add their  
lessons to our recent attack — were looking monstrous  
they are too!

10 IV 17 All good <sup>things</sup> ~~went~~. Took up the  
same artillery fellow to see his battery position  
the evening. Burst my tyre on landing —  
very embarrassing, tho: of little consequence.  
An unfortunate & disagreeable episode this evening  
has somewhat lessened ~~the~~ my mental  
quietude & content — however one must take  
the rough with the smooth, & keep as busy as  
possible! It's a quaint world this, & peopled  
with quaint & queer characters — <sup>but</sup> luckily  
I possess a sense of humor!

11. IV. 17. Flew this evening on Martin's type  
No. 98 as escort to the evening recon machine  
passed over the usual area — Sharrick  
— but met with no special excitement.  
Fellows however, who was also acting as  
an escort to the same machine, ~~he~~ met an  
enemy <sup>plane</sup>, & pursued it as far as Sharrick.  
It was most ~~an~~ unfortunate that I  
had not the luck to join in the encounter.

12 IV 17 Roused early this morning by  
a phone message telling us that Rafa aerodrome  
had been bombed. Wallerforce went up  
in a "Troxyde" to intercept the Hun machines,  
but did not get into contact with them.  
Later on, at about 9 a.m., Fellows, Skimmer  
Selander & myself flew over to Rafa —  
I myself flying BE2c No. 2775. Took fifteen  
minutes to clear & reach R. & made a decent  
landing. I arrived last, & had only  
been on the ground some ten minutes when  
Hun machines again appeared on the scene.  
— several of them. Then  <sup>ensued</sup> an unpleasant  
period of time while bombs whistled  <sup>& burst</sup> round  
us. The sheds & machines however were  
not hit at all, & all the bombs fell in or  
around the camp. One of our men was  
killed outright, & a number more or less  
seriously wounded. No officers were hurt  
in this raid, but in the early morning  
Captain Lisc while asleep ~~in his tent~~ was wounded  
in 14 separate places by a bomb which fell



by the familiar <sup>inmistake</sup> ~~agreed~~ of their passage through  
the air. They were bursting at first  
just short of the aerodrome. Then they  
came up level with it, but about a  
hundred yds to the right. Next they burst  
full in the centre of a neighbouring  
Red Cross hospital. It was hardly to  
see shell after shell - at least 6 of  
them burst right amongst the tents, &  
to think of the unfortunate ~~occupants~~ <sup>occupants</sup>!  
Then the range was again increased, & a couple  
of shells landed just beyond our aeroplane  
hangar <sup>on the railway</sup>. This sort of thing went  
on for about an hour, till our own guns  
got going, directed by one of our aeroplanes,  
when the hostile battery was silenced - for  
the time being at any rate! It  
is strange to find the Turk shelling a hospital!  
It must have been an accident, for he is  
usually quite humane in this matter. He  
was I think aiming for the railway, & some

good situated ~~at a~~ ~~very~~ out no  
very great distance from the hospital.  
Strangely enough no shell fell actually on  
our camp, or even on the aerodrome. We  
had quite thought we were "for it!"  
I believe there have been a number of casualties  
including 11 killed in the hospital.  
Today everyone in this camp has been busy  
digging "funk holes"! F: & I have made quite  
an excellent little dug-out conveniently close to  
our tent! I tested my machine -  
Marking No 7475, but after two trial flights  
found her still very bad. Magneto shaft found  
to be loose. Up in the air about 40 minutes.  
The Colonel, & the whole Wing personnel ~~are~~ <sup>are</sup> arrived  
here today, & are settling into a camp close by.  
The "Tanks" passed here ~~from~~ <sup>on their</sup> this evening, ~~which is~~ <sup>which is</sup>  
on the way forward to join in the attack, ~~shabby~~ <sup>shabby</sup> to  
start. They look like some sort of horrible  
parasitic and delirious beasts as they crawl across  
the country. I fancy the Turk will find them  
an unpleasant surprise packet! The other

afternoon, while riding ~~back~~ back from  
~~my~~ <sup>our</sup> afternoon bath, Gardner & I passed  
through their camp again, & this time  
received permission to ~~look~~ <sup>under</sup> ~~one~~ <sup>of them</sup>, & it was  
most interesting to see inside it.)

I choked at dinner this evening, & lost ~~consciousness~~  
consciousness for a number of minutes. When  
I came to I found that the obstructing substance  
had gone from my throat — how & when  
I don't know — & various kindly brother-  
officers were attending to me. I was  
carried to Walterforce's tent & soon recovered.  
A doctor had been sent for, but <sup>by the time</sup> ~~when~~ he arrived  
I was feeling much better, tho still a bit  
giddy & faint! It was not a very  
pleasing experience!

