



PRG/18/19/1 Diary kept by Ross Smith in No 1 Squadron AIF 24 October 1916 to 15 February 1918
Transcribed by Judy Fander, Volunteer at the State Library of South Australia, 2012

Ross Smith Journal of Air Services 1916-17 *Written in pencil on cover*

Printed on the cover

ARMY BOOK 152 Correspondence Book. (FIELD SERVICE.)

A 6 inch ruler is printed along one edge of the cover

Also hand written on the cover is the single word theft

Written on inside front cover

R.M. Smith. No.1 Sqn. A.F.C.

Printed on inside front cover

Opened on.....

Closed on.....

The Squares in this book are $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.

(S.O. 1222-3 W1134/M1702. 150,000. 5/17.-McC.&Co., Ltd.-(E 1224.)

Diary entries written in ink commence

Oct. 24th. 1916.-

Left 1st. A.M.G.S. at KANTARA WEST & reported to Major Rutledge. O.C. 67th (Aust) Sqdn. R.F.C. at KANTARA EAST, for instruction in aerial observation.

Oct. 30th.-Had my first flight with Major Rutledge in BE2C 4312. Up about 20 mins & flew about KANTARA.

Nov. 1st. Did an Artillery practice puff shoot with Badgery and went for a joy ride with MacNaughton to DUIEDAR in the afternoon. We usually go for a swim in the Canal every day & play various games on the aerodrome to keep fit.

Nov. 3rd. Posted to "C" Flight. Capt. Williams O.C.

Nov. 4th. Did my first reco with Capt. Williams out to Zagadan & came home by MAHEMDIA. Got on fairly well with the reco and found the sandy country hard to read except the parts I had been over with the Light Horse.

Nov. 11th First bomb raid on BEERSHEBA. Machines went out to Mustabig to fill up. Wackett & Turner fought a Fokker.

Nov. 6th. Went up for a joy ride with Wackett & we did some shooting at pelicans & flamingoes for practice which was great sport.

Nov. 15th. Did a practice shoot near ROMANI with the 264th F.A. Bgde. Had to return to MAHEMDIA aerodrome with engine trouble & carried on shoot afterwards. Pilot - Lt. Macnamara.

Nov. 22nd. Reco out to EL RAKWA with Wackett. Nothing of importance.

Nov. 23rd. Went on leave to Cairo & stayed at Heliopolis House with Murray Jones.



Nov. 25th. Went to the dentist at 14 A.G.H. & on to see the Rofès & then to a dance at the Continental.

Nov. 26th. Flew back to KANTARA with Macnamara. He & a few others, Muir, Guilfoile & Jones had brought their machines to Cairo because we had heard that the Huns were going to bomb Cairo again & our machines were to chase them if they came.

Dec. 2nd. Went over to MAHEMDIA with Heathcoate for breakfast. Saw Bill Bowd & all the others.

Dec. 7th. Left KANTARA by train for the new aerodrome at MUSTABIG, about 10 miles E of the CANAL. "C" Flight moved out first & I was sent on ahead with Morgan and some men to get the camp in order & help put up hangars. 14 Sqdn. were on the same aerodrome about a mile from us. The aerodrome is a very large salt pan & a good landing ground & is surrounded by sand hills. About 2 miles from the sea & alongside the railway line. We travelled up in open trucks but were fairly comfortable.

Dec. 9th. – Did a reco out to Maghara with Macnamara. It is a very hilly place with a small Turkish garrison camped on the hills & around the wells. Our exhaust manifold blew off when we were over the top of the place & gave us both an awful scare as we thought we'd been hit by an archie! Mac dropped 4 bombs. [*archie is slang for anti aircraft fire or artillery*]

Dec. 13th. – Did a patrol with Wackett in BEZC 4192 over to MAZAR. Wackett had fixed up a turret mounting in the centre section & we thought we were good enough for a Fokker if he came along. There was a hole cut in the centre section & the gun was mounted on a revolving rail which ran round the hole. I stood up on the sides of the fuselage & put my head & shoulders up through the hole & then fired away. It was a good scheme but took about 5 miles off the pace of the machine when I stood up. We got up to 6,000 ft. & could'n't go up any more & no Huns came along. The Huns are using Fokkas and Aviatiks which are a bit faster than any of ours. Their aerodrome is at BEERSHEBA & they come over fairly often. Muir stands by on his Martinsyde (120H.P.) & goes up with one of the 14 Sqdn's Martinsydes & they often chase the Huns home. Muir has had bad luck, he has often shot a machine up but it always seems to manage to get home. He chased one down to 300 ft over his own aerodrome

Dec. 13th. (contd.) a few days ago. We have got a 90. H.P. Clerget Bristol standing by too. Drummond usually flies it & there is great competition between us & 14 Sqdn as to whose machines get off first when the alarm goes. We usually win.

Dec. 14th. The 42nd & 52nd Divisions had a field day for practice for the attack on MASSAID, just ~~w~~ W of EL ARISH. I was out with Wackett doing dummy shoots with the artillery.

Dec. 20th. Went out to Ma MAGHARA with Heathcoate and found it evacuated. We came down to 500 ft. & then went on to HAMMA where we found a small enemy rearguard. EL ARISH was evacuated to-day too.

Dec. 21st. Did a reco up the coast to RAFA KHAN YUNUS, to see if the Turks had gone that way. We saw very few enemy. At village of SHEIKH ZOWAIID the people came out onto a hill & surrendered to us by putting up a white flag. They evidently thought

Dec. 21st. (contd) we had come over to bomb them. The country we flew over looked very pretty after the sand. East of the WADI EL ARISH the land improves & is covered in grass &



the Bedouins are ploughing it. Scotty Glen went out in another machine & found the Turks had gone down the WADI EL ARISH & were digging in at MAGDHABA.

Dec. 22nd. Bomb raid on BEERSHEBA aerodrome by 5 Matinsydes (3 of ours & 2 of 14 Sqdn.) Muir, Guilfoile & Jones were our pilots & they drove down two Huns. Jones was badly shot up by archie. Another raid of 12-2 C's went out & bombed the Turks at MAGDHABA

Dec. 23rd. The Light Horse attacked the Turks at MAGDHABA & by nightfall had captured the position & a good haul of prisoners. I went out with Roberts with orders to machine gun the enemy. We had a great time but got badly shot up. They were retiring down the WADI so we flew along the road & the WADI at about 200 ft

Dec. 23rd. (contd.) and had some fine targets. We got onto a mule train on the decanville railway & shot a few mules & upset some trucks. Coming back we tackled a Redoubt but they made it too hot for us & we didn't have a second go at them. We landed near the 10th L.H. once out on the flank & had a look at the scrap from the ground & then went on & landed at ANZAC HQ. & reported to Gen. Chauvel. Gardiner of 14 Sqdn. was wounded in the arm while machine gunning.

Dec. 24th. Xmas Eve. We all got more or less tight & generally had a good time. The weather has been very rough for some time, cold, rain & high wind. The 3rd L.H.Bgde. are camped at MASSAID about 6 miles away & we go up there & they come down to us fairly often. Heathcoate landed 4192 in the sea.

