

THE DIARY OF

Lieutenant HAROLD WINSTONE BUTTERWORTH

This is a transcript of Harold W Butterworth's diary. It records his days from 28 March 1915 to 27 January 1916 as he worked his passage from New Zealand to England to join the Royal Flying Corps during World War I. Just after the end of this diary he left for France where on July 15/16 1916 his aircraft was shot down and he was killed.



*"Or if on joyful wing cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot, upward I fly."*

H BUTTERWORTH

DIARY

Auckland

Sunday

28/3/15

Came aboard the Karamea at 12 last night. Slept well and started work at 5.15 am. We cleared the wharf at 5.30 am bound for Gisbourne and had a lovely run down, arriving there at 8 am on 29/3/15. The anchor was dropped about two miles off shore and at 8.15 lighters came out and started loading wool and meat for the NZ Government. (As far as is known this cargo is to go to England but it is expected that it will in the end be landed on the continent.) No one is allowed to go ashore here, but Gisbourne looks a cosy little town with hills on three sides and the ocean on the fourth.

30/3/15

Finished loading at 8 pm and left for Napier at 9 pm. Weather good.

31/3/15

Reached Napier at 6 am and are under the same restrictions as Gisbourne the boat loading from lighters just the same. Napier is a very pretty town and is on hilly country with a good number of trees about giving it a very cool and refreshing appearance.

1/4/15

We took aboard enough fresh fish to last us until we reach England today. We left Napier for Wellington at 8 pm where we finish loading for home.

2/4/15

Arrived at Wellington at 5 pm. The wind blew a gale on the way and made progress very slow. We saw the wreck of the "Devon" at the mouth of Wellington harbour. Her mast and funnel are still standing although she is broken in half just behind the funnel. The bow still remains stuck fast on the rocks but the stern is nowhere to be seen. I took the watch this evening the stewards going ashore.

3/4/15

We are laying aside the wharf loading and coaling a job that makes a terrible mess. I went ashore this evening and tried to ring up home but the wire was buzzing so that we could not hear so have got to wait till Monday, after that I bought a few books, to read on the way home, went to the pictures and returned to the boat at 10.15.

4/4/15 Sunday

The pantrymans work goes on just the same as ordinary days. I went ashore at 8 pm with one of the stewards and we walked about for two hours seeing all the main parts of Wellington. There is a big number of shops and tramways but although there are more shops than Auckland, there seems to be very few people. The roads and footpaths are very narrow but are kept in very good order and seem to be mostly of wood blocks very thickly tarred. I did not see one macadamised road in my walk about the town, whether it is they cannot get the metal or not I do not know. It being dark I was a bit disappointed at not being able to see what class of building was most prevalent but hope to be able to before leaving.

5/4/15 Easter Monday

Another fine day today and all the sailors and men who are not on watch are having a holiday. The boat will start coaling again tomorrow and will take on the rest of the cargo. I have been working all day and is my watch this evening so am not able to get ashore. Those who have been on shore have just returned at a quarter to eleven so I will turn in.

9/4/15

It has been very rough today and I have been sick all day but am still at my work.

9/4/15

Two Fridays this week, it is the first time I have had two Fridays in a week but it has to be so as to bring our time to suit the home time when we get there. I am better today although I have to be careful what I eat.

10/4/15

All well and getting on fine.

11/4/15

I have been very busy today as we have inspection every Sunday at 11 am when the Captain, Chief Steward and Chief Mate come around and inspect the boat. It has been increasingly rough ever since we left Wellington. One wave went down the funnel and also put out one of the galley fires. A big number of the cabins are flooded and the saloon alleyway door has been cracked so we are almost continually bailing it out. We have to be very careful going along the deck for fear of being washed over and cannot move half a dozen steps without hanging on. There has been quite a lot of crockery broken through falling off the tables although we have got the fiddles on. It is very hard writing as you keep sliding backwards and forwards along the seat so I think I will turn in.

12/4/15

It still continues rough and we have had several more seas over the funnel. The second cook got a soaking today he had left the skylight in the galley open and was standing under it when a big sea came over drenching him to the skin, not expecting it he gave one yell and jumped about four feet to one side upsetting several pans in his hurry (the water is icy cold.) We have travelled 1104 miles since leaving Wellington and are in Latitude 48.18 degrees S Longitude 161.32 W. A big sea smashed the bakehouse door to splinters and flooded the place out about 10 am.

13/4/15

The sea is a good deal calmer today and we have only taken a few seas aboard none of which came into the rooms.

14/4/15

All is well and the sea about the same.

15/4/15

It is a lovely day but nothing of interest has happened.

16/4/15

It is keeping fairly warm although we are getting well South.

17/4/15

One of the fresh water pipes in the engine room burst today causing a stoppage of the machinery for two hours. There was little trouble in fixing it and we are now making good progress.

18/4/15 Sunday

It has been inspection today and I have been very busy getting things cleaned up. We passed a school of whales today but could not see them very well as it is very misty. It is lovely weather otherwise and we are making fair speed now.

19/4/15

All is well.

20/4/15

It is raining today and shows signs of bad weather.

21/4/15

It is very cold today and the sea is rising again. Progress has been very slow today the distance being only 238 miles in 24 hours.

22/4/15, 23/4/15, 24/4/15, 25/4/15

Fine weather and cold but nothing of special interest.

26/4/15

Now we are at sea we turn out at 5.15 am and it is rather cold of a morning now. This morning when I came on deck it was snowing and as the morning got lighter the decks were a lovely sight with about 3 inches of snow all over them and the sea making a dark background with the white ship in front it was a picture worth seeing. As soon as it was light we saw a sailing ship about 5 miles ahead going the same direction as we were. We caught up to her about ten o'clock. She was a four masted Russian boat bound for home from NZ and Australia and was called the "Marion Lightbody". We passed about 800 yds from her she only had 4 sails set but was even then travelling about 9 knots an hour and this ship only does 10 so if she had more sails set she would have left us well behind.