15 IV 17 (Tested ~~my~~ <sup>my</sup> Markosyde No 7473 this  
morning, & found her much improved. The  
Turks shelled this neighbourhood again <sup>during</sup> <sup>most</sup>  
of the morning, starting at about 10 am.  
According to orders issued yesterday, all machines  
were taken from their hangars immediately the

bombardment started, & tasked by their respective  
pilots to various parts of the aerodrome, or the  
fields near it, so that any single shell  
might not cause ~~damage~~ extensive damage  
~~to our aerodrome~~. This was all carried out very  
promptly, & the machines were well scattered  
within 5 minutes of the first shell bursting.  
There were no casualties, ~~and~~ in our camp  
nor was anything damaged. The infantry  
camp however, just north of the aerodrome  
had rather a nasty time — first ~~bombardment~~  
by shrapnel, & then big H.E. shells.

16 IV 17. Went up this morning at about  
9.45 in BE2c2775 to take photographs  
of the redoubt system on the Gaza-Bir Sabra  
road. After climbing to the required height —  
6500 ft. I started my job. I noticed however  
that the two Markosyde machines who <sup>had</sup> ~~was~~ been  
acting as escort to me had vanished — I learned  
later that they had become engaged with enemy  
aircraft. Hardly had I started my photography  
when I heard the sound of machine gun fire, &

bullets whistled past my head. ~~Turning~~  
Turning sharply round I saw a Hun about  
100 feet above & behind. Gardiner, my observer  
immediately opened fire with the Lewis gun  
& emptied one drum directly into our assailant  
as he followed close after us. Thereupon the  
Hun turned sharply & left us, passing out  
of sight in the direction of Ramleh.  
The encounter had led me a little away from  
my objective, but after waiting a few minutes  
I returned to the redoubts, & continued the  
photography. Some ten minutes after the first  
hostile plane had left us, we were again attacked  
from behind, apparently by a second machine.  
This attack was more determined, but Gardiner  
again turned it off by desultory use of the  
Lewis gun, while I manoeuvred my machine as  
conveniently as possible. However as we were  
unprotected by any escort, & the hostile  
plane remained in the neighbourhood, I  
decided to return to the aerodrome. The

enemy machines — of the Roland type —  
were infinitely superior to the BE2c which  
I was flying, both as regards speed, climb, &  
armament, & one is not supposed to engage  
unnecessarily in a fight ~~at~~ when ~~one~~  
obviously at so serious a disadvantage.  
However, considering all things, I don't think  
the encounter was altogether unsuccessful  
from our point of view — we at least drew  
off two attacks from greatly superior machines.  
I heard later that our escorting <sup>(Tensyde)</sup>  
pilot <sup>led by Felbues</sup> had also had a scrap in which <sup>he</sup>  
<sup>it</sup> had disabled his opponent, & the  
<sup>piloted by Bewan</sup> other had been shot through the petrol  
tanks, & only just succeeded in regaining  
the aerodrome. My old "bus" was  
hit by machine gun bullets in many places,  
but luckily was not very seriously <sup>damaged</sup> ~~injured~~.  
The first stage of the great attack on  
Gaza starts tomorrow. Several  
pilots & observers have come over here from  
Raba to be on the spot during the

most few other news day 5.

17 IV 17 Our bombardment started at dawn today — a vast ~~burst~~ <sup>burst</sup> of gun & shelling of shells has been going on more or less ever since! It is a fast still continuing, & it is now 9:30 pm. From our aerodrome, & more still from the high ground behind it, one can watch ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> shells bursting along the trench lines, & the redoubt systems. There are monitors, & a French ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> cruiser the "Requin" lying just off the coast, & these as well as our land batteries have been doing excellent shooting — the "Requin's" 11 inch shells make an enormous burst that can be seen — & heard! — from a great distance. I was ~~be~~ flying this morning for 1½ hours over the bombarded sectors, & it was most interesting — not ~~quite~~ <sup>of course</sup> such a fearful spectacle as the Loos bombardment presented from the air, but still no insignificant display. I had serious engine trouble while on my

way back to the aerodrome — a connecting <sup>into</sup> rod became loose, & smashed ~~in~~ the wall of the stomp. I got down safely, but narrowly missed rather a bad crash! <sup>was flying in BE2c No 6732</sup> We have brought that so far our attack on Gaza is progressing well. The first line of Turkish positions has been taken. We are avoiding a bombardment of the town itself as far as possible. One of our "Tays" has been put out of action! <sup>we hear, but not permanently damaged.</sup>  
18 IV 17 The bombardment has somewhat lessened, but both sides <sup>have been</sup> ~~are~~ making use of their guns at intervals. Was flying in BE2c No 6779 for two hours this evening doing artillery ~~and~~ <sup>with</sup> reconnaissance. A Hun machine appeared on the scene, but kept his distance & did not attack us. We fired a few shots at him at long range, & ~~clouds~~ <sup>summoned</sup> our ~~scout~~ <sup>our</sup> machines <sup>from the aerodrome</sup> by wireless to drive him off. However he had vanished before they could get up to him. Clouds were very troublesome during the flight.