Dec 25th. Cold & Wet. There were sports in the afternoon but I did not compete. Qualified as Observer from 24-10-16. 5th Wing. R.O. No.13 of 18-1-17. Authority M.E.B.R.O No.8 of 10-1-17. Sqdn. R.O. 19/1/17.

Dec. 28th. Reco. out to HASSANA with Capt. Williams. Our engine cut out & we were very lucky to get home. It was very cloudy & windy.

Dec. 31st. Did some dual control with Wackett in our new & first BEZE 7133.

1917

Jan. 6th. Reco of Rafa position

Jan. 8th. Landed at Kilo 143 with Macnamara so as to get an early start in the morning for the attack on RAFA.

Jan 9th. ANZAC MT.D. DIV. attacked RAFA. Mac & I left 143 at daylight & we *inserted in pencil* went over RAFA soon after sunrise. I did artillery co-operation & contact patrol all day & did 9 hrs & 5 mins in the air which is I think a record for any observer for one day on this front. We had a landing ground at

Jan 11th. Muir, Bell & Guilfoile left to go to England.

Jan 9th. (contd) SHEIKH ZOWAID and filled up with petrol & oil there. It was a very pretty fight to watch, & a perfect day. The country round the Turkish position was covered with crops or grass and it was a fine sight to see a mounted brigade or a Battery of Artillery galloping into action. Jones & Muir bombed BEERSHEBA.



Jan. 10th. Out to RAFA again with Capt. Williams. We found the Bedouins we clearing up the battle field & looting everything they could find.

Jan 12th. Reco of Weli Sheikh huran, with Capt. Williams. After the RAFA fight the Turks started to dig in about 5 miles W of SHELLAL & they eventually made a large & very strong position consisting of over 50 redoubts all connected up & forming a rough circle. They had only 6 redoubts this day & I made a rough sketch of them. We flew over the position at 2,700 ft. & got a great surprise when they started

Jan 12th. (contd.) to archie us. They were pretty good too & it was my first experience of archies. They are not so bad as being shelled on the ground but it's a nasty sensation waiting for the next one to burst. One good thing is that you can't hear the screech of the shell as its coming like you can on the ground, unless its very close, but they make a nasty noise if they go off at all near you. Moved to Kilo 143.

Jan. 15th. Started for BEERSHEBA in the morning with Mcnamara but had to turn back owing to clouds. We went again in the afternoon & 7 other bombing machines came with us.

Jan 16th. Reco of BEERSHEBA with Roberts. 12 bombing machines came too & did good work on the aerodrome & camps.

Jan. 19th. Started at 8.40 A.M. on Reco to Jerusalem & Jericho. (We were going the day before but our machine 7133 would not start & we had to change the magnetoes.) Roberts was my pilot & Jones & Ellis came with us as escort on Martinsydes.

Jan 19th. (contd.) We flew over GAZA & then to BETHLEHEM and JERUSALEM, then out to JERICHO, back to JERUSALEM and then down over HEBRON and BEERSHEBA and home via SHELLAL. It was a perfect day & we could see nearly all Palestine from 10,000 ft. We had no Huns or archies to worry us so had a fine trip & I think we were the first British airmen to fly over Jerusalem & Jericho. I took 2 photos, 1 with Tunbridge's camera & one with Roberts.

Jan 21st. & 22nd. Two horrible days, very windy & the sand blew about a lot. Some showers of rain but not enough to keep the sand down.

Jan. 24th. Went out to see the Regt. who were camped 1 mile E of the WADI EL ARISH. Mills wounded by archie over NURAN. He was flying with Roberts & had been out to BEERSHEBA.

Jan. 25th. Reco of Gaza and BEERSHEBA with Capt. Williams. It was cloudy & they fired one archie at us at B/SABA. It was a beautiful shot & hit us in several places, one piece hit me on the foot. They only fired the one shot.

Jan 27th. Reco of Gaza, Askalon and el Tuie. It was very cloudy & we ran into 2 heavy rain storms and had to turn back. I was with Capt. Williams & Jones & Ellis were escorting us on Martinsydes.

Jan 29th. The Huns had evacuated their aerodrome at BEERSHEBA early in January & we did not know where their new 'drome was. We did not see it on the Jerusalem trip so concluded it must be somewhere up the line towards RAMLE. I went out with Roberts at 8.35 A.M. with Jones & Ellis escorting. We went over TINE & JUNCTION STATION & then



to RAMLE & found the Hun aerodrome just S of the town. This was the first reco of these parts & we got a lot of information.

Jan 31st. Major Rutledge flew me up to el ARISH to see Gen. Waller, the Engineer officer of DESERT COLUMN. Jones & I had a scheme for blowing up a bridge on the Turkish railway. We had picked our bridge & were going to take out a specially prepared charge of gun cotton on the bomb racks of the machine and then land near the bridge & carry the charge to it & set the fuse going & then fly off again. It would have been very simple and we had the charge` all ready & all details worked out but at the last minute we were stopped by DESERT COLUMN & not allowed to carry it out.

Feb. 1st. Went out with Jones at 8.30 P.M on a night raid to NURAN. It was moonlight & we took 4 bombs, parachute flares & a lot of ammunition. We found the place easily enough & gave them a proper fireworks display. They turned a small searchlight onto us. I thought it was quite close & fired a drum at it but it turned out to be about 2 miles away!

Feb. 3rd. Reco to NURAN, BEERSHEBA and SHARIA with Capt. Williams. We found the Turks laying a new decanville line from SHARIA to SHELLAL & came down low and machine gunned the men working on it.

A few days ago a Hun came over and bombed EL ARISH. One bomb landed among a gang of the Egyptian Labour Corps working on our railway & it killed 19 of them.

For several weeks after this the Gippos used to run if they saw a Hun machine so we had to have one of our machines over them all the time and they thought they were quite safe then. We used to send out an old ze & it would do practice shoots with a Battery while it was on its patrol.

Feb. 5th. Reco to Θ AUJA & ASLUJ with Macnamara. Going along the line we came down low & machine gunned a train. The train stopped & everyone jumped out & ran for cover. Some jumped out while the train was still going.

Feb. 6th. Went out to NURAN with Capt. Williams. We did not leave until late & it was dark when we got there. Could not see much.

Feb. 9th. TO BEERSHEBA with Capt. Williams. Machine gunned a train from 300 ft.

Feb. 12th. Capt. Williams, Drummond, Cole, Morgan & I went to ISHMALIA to work in connection with the attack on NEKHL. Morgan & I went down by train. The attack was to be carried out by 2 colums, one working out from FERRY POST (Ishmalia) & the other from SUEZ. Both colums were to attack NEKHL at the same time. Our job was to watch the front & flanks of each column daily & to tell each column where the other one had got to. It was very easy work as there was nothing much to see except a few goats & Bedouin. The country is very barren & in places very hilly & rocky.

