

The following diary entries are taken from the Pocket Diary of Sir Clifford F. Gothard, Bearwood House, Winshill, Burton-on-Trent [DocRef D4090/1-6, Stafford Records Office], covering his Military Service during the Great War, 1916 to 1920.

The diaries and the miniature texts they contain have been painstakingly transcribed by Staffordshire Records Office volunteer, Ray Wilson, and will be uploaded each month as a resource, reflecting ones man's wartime experience, alongside a preface to each month noting key events of Gothard's War and in Europe.

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### **Preface to January 1916**

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On January 4<sup>th</sup> 1916 Gothard passed his Enlistment Medical and was Attested on the 6<sup>th</sup>, changing from being a civilian to joining the British Army, becoming known as Private C. F. Gothard 6449. During January he was billeted at 24, Tavistock Square, London, and spent his days doing drills, physical activity across Royal Parks and Hampstead Heath and lectures. At night he attended theatres and the cinema with fellow privates.

His diary records events that took place in Europe during the Great War, on the Eastern and Western Fronts and sea battles between the British and German Imperial Navy, and acts of Parliament leading up to Conscription including The Military Service Act January 1916, which had a dramatic effect on his friends and family. He also refers to the defence of London against Zeppelins which had started in 1915, through the use of Barrage Balloons.

During this month Gothard received 4 leave passes, and the Diary also covers his movements between London and his home base at Burton-on-Trent, where he came in contact with other service men who had been to the front and seen action. He also witnessed the Red Cross trains returning injured service man back to the UK from the front.

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## *Pocket Diary Entries for January 1916*

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### **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup>** (Loose paper in back of diary)

Mr LINSLEY<sup>1</sup>

Weather - Showery all day. Very rough in the afternoon

In the morning I went down town and bought a handbag from Plant's. Called at *Pafects* for a time table and at Mrs Porter's for GUI's address. Did not succeed in securing latter. Had lunch with Mr Linsley and Arthur. He thinks the reason I was turned down was because I wanted Mech[anical] Transport. Had a long talk in afternoon and settled on a scheme of campaign for Monday. Had tea after Mr Linsley left and then changed and cycled over to Brizlincote and saw Jack, Uncle George and Auntie Louie and Miss James. Told then I had been turned down and then I cycled to Bretby with Jack. There we found Syd and Marjorie. I cycled up to Mr Davis and got him to write me a letter of recommendation to the OC [Officer Commanding] of the Artist's Rifles' from whom he had the circular. I then came back to the farm with Jack who had taken Marjorie home. Had supper then Syd left early and Jack and I stayed until about 12.15. Cycled home and went to bed.

### **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup>** (Loose paper in back of diary)

(After Christmas)

Weather - Wet all morning, Showery afternoon then fine again at night.

In the morning I went to church with Mother Syd and Pollie Collins. Collection for the Red Cross good congregation. Came home and had lunch with Uncle Jim who had been to George St. to take the Major to church. Filled in the diary and then took tram to Brizlincote, tram conductor punched my ticket to Brizlincote. Had tea at Brizlincote then walked to Bretby Church, with Marjorie between Jack. Effie [and] Nellie went back to the farm with us. Stayed talking for some time, and then Nellie [and] Effie went back home with George and we accompanied them. Had supper there and looked through a lot photographs. Had the pleasure of watching Effie catch Jack

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<sup>1</sup> Mr Linsley was executor to Mr. F. Gothard, father of Clifford Gothard. Referred to in the July entry as an insert of The Burton Observer, July 16<sup>th</sup> 1914 (Ref D4050/2/4)

under the mistletoe. When we wanted to start off it was raining as we waited a bit, were told of a proposed dance on the 14<sup>th</sup> ins[tant]. Had to start off – choose a fine interval but it soon restarted and rained all the way home.

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup>** (Loose paper in back of diary)

LONDON

Weather - Fine all day, bright most of the time.

In the morning I went up to London by the 8.27. Walked to Duke's Road, Euston Road, and there I filled in the form. Had lunch and walked about. Had a long wait and then saw an officer (a Captain) who passed me subject to medical examination. Had no chance of seeing the Dr. so caught the 4.35 home, changed at Derby and caught the 7.25 to Burton – travelled with a lot of soldiers – they emptied my cigarette case amongst them and they nearly all wanted to shake my hand when I got to Burton. They had all been home on leave. Took tram home had supper filled in the diary, packed bag and had a bath and then to bed.