19.12.17. From early dawn our guns  
have been carrying on an intense bombardment  
of the enemy positions close round Gaza, &  
on the Gaza - Sheria sector. The firing  
has been far heavier than on either of  
the two preceding days — for some five  
hours there was <sup>seconds</sup> ~~minutes~~ a pause  
in the ~~shells~~ ~~explosions~~ crash of  
big shells, & the vibrating rattle of  
guns. Then ~~the~~ <sup>our</sup> firing died down a bit,  
while our infantry attacked, & the  
hostile guns, of course, continued. The  
attack has gone fairly well, but ~~not~~  
the advance has been held up more than  
was expected. I set off on artillery  
co-operation at 4 p.m. this evening. I  
went up first in BE2C No 395, but had  
an engine failure just as I rose from the  
ground, when I was hardly 50 ft up! There  
followed some rather lull moments, as  
I struggled round ~~it~~ in an effort

to find a place to land on, outside the  
aerodrome. Missing wires, lints, &  
telegraph poles by a matter of a few feet,  
I at last brought my bus undamaged to  
the ground. I re-started immediately  
on BE2C No 6803. However while testing  
the wireless over the aerodrome, the  
whole wireless apparatus suddenly fell  
off — & down I had to come again!  
Eventually we left ~~again~~ about 4.40 p.m.  
Our area was over the coast position east  
of Gaza. We flew low, & could see our  
infantry digging themselves into the region  
captured this morning. They were being  
shelled a bit with shrapnel, & my  
observer - Jenkins - got our guns onto  
one of the hostile batteries that had been annoying  
them. We had an excellent view of the town —  
a most picturesque & pleasant looking spot,  
well wooded with orchards, fields & pools of water.  
Part of the town looks quite modern, & there is a

large white building on high ground, facing the sea  
which we hear authoritatively is an hotel. "Bevan"  
left us alone most of the time, but surprised us  
suddenly towards the end by a half dozen very good  
shots. Landed again at 6.15 p.m. I then  
heard that other of our machines had been  
having an encounter with 5 others ~~machines~~, &  
that poor old Bevan had been killed. He  
was attacked from behind, <sup>just after being brought down</sup> & <sup>apparently</sup> killed  
or fatally hurt. <sup>Thimfuntky saw this</sup> ~~the~~ machine was seen to spin  
<sup>down</sup> ~~fall~~, out of control, & then ~~the~~ Bevan himself  
fell out of his seat. The machine has been  
found by one of our patrols; <sup>Capt.</sup> Bevan's body has  
not been found. In him ~~is~~ I have  
again lost a friend - one of the men I liked  
& knew best here, & at Raleigh, for he was with  
me there also. He was a <sup>spotter</sup> steady pilot, & a  
brave fellow, quiet & reserved in manner, & rather

relieving by disposition, but one of the <sup>very</sup> best  
~~most~~ ~~valuable~~ things. He was very young, only  
about 22. Lately he has not been very fit, but  
never dreamed of complaining, or shirking his  
turn, tho I know he at times felt ~~rather~~ weary  
& longed for a rest. This rest has now come to  
him & he has earned it. ~~AMM.~~  
<sup>was one of the first to congratulate me on my escape from a bad crash, after my engine  
had quit this evening. I am still safe. ... this is gone. ...</sup>  
near that Wallaston & Selander's, <sup>this morning</sup> doing artillery  
work in a BE2c, were also attacked, but drove off  
the hostile machine. Willerforce in a 'Vinsy de  
' has shot down a Hun. The machine was  
seen to make a good landing, but then fell  
over a small <sup>ridge</sup> ~~Asap~~ into a wadi-bed, this is a  
good item of news anywhere. The  
Matters are becoming just a trifle serious. The  
new German machines are of the recent & <sup>good</sup> ~~best~~  
~~most~~ design. It is not <sup>so much as</sup> ~~even~~ a matter of  
preference here, <sup>just now</sup> that ~~is~~ even our best machines can  
equal theirs in general efficiency - particularly for  
fighting purposes. Unfortunately the Huns seem just  
to be realizing the advantages they have. For a  
long while they have been doubtful, & it is never  
their plan to risk their machines without very

good chances of success.) It is foolish & most  
unfair that we should be so handicapped.

20 IV 17 (The news of the attack is not very good today.

We are held up very considerably on the right flank.  
All our "banks" have now been put temporarily out  
of action by heavy shell fire — they do not seem  
to have been quite so great a success as was expected.

I saw one of them yesterday, stranded forlornly  
on a sand dune near the sea.

I did an <sup>this morning</sup> escort flight, in Martinzyde No 15-93. It was  
recasting a strategical zero machine, sent out  
to ascertain whether the Turks were bringing reinforcements  
up the Wadi Ghuzza.

I neither encountered nor  
saw any hostile machine, tho we passed close to one of  
their landing grounds.) Had engine trouble while  
landing — the engine choked when I tried to "swirl  
on" to get into the aerodrome, having slightly misjudged  
my landing. To avoid a fence, I had to "skate" the  
machine — result a ~~rather~~ bumpy landing, & a  
bit ascel. # I have not had much luck  
with my engines of late, & it is a little trying.