27/4/15

We are now rounding the Horn and expect to arrive at Monte Video on Monday.

28/4/15

There is a fairly big swell on today but the weather is lovely and clear.

29/4/15

This is the roughest day we have had one minute the rails will be underwater and the next the propellor buzzing in the air and as you lay in your bunk you rise and fall over 30 ft on average. It has been impossible to do any scrubbing today as if you put a bucket down for a second it goes shooting around the room and if you make a grab at it ten chances to one you follow it much to ones discomfit. We had one port smashed in today and the saloon flooded out (the glass in the port is 3/4 " thick). We are now passing the Falkland Islands so expect to get better weather very shortly. The run today is only 150 miles against 258 yesterday.

30/4/15

The sea is a lot calmer today although there is a strong southerly wind blowing.

1/5/15 Saturday, 2/5/15

Fine weather and a good run.

3/5/15

It is getting a good deal warmer now. We sighted land early this morn and arrived at Monte Video at about 2 pm. We passed quite a number of boats of various classes on our way in, including 2 English cruisers one of which was a converted one called the Macedonia and the other four funneled cruiser called the Glasgow, also two cruisers and a torpedo boat belonging to Uruguay. Monte Video seems to be a very large place and is protected from the ocean by a breakwater. We were only there for 24 hours and lay in the stream while we coaled and discharged our cargo no one having leave to go ashore so one could only judge the town from the water. All the coaling and unloading is done by Italians who seem to be a very riotous lot. There were 4 police aboard all the time and it was a good job too for I think there would have been some trouble if there had not. All these men carry knives of which they seem very proud. I was talking to about half a dozen of them this evening they took their knives out and went through various movements as if stabbing a man always ending by saying finis. It costs 2½d to send a letter from here and cards a penny.

4/5/15

Coaling continued all night finishing today at 2 o'clock and we left Monte at 4 o'clock bound for Teneriffe. Monte Video is very busy at present owing to the war and the Italians seem to be very much against the Germans.

5/5/15, 6/5/15, 7/5/15

Lovely weather and a good run.

8/5/15

It is starting to get very hot now and the stewards and officers are wearing white suits. We sighted a steamer and two barques to day but were not in communication with them. This afternoon we had boat drill. At 4/30 we heard three blasts from the siren the signal for boat drill, everyone except the firemen on watch and one engineer and greaser ran up on the boat deck, the boats were swung out ready for lowering and then brought in again and fixed, after which we were dismissed. I am in No 1 boat with with the Captain and officers.

9/5/15 Sunday

There are big schools of flying fish about today. They look very much like a flock of small birds and some of them fly a considerable distance. All 5 lights are smashed now and a very keen lookout is kept.

10/5/15

Lovely calm weather but hot.

11/5/15

I was down having a look around the engine room today when I met Mr Tibbs a son of Mr Tibbs of the Auckland Grammar School, he showed me all around the engines and explained the different parts. I was very much interested and spent a very pleasant hour profiting much by it.

12/5/15, 13/5/15, 14/5/15

Lovely weather.

16/5/15

We passed two more sailing ships this morning both under full sail. We are now in the doldrums and have had three very heavy showers to day.

17/5/15

There have been some very heavy showers today the rain lashing the water to foam.

18/5/15, 19/5/15, 20/5/15, 21/5/15

We have passed quite a number of boats of various descriptions and on the 21st we past two in an hour. It is lovely weather and not near as hot as one would expect in this latitude.

22/5/15

We heard very bad news today by wireless. One thing was a big train collision in Gretna the other the sinking of the Lusitania and the loss of so many lives. We expect to arrive at Teneriffe at midnight. All is well.

23/5/15

Arrived at Teneriffe at 3.30 am and left 9 pm. Teneriffe is a very picturesque place and is situated between high hills which are very rugged. The houses are either white, pink or yellow and with the grey rocky hills well to the back, and green market gardens laid out in squares close behind the houses it is a lovely sight, but although this town is so beautiful to look at its inhabitants are a very low immoral lot. Although I would have liked to have gone ashore very much to see the town I saw all I ever want to see of its people.

24/5/15

This morn we were out of sight of land again and off for London.

25/5/15, 26/5/15

Fine weather and good progress.

27/5/15

This is the finest day we have had since leaving New Zealand the water is just like glass and the sky is a clear blue.

28/5/15

We passed a sailing ship today and ran so close together that we had to alter our course to nearly a right angle to avoid a collision. Just after we saw the boat we saw a shark alongside. It was a fine specimen and was about 10 ft long. There was also a small fish swimming just in front of it. I believe a shark has no taste or smell and this fish (which is about a foot long) always goes in front and is called the pilot, its work is to find food which the shark kills and then shares with his small friend. We ran short of meat today so I dressed up in a suit like Captain Scott went to the pole in and went from the freezing chamber through the snow boxes to the hold and got 4 sheep. It was quite a good experience to go through a tunnel lined with snow and then see thousands of carcasses of mutton all frozen and covered with snow at the end.

29/5/15

There are two officers on the bridge all the time now and there is a man kept in the crows nest all day and night.

30/5/15

We crossed the Bay of Biscay yesterday and are now running up the channel past the Channel Islands. We have passed a big number of boats today all travelling the opposite direction to us.