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup>** (Loose paper in back of diary)

LONDON – PASSED DR.

Weather - Fine most wet at night

In the morning I went up to London and went to Duke's Road to see the Dr. Found the room full up so I then went and bought some lunch. Had lunch and bought a shaving brush. Went back to Duke's Road and there I saw Dr. Twenty men were admitted to the room at once and 6 were stripped at a time as Dr. called them up they waited in our coats as it was cold. Had to wait whilst 5 men were examined. I heard him reject one as under chest measurements and second form heart weakness. Had my eyesight tested and found perfect and then went to the Dr. Weight called 12 stone height 5-10 ½ chest 36" 4" expansion skin tight tape.<sup>2</sup> Had just had time to catch the 4.30 Midland to Derby and then the 7.25 to Burton. Had supper at home, arranged a few things and went to bed early. I arranged to be attested on Thursday. Lord Derby's figures published at noon to-day. Mother Pollie Collins went to Falder's to tea.

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<sup>2</sup> Gothard was passed for fitness Category A2 (Recruits who should be A1 on completion of their training). See National Archives WO 32/5093 for full list of Medical Categories.

## Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup>

(Part One – Loose paper in back of diary)

Weather - Fine

In the morning after telephoning Mr Linsley and shaving I went down town to Bank, Howarth's Books and Whitehurst's. Came in and then filled in diary, arranged correspondence, saw to bag for packing to-night etc., and then I... (end of part One)

(Part Two – Continues in Pocket Diary)

In the morning I shaved and went to the Bank to see about Dep[osit] and Current A/c [account] and about opening with the London Branch. Called at Boots Howarth's etc., Cycled home, saw Brown and went through a lot of papers. Had lunch and changed. Cycled to Brizlincote and told Jack that I was going to London tomorrow. Saw Uncle George Auntie Louie who were going to Woodville<sup>3</sup>. I finished one puncture in Jack's bike before tea and one after. Cycled to Bretly and there I told them [joining the Artists Rifles] and after that went to Falder's. Saw John, George, Nellie, Effie, Miss Mabel and Agnes Badger. Talked and joked with them for some time and then George saw them to the tram after supper. One of them hid our cap before she left and delayed us some time. Jack's tyres were flat again. Rode home and went to bed.

## Thursday 6<sup>th</sup>

Weather - Fine most of the time

In the morning I took the 8.27 up to London and then went to Duke's Road – was unable to get my papers to be sworn, so after getting lunch, I called again in the afternoon. Had better luck and got sworn in before Charles, James, Stonefield, JP and Sergt. Greenwood<sup>4</sup>. After waiting I got some clothes issued out to me and there I was trying on I made an acquaintance of Garland, who recommended his digs after which I fetched my bag from Caledonian Club and then had dinner at digs. Had time to clean my buttons and then went to bed.

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<sup>3</sup> See 6" Ordinance Survey Second Edition 1902 for Burton-on-Trent, Derbyshire and Staffordshire 41N.W, 47N.E, 47A.N.W, 41S.E and 40S.E (Staffordshire Records Office) for the areas travelled in the Diary.

<sup>4</sup> Memoranda page in Collins Pocket Dairy – "**OATH TAKEN ON JOINING ARTISTS RIFLES:** I (Clifford Frederic Gothard) swear by Almighty God that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George V, his Heirs and Successors in Person, Crown and Dignity against all enemies according to the conditions of my service.

## **Friday 7<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Showering in morning fine but dull in afternoon and evening.

In the morning I turned up for drill at headquarters. We were forced to go to Cartwright Gardens as the hall was full. Marched back, were dismissed. Had lunch went back for drill, got on fairly well? Had tea and then went for a long walk down Tottenham Court Road. Had dinner and then went out again. Came in filled in diary etc. Went upstairs with Garland and after that we cleaned our buttons and boots etc., and I went to bed about 12.30.

## **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup>**

LEAVE<sup>5</sup>

Weather - Fine, bright, sunny all day.