A: tried to make himself unpleasant about the  
bit ascel. I stated the facts & left him to judge  
for himself: He is <sup>a somewhat</sup> ~~rather~~ silly individual, who  
tries to make up for lack of character, by a rather  
wretched display of bluster! —

~~My own machine~~  
~~is now in the workshop~~  
Steele — an Australian pilot — is missing tonight.  
He was flying in a Martinzyde, & the ~~rest~~  
fellows he was escorting saw his machine nose dive  
to the ground in flames. He fell into hostile  
territory, & the cause of his accident is not  
really known — probably he was hit by anti-aircraft  
fire shells, four of which were seen to burst close to  
him just before he fell. He was flying at 8000 ft.

21. IV. 17. I have not flown today at all. I am  
not very sorry as I am not feeling ~~very~~ fit. — I have  
not been feeling right for some weeks now, & I shall  
have something queer wrong with my voice — it gets so  
fickle at home that it is quite an effort to talk at all!  
I don't know what's wrong, but I suppose I must be  
a bit "run down". I trust I shall pick up soon!  
Another of our machines — a Martinzyde —

was brought down by hostile A.A. guns this ~~very~~ afternoon. Both petrol tanks were pierced by shell splinters. The pilot — an Australian named Cole — landed <sup>safely</sup> in enemy country, but succeeded in borrowing his machine, & was then picked up & taken home by the pilot of a BE2e, who saw him go down.

Our attack has now come to a complete standstill, & is now more degenerating into trench warfare. It is most disappointing, but <sup>we</sup> hope another push will start soon. We had a Turkish officer — a prisoner — to dine in our mess tonight. He speaks no English, but Marawley, who can speak Turkish, acted as interpreter for us. He seemed a quite good sort of fellow, <sup>the fact is he is not</sup> not a professional soldier, but he is a school master in Constantinople in peacetime. Like many others, he does not like war, & will not be sorry when it is over — he however

seemed to have no doubt as to who would be the final victors. He seemed to consider it a certainty that Germany & her allies would win in the end! He told us further details of the capture by us of the Turkish General, & his staff, including Germans & Austrians, near Garga <sup>during</sup> the first attack. Apparently the capture was a neat & rather funny episode — the General <sup>& his whole staff</sup> were captured while driving quietly in carriages from Beer Sheba to Garga, imagining themselves quite safe! ~~The~~ Our prisoner guest seemed himself greatly amused at the episode & recounted it with delight. His own C.O. had been amongst those taken! 22 IV 17 For I in two Martinydes acted as escort to the strategical reco this morning, leaving the ground at about 9.45 a.m. We started in a northerly direction, keeping well out to sea till some miles past Garga, striking inland just N of the Wadi Hesi. At this point the clouds became



23 IV. 17. My photographer overlay<sup>d</sup>  
has turned out quite a success, & shows all  
that was wanted. The Colonel seems very  
satisfied. Apparently my photographic  
efforts are looked upon with favour. This  
is pleasing, as I have done quite a lot, &  
have taken a good deal of trouble over it,  
tho just recently I have not had much work  
of this sort to do. I started off  
this afternoon in Martin cycle no 1591 to act  
as one of the escorts to, & take part in, a  
bomb raiding formation <sup>at</sup> Sherice. However  
~~as~~ a valve rocker broke, just after I had  
left this place to proceed to Rafa, from  
which place the raid was to start. I had  
to return at once. I heard later however,  
that the bomb raid was postponed, so I did  
not lose much.

We learn that further offensive <sup>on the front</sup> ~~operations~~ are now to be  
postponed for at least ten days. Many people  
are going away for a bit of leave & rest, in  
consequence.

24 IV. 17. Has been an appalling<sup>ly</sup>  
hot day, with a Khamsere blowing ~~strongly~~  
the atmosphere dull & glistening with dust,  
& the very wind hot & ovenlike. I have  
been feeling most unfit all day — a load  
of the sun I think, & head hair melting  
& panting in my tent! — not pleasant. I  
feel relieved now that the sun has gone down, &  
hope to be right tomorrow.

There are special messages of congratulation  
to the R.F.C. <sup>this evening</sup> ~~today~~, from various Generals,  
for work done during the last 10 days.

25 IV. 17. Khamsere still blowing, heat at  
midday intense & beastly! Our water supply  
unfortunately has ~~gone~~ run short, & there is no  
soda water — only bottled lemonade, ~~but~~  
~~but~~ ~~but~~ almost hot, & much too  
sweet to quench one's thirst! I ~~was~~ went  
up in the air for about an hour <sup>in P.F. 2e</sup>  
6979, during the tactical <sup>this evening</sup> ~~recon~~ <sup>(0675 William's)</sup> However  
the atmosphere was heavy & dull, & tho we

flew at only 2000ft, we could not see much. We passed over the At Arweneh ridge, & being low, we ~~was~~ were fired on a good deal by the Turkish machine guns & rifles, but were not hit. Even in the upper air it is close & stuffy, & one feels the heat from the engine a good deal — I am glad I did not have to fly a 'binayde today, the fumes & heat would have been altogether too much! ~~of the engine~~

26 IV 17. Still extremely hot, but the wind is at last changing round a bit. I have not flown today at all. Nothing noteworthy.

