

RAMC, 52 Gen Hospital, Salonika. From May 13 – Oct 14, 1918

- 13 May Carrying on as usual. Special malaria patients from 5043. 49 & 29 transferred for special treatment – 60 in all. Met an old Aberystwythian Jenkins. Fairly busy all day. Inspection by DMS of 7men.
- 14 Another fine day. Mail small. Letters from VJ, Vrina, Annie & Phyl. Wrote to poor Chas. Afternoon off. Visit 660 Coy. where a revue is given by the Camouflage. Fairly good on the whole; yet how empty. Still it served to relieve monotony of our life here.
- 15 Discharges. Fairly busy today. Doing fairly well so far-nothing gone wrong.
- 16 Easy day. Off this afternoon. Rumour of another change.
- 17 Discharges “A” men inspected by Colonel who made a foolish speech. What can we expect from the army when such soulless men lead. Talk of Prussianism- it is rampant in our midst. We shall have to fight this demon after the war is over. O England who dost slay the prophets! Am told that I shall soon be L.Cpl. Ye Gods!
- 18 Busy morning; all goes well. Afternoon off. Sleep all the time. Price & Davies call. Price as talkative as ever.
- 19 Sunday. Glorious day. But oh for the Sunday of Wales! How I long to be at home with the folk who spend it in the good oldfashioned way. I am at work. Before me across the road are officers & sisters laughing and giggling playing tennis. Yonder in France the boys are bleeding to death- for what? O tempores! O mores!
- Still through the darkness of human folly I see the glorious dawn of the day of the Son of Man. Wrote to Mabel- a letter with a sad note. I could not help it. It was my mood. Shall go to services tonight when I hope my drooping spirit shall be revived. I hope the Padre will not indulge in any of his gallery play as he did last Sunday when he evidently spoke under a mistaken conception of the kind of men whom he had for a congregation. Am told that my promotion to the honourable rank of Lance Corporal in HM’s army will be an accomplished fact. I hate the idea. Everything that pertains to the army is hateful to me. Yet what am I to do under the circumstances. Discretion is the greater part of value. A man is a fool to court trouble. One gets that easy enough in the army. It seems that more “A” men will soon be transferred to the Infantry. I wonder when my turn will come. Yet I trust & believe I shall be saved the trouble of fighting the army. I have much to be thankful for. The hand of Providence is clearly evident in my life. I bow to Him gratefully. Attended service not knowing of Communion at 7. I missed it to my regret. Address – “What do I lack”. The subject acc. To the speaker was “perfect manhood”. Manhood has 3 sides – physical, mental & spiritual. These 3 are essential to perfect manhood. By spiritual the speaker meant the refined in nature- the glow. This is impossible without religion. If a man has no respect for God & His worship he neither has respect for the good in man. So religion is absolutely essential to a perfect manhood. Speaker severely criticised after the meeting- unjustly to my mind. The fact that man wears the cloak of religion and lacks the glow does not affect the argument that a man who is truly devoted to & recognises things divine also recognises goodness in man. The cloak is not the glow nor is it religion.
- 20 Monday. Glorious day. Nothing of importance doing. Afternoon off. Read Quo Vadis. Walk as far as the YMCA with Cpl Sterling. 10 men detailed for Infantry among them Owen & Dollar. Saluting drill in the morning.
- 21 Glorious day. Salute for 10 minutes or so. Why waste time with such trifling things? Why wonder that we are so slow? Saluting is more essential than to find a way out of the chaos. This is rank militarism. NCO charged with drunkenness is let off. If I happened to pass an officer without saluting him it would mean 17 days CB. What fools we are. Rec. 2 letters from Pugh & 1 from Rachel.
- 22 Fine morning. Saluting drill for 10 minutes. Fairly busy morning. Off for the afternoon. Thunderstorm. Quo Vadis. 10 men leave for Infantry Training. 10B arrive to replace them. 10 men go for rest every week to Karabouro.
- 23 Nothing of importance today. O yes I find myself belonging to the hateful class of NCO’s having been

Appointed L.Cpl with pay with effect from 6 May. How I hate! I wish I had never consented & yet under the circumstances what could I do. So far all goes well; but when I shall have to be responsible for Simb etc I am afraid things will go to pieces. Preparation for HS.