Feb. 14th. We lived with 57 Reserve Sqdn. at Ishmalia & had our machines at their aerodrome. Did a reco with Capt. Williams.

Feb. 15th. Reco with Drummond.

Feb. 17th. We were to go out to a place called BIR EL THEMADA & land & stay there the night so as to be ready for the attack on NEKHL early next morning. I went out with Capt. Williams & we had trouble in starting & did not get away until late. It was dark long before we got near THEMADA & I did`nt feel too happy flying round in the dark over strange country.



Fortunately, Drummond, who had gone out to THEMADA earlier, lit a fire & we saw it & steered towards it. As we got closer Drummond put out flares for us & we landed safely. We had quite a picnic that night & slept under the stars with a few L.H. men who were looking after the water supply of the Northern Column.

Feb. 18th. We occupied NEKHL & captured 5 prisoners with practically no opposition. There had only been about 20 Turks there & they all cleared out except the 5 we caught. We had sent out about 1,000 men & horses over 100 miles of desert to try & capture 20 Turks! It took about 10 days for the two Columns to get there & back & all that time they had to be supplied by camel transport. Col. Grant D.S.O. & the 11th A.L.H. comprised the Northern column working from FERRY POST, & a Yeomanry Regt. made up the Southern column working from SUEZ. Col. Grant & his men were in NEKHL about 2 hours before the Yeomanry came up, a fact which was not at all pleasing to the Yeomanry. Cole & I left THEMADA early & found the L.H. in NEKHL when we got there. We went along the road until we were about 20 miles from AKABA & could see no sign of the enemy so

Feb. 18th. (contd.) came back to NEKHL and landed & reported to Col. Grant. It was a very cold morning & the Col. gave us each a cup of hot chicken broth which was most acceptable. The chicken had been running around NEKHL about an hour before! Cole & I had a look round the town before returning to THEMADA. It is the capital of SINAI & was governed by Col. Jennings-Bramley before the war. When the Turks came down to the Canal in Jan. 1915 we evacuated NEKHL & the Turks used it as one of their bases because it is on the main caravan route from BEERSHEBA to ISHMAILIA & has a good lot of wells. It was also a great place of call for pilgrims on their way from Egypt to MECCA. The town is quite small but clean & built of stone. Jennings-Bramley lived in an old sort of ~~Castle~~ Castle that was built years ago by Ibrahim Pascha. He came out with Col. Grant & it was very

Feb. 18th. (contd.) amusing to see him going through his old house and garden of pepper trees. The Turks had used one room as an ammunition dump & some time before an airman had hit the spot with a bomb & exploded the ammunition so things were broken up somewhat. There was very little loot left in the town but some of the L.H. got a few small things. They climbed all over the buildings & I saw several of them carving their names in places where they will be visible for many years. Col. Grant gave me a dispatch to take back to ISHMAILIA & we got back there about midday. Turner went out with the Northern Column as R.F.C. officer & picked out landing grounds for us & put out strips where we were to drop messages. That concluded the NEKHL stunt, rather a costly business but it cleared the last lot of Turks out of SINAI & EGYPT, which was what Gen. Murray wanted.

Feb. 19th. Left ISHMAILIA in the afternoon & flew back to KILO 143 with Cole. "KILO 143" was the name we gave our aerodrome because there was no name for it on the map. It was 143 Kilos from KANTARA by rail & like MUSTABIG, was a big salt pan with sand hills all round it.

Feb. 21st Ellis & I left KILO 143 for Cairo to go on leave. Murray went by train & we were to meet him in Cairo. We could not get our old 2c (4520) to go for some time & just after we started she konked out with a leaky induction pipe & we had to return. We got going again & arrived at KANTARA just before dark & filled up & got off for Cairo again. It got too dark so we went to Ishmalia for the night.

Feb. 22nd Went on from Ishmalia to Cairo. It was a rotten day & we had a very bumpy trip. Stayed at Continental Hotel.



Feb 22–26th. In Cairo & had a very good leave. Coates was in hospital but was allowed out. Alston & Gilmore of the K.O.S.B.'s were on leave too so we had lots of company. Murray flew a new Martinsyde back on the 26th & Ellis & I returned by train. We decorated Murrays machine with streamers before he left Heliopolis.

March 5th. Was sent out with Steele to do an "all clear" reco. We thought the NURAN position looked different so went on to it & found it had been completely evacuated except for a few cavalry. It was Steeles first trip over the lines. We were quite low & when I pointed the Cavalry out to him he thought I meant he was to "zoom" them so he went down & zoomed them from about 200 ft. They scattered everywhere & several horses bolted. Capt. Hoyen & Lt. Palmer & Lt. Barlow of 14 Sqn. were lost about this time & all taken prisoners.

March 7th. Reco with Capt. Williams to GAZA, AKRA & HARIERA. We were flying low over AKRA and they shot away 2 of our main flying wires with an archie so we turned for home. The Turks were just starting to dig in around GAZA, AKRA & HARIERA & it looked as if that was to be their new line after the evacuation of NURAN & SHELLAL. There were very few trenches at BEERSHEBA. Our railway was up as far as RAFA & the enemy held KHAN YUNUS.

March 13th. Reco with Capt. Williams to A AUJA & BEERSHEBA. Our machine was badly shot up by archies over BEERSHEBA. We ran into 3 Huns coming home but they did not attack & we could not attack them because they were miles too fast for us.

March 8th. Hun machine came over & dropped letters from Hoyer & Palmer asking for their kits. The pilot was Lt. Felmy.

March 19th Reco to BEERSHEBA & up the HEBRON Road with Rutherford. I went out again with Bailleau in the afternoon. Jones & Kirkby, of 14 Sqn., were going out on Martinsydes to bomb the line near the WADI HESY & after that Jones & I were going a bit further up the line to have another look at the bridge we were going to land at & blow up. Kirkby went down to drop his bombs & had a forced landing so Bailleau went down & picked him up & we took him home in our machine. We had an advanced landing ground at SHEIKH ZOWAID so Bailleau landed me there & then took Kirkby on to Kilo 143, while Maturlich flew me back.

March 16th. The 1st Anniversary of this Squadron's leaving Australia. We had a very fine dinner.

March 20th or 21st. During another bomb raid on the railway near the WADI HESY Rutherford had a forced landing. Macnamara pulled off his bombs & went down to his rescue. One bomb burst prematurely & wounded Mac in the leg. He landed & picked up Rutherford but crashed his Martinsyde taking off. They burnt it & went back to Rutherfords 2c & got it going & Mac then flew Rutherford home. It was a jolly fine stunt on Mac's part.

March 22nd. Reco of GAZA with Winter-Irving. I had to look for gun positions & report on the nature of the ground round GAZA & whether it was suitable to attack over.

March 24th. Hariera reco with Winter. We moved up to RAFA aerodrome. It is not a bad spot & nice & green with the aerodrome on the side of a hill.