In the morning I paraded at Headquarters and then I asked for a pass home. Got one but no voucher. Had to drill in Russell Square - just opposite to the hotel. Came back to H.Q. and got voucher. Went to digs after lunch I caught the 2.30 to Burton, changed at Derby and took the 5.45 which was late. I met George Wardle on Derby Station and also a Bindley who was in the Guardianship grammar school boy. I took tram up home and talked with Mother for some time then cycled to Brizlincote. Saw Louise James Auntie Louise and Uncle George told them all about it. Had to ride up to Bretby to catch Jack up. Will and Effie were also there also – Will arriving later on. I won 48 beans at nap.<sup>6</sup> Nellie was enchanted to see me in uniform. Had a talk with George Falder in the lane as we went back together. Cycled home and went to bed.

## **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>**

LEAVE

Weather - Fine all day

In the morning Syd, Mother and I walked up to Brizlincote. Saw Louie, James, Jack, Uncle George Auntie Louie. Had lunch with Auntie Sallie at Bearwood House. Had a look round across the garden and then I packed my kitbag. Had early tea with Mother, Syd and Auntie Sallie and took the tram to the station accompanied by Syd.

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<sup>5</sup> Army form B. 295. Pass for dismissal between the 8<sup>th</sup> January to the first parade on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 1916. To proceed to Burton-on-Trent from Dukes Road, London. Part of Regiment 2/28<sup>th</sup> London Regiment (Artist's Rifles). Signed by Capt. Charles Blomfield.

<sup>6</sup> Game of 5 cards.

Travelled to Derby with George Wardle - talked with him re[garding] conscription.<sup>7</sup>  
Travelled to London with a Royal Engineer who had not been “out” and a Grenadier Guard who had seen much fierce fighting and been wounded. Had a snack before going to bed at my digs and then went to bed. Found Mr Linsley had called to see me but I was away. (The battleship King Edward VII has been sunk on a mine).<sup>8</sup>

### **Monday 10<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Fine and bright all day.

In the morning after parading at Headquarters and drilled in Russell Square. Had early lunch paraded in Regents Park and marched the north side of Hyde Park passed the Albert Memorial and Hall and finally to Queen’s Club ground – and there we watched the Artists Rifles play Public School at Rugby. Had won by three converted tries and two tries in the last few minutes and two tries (9-6). Had tea at an A.B.O[?] place after crossing at King’s Cross by Underground, cleaned my buttons and had dinner. Then Broadbent, Garland and I headed to the Strand – got in a rotten little cinema and were swindled as the show was poor. Took bus home again played a hand or two at which I went to bed. (Russians advancing in South. Sofia bombed from the air. 6000 Turks defeated at Kut-al-Amara.)<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The Military Service Act January 1916 led to all adult males, aged 18-41, to register for Military Service, unless they possessed a certificate of exemption. Due to the drop in number of men on military service the Act was brought in to differentiate between those with legitimate cause to be in protected occupations and those who could be spared to join men at the front.

<sup>8</sup> See: <http://www.greatwar.co.uk/timeline/ww1-events-1916.htm> - King Edward VII was part of the 3rd Battle Squadron Grand Fleet as squadron flagship. Squadron used in support of cruisers on Northern Patrol. November 1914 detached to reinforce Channel Fleet then returned to Grand Fleet. 6 January 1916 mined and sunk off Cape Wrath.

<sup>9</sup> See: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/firstworldwar/battles/mesopotamia.html> - Early November 1915 British and Indian troops were sent to the Persian Gulf to protect British oil interests at Abadan, making rapid progress against the weak Turkish resistance. By 28 September, they had taken the town of Kut-al-Amara just 120 miles south of Mesopotamia's major city, Baghdad.

## **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Fine all day, showers in afternoon.

In the morning we paraded at Headquarters and marched to Russell Square for drill. Had lunch at the digs, then paraded again dismissed from Headquarters owing to the rain. Had tea at Lyons. Spent evening talking, mainly on the tropics, alligators, sharks etc., and sport generally. Went to bed late.

## **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Shower in morning, fine rest of day.

In the morning I was told that I was posted to E4 Company - my number is 6449. Most of the other chaps who enlisted at same time as I did are also in it. We were marched to Regents Park and had physical drill in rain, tunics off. Were told to parade at 12.20. Got lunch at Lyons and then went back to Park – found a Corporal who said we were late. Had a route march to Queen's Park Ground – watched Artists play and beat Public Schools at Rugby. Had to take the tube back – paraded at 5 in drill Hall - about a dozen of the new E.4 men were “late” owing to confusion of instructions. Colman (Lieut) let us off on these grounds. Shaved and had dinner. Spent evening at pictures in Tottenham, went with Garland. Went to bed on returning.

