

Very cold this morning. We are running along the coast of ^{Sardinia} Sardinia Island. It is about 15 hours run to Marseilles; the ^{Balearic} Balearic Islands are above the Sardinia Island, but we won't be close enough to see the island. We sighted land again at dark and we slowed down to get into Lyons Bay till morning. There are 2 other troopships in here names A 25 and A 58. Terrible cold tonight.

29th June. 1916.

Very cold early this morning but when we came on deck a very pretty scene met our eyes, a big workshop and the lovely green grass and lawns around look beautiful. The land is all hill right to the waters edge and there are lots of tunnels going right through the rocky mountains and you can see trains pass through them and that is the last you see of them till they come up again out of a gorge about 3 miles further on. I had a good look at this place through glasses and it looks lovely. We came into port, Marseilles, at 4 30 p.m. but we were not allowed off the boat on account of the 4th Division playing up here. We slept on board.

30th June. 1916.

Reveille at 4 a.m. Left Boat at 9 a.m. and marched to Station. While we were on the wharf a big fire broke out but we had to leave before we could see what damage was done. The fire had a good hold. We entrained at 5 a.m. and started on our journey. We had not gone far when we saw some splendid scenery. We passed through 4 tunnels, 1 five miles long and we reached a brick and tile works. In the works women and young girls are working, along the line the boys and girls cheering us and singing out "English" to us. The first station we passed was L'Estaque, the next one we stopped at was Berre then Marimas, a very big station. A passenger train pulled in and she had a lot of French soldiers on board. When we were pulling out I shook hands with 2 French soldiers who wore the V.C. The next was

Tarascon at 6 49, Vignon was the next at 3 p m where we stayed for $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour. We were allowed out of the train here. The next stop was Orange 5 p m when we detrained and had tea. We started off again at 6 p m. The next Moutiliman 8 a m The next Valence. I had a bit of a sleep. The next place I saw was Lyon 3 p m. After leaving Lyon we crossed a small river then passed through a tunnel 3 miles long.

1st July. 1916.

At 3 35 a m we stopped at Lyons Vaise, it is a suburb of Lyons. Lyons is a big place and looked lovely lit up. It was pretty chilly early. We stopped Macon for breakfast. The first stop afterwards was Chalon; the scenery is beautiful passing dairy farms and vineyards and orchards. We stopped next at Chagny 9 15. Beaune-Dijon-villa. On this station we got a souvenir off the French women; a little French flag, with the following words. Pour vos Blessés le Davour, 1914-1915. 11 30 a m we passed through another tunnelli about 8 miles next was Parcey at 12 50 p m, we stopped for dinner, started at 2 p m. The next was Montbard, next stop Nuits Ravieres, Laroche (Yonne) 5 30 p m Sens 7 20 p m Montereau (Eplughes) 6 15 a m.

2nd July. 1916.

Sunday, lovely morning. First stop since I woke. We had breakfast. The scenery is beautiful all along the line. The French people wave their hands at us and throw kisses at us. There is a terrible lot of women and children in mourning. The women work on the farms here just like the men and do any mans' work. There are old Frenchmen soldiers on guard all along the line. We are travelling very slow since breakfast, about 100 yards at a time. The lines are very busy with troops and cattle trains. By Jove there are some very nice carriages on this line, especially the 1st class ones. There is a terribbig railway scene I have seen more locos in 3 days than I

have seen in the whole of my career. We arrived at the end of our destination about 11 p.m. Just before we got here we had 2 false alarms. One we thought was tea time but we had to get in the train again. About 8.30 p.m. we were ordered out of the train but our Colonel made a mistake and we had to get in again and travel about another 20 miles. I don't know what the Tommies and French thought of our Colonel. We waited about till on the road leading to the Station. We could hear the big guns going off when we got out of the train.

3rd July. 1916.

We are billeted here but it took us about 4 hours to get fixed up and all the time we had our packs up and had not anything to eat from 1 p.m. the day before. By Jove it is a lovely country Worth Fighting For. Our billet is handy. We have a beer wine and coffee saloon. It is lovely to lay on the grass after being 6 months on sand in Egypt.

4th July. 1916.

Lovely weather. I am working in Officers Mess. Terrible lot of aeroplanes here about our camp owing to big munition works handy. Rained slightly.

5th July. 1916.

Nothing exciting only very dull. We had a little rain. Nothing much.

6th July. 1916.

Same as yesterday only sun was out for a little while. It was lovely while it lasted.

7th July. 1916.

Wrote following letters. Dad Mum Poll Bert May Grace Dick Arch Mr Payne. Received letters from Dad Mum May Mrs Payne. Sent cable to say boys arrived safely.

8th July. 1916.

We went out for a route march. While out there we went through gas and tear shells. We went about 18 miles altogether and I was dead beat when we finished. Just before we finished we had to fall back and fetch in 3 prisoners with us. They fell out at the beginning of the march.

9th July. 1916.

Sunday. Left Thiennes 8 a m and arrived at Estaires at 4 p m. It was the stiffest march I have had since being in the army. My feet were that sore I could hardly put them to the ground due to the hard stone and block roads We passed through 2 big towns. We are billeted in a big mill right in the town. The whole Battalion saw Snowy Clyde.

10th July. 1916.

Very tired this morning. Went up town and had breakfast. Had a pretty fair time in Estaires. Left Estaires at 8 30 a m and arrived at our destination. We were billeted in stables here. Our batmen were put in the house for quarters. We had a pub here beer 1½d a glass.