March 26th. The first attack on GAZA commenced at daylight. I was out most of the day doing Artillery Co-operation and worked mostly with 60 pdrs. The Turks had no archies so



we were able to fly low and spot their guns but their machine guns made it pretty hot for us at times. I got 1 direct hit onto an enemy gun with a 60 Pdr. H.E.

March 27th. The attack continued and we were very busy. I did 8 hours (4 with each of Steele & Maturlich) Artillery Co-op. & was glad to get to bed at night. Had some fine targets, once I got a 60 pdr. battery onto a big lot of Turks in a small wadi & the big shrapnel carved them up in fine style. These Turks had marched up from HARIERA to try & get on our flank & were very thirsty. There was a well out in the open near the Wadi & in spite of the shells the Turks kept going out to the well for water. It seemed very inhuman

March 27th (contd.) to be shelling men who must have been half mad with thirst but I soon got over those sentiments when I looked round & saw our own men lying dead up towards GAZA. I also turned an 18 pdr. Battery onto them & they also did good shooting with their shrapnel. It was a terribly hot day & we were half cooked even when flying & the engines got very hot.

March 28th. Did 2 recos out BEERSHEBA way, one with Capt. Williams & one with Steele. Hyam & Rutherford were doing Artillery Co-op. over GAZA & were shot down by a Hun & both were wounded. Hyam died later on the Hospital train at EL ARISH. On the morning of the 26th Gibbs & Williamson of 14 Sqdn/ took off from RAFA & the machine stalled & caught fire when it crashed. Both were killed. Ellis crashed but did not get hurt.

March 30th & 31st – Out taking aspect photos of Gaza with Drummond & Geere.

Apl. 1st. Photos with Winter-Irving. Left RAFA for PORT SAID by train to see Keith who was due at Port Said on the 3rd

Apl. 3rd. Went back to KANTARA and saw Capt. Williams who told me I might stay 2 more days & go back with him.

Apl. 5th. Keith had not arrived (he did on the 10th but I was not here so I had to return. Met Capt. Williams at KANTARA & flew back to Kilo 143.

Apl 6th. From Kilo 143 to RAFA with Capt. Williams. Murray Jones fought 5 Huns out of a Martinsyde but got shot down in our lines, unhurt.

Apl. 11th. Reco to JUNCTION STATION and LATROUX with Capt. Williams.

Apl. 15th. – Turner, Rhodes & I moved up to Dier-el-Belah to do Artillery Co-op. We lived with 14 Sqdn. so as to be nearer GAZA & to get the latest news from the Wing about any new targets. I was out with Capt. Williams over GAZA and we were attacked by a Hun. I put several bursts into him & he cleared off.

Apl. 17th. While on Artillery patrol with Capt. Williams we were attacked by 3 Huns. They dived in turn but we eventually drove them off just as I had used up all my ammunition.

Apl. 19th. Second attack on GAZA commenced. It was a foggy morning but Maturlich & I managed to be out there before 6 A.M. & got in some good work before the clouds came right over. The Tanks went into action about 7 A.M. by themselves & I saw one get knocked out by a direct



Apr. 19th. (contd.) hit. I think I could have saved it too because I could see the enemy battery firing at it, but we had some absurd rule that we could not call up a Heavy Battery ourselves & put them onto a target. Instead we had to fly back to Artillery H.Q. & wireless down the target & then wait for them to put out strips to indicate to us which of our Batteries was to take on the target. Once we got that it meant going to the Battery that was going to do the shoot & sending the target down to them & then wait until they were ready to fire. I had to do all this & it took 22 minutes. Meanwhile the poor old Tank was being shot at & was hit & set on fire about 5 minutes before I got my Battery going. We silenced the enemy Battery in 5 shots but it had done the damage & but for that absurd rule I could have saved the Tank & a good many lives.

Apl. 20th. Steel went out on a Martinsyde and did not return We heard later that he had been shot down by archie and died in hospital. Gen. Dobell relieved of his command of EAST FORCE on Apl 22nd

Apl. 19th. (contd.) I went out again at 11.15 AM with Ellis. The clouds were very bad & there was a bank of them from 800 ft upwards. Consequently we had to do all our work under 800 ft. It was not much fun as over the enemies lines we got heavily machine gunned while over our lines we were in danger of being hit by our own shells all the time. Once the M.G fire got too hot for us so we went up into the clouds & flew round for a bit but unfortunately we came out again right over a big redoubt at QATAWINEH & got shot up a lot more. The whole attack was a failure & after losing a lot of men we found ourselves back where we had started.

Apl. 20th & 22nd. Out doing Artillery Co-op. with Macnaughton & Dawson. We heard that the Turks were using the Great Mosque in Gaza as an ammunition dump so Morgan ranged the 8" Hows onto it & got a direct hit & there was a fine explosion. (Since proved to be correct.)

Apl. 23rd. –Flew back to RAFA from BELAH with Winter-Irving and left RAFA for Cairo that night to go to the school. Capt. Williams, Cullen & Gardiner & Thorne were on the train too.

Apl. 24th. Arrived in Cairo and had leave until the 30th. I stopped at Shepherds and generally had a good time.

May 1st. Started T.T.C. at No. 3 School of Military Aeronautics, Abbassia. We lived in stone barracks & were very comfortable and the work was not hard.

May 2nd. Geere & Wackett left for England.

May 13th. Tunbridge was shot down by a Hun from 8,000 ft. At 2,000 ft. a bullet ignited one of his Very's lights & he was badly burned & sent to 14 A.G.H. Macnamara, Turner & Tunbridge were in hospital together & I used to go round & see them from the school. Murray-Jones wounded.

May 23rd. Finished T.T.C. and passed all my exams.

May 24th. From Cairo to No. 57 Reserve Sqdn. Ishmalia

May 25th. A force consisting of one Company of Camel Corps under Major Mills was being sent out to NEKHL to destroy the wells there in case the Turks should want to come back and occupy the place. One Flight of the 20th Reserve wing R.F.C. was detailed to work with the Columns & reconnoiter it from & flanks daily. As I knew the country I was one of the



Observers & Gardiner & Forrest of 14 Sqdn were the other 2. Our pilots were Capt. Macrindle (M.C.) from 57 R.S. Lt. French, 57 R.S & Capt. Peck (since M.C. & D.S.O) from 22 R.S at Aboukir. We went down to SUEZ and left our machines at the aerodrome (58 Res. Sqdn.) & lived at the Hotel Belair. I did not enjoy the stunt very much because we were working

May 25th. (contd) over very uninteresting country and I was flying with pilots I didn't know very well. We were using School machines (2 E's) so of course had several forced landings in the desert.

May 26th. Did a reco with Peck but did not see anything except a few goats.

May 27th. & 28th. Went out and landed at NEKHL and watched the Camel Corps blowing up the wells. They were beautiful wells and it seemed to me to be a great pity to blow them in as there was no one in the town and no Turks nearer than 50 miles away. The engineers did not take enough gun cotton out with them so Macrindle & Peck flew back to Suez & got some more. We camped at NEKHL on the night of the 27th & returned to Suez on the 28th.