31/5/15

We are carrying 4,000 boxes of tomatoes from Teneriffe and 80,000 carcasses of meat from New Zealand as well as flax and wool. We have had an exciting time today coming up the channel and up the Thames as far as Tilbury where we are now laying waiting for tomorrow mornings tide. It seems wonderful that a submarine could get up the channel with the watch that is kept. There seems to be hundreds of trawlers about all with a gun mounted on the bow and there is always two or more torpedo boats or destroyers in sight. Besides this we have passed three rows of mines on the way up. At dinner time we thought it was good bye to the Karamea. A submarine rose about 200 yards off on the starboard side and about 300 yards in front of us and started coming towards us we were all watching for a torpedo to leave her when a torpedo boat fired five shots landing them about 20 yards astern of her. To our surprise instead of diving she went slowly off in another direction and the torpedo boat came up alongside her and we knew it was a British submarine at manouvres. There was also several boats at gun practice you would see a splash then there was a report and close to the target a column of spray shot up about 50 feet. All the afternoon there was an airship circling around near the mouth of the Thames evidently on watch.

1/6/15

We hardly left our moorings this morn before we stuck in the mud and had to wait until high tide just managing to get to the Albert docks in time to save us returning to Southend. After the Customs had cleared us I went by tram and bus to the YMCA Tottenham Court Road. After lunch I went to the Bank of New Zealand and to the High Commissioners where I was advised what best to do.

2/6/15

The Bank of New Zealand and the Bank of New South Wales was my destination this morn after which I went to the ship to pay off.

3/6/15

To the High Commissioner this morn and the bank. There is a great scare tonight of the Zeppelians a flight of them are reported to have been seen over Southend and the YMCA have been advised by the war office to mask all lights and get buckets ready. the consequence is there is buckets of water about and the fire hoses all run out and although it is 11.15 pm the young men are turning out by the dozen to gaze at the sky in the hopes that they will see a light. There are soldiers about in the daytime by the hundreds but the stamp of man taking the average is very poor. I was watching a squad of them shooting today and they have to pay for their ammunition themselves 2d for 7 shots. There was one man said he could not pay so he had to stand by and watch the others shoot. This to me seemed very unfair and I am sure it would not be so in NZ.

4/6/15

Today I went to the head recruiting office Whitehall and there found out that there is no men wanted for the Royal Flying Corps but men are wanted for the Naval Flying Corps especially as carpenters and mechanics but in this one has no chance of rising as they will not allow a mechanic to sit for a pilots certificated. i also went to see a friend at Regent Palace Hotel Picadilly Circus. This hotel is a wonderful piece of architecture in the front hall there are several pillars of solid marble and the walls are all granite and marble blocks very highly polished, the ceiling is plaster and is dome shaped while the floor is tiles covered with red carpets of great worth. I believe this hotel has only been open about a fortnight and has accommodation for 1,000 people.

5/6/15

This morn I went to the Regent Palace Hotel to see Mr Sanford again and we went together out to Hendon aerodrome to make inquiries about getting a commission, but have to go out again Monday to get details. We spent the day out there seeing some very good flying and one machine went up several times with 4 passengers. The people in this country are a very slow sleepy lot and have not even got a regular bus service to Hendon and if you go into tea rooms you have to wait a tremendous time before you are served.

6/6/15 Sunday

I have had a quiet day today, in the morning I wrote all the time and after lunch went for a three hours walk along the back streets ending up at St Pauls Cathedral, after that I walked half way back and then took a tube. From Tottenham Court Road to St Pauls along the back roads is not near as bad as I expected but I only carried 2// and no valuables in case I did get in bad quarters. This evening we had a nice sing and address at the YMCA which I enjoyed very much.

7/6/15

This morn I started early and have been having a general run around today. First I wrote some letters then went to the Bank. From there to Hendon to see the "Ruffy Bauman School" about training me for a commission and then back to central London and the High Commissioners.

8/6/15

Hendon again today.

9/6/15

Today I went to the Ruffy Bauman school again and made all arrangements to start with them in three days on the condition that I get in 13 hours a day enough to get me through in 9 months with some of the overtime to pay expenses. When I got back this evening I received a letter from the Government to go to Aldershot to see the adjutant there about getting into the Royal Flying Corps.

10/6/15

I left first thing this morn for Aldershot returning this evening and have to go to White Hall tomorrow to settle things and if I get fixed up allright will have to go out of the Ruffy Bauman school again and settle up with them. A ladys orchestra is giving a concert in the YMCA tonight. This concert was very good and there was some very good playing.

11/6/15

Off to Whitehall this morn where I had to wait until 12 oclock, and then was told to call at 3.30. At 3.30 I went back again, this time with more luck, for by 5.30 I had all the papers fixed up and had been medically examined, and was told to go to Brooklands on the 21st June for instruction in aviation. I was lucky to get in at all as they have had over 200 applicants in the last week some wanting to get in as mechanics and some as pilots, but because I am a colonial I was given preference.

12/6/15

At 10 this morn I set out for Hendon again where I saw Mr Ruffy and explained what had happened since last seeing him. He was glad I had got in, but was sorry that I would not be working with him. After talking for some time Mr Ruffy decided to go for a "hop" around the grounds and in the end took me with him. He was not allowed to fly around the grounds (carrying a passenger) without paying the Graham White Company a certain sum and as this meant I would have to pay 2 pounds and 2 shillings I had to be content with flying from one end of the grounds to the other, landing and then flying back. The only trouble in this method is that you cannot get higher than 70 feet but even so it was lovely. There is no feeling of fear like one seems to expect, but just a feeling of joy and exhilaration. When the engine is started you go shooting over the bumpy ground at about 50 miles per hour then the elevator is raised a little and all bumping and vibration cease, this being the only thing to tell you mother earth is left behind and you are skimming above its surface. Then up goes the elevator a little more and you slide smoothly on a soft cushion of air upwards. After flying a short distance the engine is shut off and you glide quietly back to earth switching the engine on and off several times when about a dozen feet off the ground so as to keep a good pressure under the planes and thereby land more smoothly. It is beautiful going at such a speed through the pure air seeing all nature laid out below and having such a glorious feeling of freedom.

13/6/15 Sunday

I had a fairly quiet day today. I went to the evening service in the Methodist Church and two services in the YMCA.