## **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Fine all day

### **1<sup>st</sup> INOCULATIONS**

In the morning we paraded in Regents Park – Marylebone Green and had ordinary drill, CO's [Commanding Officer] drill and more physical drill, including doubling up and down the park paths. Park still very muddy. Had lunch at digs and paraded in Drill Hall in afternoon for inoculation. Whistle waiting we had some instruction in semaphore signalling. A man called Beasley from Melton Mowbray was the first to be inoculated – he told me he knew Whittingham's – the horse breeders and had several times worked “Starlight”. I was the next to be done, about 100 paraded for inoculations. Then we received passes and vouchers and I went to St. Pancras caught the 4.30 home. Had supper and went to bed.

## Friday 14<sup>th</sup>

Weather - Fine all day. Frosty early

LEAVE

In the morning I cleaned my buttons and went down town - got a shave and haircut at Hodgetts. Met 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. O'Sullivan and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Smith and also a young yeoman's [illegible] in with his sister. AC has been wounded as has Smith. O'Sullivan is at Grantham Camp. Bought a wristlet watch at Wrights then came home. Had lunch. Cycled to Brizlincote saw Uncle George Auntie Louise Miss L. James and Jack Falder is going to the dance for attested men only at Bretby Schoolroom to-night. I then cycled to Bretby, had tea at Farm, and then went to see Mr Davies. Caught him [illegible] as he was off out to look for a [illegible] ferret and go to take more malt to Falders to be ground. Cycled home after chatting for some time and then I came in played bridge. G.S, Miss James, Auntie L and I. We lost 3 rudders. (My arm is very stiff, so I intended to have a rest and bath it well with hot water). Had supper. Saw visitors off, bathed and went to bed.

## Saturday 15<sup>th</sup>

LEAVE

Weather - Fine and Bright

In the morning I had breakfast and shaved. My arm is much better. I think I can salute now with my left hand without undue pain. Went round gardens and told Brown what to do. Syd went down town. I filled in diary looked over some letters etc. Had lunch cleaned buttons etc., after I cycled over to Bretby with Syd. Talked for a long time with **Serg F. Falder** who was home for a few days leave from France,. Had tea with him and then went to Faulkner's with him. Met George who was going to the theatre with Frank, Madge, Kate the Woolley girls, Harry Jeffords etc. Went back. I started to play nap Jack had his armlet on view. I won 112 beans clear 37 before supper and the rest afterwards. Will and Nellie arrived together and joined in the game before supper. After supper we decided that the Club should meet at Brizlincote next Saturday .Will saw Nellie home, Syd went Geary Lane and Jack and I via Bretby Lane. Rode home and went to bed.



## **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup>**

LEAVE

Weather - Dull all day

In the morning, Mother, Syd and I went to the Parish Church – someone was sitting in our pew so I sat alone in the right hand aisle. Had lunch on our return home. Filled in the Diary looked over things for Brizlincote and then I shaved. After that I walked up to Brizlincote and had tea with Uncle George, Auntie Louie and Miss L James. Walked over to Bretby with Jack. Called at Farm and went to church. Miss Woolley was in our pew so we went to the front nearly fainted [on alter]. Had a sermon on everybody having their own burden and then walked with Will and Nellie to Faulkners - waited for Effie but she did not appear. Had to go on - met Effie and Miss Staley in the Lane. Jack came and had supper with me at Bearwood House but left early. I had a lie down for an hour and then walked to the Station carrying kit bag crammed full.

## **Monday 17<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Dull damp showers

[Took the] 12.20 to Derby arrived at 12.38 and caught 12.48 to London.<sup>10</sup>

Had a R.F.A [Royal Fleet Auxiliary] man's head on my shoulder and a R.F.C. [Royal Flying Corp] man lying on the floor - a civy [civilian] and 3 others in carriage as well. Went to bed at about 5.00am got up at 8.15am had breakfast and paraded at 9.25am. Drilled all morning in Regent's Park - got lunch at Royal Restaurant, (my arm is nearly well again). Drilled all afternoon in Regents Park and then went to Bishops school of motoring to enquire about terms etc. Got prospectus and then walked to Kings Cross. Had tea at an A.B.C., and bought more boot oil. Had dinner. Wrote a letter or two filled, in diary and cleaned boots and buttons, shaved and went to bed at 10.30pm. (Montenegro has surrendered to Austrian's according to Austrian reports).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Army form B. 295. Pass for dismissal between the 13<sup>th</sup> January to 17<sup>th</sup> January 1916. To proceed to Burton-on-Trent from Dukes Road, London. Part of Regiment 2/28<sup>th</sup> London Regiment (Artist's Rifles). Signed by Capt. Charles Blomfield.