May 29th. Did a reco. with Peck & completed my 200 hours \in the air/ as an Observer.

May 30th. From Suez to Ishmalia by train. Stone & Morgan, while flying over GAZA were hit by an archie. They were on a 2E & one extension was shot away. Stone brought the machine down to about 200ft but it then got out of control & crashed. They were both killed.

May 31st. Started to learn to fly. Dual control on Maurice Farmaus. Found it quite easy.

June 2nd. Did my first solo after 1 hr. 14 mins. dual

June 7th. Left Ishmalia and went to ABOUKIR to 22 Res. Sqdn to fly Avros. Peck was my instructor & I went solo on the 10th. After 2 hrs 35 mins dual. I found landing Avros a little difficult at first.

June 13th. We had a Regatta in Aboukir Bay & there we swimming races and all that sort of thing. It was very nice swimming at this time of year & we often got some good surf bathing. The old forts around Aboukir show signs of their bombardment. The Ancient Roman city of CANOPUS is quite near the aerodrome and parts of it are still in good repair. My weight is 11 st. 8 ½ lbs on the scales at the Union Club in Alex.

June 18th. Started on Bristol Scouts

June 29th. Started flying B.E.'s

June 30th. Did my first loop. BE2C.4540

July 3rd. Graduated as a pilot. Started School of Aerial Gunnery

July 13th. Left Aboukir for Cairo. Finished up at School. Did 4 hrs. 19 mins. Dual and 23 hrs. 14 mins. Solo.

July 14th. In Cairo

July 15th. Left Cairo for DIER-EL-BELAH at 11 A.M.



July 16th. Arrived BELAH and rejoined my Squadron. Posted to A Flight. Major Williams O.C. Jones, Ellis & Macnaughton the 3 Flight Commanders. The camp is among fig trees & vines and the aerodrome has a good level surface.

July 17th. Did my first job as a pilot. Took out Sutherland in a 2E & we did the Tactical reco. with 2 other 2 E's

July 18th. & 19th. Out on Recos.

July 20th. The ANZAC Div were doing a stunt out towards BEERSHEBA. Took Turner out and landed at ANZAC H.Q. A wheel came off as I landed & the machine stood on its nose & broke the prop. Winter brought me out a new prop, & we gathered up all the local ground telephone wires with our tail skids when we took off to come home.

July 21st. Started flying Martinsydes(120 H.P.)

July 22nd. Reco of HARIERA with Turner. We flew in formation on all these recos. Three 2E's in the shape of a triangle and a Martinsyde or a BEIZA above them as escort. Sometimes two D.H.'s or two Vickers Bullets\from 111 Sqdn./ would come with us or meet us over a certain place but we did not always have them. If a reco was to go out the 2E's would get off & climb for an hour,(by which time they would reach only about 6,000ft.) then the Martinsyde or 12 A would get off about half an hour after them, pick them up & the whole lot would move off.

July 25th. Out taking photos in a Martinsyde & escorted the reco as well.

July 30th. Took out the film camera on a Martinsyde & took a strip around BEERSHEBA. Bowd came with me as escort, also on a 'tinsyde.

Aug 2nd. Practiced night landings with flares on BE2C 4312

Aug 3rd. Photos with Bowd out at SHARIA

Aug 4th. Sutherland reported a Hun machine on the ground at BIR IFTEIS near SHARIA so we were sent out to bomb it. Jones was on a 2E, Morgan on a 2E & Austin, Potts L. & I were on 12 A'S. I had 2 -100lb. bombs. We got out to the machine but it was a dummy! Some of us started to drop our bombs & 2 Huns came up at us, one 2 seater & 1 Albatross Scout. We all had a go at them and drove them down to SHARIA. I took on the 2 seater first & he was a very dud pilot but could easily out dive me & so got away. The Scout pilot was not up to much either. Jack Potts & Sutherland were with us on a 2E as well.

Aug 6th. Was going out on a job in a 'tinsyde but had a forced landing on the aerodrome with a beetle in my petrol pipe.

Aug 8th. We have just got a Bristol Scout (Clerget) for practice flying. It's a nice little machine & we have great sport on it, looping it etc. Rogers crashed it later on.

Aug 10th -17th. Out on various jobs, mostly escorts or photos.

Aug 17th. Nearly got let down by a 2E, the engine was very dud when I was testing & I only just got back into the aerodrome



Aug. 20th. Photos with Bowd out at BEERSHEBA.

Aug 23rd. Photos with Jones at BEERSHEBA

Aug 24th. 8 Bombs on BEERSHEBA camps. 3 other machines came too.

Aug 30th. Bomb raid to HARIERA. Bowd & I went on Martinsydes, with 12 bombs each.

Sept. 1st. Ellis & I were out on patrol on 12A's/ over the Yeomanry near ESANI & BEERSHEBA. Two Huns came along, a 2 seater & an Albatross Scout. We were above them so chased them. Ellis dived on the Scout first & then I took him on & got on his tail. We had 3 rounds & he hit me in the face. I turned for home and did 110 MPH all the way & landed safely. The Doc. dressed my face & then I went to the BELAH Casualty Clearing Station & was put on a hospital train & spent the night at EL ARISH hospital.

Sept. 2nd. Went on to KANTARA & stayed the night at the hospital there.

Sept. 3rd. Went on to CAIRO by hospital train & out to 14th A.G.H.

Sept. 18th. Went up to No.10 Convalescent Home at Alex, with Charlie Watt.

Sept. 25th. Weighed myself at the Union Club, 11 st. 2 lbs. I spent most of my time at Alex. in bathing and sailing. Watt & I used to go out to Stanley Bay in the mornings and it was very nice bathing there. Several of the Sisters from 14 A.G.H were on leave in Alex too & we bathed & sailed with them. We would make up parties in the afternoons & go down to the harbour & get a boat & take our tea out with us.

Sept. 28th. Went out to ABOUKIR with Lang.

Sept. 29th. Went out to Aboukir & took delivery of BEIZA 6338 & flew it to Heliopolis & camped there for the night.

Sept. 30th. Flew from Heliopolis to SHEIKH NURAN & rejoined my Squadron. Landed and filled up at KANTARA on the way. Posted to "C" Flight as O.C.

Oct. 3rd. & 4th. Out on photos.

Oct. 5th. — Oct. 19th. Out on the usual jobs, photos & escorts.

Oct. 20th. Jones, Winter-Irving & I went to Cairo by rail to get 3 new R.E.'s that were ready for us at the Park.

Oct 21st. Arrived Cairo & stayed at the Continental Hotel.

Oct 22nd. Jones & Percival & I came back to NURAN by air. Winter could not get his machine started. Landed & filled up at KANTARA on the way.

Oct. 28th. Did a patrol with Jones on 12's & we also took photos of the Sharia defences for the coming attack.

Oct. 30th. Patrolled over the L.H. around Esani with Spragg.