27 IV 17. Set off this morning at about 9.30 for escort duty, but had to return with engine trouble. We made a second start in the evening, but could not complete the run owing to clouds. Weather cooler.

28 IV 17. All the remainder of the squadron arrived from Rafa today. The camp has now assumed exclusive proportions, & will make

an excellent target for enemy bomb raids! The weather has now turned quite cold, & we have had showers of rain! These contrasts of temperature are a little trying.

29 IV 17. I went on a photographic flight on a 'binayde today. I had a very long series of overlays to do, covering a distance of very many miles. <sup>a portion</sup> Part of this overlay included ~~some~~ <sup>part</sup> ~~of~~ the Beerseba-Jerusalem railway, from Sheria station northwards. I was archaic a bit at Sheria, but with greater accuracy in the region of Gaza. After my return, when the photos were to be developed, I received the distressing information that the camera had failed to work properly, & only the first 16 — out of 100 — plates had come out. It was in no way my fault, but it is very distressing! However the 16 successful plates happen to include an overlay of special importance, which is fortunate.

30 IV 17 There has been no very interesting event. I went up on the evening packet here with Watson, passing north of Gaza & home via Marsa.

18 IV 17 Went up again on a Markenside to redo the photography that was spoiled last time. I climbed to 10,000 ft, & started my job from Sheria station. In all I took 87 plates, & luckily they<sup>are</sup> all satisfactory this time. I saw no signs of Hun machines, & was troubled very little ~~with~~ by anti-aircraft guns.

May 3<sup>rd</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup>

Since last writing there has been quite a lengthy interval of time, during which ~~quite~~ a number & variety of events has taken place - events not perhaps extremely thrilling or unusual, but nevertheless of the small interest to myself. So on May 3<sup>rd</sup> I was granted seven days leave to proceed to Cairo. Skinner, Halder, & Muller were granted leave from the same date, & that evening we set off on the military railway from Peir el Belah station by the 6 p.m. train. Now-a-days there is provided on this particular train a vehicle that calls itself a "sleeping coach", for officers proceeding to Kantara. This coach has a double row of bunk's arranged along it's sides, with cushions - of a sort not to be blamed for any over luxuriant softness! - upon which one can recline & attempt - during the calmer intervals of the train's abandonedly bumpy

progress — to justify its title of "sleeper"!

Our journey did not start off very well —  
a break-down <sup>resulting upon a second storm</sup> on the line further along  
delayed us some 6 hours. However once  
we did start, things went well. We  
reached El Arish at daybreak, & I ate  
<sup>Some</sup> sandwiches while waiting there. At  
<sup>Romani</sup> ~~Romani~~, some two hours later, I obtained  
a cup of tea at a Canteen, & then at  
11.30 pm we reached our destination — ~~Kantara~~  
— Kantara — about 17 hours after our  
entry into the train at Belah!

After a little wash & refreshment at the ~~little~~  
rest camp that some kindly lady runs at  
K., we caught the train to Cairo, & by  
3 pm were in Shepherd's Hotel.

"Shepherd's" seems quite a home to me in these  
times, a somewhat formal & unresponsive home,  
but yet a place of comfort & rest. I am "pinched"  
here now, & the head porter is quite a

"pal" of mine, & always gets me the best  
room he can. I also always have my own  
special table, & favourite waiter that I  
invariably patronise — in fact all is  
quite pleasant & ~~very~~ cosy.

I was very glad to find Jenkins also  
spending his leave here. He is a dear  
cherry fellow, & we <sup>have</sup> spent a most pleasant  
<sup>time</sup> ~~week~~ together. Amongst other things,  
we <sup>have</sup> had a series of most enjoyable runs  
in a car — once out to the Nile Barrage  
some 20 miles away, when we had tea in  
the gardens there, & drove to the pyramids  
by the light of the full moon — on the first  
occasion, <sup>we went</sup> by ourselves, when we climbed up  
the great pyramid — (Jenkins went the  
whole way, but I gave it up some  $\frac{3}{4}$  of  
the way up, being lazy) — It is quite a  
lucky & perilous job climbing the Pyramid  
by moonlight) — & on the second occasion we  
went out with two Nurses from Ghuzeh

Hospital (!!) who dined with us first at  
Shepherds. On another moonlight  
evening J & I did <sup>a particularly delightful</sup> ~~another~~ <sup>pleasuring</sup> little  
run, first along the Nile banks, then  
through old Cairo, & through the "Dead City"  
— the latter a most gruesome locality to  
visit by moonlight! One drives  
through streets, & amongst houses, large  
& small — all seemingly in good repair,  
yet all silent, deserted, & without any sign  
of habitation. Within the courtyards,  
by the road-side — & even glimpsed through  
the open doors of houses, one <sup>can</sup> ~~could~~ see  
~~countless~~ tombs & grave stones looking  
cold & ghastly by the light of the moon!  
It is said — I don't know if it ~~is~~ is  
the true story — that very many years ago,  
that quarter of the town was ~~destroyed~~ <sup>devastated</sup> by  
a ~~plague~~ plague. To restrict its ravages  
a wall was built around the infected area, &  
no person allowed to move from within it.