14/6/15

I went to the High Commissioner this morn and spent the rest of the day reading.

15/6/15

My room mate is having exams at present so the two of us went for a row on the lake this morn, so as to leave him fresh for the afternoon. This afternoon I spent studying the theory of aviation and learning the morse code which is very necessary in flying as practically all machines on active service are fitted with wireless.

16/6/15, 17/6/15

The last two days the programme has been practically the same as the 15th.

18/6/15

This morn I left first thing for Brooklands to see about getting board and lodgings, returning this evening at 6.30. (I took the train to Weybridge and walked to Brooklands where after much walking I managed to get rooms, after arranging to come down the next day, I walked on to Byfleet station where I had to wait 1¼ hours for a train.) When tea was over I went into the YMCA rifle range and "shot off" for this weeks competition which is open to all comers, soldiers included. (I have heard since that I got first prize making 2 firsts and one second in 3 weeks.) One first prize was a silver spoon, the other a gold centred silver medal, and the second prize was a silver medal.

19/6/15 Saturday

This morn I went to the Bank to change my address, from there to Regents Park, where we had a final row and finished my stay in London with a good lunch, after which I left for Brooklands.

20/6/15

I spent a quiet day today reading and writing.

21/6/15

I turned out at 4.30 this morn and went over to the aerodrome where I had a lovely flight of about 6 miles rising to the height of 1000 feet going several times around Brooklands and out over Byfleet. We shut off the engine when some distance outside the aerodrome and volplaned back. After breakfast I went over to the workshops and worked on and studied Renault engines. In the afternoon I went for a walk so as to see a bit of the country, returning at 4.30 to the aerodrome where I waited about until 7.30 on the chance that a breeze that was blowing would drop and I would be able to have a "hop".

22/6/15

This morn I spent over in the workshops studying the Gnome motor and in the afternoon practicing "morse".

23/6/15

I was on rigging today, this is the building of machines and takes in the building of the framework of planes, covering, and doping them, general assembling, and trueing up. After lunch I turned in for a few hours sleep as we get up at 4 am and by the time tea is finished in the evening it is 9 oclock after which I generally write until after eleven.

24/6/15

There has been no flying for the last three days owing to the arrival of a new commanding officer who ordered all the machines to be thoroughly overhauled. The machines were just finished in time for a flight this evening so I managed to get a flight which lasted 10 min. On Thursday I have transport work which consists of walking about amongst the different motor lorries, playing with the controlls, and if there is anything I want to know about the lorries, or engines, go to any of the mechanics and enquire.

25/6/15

I had another short flight this morning and took partial controll. Friday morn we are supposed to have a lecture, but it seems to be a myth as there has been none for the last month, nevertheless we had to sit in a room all the morning waiting and hoping.

26/6/15

This morn we were supposed to have an exam but this also seems to be a myth. After lunch I hired a bike for 6d and went for a two hour spin around the country which I enjoyed very much.

27/6/15

I have had a nice quiet day today going to church in the morning and spending the rest of the day reading and writing.

28/6/15

There is no variation in each weeks work so from now I will just speak of anything extra. One thing I forgot to mention on the 26th was that I had just received my box from London which left there exactly a week before I received it. Seven more men came to start flying this week making now a total of 16 men in A squadron and only 1 machine between the lot.

29/6/15

There was a racing motor on the track today testing tyres. I saw it travel 30 miles averaging 90 miles an hour and once for 9 miles it averaged 1 mile in 35 seconds, that is 135 feet a second.

30/6/15

It has been lovely and fine since I landed in England but this afternoon there has been a thunderstorm and a fair amount of rain. The motor was on the track again today, so I went out and took a photo of it doing 90 miles an hour. Up to the 30th have now had 1hr 20min in the air.

1/7/15

Things are jogging on just the same as usual. A new Maurice Farman biplane flew over from Hendon for us today.

2/7/15

Two new officers arrived today both of whom have just returned from the front.

3/7/15

Three men that started a fortnight before I arrived went up today and took their "tickets", a fourth man went up but when making his last landing broke the landing chassis clean away so has to go up again next week. The test for the "Pilots Ticket" is to go up to any height and do 5 figure eights, then make a landing within 50 yds of a given spot with the engine stopped. If you do that first part of the test all right you have to go up again and do another 5 eights shut off the engine and make another landing within 50 yds of the mark, then you rise to 328 ft shut off the engine and land anywhere you like in the aerodrome. This evening I went for a "flutter" with the Captain we rode to 3,000 ft and went for 20 miles keeping within a 5 mile radius of the aerodrome.

4/7/15 Sunday

We had flying this morning the same as week days but there was no workshop practice.

5/7/15

The new officer has ordered the pupils to drill every day from 11.15 to 12.15 so from now on this will be an extra in the days work.

6/7/15, 7/7/15

It has been raining and blowing this last two days making tuition impossible. On the 7th I went up to town in the afternoon to get several things necessary for training.

8/7/15

It was still raining this morn but cleared up in the afternoon but owing to the wind still continuing there was no flying.

9/7/15

I had a flight again this morn taking partial contrll and was told that I was ready for my first solo. So far I have had 3 hours in the air and have been an average height of 577 feet. This evening I went for my first solo. I rose to 500 feet doing three circuits of the aerodrome and then landing. It seemed rather strange going up alone for the first time but once I was up, there was no time to think about that, what with watching four sets of instruments, keeping the machine level and looking out for other machines and when I wanted to come down attending to the engine and choosing a landing. I did not have much time to think about other things. The different instruments are a revolution counter for the engine, and petrol tube for registering the speed, an aneroid barometer for the height and an inclinometer for the lateral stability as well as several minor instruments.