Oct. 31st. The big attack started by the L.H. and Infantry attacking Beersheba. The Turks held a trenched line from the coast through Gaza, Hariera, Sharia & down to Beersheba. Gen. Allenby's plan was to hit the Turks on their left flank first. For a week before there was a continuous bombardment of the Gaza trenches to make the Turks think we were going to attack there and on the night of the 30th. the Inf & L.H. were moved out to attack Beersheba. The Inf. made a frontal attack & by 10 A.M. had taken most of the important trenches which were in very difficult ground & strongly held. Meanwhile the Anzac Div. and

Oct. 31st. (contd.) Aust. Div. had moved round to the north east of Beersheba & attacked from there. By night we had taken the town & its garrison. The 4th L.H. Bgde were the first troops to enter the town & they made a very fine mounted charge over 3 rows of trenches. Col. Grant was presented with a Bar to his D.S.O. by Gen. Allenby the next day. I was out in the morning escorting a reco. & saw all the early stages of the attack.

Nov. 1st. The Beersheba troops pushed forward at once on the Turkish flank and attacked the Sharia-Hariera position from the South. It was very strongly held especially on their extreme left where the Turk's line ran out into the Judean hills. I went out with Winter-Irving just before dark & did a reco. & landed back home in the dark.

Nov. 2nd. Took photos of trenches at Hariera & Sharia. Each day during these operations we went out and took photos of the position that was being attacked. As soon as we got home the plates were developed & prints made and handed to a man from the Survey Dept. who was attached to us. If the photos showed any new trench work or gun positions it was sketched in on the trench map & then another photo was taken of the amended trench map & these photos were sent out to the troops attacking. By this means the Staff knew exactly any alterations the enemy made in his defensive system & by means of unceasing hard work on the part of our photo Section we were able to supply the Staff with these up-to date maps a few hours after the machine had landed with the exposed plates.

Nov. 3rd, 4th & 5th. – I was out each day taking photos of the Sharia defences. The Turks knew that if Sharia fell their left flank would be right in the air so they put up a big fight for it. So far we had had no opposition from the Huns in the air and Bristol Fighters from 111 Sqdn. kept the air fairly clear.

Nov. 6th. Austin & I started out to take the same set of old photos of the Sharia trenches in the afternoon. We found 3 Hun Scouts patrolling over Sharia at 9,000ft. We were on BEIZA's and at once attacked but as usual we had no hope from the start. The Huns split up & while I was engaging two of them the third got right on my tail & I could not get him off. He shot up a longeron, a main span & skinned my leg with a bullet, so I had no option but to put my machine

Nov. 6th. (contd.) into a spin. I flattened out at 3,000 ft. Austin saw me spin & did the same & the Huns did not follow us down as they evidently thought they had got us. It was the first time we had ever failed to get our photos but it did not matter a bit as we captured Sharia a few hours later. In one way we did ourselves a good turn as from then onwards we were never sent across the lines without a Bristol Fighter escort. Fraser & Potts on R.E.8's met the same 3 Huns over Sharia about half an hour after Austin & I had been forced down. They both got well shot up but drove 2 of the Huns home. At the time there were large concentrations of our troops & transport in Beersheba & the Huns did a good lot of bombing amongst them. They worked it in a very cute way too. We had patrol machines over our troops



Nov. 6th. (contd.) all day but the Huns would send up a Scout from their aerodrome at Huj & the Scout would draw our patrol machines away after him. As soon as our machines were away 2 or 3 bombing machines would get off & slip over to Beersheba low down & drop their bombs. The Huns were using D III Albatross Scouts at this time and Rumpler 2 seaters. Sharia was captured late in the afternoon together with a number of prisoners and guns. The Light Horse at once moved north and it looked as if we would get a large haul of prisoners from the Gaza positions. However the Turks evacuated during the night.

Nov. 7th. Our Infantry were in Gaza early in the morning & at once consolidated the positions and pressed forward after the Turks, the 52nd (Scottish) Div. moving up along the coast. Desert Corps occupied Huj but the majority of the enemy managed to get away in the broken ground near the Wadi Hesy. We captured a great deal of booty at Gaza as well as at lots of other places. It was thought that the Turks might make a stand along a trench line which they had prepared along the north side of the Wadi Hesy. Jones & I were sent out to photograph this line but it turned out later that our photos were not required as the Turks made no stand there at all. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon every available machine was collected & loaded up with bombs to harras the retreating enemy. It was a great sight. I led the formation on an

Nov. 7th. (contd.) old 2E and altogether there were 32 machines. We all met over Belah aerodrome & set off along the coast. There were many & various types of machines—1 2E, RE8's, Martinsydes, BE 12 a's, Vickers Bullets, DH 2's, a Bristol monoplane & Bristol Fighters. We passed over our 52nd Div. marching up the coast & just N. of the Wadi Hesy we found the Turks in large numbers. It was good bombing & we were told afterwards that the raid killed about 700 Turks. It was a quiet night for us as the guns were all being moved up and we missed all the noise of the previous few nights.

Nov. 8th. It was a great day for the Flying Corps. Early in the morning we found the Huns very busy trying to remove a Squadron & its stores from an aerodrome at Arak el Menshiye. We made 2 raids on them with about 30 machines on each raid. I led both raids in my 12 A & it was the best show I've ever been on. The railway station was packed with rolling stock & there were about 14 hangars as well as numerous large tents. We bombed from 3 to 4000 ft. and did great damage. We found out later that they had to burn all their stores, 5 machines, all their hangars, tents & kits. It was a new Squadron which had just arrived & they were only erecting their machines when we attacked them. They also burnt 2 spare engines. A week or two later we went out there & got 3 of the engines in which were very easy to put serviceable & we also got a lot of other useful things. After bombing

Nov. 8th. (contd.) the aerodrome most of us went down low and machine gunned it. No Huns left the ground but Peck of 111 Sqdn. shot down a Scout in flames near Gaza. We flew out over our own advancing troops & some of the L.H. told us afterwards that it bucked the troops up tremendously.

Nov. 9th. We had orders that we were to break the Turks railway at el Tine if possible. Four of us set out at 9 A.M. on 12 A's with 2—112lb. bombs each. We bombed from 7,000 ft & I quite surprised myself—my first bomb landed just beside the line between the station buildings & the water tower & made a great mess. The second bomb appeared to land right on the track but only the detonator exploded so did no damage. We heard afterwards that my first bomb hit a gun which was going to be put on a train & also

Nov. 9th. (contd.) "splashed" several Turks over the surrounding landscape. In the afternoon I went out again with 11 other machines & we bombed another Hun aerodrome at el Tine



about a mile from the station. It was good bombing & we destroyed at least 2 machines & set fire to several hangars.

Nov. 10th. I went out on my 12 A with a reco to Junction Station and took 4–20 lb. bombs with me. I dropped them from 11,000 ft & 3 of them fell in the station yard.