Practically all the people ~~related~~ in this  
manner are said to have died, & since that  
time no one has dared to re-occupy the  
deserted houses. For a long period this  
quarter has been used as a cemetery only, &  
that apparently is still its use.  
It was ~~very~~ interesting to see.  
Jenks & I have neither of us been feeling  
very fit of late, <sup>therefor</sup> ~~we~~ have had no inclination  
for "notorious living" during our leave — <sup>we have been</sup> I think  
~~any~~ <sup>few</sup> adventures even approaching the  
"noisy" <sup>we spent one or two</sup> ~~was~~ <sup>evenings</sup> at the  
Kursaal <sup>at the</sup> ~~of~~ We occupied a box and watched  
the show — the usual type, suggestive  
& "French", & at times vulgar in no small  
degree — but we ourselves remained quite  
select — & unaccompanied! — & is usual found  
the entertainment not a little boring <sup>the "good in parts"!</sup>  
I fear Cairo is not noted for the ~~refinement~~  
~~or~~ refinement — of the entertainment it offers to idle  
folk in quest of amusement!  
I have recently heard news of its further activity

on the jagged front, especially aerial activity. Our aerodrome has been bombed several times at night, & we have made reprisal raids on the Hun aerodrome. The recent moonlight nights have of course been very suitable for night raids. Fortunately we have suffered very little damage — we received warning of some of the attacks, & were able to remove our machines secretly I hear.

The Huns have again been attacking our Red Cross hospitals. The one at Belah has been twice severely bombed, & not only that, but the hostile machines turned their guns onto the wretched occupants of the hospital as they crawled or ran from the tents. This is ~~indeed~~ a shameful & unclean method of carrying on war.

There were <sup>very</sup> many casualties in the hospital, both amongst the staff, and the sick & wounded. It is curious that this should have been done, for we dropped a message of

protest over the enemy lines some time ago, after the shelling of one of our hospitals, & Von Kress sent us quite a courteous reply, saying he was sorry for what had occurred, & declaring that he wished to keep all forms of "savagery" out of the war in Palestine. After the first 6 days of my leave, & acting upon medical advice I entered Nazareth Hospital. I had been under medical treatment, & finally a throat specialist here advised me to enter hospital, & this I did on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

Some two days prior to this I had been given a piece of news very interesting to myself. Anne — our B. Brigade Staff Captain came up one evening & congratulated me on my "promotion!" It seems that I am now to receive my captaincy, & what is more, am going to England to get my "flight!" These are things of quite distinct interest! I have already wired

home to let them know I don't  
know when I shall get a passage on  
a homeward bound ship. — I was told it  
would be almost immediately, but have  
already been waiting about 3 weeks, the day  
of departure being constantly postponed.

From May 10<sup>th</sup> - 17 I remained under treatment  
in Hospital. I had a restful & by no means  
disagreeable time. I was not kept in bed,  
& was able to "walk abroad" in the afternoon.  
This is my first experience of as an inmate of  
a war hospital, & like all new experiences has  
had points of interest. To live in a  
military hospital in these times brings home  
to one again in a new aspect the great  
power of suffering that the war is claiming.  
One sometimes is apt to imagine that the most  
painful & distressing time in regard to wounds  
is just the time at which they are received, &  
~~But~~ that afterwards all is well. But  
there in hospital one might see poor

men fellows who had lain for days & weeks  
& even months in ~~the torture~~ <sup>with</sup> of wounds that  
are terrible to think of, & still more  
terrible to see. Day after day they lie there,  
& every day, often several times a day  
the wounds must be dressed; & however ~~tedious~~ <sup>skilfully</sup>  
this be done it often means a period of  
pain that needs the strongest courage to  
endure. It ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> wonderful, however, how  
plucky & how cheerful these poor chaps  
can be; & however there was one ~~man~~ in  
particular I cannot forget. After great  
suffering, his leg had to be cut off at  
the hip. I sometimes stood by & talked  
to him while his dressings were being  
done, & often he would be trying his utmost  
to laugh & joke, tho: his face was marked  
with pain, & the sweat of ~~effort~~ <sup>effort</sup> ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> literally  
pouring from him. ~~There~~  
Then there was a boy of 20, a good looking  
finely made youth, who had been shot in

The ~~first~~, & was permanently paralyzed from his waist downwards. One may well understand what this must mean to a young fellow, who loved life, & had always been full of energy & vigor & independence of spirit. And yet he too was cheery & full of pluck — & only rarely did he ~~at~~ <sup>show</sup> himself what he realized the fate that had come to him. And there were many cases similar to these. But there were just a few whose suffering was too great for their strength. One poor man in my ward had lost his nerve entirely & it was ~~troub~~ very ~~at~~ painful to hear his cries when his <sup>suffering</sup> grew severe. Sometimes at night he would sob for long periods just like a ~~lively~~ hurt & heart broken child. It is a dreadful thing to hear a ~~suffering~~ man cry like that.