10/7/15

This morning I turned out at 4 am expecting to get another solo, but when I arrived I was quietly informed I had to go up for my ticket (after only doing 15 min solo). Two men went up before me. The first one instead of landing within 50 yds of the observer settled down quietly into a sewage farm several hundred yards away but luckily did not damage the machine. The second one did five sets of eights and the observer below waved the flag for him to come down but he kept on doing eights and the observer got so wild he walked off the field and when the man thought he must have done his five eights, but in reality had done seven there was no observer below to land to, so when he came down the Captain was so wild he would not let him go up again so he has to wait until next week to try again for his ticket. At 6.30 I was called on to go for my ticket. After waiting 15 min for the mechanics to fill up the petrol and oil tank I was ready to start off. The first thing is to give the word switch off when the mechanic swings the propellor and sucks a charge of petrol into the engine, then the mechanic says contact and you put the switch on replying contact, he swings the propellor again and off you start. I rose to 500 ft did five sets of eights keeping an eye on the observer all the time and when he waved me down throttled the engine down and glided to earth landing just where the observer was standing and running about 90 yds past the observer tearing across the field to get out of the way. I then went up for my second set of eights this time landing within the 50 yds of the observer. By this time the air was getting frightfully bumpy and all machines were on the ground the instructors finding it too rough for instruction, but they let me go on as I wanted to finish my ticket once I had started. I then went up and did another landing and after went up for my altitude. The proper test height is 328 ft but the pupils are generally told to go to 500 ft. I climbed the 500 ft in one circuit of the aerodrome and then as the regulations are, shut the engine right off to glide to earth. Just as I shut the engine off and has put the nose of the machine down to the ground I got a severe upward bump bringing the machine up level, there I hung for about 6 seconds trying to get her nose down again and was thankful when I managed it and started gliding down. I landed well within the 50 yds and went off to breakfast feeling happy that I was accepted for my ticket. This afternoon I went off to the revolver range and had my first practice with the revolver, firing 25 rounds. There was no flying this evening as it was too windy.

11/7/15 Sunday

It is blowing and raining again today and I have spent the whole day writing.

12/7/15

This morn I went for my first ride in a Maurice Farman Shorthorn.

13/7/15

I got leave today to go to London to get measured for my uniform. The outfit for a pilot in the RFC costs just over 50 pounds. The price of a pair of boots we have to get is at the cheapest 4 pounds and one has to be careful in ordering things or he will exceed the 50 pounds allowed to each man to pay for his kit.

14/7/15

It has been raining today so there has been no flying.

15/7/15

I had my first squad of men to drill today and got on better than I expected, although making several slight mistakes.

16/7/15

This evening I went up with the Captain who did some "stunt" turns, in some cases banking over to 90 degrees.

17/7/15

Raining and blowing again today so I got leave to go up to London to have my uniform fitted and get a flying cap, flying gloves and several other necessary articles.

18/7/15 Sunday

Flying again this morn. I went for a 20 mile solo flight this morn rising to 2200 ft and at times travelling 70 miles an hour. I went out over Byfleet, Weybridge, Addlestone and the surrounding country. After breakfast I changed my clothes and went to church returning at 12.15, when I had lunch and spent the rest of the day writing.

19/7/15

I went up again this morn and had the roughest trip I have had so far. One of the most severe bumps the machine dropped clean from under me and I must have been inches off the seat for I could see right over the windscreen and the belt which is around ones waist was quite tight. As I was shooting up off the seat I gave the elevator a vigorous pull and thereby managed to keep the speed constant until I once more settled down again. It is great sport up on a bumpy day and as you first overcome one bump and then another you have a great feeling of joy over your imitation of the bird and the freeness of the air.

20/7/15

It is raining again this morn so there is no flying and I have got leave to go to London and get my uniform fitted again. I met Mr Sanford in town and was exceedingly pleased to hear that he is at last granted a commission in the RNAS (after waiting for over a month). No flying again this evening as it is too windy for pupils.

21/7/15

Windy weather today so there is no flying.

22/7/15

There is no flying this morn owing to wind and rain. We had a lecture on the Lewis machine gun this morn which proved very interesting.

23/7/15

It is still blowing a gale and we had a thunderstorm today.

24/7/15, 25/7/15, 26/7/15, 27/7/15, 28/7/15, 29/7/15

We have had a thunderstorm practically every day accompanied by a good deal of wind. There has been practically no flying for pupils.

28/7/15, 29/7/15

Windy with occasional showers.

30/7/15

A lovely morn for flying this morn but my luck again, I did not get any. Flying started at 4.30 and before 1 hr had passed 2 machines were smashed and the engine on the third machine broke down. The first machine broke the chassis in landing and the second ran into a fence.

31/7/15

No flying this week end owing to the machines being broken. There is a Mr Snook from Australia staying at the Aviary and as there was no flying he asked me to come up to his aunties place in Bexley for the week end. I went in my uniform which I am now entitled to wear. We hired a boat and went for a row on the Thames in the afternoon after which we went to Bexley where we spent a very pleasant evening singing and talking.

1/8/15 Bexley

This morn we went for a walk in Bexley woods and over the common. The woods are very pretty and are mostly silver birch trees with one kind of fern growing underneath but they do not nearly equal the NZ bush. One thing a NZ misses greatly is the beautiful undergrowth and the nice cool valleys of his own country. I saw in these woods an old Roman well 150 ft deep, there were also several chalk pits about 50 ft deep. (The chalk from these pits was evidently used for lime on the surrounding country. I went down into a large chalk pit which was about 70 ft deep and 120 ft wide the floor of the pit was almost completely covered with elder trees and fern. We returned for lunch at 1.30 and after spent a quiet afternoon sitting in the garden talking. I forgot to mention that my kind host was Mr Ede and a great lover of nature I enjoyed the walk through the woods with him very much. After tea Mr Snook and myself set off for Brooklands where we arrived at 11.15 after a very enjoyable time.