11th July. 1916.

Had a sleep and felt pretty right. I have a great big boil on the back of my neck and it gives me GIP when I carry my pack. We left our billets at 8 30 p m and came out into the supports. By Jove the firing was pretty hot when we got here, but we never had any casualties. Got in our dugouts about 11 p m after a very tiresome journey. We had to walk through 5 miles of communications.

12th July. 1916.

Had to stand to at 3 a m till 4 a m then went to bed and slept to 9 a m. I was not out of my dugout much. I was none too good so I slept nearly all the morning. My boss is in charge of a platoon so I have got to go around with him. I am lying about 300 yards

behind the front line. We had a little rain this afternoon. About 8 p.m. there were 3 shrapnel shells just lobbed behind our trench but they did no damage. Had to stand to from 9 p.m. till 10 p.m. Have to do same every morning and night.

13th July. 1916.

Shifted around near my boss in a dugout. A little rain not much to speak of and nothing exciting to speak of till about 9 p.m. when we stood to then our guns got to work and by Jove they peppered the Huns. Everything got quiet except machine guns until 1 a.m. then the Huns fired 30 rifle bombs but done no damage.

14th July. 1916.

Received a letter from Uncle Dick a parcel from Mother. Toffee and lollies they are bosker. The shelling was pretty hot for a while. We left trenches about 12.30 p.m. and arrived at billets on the 15th at 3 a.m.

15th July. 1916.

Went down the town and had a good feed of eggs and chips. Then went down and had a nice hot bath and change of clothing. It was bosker I did not like getting out of it. Saw the 2 McLaughlans this morning. Bill Lee is a bit crook. A party went out last night and one was killed. His name was Martin from New Lambton and one of the boys from my Company was wounded his name being Bootle.

16th July. 1916.

Raining slightly doing no drill. At dinner time we got orders to pack up ready for the front line. We moved out of our billets at 8.45 p.m. and arrived in our trench at 3.30 a.m.

17th July. 1916.

Hardy had we got here when the Germans started to bombard us. There was an officer and 2 men killed just near where I was, and 3 others in the same bay as me were wounded. 1 getting both his legs broken.

1 wounded in the neck, 1 wounded in the right hand. I got a slight wound in the ~~right~~ left arm in face and thigh but not serious. The Germans put the shells and trench mortars in very constant, the worst scene I ever witnessed. By God the trench Mortars made things fly about. Our artillery opened up at 12 p m and kept going for an hour, but the Huns never retaliated that night.

18th July. 1916.

We left trench at 2 a m and came like one thing for over an hour and a half without a spell. I had a good sleep after the Bombardment but I was terribly nervous. We got to our billets about 5.30 a m then I had a sleep for an hour, then Bro. John Brown and I went for breakfast which we had composed of eggs and cakes. I got 3 little pieces of shell out of my hand this morning.

F I N I S.

Note.

His comrade Private W. J. Wilson then writes the following letter of what happened on the 19th July. 1916 and sent Private Cressy's diary and personal effects home to Australia to his parents through the Base Headquarters.

29th Decr. 1916.

Dear Mr Cressy., Just a few lines in answer to your most welcome letter asking me to explain to you how your heroic son Harry, our comrade fell, so I will give you the correct details of Harry's death, or as near as I can remember. Well it was on the 19th July. which I will remember well that your son met his death. He went over very close to me. We both arrived

together in the German trenches. After congratulating one another on our luck to get there unhurt, we were parted by a rush to the dugouts in which there was a great many Germans. I was only separated from him for about 5 minutes, when our Corporal C D Halliday said to me Harry Cressy is hit. We at once went to his aid but it was of no use the wound was too fatal. He was hit fair between the shoulder blades. The nature of the wound was caused by a bullet fired by a sniper. When I got to him asked him where he was hit but he never answered me, so I at once cut his tunic and shirt off and discovered the wound and dressed it and after doing so I thought he was done as he was bleeding from the mouth nose and ears so I held him in my arms till he passed away. When the last came I took all the things from his pockets and his money belt then laid him under the fire bench that some of our boys had fixed up so that he would not be walked on. There were several others that had the same attention paid them by their comrades. They had every respect paid to them that was possible to be given. Well there is another thing I wish to tell you and that is your other son Brougham had bad luck not to be with Harry that night but I can tell you it was the best thing that ever happened for his sake as it would have driven him mad when his brother fell and would have very likely fell himself or would have been taken a prisoner when we had to retire as he would have wanted or would have tried to carry Harry back to our lines and that would have meant both them either being killed or Bro. a prisoner but I am glad for his own sake and yours that he was a machine gunner that night. Well Mr Cressy I am sorry that I could not get our comrade into our lines as it was entirely impossible as we were nearly surrounded. Some of the boys had to fight their way back that is when I got wounded myself. So your heroic son would be buried behind the German lines, but I hear

that they had every respect given them. Well I hope and trust that this letter will not upset you too much as I know the blow struck both you and your wife hard. Well I think I have told you all I can remember, Mr Cressy, so I will draw to a close with my sympathy to you and your family.

I am

yours faithfully

W. J. WILSON.

To Mrs Cressy, Mother of Private H. A. CRESSY who died in a bayonet charge on July 19th 1916. These few things were taken of his pockets by one of his mates who enlisted with him and saw him fall. I am very sorry at the loss of our comrade, as he was a true staunch Britisher and a good soldier.

W. J. WILSON.

His mate.