The nurses at Harroch were very pleasant women, & mostly very cheerful & kindly by disposition, tho. Their work must be very trying at times. Jenkins left for Belah the day after I entered hospital. He had intended to be there only one day, to collect his kit, but after all was kept till the 2<sup>nd</sup>, in order to observe during some special operations — he is I think the best & most experienced observer of No 14 Sq<sup>th</sup>. I missed him very much, & was very glad to have him back when he came. However he ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> only ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> able to stay at Shepherd's for ~~two~~ <sup>more</sup> days, but they were two very pleasant & happily spent days — unless as far as I was concerned! <sup>On</sup> one afternoon J: "treated" me to ~~a~~ <sup>yet another</sup> most pleasing run in a ~~car~~ motor out to Pelouan. It was a very interesting run, about 25 miles each way. The road followed the hill most of the ~~way~~ <sup>time</sup> & one had a good view of the

Pyramids, both the Sakhara, & the  
Ghizeh <sup>varieties!</sup> ~~one~~. We had tea at an  
hotel in Helwan, the English Winter Hotel.

Two days ago J. joined up at the  
flying school at Helwan, where he is  
to learn the art of piloting. Poor old leg,  
he was just a bit worried about it at  
first, & I could heartily sympathize.  
These schools are such beastly formal  
affairs, & so full of "hot air" & this makes  
them disagreeable apart from any anxiety  
about starting flying — always a somewhat  
lonse period!

I went with him  
the day he reported himself, just to  
~~keep him company~~. All seems to  
be going well with him now tho, I am  
glad to say, but he looks very tired.  
— Oh start work at 3.30 a.m.!

I ~~do~~ hope this strenuous period won't be  
too much for him. It is not ~~just~~ as  
fit as he might be just now.

It is really rather a marvel that he  
should be doing this sort of job at all.  
He has had three bullets through his  
lungs, one through his shoulder, one  
through his arm — which broke the bone —  
one through the stomach, & he has also  
been gassed! Of course a man cannot  
be ~~wounded~~ <sup>injured</sup> like this & remain as strong  
as he was before, but he has voluntarily  
given up a "soft" job at home, &  
prefers to return to active service.  
He was an M.C. at the beginning  
of the war for excellent work on the  
trenches. He had tea with  
me here today, & seemed cheery. We  
afterwards motored out to the Citadel  
& looked over the great Mosque — a  
fine & most impressive building. It  
stands on high ground, & commands a  
wonderful view of Cairo, the Pyramids  
& the old roman aqueduct.

During the last few days I have  
been somewhat gay — dining with  
various men, & proceeding to in many  
parties to some show afterwards.  
till I was out last night, but I  
& did not stay very late.

I have also twice recently taken  
nurses — one of them a particularly  
charming little Irish girl! — out for  
a spin in a car. All went well  
— the quite discreetly! — on each  
occasion, & my duty to Noiret  
Hospital staff is now accomplished!  
I have just heard that I am deferred  
to embark on June 2<sup>nd</sup> at  
Port Said.

8<sup>th</sup> June 17 (at Wharfedale)

I did not after all embark on June 2<sup>nd</sup> at  
Port Said! That order was cancelled, & I went  
on board ship at Alexandria on the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst.

My last few days in Cairo were spent quietly;  
I was able to see a good deal of Bobbie Jencks,  
& we did a last ~~little~~ <sup>town</sup> ~~round~~ round the neighbourhood  
of Cairo the in a car, the day before I left.  
He has been a brick to me of late, when my  
- <sup>health</sup> things ~~concerned~~ ~~have~~ been a bit troublesome, &  
I have <sup>just</sup> had a good deal of worry. He is a  
generous big natured fellow, one of the best.  
"A friend in need is a friend indeed." He  
is ~~is~~ has been getting on famously with his  
piloting, but was looking more tired than  
I liked to see. I left Cairo by the 11.30 pm  
train on Saturday evening, & travelled to Alex  
in comfort in a sleeping compartment. I was  
upon coming to the station to see me off, tho  
I did my best to dissuade him, as I wished him  
to be as fresh & rested as possible for his  
"solo" which he was to do early the following  
morning. "Spud" Thomson also came to see me  
off, & they were both very helpful & cheery.  
My train reached Alex: at about 5.30 am, but I