2/8/15

It is bank holiday today and the mechanics have had a day off so there had been no flying or work. I went for a 2 hours walk this afternoon and spent the rest of the time reading.

3/8/15

Pouring in torrents this morn and blowing all day consequently no flying.

4/8/15

I went to London today to see about my army pay and as there was a man going up to London from the Aviary in his private car I went with him. The run from Byfleet to London by road is very pretty and a big part of the way is between avenues of trees which at this time of year are very beautiful. The distance is 21 miles and we took 45 min to do it.

5/8/15

The only thing of any interest today was flying this evening. I set off the same as usual but when about 300 ft up and outside the aerodrome over the railway a connecting rod in the engine broke this getting mixed inside bent another connecting rod double, broke the cam shaft and crank shaft, smashed one cylinder and tore two holes in the crank casing. As soon as I heard the engine was at fault I shut off the throttle but this being regulated badly would not stop the engine so I switched off and turned the machine round just having room to glide back and land in the aerodrome. I landed all right and we then had the joy of wheeling the machine for about half a mile back to the sheds.

6/8/15

All the pupils at the Aviary went for a row on the Thames this afternoon. One rode his bike there and the other four went in a car. We went on the river in two canoes and had great sport after which we returned to Brooklands in time for evening flying.

7/8/15

I had a fine fly over towards Staines this morn. After lunch today we all went on the river again but this time hired a launch. We left Weybridge at 3 and went up the river as far as Maidenhead that evening. We slept on the launch all night and next day went up to Cookham returning to Weybridge in the afternoon. The houses on the banks of the Thames from Windsor up are lovely and the gardens with the river in front are a beautiful picture. We had a fine view of Windsor Castle and I took several photos from the river. I tried to get a photo of Eaton college from one of the locks near Windsor but the lock keeper stopped me and I was told that no photos were allowed to be taken anywhere near Windsor Castle but I did not mind much as I had already taken all I wanted of the castle. Eaton was about the only other photo I wanted. The launch cost us 7 shillings each for the two days and 3d for each lock and as we took our lunch with us it was a fairly cheap trip.

9/8/15, 10/8/15

Showery weather

11/8/15

At 10 am today I was told to report at Netheravon before 9.30 pm for higher instruction in aviation. I packed my things and left Brooklands for the 3.43 train from Weybridge. I arrived at Pewsey station at 6.55 where there was a light tender waiting to take me and my boxes to the aerodrome where I arrived at 7.30.

12/8/15

The rooms here are very comfortable and the officers are very well looked after. I had my first flight on the Henri Farman today. This type of machine is different in the controls to the Maurice. The Maurice has a segment of a wheel for the control of the ailerons and elevator, while the Henri has a joy stick, the rudder controls on the Maurice are peddles and on the Henri a rudder bar so the controls are rather strange at first after the Maurice. The programme of work here is practically the same as at Brooklands except that we have longer at it and also have wireless practice.

13/8/15

I had about half an hour flying this evening after which I was told I was ready for solos as I have done about two more landings.

14/8/15

I had 30 min flying this morn and then was told to go up for my first solo on the Henri. I got on all right and did one circuit of the aerodrome and a landing. I am squadron orderly officer today and have to inspect the men on parade and send them off to their work, after this I got around to inspect the barracks and when it is time to stop work go and see that the sheds are locked up and dismiss the men.

15/8/15

Today has been a good easy day, practically all I had to do was to start and stop the men at the working parade. This evening I went for a walk down towards the village and attended service at the English Church.

16/8/15

I had No 8 squadron to drill this morn and I was kept pretty busy. I also had a good flight on the Henri today and went for an hour solo.

17/8/15

All the lieutenants and second lieutenants went over to Uperavon in a light tender today to attend a lecture there. I had over an hours solo again today which I thoroughly enjoyed.

18/8/15

We have got two Henri Farmans between four of us in the flight I am in and as one man has smashed the two in as many days there has been no flying today. I am orderly officer again today and have been busy inspecting barracks and drilling men.

19/8/15

No flying again today owing to the machines still being smashed. It has been very misty weather and fairly hot lately. We had drill parade again this morn and doubled 3/4 of a mile up the road and then when returning doubled 1/2 a mile back.

20/8/15

I went up in a Vickers gun carrying biplane today with the instructor.

21/8/15

I got week end leave this week end and this morn set off for Somerset. Flying Corps officers are not allowed to go on leave in uniform so I had to go in mufti. A light tender leaves Netheravon to take officers in to Pewsey to catch the 9.20 train to Paddington every Saturday so I went in it and waited 3/4 hour for my own train. I went via Trowbridge, Bath, Bristol and Western Supermere where I left the train and went the rest of the distance by car. I spent a very enjoyable time with Mr I Davis leaving the next day at 10.30. The country near and in Somerset is very pretty and I have quite taken a fancy to the country in England.

22/8/15

I left Mr Davis place at 11.30 in a car for Western Supermere as there is no trains running on the light railway Sunday morn. I arrived at Pewsey again at 6.20 after waiting at Bath and Strawbridge for 2 hours at each place. At Pewsey I went to the English Church until 8 and then after waiting for 3/4 more the light tender came down to meet the 8.45 train from Paddington and I finished the rest of the journey arriving at Netheravon again at 9.30.

23/8/15

There has been practically nothing doing today.

24/8/15

At every drill parade now we double 3/4 mile to get us a bit fit. I had a fine flight of 3/4 hr today the air was extremely bumpy but if one is not nervous a bumpy day is lovely and I thoroughly enjoy the different movements of the machine etc

25/8/15, 26/8/15

We have been having very misty weather lately.

27/8/15

I was just setting off on a cross country flight to Salisbury this evening when my distributor wire from the magneto came off stopping the engine instantly. At the time I was 1400 ft up and about 1 3/4 miles from home. I pushed the nose of the machine down and turned her round towards home gliding down and making a good landing about a 1/4 mile from the sheds.