Nov. 12th. I made 2 trips to Junction Station with 2–112lb. bombs each time. We were trying to damage the line & so capture the rolling stock in Junction Station. On the first raid one of my bombs burst just outside a large shed in the station & the other failed to explode. On the second raid I miss the line with both bombs

Nov. 13th. I had a day off & went out with the Major & Sutherland in the touring car. We had a most interesting day & went up to where our advanced troops were in touch with the Turkish rear guard about Kustinch. It was interesting seeing the old trenches & gun positions at Gaza & the hundreds of old shells lying about. Just N. of Gaza we saw thousands of round of shells of all sizes that were left behind. The Navy had hit a truck of shell ammunition & they made an awful mess of it. There were shells & bits of truck spread all round All along the road were evidences of the Turks retreat, broken transport, ammunition & dead animals were very plentiful. One little heap told a story quite on its own. An old broken wheelbarrow was lying on the side of the road with 2 boxes of S.A.A. ammunition beside it. We

Nov. 13th. (contd.) surmised from the picture it made that someone was wheeling the ammunition along and had to leave it when his barrow broke down. All our troops we passed seemed very happy and it was hot weather & they had had many long marches. The transport arrangements were excellent throughout the whole advance & the rations were kept well up.

Nov. 15th Started out on a reco in an R.E 8 but had to return with engine trouble. About this time we had a supply of inferior petrol and had a lot of trouble with it. We finally got up some good stuff & drained our tanks & got all the old stuff out.

Nov. 16th Did a reco. of Latium & Jaffa with Sutherland. The Turks had taken up a line

Nov. 16th. (contd.) a few miles North of Jaffa, we held Junction Station & Jaffa, Ramle & Ludd.

Nov. 17th. Reco of Jerusalem, Nablus & Jaffa with Sutherland in an RE. 8. we dropped 4 bombs among some camels at Nablus.

Nov. 18th. to 26th Various recos up to Tul Keram & Nablus. One day we went nearly up to Haifa.

Nov. 27th. I went out on photos with Austin. We were taking the trenches East of Jerusalem and between us we mapped about 45 sq. miles of country. I exposed 72 plates. In the afternoon Rutledge went out on one of my R.E's & had a forced landing so I flew out to him in the 2E & brought the R.E back.

Nov. 23rd. Cole, Jones & Rand left the Sqdn. to go to England.

Nov. 28th. I took Major Ferguson up to Ramleh in the 2 E. We landed on the old Hun aerodrome & very nearly crashed because the ground was very uneven. A pilot of 14 Sqdn. had just landed there with his observer (Roxborough) dead. They had been shot up by a



Hun scout. In trying to take off again to go home the pilot stalled & crashed into a prickly pear hedge but was not hurt. Major Ferguson had a Ford car to meet him and we drove to Jaffa to Anzac [...] Div. H.Q. They were in a nice house & we had lunch there & then toured round Jaffa for a bit & back to Ramleh. I had some difficulty in taking off as a large convoy of motor lorries were \started/ crossing the aerodrome just as I got my engine running but I managed to get off through a small gap in the convoy.

Nov. 29th. Eleven of our machines bombed Tul Keram station in the morning. I was leading in my old 12 A & just before we crossed the lines the engine began to give trouble. As I was leading I did not like to turn back & was sorry I did not soon afterwards. They archied us pretty heavily & after I had pulled off 4 bombs my engine cut right out. To add to my troubles 2 guns had just picked me out and were doing good shooting. After losing 2,000 ft. I finally managed to get the engine going again at about 4,000 ft. & made for home. I've never had such a "windy" trip & was very glad to be back on our side of the lines again. Late in the afternoon I tested my machine again. Everything went well until I got about 20 ft. off the ground then she cut right out. I was faced with a row of tents & just beyond them a railway with a telegraph line beside it. I managed to "zoom" the tents & then put my

Nov. 29th. (contd.) nose down intending to go through the wires & perhaps make some sort of a landing. Unfortunately I hit a big telegraph post, anchored on all 4 sides and carrying 17 wires. There was a fine crash & the machine a total wreck. I got off with a hole in my leg & a few bits of skin off. The Doc. stitched my leg up & put a splint on it. I was very sorry to lose my old machine (B.E.12A No. A6338) It was the new machine which I brought back from X.A.D at Alex when I returned from hospital. I had done about 55 hours on it and used it all through the advance and until this day it had never let me down once. We sent 3 machine to bomb Tul Keram during the night. I was going too if I had not crashed.

Nov. 30th. to Dec 4th I was unable to do any flying in on account of my leg. We were preparing to move to a new aerodrome at Julis. We had been at Nuran since the middle of Sept. It was a good aerodrome but very dusty & we had some awful days.

Dec. 5th. We move to Julis aerodrome. My leg was still in splints but I managed to fly the 2E up and it was better than having to go by tender.

Dec. 6th. to 10th Our new 'drome was on black soil and during these few days it poured with rain. We could not get our machines off and everything was very muddy. 111 Sqdn were on the same 'drome.

Dec. 9th. We occupied Jerusalem.

Dec. 11th. The Turks had a ~~position~~ \wooden/ bridge across the Jordan and I was sent out on a Martinsyde with 2-112 lb. bombs to try and smash it. I bombed from below the level of the Mediterranean & was I think the first person to drop bombs from below sea level. One bomb fell on the road amongst some transport about 50 yds from the bridge & the other failed to explode.

Dec. 13th. We were still having trouble with the mud and so decided to move to some hard sandy ground about half way between Julis & Mejdal. We accomplished our move during the day & from then onwards had no more trouble with mud. The aerodrome was not level like our previous ones but had a small hill in the centre of it & we landed all round this. It made an excellent landing ground once we got used to it.



Dec. 16th. Voting day for the Referendum on Conscription in Australia. Some of our men were still back at Nuran taking down hangars and clearing up so I flew down with Wigg in the 2 E & collected their votes.

Dec. 17th. Mustard & I escorted a bomb raid on an RE 8 out to el Bahr at the north end of the Dead Sea. Our machines bombed the grain stores there & flew below sea level.

Dec. 29th. Our Squadron got its first 2 Bristol Fighters from 111 Sqdn. It was a great day for us as we had at last, after many months of waiting, got a decent machine to do our jobs on. The Major & I went over to 111 for them. I got Peter Drummond's machine A 7202 in which he shot down 3 Huns in one day & got a D.S.O. for.

Dec. 25th. (Xmas Day) It was very wet and very windy and all flying was quite impossible. About 10 P.M. a terrific rain storm broke & the sky was as black as ink. Matteson was seeing some fellows home to 111 Sqdn. and must have got lost in the storm. As he had not appeared next morning we sent our search parties & late in the afternoon found him dead from exposure about 2 miles from the camp. He must have got lost & then lay down & died. Even in daylight we found it very difficult walking through the mud which was up to our ankles & all the wadis were full of water. Several men came back from the search absolutely done up. At this time we had no hangars for our machines. They were pegged down on the aerodrome. During the night a mild cyclone hit us & knocked over a number of tents and carried away 6 machines and

Dec. 25th. (contd.) completely crashed them. Things were in an awful mess next morning. Fortunately none of my machines broke loose but one RE 8 / broke a lower wing. We had a very fine Xmas dinner in spite of the rain & there was lots of fizz etc. flowing.