<sup>11</sup>See: <http://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/pdf/1914-1918-Online-montenegro-2014-10-08.pdf>: Montenegro entered the First World War politically and militarily exhausted. The outcome of the First and Second Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913 had a devastating impact on the future of Montenegro. From 1914 until January 1916, the Montenegrin army fought successfully, especially during the retreat of the Serbian army. In the end, retreat would

## **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Dull and misty all day.

In the morning we drilled in Regents Park. Had 2's or 3's and leapfrog and a relay race over the mud in the morning in Physical drill time. Had lunch at Lyons. Spent afternoon doing company drill in the Park. Had a lecture at London University in a miserable little theatre – as dark as pitch. Had time to get some shoulder badges and some boots from the 2.M. stores. Came in feeling jolly tired. Filled in the diary etc. Washed and had dinner. Oiled two pairs of boots and cleaned up buttons on great coat. Went to bed in fairly good time.

## **Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>**

ROUTE MARCH

Weather - Fine morning, drizzle in afternoon.

In the morning we paraded in Regents Park and marched through the Marble Arch through Hyde Park through Phillimore Place over Hammersmith Bridge and on to Putney. We got lunch then after some effort to find the place which was full of Artists Rifles. My heel felt sore, but I started back and we went via Chelsea and Fulham along the Brighton Road through Piccadilly, past Russell Square and onto Headquarters. Did some shopping, had a bath on my return, changed my boots and brushed my puttees, after which I had dinner. I wrote to Bauman and Syd, filled in the diary then shaved, cleaned my greatcoat buttons and went to bed.

## **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Fine except in morning from 11 to 2.00

In the morning we had some ordinary squad drill and then prepared for physical drill – got really wet through underdressing and were promptly dismissed. Had a lecture on taking a commission and discipline from Major Benton. Took bus home, had lunch, took bus to Park. Had battalion drill all afternoon. Took the bus to Euston – I fell off and hurt my left thigh. Took tube to Hampstead and there got tea. Had night operation – visual and out training. The heath was very muddy. Fell in and marched

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prove to be the only option for the Montenegrin army as well. Its surrender in January 1916, coupled with the growing idea of a Yugoslav state and the decisions of the Great Powers regarding the future of Austria-Hungary, ultimately sealed the fate of Montenegro.

off heath. Took tube to Euston then had a walk home. Had dinner and then filled in diary etc. Spent some time cleaning and oiling boots and buttons etc. Went to bed. (King Nicholas is still fighting).

### **Friday 21<sup>st</sup>**

Weather - Fine all day. Rather cold wind.

In the morning Broadbent and I took tube to Hampstead Heath walked to Vale of Health Hotel. Had a lecture on map reading in the morning and then got lunch. The girl carving picked the meat slices up with her fingers to put them on the plates and held the shank [illegible] of mutton in her left hand whilst carving with the right hand. Men borrowed each other's bread etc. After lunch I went for a stroll to look around a bit then had a lecture on the compass and service protractor and after that were dismissed and took tube to digs. Broadbent nearly got his hand caught in Euston tube lift gate. I took watch to be repaired and spent evening cleaning boots etc. Had supper and then talked to Hack, for some time - cleaned buttons etc. After that I went to bed.

### **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Weather - Fine sunny bright all day. Cold at night and slight frost.

#### **INOCULATION**

In the morning we paraded at HQ for pay.<sup>12</sup> I received 45/- (forty five shillings) for a fortnight. In the interval I bought some mapping materials and then paraded for inoculation. Had lunch at digs took the 2.30 PM home. Met a R.F.C. [Royal Flying Corp] man in his 5<sup>th</sup> year at Bart's. He had near a years' service. He gave me a prescription for my cold. Changed at Derby and took tram the station up home.<sup>13</sup> Left kit bag and cycled to Brizlincote. Found Messes Winnie and Gladys Howard, Effie, Nellie, Falder, Mr Davis, Uncles Jim and George, Auntie Louie, Syd and Will and Jack there. Had some songs and then supper, after which I had a 'nap' drive. George Falder won 1<sup>st</sup> gents and Nellie 1<sup>st</sup> ladies, Effie booby ladies and Uncle Jim

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<sup>12</sup> Receipt for Private Gothard C. F. (6449) paid 1 pound 5 shillings for subscription in 1916. Signed by Lt. G. Edwards.