28/8/15

Nothing of interest at all today.

29/8/15 Sunday

This evening I went for a stroll down to the village and attended the English Church.

30/8/15

I have been wing orderly today. The wing orderlys duties are to hoist the correct flag for flying in the morning and see that the correct flag is kept hoisted all day. To visit breakfast at 7 and 7.45. Attend working parade at 8.45. Inspect all barracks. Inspect rations and sign ration book. Visit the institute. Visit dinners at 12.30 and 1.15. Inspect fire engine and appliances. Test the ambulance. Attend fire parade and see it is properly carried out. Mount the guard at 6 pm. Collect absentee reports and see lights out at 10 pm. Turn out the guard and visit aeroplane sheds, workshops etc after 10 pm. I also had to go into Amesbury to the bank.

31/8/15

I had a fine cross country flight this morn down to Salisbury and back, I circled around over the spire of the cathedral at 4,000 ft and then set off back home again. There is very little to see when doing cross country here as there are very few villages about and the country has very few trees or lakes about.

1/9/15

We have had a fair amount of rain today. This evening I went up in an Avro taking partial control.

2/9/15

I had another trip in the Avro again this evening.

3/9/15

Bad weather again today but I managed to get a flight this evening. I spent the afternoon today making drawings of a new mounting for the Lewis machine gun to be used in aeroplanes. Yesterday afternoon I forgot to mention that we were signalling by lamp to another party about a mile away.

4/9/15

It has been fairly cold this last few days and especially this morn. I had a lovely flight in the Avro this morn (dual control) and when we came down the induction pipe was covered with ice.

5/9/15

I spent practically all this morn in the workshop. This evening I attended service in the church at Addleton.

6/9/15

There was a fine array of machines in front of the sheds this morn prior to no 12 squadron leaving for France. There was nothing much to see as they left as they only went off 1 machine every 10 minutes so there were only 2 machines in sight at a time. The squadron was made up completely of BE2C.

7/9/15, 8/9/15

Weather fairly cold and misty in the mornings.

9/9/15

I went for my first solo on the Avro this evening. This machine is very different to the machines I have been flying the main difference being that the Avro is a tractor and the others pusher machines.

10/9/15, 11/9/15

It has been fairly rough weather this last two days.

12/9/15

There was the usual work this morn and this evening I went to Addleton church. After church I went to supper with the vicar returning about 9.30.

13/9/15, 14/9/15

I have done about 2 hours solo on the Avro this last 2 days.

15/9/15

I went for my first solo on the Armstrong Whitworth this morn and got on fine.

16/9/15, 17/9/15

Several solos on the Armstrong Whitworth. This machine is rather nice and is fairly stable.

18/9/15

I went for a stroll down the village this afternoon and quite enjoyed the cool walk in the evening air.

19/9/15

I have spent practically all today writing and drawing.

20/9/15, 21/9/15

I had a little practice with the wireless set this morn. It has been blowing very hard this last two days. All the machines are being repaired and I have not had a flight for five days now.

22/9/15

I have had quite a lot of flying today and this evening I went for a solo on a BE8 or (Blaster as it is christened). This machine has a wheel control for the ailerons this is different to any others I have flown. I had only got up to about 200 ft on my first solo on the BE8 when my engine stopped due to the petrol pipe becoming blocked. I landed well about ¾ mile from the sheds and after working on the engine for about ½ hour managed to get her running and taxied back.

23/9/15

It has been raining nearly all day today.

24/9/15

I had another flight on the BE8 again today and also flew the Armstrong Whitworth. I saw a fine exhibition of flying today by a Mr Barnwell on a Vickers scout. He flew to Upavon to show what the machine could do and on his way to Upavon passed over Netheravon. He came down within 70 ft of the ground and travelled at 120 miles an hour with the nose of the machinery slightly down. He also had the wind which was blowing at 20 miles an hour with him making his speed over the ground 140 miles an hour and my word the speed seemed terrific. After passing over us he went to Upavon which is about 2 ½ miles away. At Upavon I saw him loop the loop 6 times and instead of putting her nose down as is usually the case he put the nose straight up and looped without diving at all in the first place. I also saw him do two loops starting the first one only 300 ft up and finishing the second one at about 100 ft. The machine is marvellous and when he passed over Netheravon on his way to Upavon he "zumed" (put the nose of the machine almost vertical) from 100 ft to 1500 ft and shot up like a rocket into the clouds which were about 1500 ft high. The machine was fitted with a 100 HP Monosoupape Gnome motor. Although this machine flies normally at 110 MPH she can land at 55 MPH which is slower than other machines that fly at 75 MPH can land.

25/9/15

I walked to Bulford and took a train to Salisbury this evening where I wanted to get several things, I also went to the pictures there where I expected to see a good programme but I was much dissapointed for they first of all had a small play then showed some pictures after which a girl danced and sang. By this time I had got properly "fed up" so left and I never want to see such "dud" shows again as long as I live. I went into Salisbury with Mr Johnston a Scotchman I had met at Netheravon. We caught the only train there was back to Bulford where we arrived at 12.35. We were lucky in catching a RPC 3 ton lorry there and set off home arriving at 1.40 after loosing our way and going 4 miles on a wrong road.

26/9/15

It has been raining today so beyond doing the ordinary work at the sheds I have not been out.

27/9/15

I flew over towards Devize today but owing to the clouds being too low I could not go right there, as it was I was well into the clouds and could not see a thing at 1000 ft up so came back.

28/9/15

I had nearly 1 hour flying this morn but this afternoon it has been pouring in torrents. It is very cold today.

29/9/15, 30/9/15

It has been blowing hard all day and it is very cold.

31/9/15

I went up on a Curtiss today for the first time. They are rather nice in the air but are tricky to land.