Dec. 31st. Did my first job in a Bristol Fighter. Mustard & I escorted Haig & Austin on RE 8's out to Amman. It was a very different sensation flying a machine that I knew was as good as any Hun to tootling round in Martinsydes & 12 A's. To celebrate the coming in of the New Year some of us raided 111 Sqdn's mess with Very's lights & smoke balls, it was a great success.

Jan 3rd. About 10 of our machines bombed Afule aerodrome & Austin crashed a scout which came up at them. I was on a reco & did not go with the raid.

Jan. 4th. Bomb raid on Jenin aerodrome. I had done a reco in the morning so did not go. We lost 2 machines. It was cloudy & a Hun Scout got into the formation & shot up Hewitt of 112 Sqdn on an R.E. 8. As Hewitt fell he crashed into Jack Pott's machine & took that down too. Hewitt & Bailey & Potts were all killed but Parkinson was only injured & was captured. He wrote & told us about this afterwards. We were all sorry to lose Jack Potts. He was a fine little chap & a good pilot.

Jan 9th. Escorted a reco in the morning. In the afternoon a Hun 2 seater came over our aerodrome. We were all very surprised as he was the first one to venture so far behind our lines. Several of us took off after him. Davidson in a B.F. of 111 Sqdn. caught up to the Hun at Jaffa but was wounded in the foot and had to land. I was just getting near enough to dive but the Hun went into clouds & I lost him. I caught the evening train for Cairo to bring up a new Bristol.



Jan 10th. Arrived Cairo in the afternoon & stayed at Shepherds. I had dinner with Jo Brooks & Doc Mainwaring & we all went to the Scamps at the Kensal later. Finlay was wounded by archie over Tabsor.

Jan 11th. I went out to the aerodrome at Heliopolis and found that Major Stent of 111 Sqdn. had just left for Mejdal on the Bristol that I had been sent up for. There was a Martinsyde nearly ready so I wired to the Squadron asking if I might wait & bring it. The Major replied that I might.

Jan. 12th. In Cairo.

Jan 13th. The Martinsyde was not ready so I caught the 7 AM train to Kantara & picked up an RE8 for 14 Sqdn there at X.A.P. & flew it back to Mejdal.

Jan 14th. Addison was landing a B.F & overshot the aerodrome & hit a post with one wing & then opened up & went round again & landed safely. He was very lucky as one lower wing was pretty well bent about.

Jan 16th. Escorted 5 photo machines with Sutherland. We were doing a very big photo job about this time & had to take about 300 sq. miles of country. Generally 5 photo machines went out & flew parallel to each other about 1000 yds apart & their strips of photos overlapped. In this way we got a lot of country at once. Two or 3 Bristols would escort the photo machines & it was rather a hard job because they were all spread out so much.

Jan 17th. Potts got a Hun Scout.

Jan 20th. Poole & Hancock were shot down behind the lines by archie in my machine, A 7202. Their machine was hit over Tul Keram & they almost made our lines but had to land just inside the Turkish trenches. They burnt the machine & were taken prisoner. Brown & Finlay were out with them & went down low but had no hope

Jan 20th. (contd.) of picking them up as they had landed in broken ground & right amongst the Turks. Both Poole & Hancock were in my Flight. Poole was only a new pilot but was very good & would have turned out one of our very best pilots. Hancock was an old 1st. L.H. Bgde. chap & was doing well as an observer.

Jan 21st. Some reinforcements were at Suez so Coates & I flew down in the 2E to pick some of them out for this Sqdn. We landed at Kantara on the way & arrived at no. 56 Res. Sqdn. at Suez about 5.30 P.M. Major Mills (3rd. L.H. Regt) was in charge of the Reinforcement Camp & we had dinner with him that night & later went on to the club at Port Tewfik.

Jan. 22nd. Coates selected the men we wanted in the morning. There were about 2000 Australians in camp, mostly Infantry reinforcements. Douglas Fordyce was there & left that night for Alex to embark for England.

Jan 23rd. Coates & I returned to Mejdal via Kantara.

Jan 26th. Went to Kantara by train for a new machine.

Jan 27th. Flew a new Bristol B1150 up to Mejdal. I had a good wind behind me and averaged 135 miles an hour (ground speed) for the trip.



Jan 29th. Did a reco in 1150. As Poole was lost in my old machine I took 1150 in her place.

Jan 30th. Mustard & I went up to test a new wide angle camera. We were going up to 20,000 ft. but at about 19,000 we were both so nearly frozen that we had to take the photos from there & then come down. I've never been so painfully cold in my life before, & breathing at that height was quite difficult.

Jan 31st. Butler & I went up to Jenin aerodrome & dropped some kit for Poole, Hancock & Parkinson. We tied parachutes onto the kit bags & they all opened & appeared to work very well. In the evening Drummond, Addison, Mustard, Fysh & myself left by train for 10 days leave in Cairo.

Feb. 1st. to 10th. I Cairo. We all stayed at the Continental & generally had a good time & went to several dances and dinners. Brown was married in Cairo.

Feb. 11th. We got back as far as Belah by train & found that the bridge over the Wadi Guzze had been washed away & no trains would be running for 48 hours. I rang up the Major & he sent the 2E down by Haig who landed on the old aerodrome at Belah. Haig was going on leave so I flew Mustard back to Mejdal. ~~Maughan~~ \someone else/ was also going on leave so he took the 2E back to Belah & Addison & Fysh flew it to Mejdal. Drummond brought a SE5A from Alex.

Feb 13th. Escorted a bomb ~~ree~~ raid to Kutrain, on the Hejaz railway, east of the Dead Sea. It was a very cloudy day & only 2 \bombing/ machines reached the objective. Maughan had engine trouble on the way & in trying to fire a light the pistol went off & the flare hit his instrument board, fell onto his seat & then onto the floor & burnt its way out. He was very lucky not to be set on fire. Had the flare gone an inch lower it would have gone through his petrol tank & set it on fire instead of just smashing the instrument board. Fraser went out to Maughan & found him crashed & he also crashed in landing beside him. It was a muddy bit of ground where they landed ~~& we~~ and it took us about a week to get both machines in again.

Jan 14th. Capt. Hurley arrived at the Sqdn. to take some photos for war records. He was with us for several days & took film of all sorts of things. I flew him about a good bit, he fixed his cinema camera onto the Scarfe mounting & took other machines in the air & also films of Jaffa & Jerusalem.

Jan. 15th. Paul had just just landed a Martinsyde when it backfired & burst into flames. Paul got away safely & Hurley was soon on the spot with his cinema camera.

*Diary entries cease about halfway through the Army book.
On the last page is the following entry.*

Lieut. H.W. Bowd.
Killed 25/10/17
Buried British Cemetary. Cairo 26/10/17
By Chaplain Major Tompkins C.F. (C of E)
Grave NO. 322 F