<sup>13</sup> Army form B. 295. Pass for dismissal between the 22<sup>nd</sup> January to the first parade on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 1916. To proceed to Burton-on-Trent from Dukes Road, London. Part of Regiment 2/28<sup>th</sup> London Regiment (Artist's Rifles). Signed by Capt. Charles Blomfield.

booby gents. Seeing a photoframe, housewife needle case, a 'lian' scrubber and a pencil. Had a song or two and then left. Jack walked with us to Bretby. Wills house keeper has been sacked. Syd convinced Dr. Holford.<sup>14</sup> Arrived home at 1.30 am.

### **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Weather - Fine all day cloudy

LEAVE

At about 2.00am I had a bath and got into bed at 2.35am. Had breakfast in bed and stayed there until 12o'clock. Had lunch, put army boots on, filled in diary etc. With Syd's assistance I cleaned my buttons and after shaving I took the tram to the end of Brizlincote Lane and walked to Brizlincote where I had tea after this had finished as I was rather late. Walked to Bretby and went to church with Jack, after which we walked with Will and Nellie to Faulkner's – calling at the farm to get my coat as we passed. Frank went back on Saturday and now they expect Hugh Lomas. Had supper at Bearwood House saw Jack off, filled in some more diary and then had coffee and walked to the station - caught 12.20 which was  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour late in leaving Derby and got in London at 5.30am Monday.

### **Monday 24<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Fine and bright all day.

In the morning I went to bed at about 5.50am and got up at 8o'clock. Cleaned buttons and had breakfast, after breakfast we paraded in Regent's Park and were marched to H.Q. but message came that the Colonel would be late, so we went a march through the Park. At H.Q. we were told that 500 men were to be sent to France to complete their training there - I did not volunteer as Broadbent didn't. Had lunch and then paraded in Regent's Park. Had shouting practice at daily squads. I got on fairly well on the whole considering my cough etc. Had lecture on conduct and duties of an officer and then got tea and had another lecture on the History of the Corp. Got home just in time for supper after which I did my kit etc. and went to bed.

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<sup>14</sup> Syd Gothard (brother) was passed unfit for service November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1915

## **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Fine all day.

In the morning we paraded at the Vale of Health for map drawing. In the morning we made a full sketch of Whitestone Pond and the crossroads, and in the afternoon we did a similar map of Vale of Health Pond, taking bearing by compass. Had lunch in the Y.M.C.A. tent a very decent lot of volunteering waitress served us - an Inns of Court man sang a song about what the magpie said. One of them was very decent by giving up his seat before finishing his coffee, but he was an exception as most of them stopped smoking in their places when the 'Artists' wanted lunch. Had tea and were dismissed after which we travelled to Euston. I went shopping buying shirts emery cloth etc. and changing boots at QM [Quarter Master] Stores. Had dinner, cleaned boots and buttons went to bed.

## **Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup>**

Our Corporal Gulick has been gazetted to-day

Weather - Fine all day.

In the morning we paraded at Regent's Park and went on a route march after men's names had been taken for the Engineer's Section. Went nearly to Hendon - saw an aeroplane. Had lunch at Hampstead and Golders Green the men being split up. I went in a place and ate my sandwiches and bought a glass of milk. Had to march to Hampstead Heath and there reformed and marched back to H.Q. Sgt Major Ellis read out the names of 40 men in B Coy[Company] who had declared their age as 19 in order to go to France when they were under age and 2 in C Coy[Company] – none in E Coy[Company]. After dismissal we got tea, and then paraded again for a lecture on equipment by Cpl Howard. We had no Corporal in charge of us on marching to the Hall and we formed 4's in the dark without marching. Had dinner, filled in diary and cleaned things up and went to bed.