- 24 Discharges: fairly busy. Pay parade. Rec small parcel from Abercynon with Greek test. Finished Quo Vadis. Go for a stroll alone.
- 25 Saturday. Busy today; several boarded etc. G.G.Davies Treorchy boarded & passed. Have great surprise -my old chum Rogers calls to see me. He is now on HS Braemar Castle- has been her 6 times. I was glad to see him. He looked well & smiled as of yore. Met one of the Welsh unit, Bevan who has recently joined us. Concert or revue at BM & d. I suppose it was a good show. But I cant say I enjoyed myself. Makeup was good , some of the singing splendid & great deal of humour but there was much vulgar suggestion running through the whole show as is generally the case in these concertts. It seems such a pity that no concert given by 1 or 2 soldiers is complete without the vulgar. It is appalling that all officers,sisters and men enjoy these suggestions. I blush with shame for my fellows when I think of this. Every sense of the beautiful and refined is sacrificed today to suit the low and vulgar tastes of the mob. Rec letter from Mabs with snaps from Anne, VJ & Miss Davies, 5, Llandybie St with a small parcel.
- 26 Sunday. Fine breezy morning. Easy, nothing doing. What is going to happen; we have only 500 patients in. Can't go to service this morning. Hope to go tonight. Afternoon off; read a chapter of Greek text. Attend service. Address on Is it I? Pts. Religion opens out ones character- takes one up to the highest also reveals the lowest; having achieved great things one realises the depth one might fall.
- 27 Glorious day. Letters from Mrs Lloyd & Rachel. All well at home. Saw Davies Treorchy & Jones. Both going on HS in the morning. Lucky chaps! Dinner to commemorate our landing in Y unit in Salonika. Would that it were to be our departure! Had a splendid dinner; concert naturally disappointing; vulgar Stories said & songs sung. CO said that we shall soon be going westward.
- 28 Fine day; many complaining of sickness. Mail up; rec letters from Rachel, VJ & Mr Llwyd
- 29 Cooler; DMS inspection of Y men. Afternoon off . Davies calls from Summerhill. He feels that he would like to enter the ministry. D is a fine chap & am sure he will do well. Go for a stroll with March. Rec letter from JJ, Phyl & paper from John
- 30 Cool & looks like rain. Big convoy of ships in the morning.
- 31 Bitter cold & wet; some discharges.
- 1/6 Fine & fresh after the rain but muddy. Busy in the morning; afternoon off. Do some washing. Take a walk through the golden cornfields with Sterling. Glorious evening, fine sunset. Return to camp; sleep with mosquito nets. DMO inspect all huts to see if nets are used.
- 2 Sunday Work as usual in the morning. 2 more dysentery cases in hospital total of 9 for the week. Fresh wind blowing; easy afternoon. Write to Minafon & to Miss Prosser. Attend Communion Service; feedaw present due no doubt to the fewness of patients. Called out from service by George Price who is in trouble again. To appear before Tribunal next Thursday. Try to state his case on paper.
- 3 Fine day. Inspection of Y men. Nothing much doing; off in the afternoon, have photos taken with Timmy and Rickup. Received letters from Mabel & one from O.Griffiths who is still free and bitterly criticising the Gov. He is obviously right & thoroughly agree with his remarks. He is free to state them. I am gagged Wrote to Mabel & quoted 2 lines of Welsh poetry for which my letter was sent to the Base Centre. What will he say I wonder?
4. Busy morning. Visit Salonika with March in the afternoon; town full of all sorts of men, soldiers of all nations; visit various shops but see nothing but toys for which exorbitant prices were charged. Manage to gain admission to the ancient St George Church which is being renovated & excavation going on. Did not get time to see all. Saw 3 Greek funerals including one of an officer judging by the many officers present. Arrive back in camp about 7pm. Call roll. Martin has words with one of the men whom he threatens & wants me for witness.
- 5 Gloomy morning. Martin drops the case-good thing for him. Rumours of Greeks taking Rupet pass; not likely. Men return from "change of air camp" Reports not over favourable; had plenty of work to do. Wrote to OG. Inoculated for cholera for the 2nd time. Rainy day. 3 men leave for Blighty.
- 6 Fine day after the rain. Nothing much to do. Few boats in again. Wrote to Mr R. Morgan. Rec letter from EJ who is in hospital again.
- 7 Glorious day. Easy day. Pay. Off in the afternoon. Shower of rain in the evening prevents my going for