did not have to get up till after seven, when I dressed & washed at leisure & then ~~had~~ disposed of my luggage & breakfasted at the Savoy Hotel. During the morning I did a little shopping & sent of a couple of wires, one to Mother, & one to Jack. At 10.30 I reported at the Embarkation office, & then went on board according to instructions received there. This ship, the "Jason" is quite a fine <sup>two funneled</sup> boat, of about 12000 tons. She is well arranged & fitted, tho' not of the most modern style, as she is a fairly old boat. Unfortunately she is very much crowded up — over-crowded in fact — there are about 250 officers on board, & a large number of troops — some 2000 persons all told. Amongst the company were 12 hospital nurses, returning to England on leave. As the Huns no longer respect hospital ships, there is no reason against nurses travelling on a transport I suppose, but

it seemed quite strange to have women aboard a troop ship in war time. These ladies however left us yesterday, after our arrival at Malta. On the receipt of unexpected orders, they were suddenly transferred to another ship, & are completing their journey via Italy it seems, tho' in order that they should avoid the perils of the longer sea passage to Marseilles. Poor girls, they were packed off very suddenly, & it cannot have been convenient! Also it interrupted several ~~very~~ pleasant <sup>romantic</sup> ~~little~~ <sup>little</sup> ~~flirtations~~ I think! ~~Well~~ Up till today the voyage had been quite uneventful. We are escorted by two Japanese destroyers all the while, & they are extremely keen & energetic in guarding the ship. One pair took us as far as Malta, & were relieved by two others at that place. The voyage of course under the usual conditions — continual guards & look-outs on duty, life belts carried continually ~~with~~ by every man, no lights of any sort allowed to be shown after dark, & all port holes closed & button down both

by day & night — the last a success, but  
very unpleasant precaution, causing the interior of  
the ship to be distinctly lacking in fresh air. I have  
a quite comfortable cabin, but the lack of air &  
daylight detracts dreadfully from its possibilities  
of real comfort. In the matter of ship's  
duties I have been lucky & have only been on  
duty once so far. On this occasion I ~~had~~ ~~been~~  
was on Submarine guard, & started my first watch  
at 4 am, just before dawn.

Yesterday Today at lunch time we had a little  
wild excitement. The ship was noticed to be  
turning & twisting with unusual energy, &  
our escorting destroyers were seen to be circling  
about us with great speed. Upon going on  
deck a little later, I learned that a  
submarine had suddenly come to the surface  
not more than 100 yds away, & between us & our  
escort. Seeing her dangerous position however she  
dived at once. Our escort immediately came  
between us & the enemy, & ~~we~~ all three

boats carried out a series of manoeuvres, to  
frustrate the accurate firing of a torpedo.  
In addition to the manoeuvring, each ship  
let off a dense screen of smoke — from an  
apparatus on the stem, ~~which~~ <sup>this smoke</sup> drifted low  
across the water, & formed a kind of fog  
behind us which lasted quite a long while.  
I suppose we may congratulate ourselves on  
a fairly narrow escape. ~~It was quite~~  
~~an interesting episode.~~ <sup>my last</sup> During ~~the~~

voyage out to Egypt we passed through much  
wreckage, & our escort picked up a wrecked  
crew, but <sup>actual</sup> no submarine appeared near to us.

9 VI 17

Have arrived ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~at~~ Marseilles this  
evening at 11 p.m. We are at present anchored  
outside the harbour, but safely inside the  
mine field, & out of reach of lurking submarines.  
All through today we have had a  
somewhat specially perilous passage, as  
submarines were known to be making

open effort to waylay us on our approach  
to Marseilles. However all ~~was~~ had her well,  
We had one seen it is true, but that  
turned out only to be a couple of spotted  
whales, one of which came lazily to the  
surface not more than fifty feet from  
the ~~st~~ side of the ship. I ~~see~~ had an  
excellent view of the fellow — a great  
big creature, between 20 & 30 ft long.  
At one point we passed through a  
quantity of wreckage — no unusual  
sight in the Mediterranean these days.  
We hope to disembark & entrain tomorrow.  
There is a large crowd of R.F.C.  
<sup>officers</sup> fellows on board, including our General,  
& it is just possible there will be  
a special train for us. The ordinary  
military train is a tedious affair I  
believe, & takes quite 3 days to reach  
Marseilles. General Salmond,  
by the way, has been very pleasant

to me during the voyage. I have  
had several conversations with him,  
& he congratulated me ~~thoroughly~~ on my  
promotion. I am very sorry to be passing  
from under his command — ~~one~~ could  
~~always~~ feel sure that in any matter  
that concerned him <sup>fight him</sup> ~~one~~ <sup>whole</sup> one  
could always feel sure of justice  
& consideration, which are not to  
be had from all officers of high  
rank I fear. General Salmond ~~was~~  
a major at Gosport when I first met  
him. Next ~~he~~ <sup>he has been our</sup> was my wing commander,  
& latterly ~~my~~ Brigade Commander.