## **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Dull misty drizzle all day

In the morning as I was A.C. Orderly (Administration Centre) I had to show would be recruits upstairs and also to deal with several [mammass?] who wanted details about the Corp. One girl who came had a message for her brother who was on Hampstead Heath and I described to her how to find the place as well as I could. Little Beasley

and Blackmore were the other orderlies. I got lunch from 1.30 to 2.30 spent afternoon in same way as morning. Had pleasure of giving an Inns of Court man details of our Corp for his brother as he thought we got the better training. Had tea in the canteen. Had a shave on my return home and then got supper wrote about some lecture note books and went to bed after filling in diary.

### **Friday 28<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Fine all day.

In the morning we paraded at the Vale of Health and then went trench digging. We dug all morning at the trenches which were in accordance with latest experienced at the front. Almost 120 men were at work. Had lunch at the Y.M.C.A tent - had to take what I could get. Actually had mutton, baked potatoes, bread, two sandwich cakes, pineapple chunks and custard, a mug of coffee, 4 biscuits butter and some toffee drops total 1/7.

In the afternoon we had orders to fill all the trenches in, which we did. We then had some fuss about a chap who had 20/- taken out of a pocket book. I think that there is trouble also waiting for a chap who 'mitched' from lights out last night. Had to take picks and shovels back to Hampstead Town Hall. Had dinner on returning from sending off a wire to Mother from Euston sending parcel home for to-morrow. Filled in the diary, prepared kit bag for tomorrow - shaved and went to bed after usual performance with boots and buttons.

### **Saturday 29<sup>th</sup>**

Weather - Fine and bright all day.

In the morning I paraded for pay at Headquarters - received 28/9½ and then we paraded outside H.Q. and we marched to Regent's Park. There we were drilled until 12.45 - We saw 5 balloons pass over whilst we were being drilled. Had lunch at the digs and then went to the station. Caught the 2.30 train, came back with a Mercantile Marine [M.M], Sailor and two R.N. [Royal Navy] Division Men and two men in uniform - territorials.<sup>15</sup> The M.M. chap had endless cigarettes and kept handing them round and insisting on us smoking – we smoked about 40 for him. Had

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<sup>15</sup> Army form B. 295. Pass for dismissal between the 29<sup>th</sup> January to the first parade on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 1916. To proceed to Burton-on-Trent from Dukes Road, London. Part of Regiment 2/28<sup>th</sup> London Regiment (Artist's Rifles). Signed by Capt. Charles Blomfield.

tea at Derby and caught the 5.45 to Burton. Took tram up home - saw Mother, and then cycled over to Bretby. Had a hand or two at nap and then Mr Holmstead called in and I saw him in the drawing room. After supper Jack, Syd and I saw Nellie, Phyllis and Effie home and Daisy went home by herself. Had a look at Hugh and Frank's relics and curios from the front. Walked back and then cycled home after talking for some time to Mr Holmstead, who is wondering if he should attest.

### **Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>**

Leave

Weather - Fine all day.

In the morning I shaved and had a look round the garden and talked to Syd. Cleaned my buttons etc., and had lunch filled, in correspondence book etc., and then I talked to Auntie Sallie. Had tea at Brizlincote having taken the tram Auntie to the end of Bretby Lane. Had a walk to Bretby with Uncle Jack then went to church with Harry calling into the Farm on our way there.

Jack let Madge and Kath into our pew, Daisy sat next to the gardens and Will sat in front of aisle. Had service and then Will, Nellie and Jack, Effie Nellie Chapple - I walked back to Falders and there we stayed for a bit but would not go in. Jack came to Bearwood House and had supper, after which I saw him off and hurried of myself to catch the 12.26 in which I succeeded. Had the bad luck to be 20 minutes late at St. Pancras. Saw Shelly on Burton Station.

### **Monday 31<sup>st</sup>**

Weather - Fine all day

In the morning we paraded at Hampstead Heath. I had rather a rush to get ready as a bootlace broke and a button came off my overcoat. Had a lecture on contours in the morning. In the afternoon I volunteered to be an instructor and so I went to Warren St with some officer chaps and then Regent's Park afterwards, going to the Chapel Room. Had two lectures - 'Guards' and 'German Poison Gas' and Military Crimes. Came back, tried to telephone Mr Linsley at Victoria Hotel - could not get through. Had dinner and walked to Euston and found the Station and underground closed owing to Zepps [Zeppelins]. I took a bus to the Strand and found Mr Linsley in Constitutional Club. He said Mrs Linsley said there had been a raid over Nottingham. Had a long talk, bussed home, filled in the diary and went to bed.

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