- my usual walk.
- 8 Saturday- Busy morning. Rec letter from Mabel & one from Owen & papers from Abercynon. Wrote to Jones. Talk of splitting up – some men to be sent to other hospitals for the summer. Take a stroll with Luke March- enjoyable walk. Sleep out- good night's rest.
 - 9 Sunday. Fine, cool breeze blowing. Sgt Brook & Staff Fletcher going on leave to 33 Stat for 5 days. My afternoon off. Attend service at 7.15 Singing good; sermon disappointing. Subject - forgiveness. Points- That Christ taught general forgiveness is incorrect. He taught that we should forgive those who know no better, referring to the incident at the Cross, but Christ did not teach that we should forgive those who sin knowingly. He did not forgive the Pharisees but denounced them. Yet we should forgive as far as we can. Charity is very nice but justice is the fundamental principle between man and man but not between man and God. We must insist on justice which is unchangeable; charity is something which depends on moods. Never have I heard such contradictory statements in a sermon. It was all a distorted view of the Gospel to Justify circumstances.
 - 10 Monday Easy day. Wrote to Mabel, Phyl & Bill Edwards. Inspection by DMS of Y men. Jones, Treherbert approved . Radburn admitted to hospital & recommended for hospital ship. Go for a stroll with Hulme & March.
 - 11 Easy morning. Nothing doing. Hear that all A men from adjoining hospitals are to be sent away this week. No news here yet. What is it for? All L Corps already returned to base. What will the week bring I wonder I am not discouraged – I trust all will be well in His keeping. March parade for transfer. Papers sent through. Off the afternoon – do some washing. Take a walk by myself & thoroughly enjoyed it. It is well to have a quiet hour to think & commune with the unseen. Felt an inward peace. Rumours of peace offensive.
 - 12 Glorious morning. Take short walk before parade; have a view of Olympus clothed in mist but with its peak glistening in the morning sunshine. Easy morning. 10 men leave for temporary duty in a Con Home. Wrote to Jack Lloyd & Rev DJ Williams. TRPC to R.Davy. Take a walk with ? & Hulse; enjoyable evening; corn fields ripe for harvest. Fine sunset.
 - 13 Hear that the 50th is evacuating all patients. Notification that W Theo students are not exempt from Infantry. "The War Office have no objections to Welsh Theo students being transferred to Infantry". Such Is the honour of the English Government! Here is a body of men trained for preaching the Gospel of Peace enlisted specially for RAMC whom the War Office now allow to be transferred to Infantry! It needs no comments. No wonder are getting fed up with them. Our people say they will not fight. Afternoon off ; visit Radburn; looks ill. He is glad to be off from this country. Saw Lloyd- promise to send cable for him as he has no money. Take a long stroll with Jack & Mitchell. Wrote to DJ Williams, BA.
 - 14 Fresh wind blowing this morning. Busy; hear that many men (A&B) from the 43rd & 50th are off to GBD to form 2 hospitals for France. I wish I were with them. Convoy of 44 expected from 49 GHP this afternoon. Expecting a mail. Received 43 patients from 49 GHP. Over a month since we had a convoy. Working till 8 . Take a stroll with March.
 - 15 Saturday. Glorious day. Busy morning. Rec 2 letters- one from Mab & one from VJ. Hear that Mrs Jenkins my late landlady is dead- poor soul! She was a good kind lady; had a good home with her & after I left she was always kind to me for which I am afraid I did not show the gratitude I should. Mabel's 2nd paper today. She'll be going down next week. Wrote to Owens & Bill Evans. Take a walk with Hulse thro the cornfield.
 - 16 Sunday. Another glorious morning- little to do. Rec letter from Miss J.Jones Cardiff. Wrote article by AGG on Ireland- a scathing attack on England's policy. Wrote to Mrs Lloyd & ? Jones. Attend communion service at 7 pm. Few present, sermon again disappointing. Text-Decalogue. Pts. No man arranges the commandments in the same order-greatly laboured. Story of the young married couple; man comes home drunk, wife shocked; wife lies –the husband dumbfounded-different arrangement. Society opens her drawing room to man who lies, is mean & avaricious but the drunkard no. There are sins and sins- good sins and bad sins. The speaker appeared to be getting at the point that a distinction should be made between good and bad but never said so. He almost condoned many sins. He said that God is not so angry with some sins as others. Absolutely no gospel. All his preaching void of the Cross. He seems to be a man who desires to please the mob. But if he thinks he is pleasing the boys he is wrong. For the boys however they live have a keen sense of what is right and what is wrong. Heard strong condemnation of his preaching last night. March is to go away tomorrow to S Hill for reposting. Sorry to lose him. He is a fine boy; cheerful & good natured; has the making of a man in him.