1/10/15 and 2/10/15

I set out on my cross country flight for my wings today and had to go from Netheravon to Warminster, Frome, Malmesbury, Swindon and home again. I got on fine until I reached Malmesbury but about 5 minutes after I left there the engine started to miss and a short time after stopped. I glided about 4 miles and landed safely in a large field. I had hardly landed 10 minutes when a nice young lady from a house near brought me a big jug of tea and some cake. After I had refreshed myself I picked several men out of the crowd that had gathered and got them to help me to wheel the machine to the side of the field. Here I examined her and found that the cover had come off the make and break in the magneto and it had become full of oil. After I found out the trouble I left a man in charge of the machine and went to the post office and sent a telegram to Netheravon telling where I had landed and also the cause. After this I went back with the owner of the field (Mr White) in his car and had some tea after which I went back to the machine and dismissed the man giving him a couple of shillings. At supper time I went up and had supper and sat and talked until 9.30 when I borrowed some rope and two horse rugs and went back to spend the night with the machine as a pilot is not allowed to leave a machine unguarded. I then tied her nose down and rolled up in the rugs and slept. At 1 I woke up with the patter of rain on the plane so got up to see everything was right and then turned in again. I woke at 6 o'clock and went to Mr Whites for breakfast where I stayed until 9.30 because of the rain. At 9.30 the rain eased a little so I went down and cleaned the magnetor and distributor ring and got the machine ready for flying. The clouds were only 300 ft up so I went off to ring up Netheravon to let them know I would not be coming on that day. Meanwhile seeing that it was a bad day and that I may start the OC sent out a tender with Capt Windham and 3 mechanics so when I returned I found them with the machine. We decided that the clouds were too low to fly back so went off with a gentleman who asked us to his house to have lunch. At 3 o'clock we returned to the machine and as the weather was slightly better (but still very bad) Captain Wadham decided to try and get back. He flew all the way over towns and woods at only 900 ft and under, and when he came to the Marlborough hills had to go right up through the clouds to get over. After the Captain had gone 10 minutes we set off back in the light tender arriving at Netheravon at 7 pm.

3/10/15

I had a fairly quiet day today and went to the English church in the evening.

4/10/15

I did my landings before the Colonel for my wings today and landed each time close on the mark and was told they were very good.

5/10/15

I went over to the Central Flying School today for my exams and passed alright getting very high marks on engine, wireless and rigging. I got 90% for cross country flying and 95% for wireless but these are the only marks I remember.

6/10/15

I heard today that I have qualified for my wings alright. I went up in an Armstrong Whitworth this afternoon and did some wireless practice from the air. It is very interesting observing from the air and sending the reports down by wireless.

7/10/15

I went up for 1 1/2 hours taking photos today and got very good results. It is fairly hard to pilot a machine and change the plates in a camera at the same time but one soon gets used to it. I took several photos from 8,000 ft but the difference in height from 4,000 ft up as seen with the naked eye hardly seems to alter in going 3,000 ft.

8/10/15

I have had quite a lot of flying today and took my first passenger up for a 40 minute flight.

9/10/15 and 10/10/15

I am in charge of 21 squadron today as most of the officers have gone away. It is blowing quite a gale and it is very cold.

11/10/15

Today has been very rough and this morn I was the only pilot flying.

12/10/15

I am in charge of the flight again today as my captain has had a forced landing. I went up on the Curtiss this morn and broke all records for height 6,000 ft on this type of machine for Netheravon. There was very strong southerly blowing and I went to Salisbury. It took me 3/4 hour to go to Salisbury and under 10 minutes to come back. At 6,000 ft I could see the Isle of White quite plain and could also see the boats on the water around it.

13/10/15

There has been great doings here today. There has been fancy flying and fights in the air for the purpose of taking films for moving pictures. I went up on a Curtiss and just did some ordinary flying and helped by making one extra in the air. If ever this film is shown in NZ I was the first Curtiss to lead off so can be recognised by that. I took several photos of the bomb dropping and am hoping they will turn out all right.

14/10/15

I have done quite a lot of flying today and have taken seven passengers up, three on the Armstrong Whitworth to show them the aerodrome, two on the Curtiss for instruction, one on the Curtiss and one on the Armstrong for joy rides.

15/10/15

It has been fairly misty today. This afternoon I took two more new men up on the Curtiss to instruct them. About 3 o'clock this afternoon a man who has been here for the last week set off to do a circuit of the aerodrome on a Curtiss and when about 1/2 way around lost his way. We waited for 1/2 an hour for him to return and then I set off with a passenger in the Armstrong to look for him. After flying for nearly 3/4 hour we found him down near Salisbury heading towards Warminster and he would have passed about 4 miles to the left of the aerodrome. I brought the machine I was in down to the same level and circled around him and then set off back, he following. When we got back he said he had lost his way and landed near Salisbury to ask the way. He then set off again and lost his way a second time so when he saw us decided to follow knowing that the machine would be going to an aerodrome.

16/10/15

All the flying I did this morn was to test a Curtiss and take a passenger up on an Armstrong. I took a run into Salisbury this evening and went to the theatre and a worse show I never saw in all my life.

17/10/15

There has just been the ordinary Sunday mornings work this morn. This afternoon I spent writing and went to church in the evening.

18/10/15

I took an observer today and went out to practice artillery observation.

19/10/15

I have had a grand day today I took an observer up to write out a report of what he saw while I took photographs. We set off about 11 am and flew down to Christchurch, where we turned and went to Bournemouth, taking photos all the time of different towns we passed. It was a very cloudy day but we went above the clouds and took photos through the gaps in them. We were in the air for 2 hrs and 10 minutes so must have travelled, (including the time we circled around towns) quite 120 miles. After the photos were printed I got the credit of taking the best photos from the air that the photographic officer had ever seen. In the afternoon I took an observer up to practice artillery observation.

20/10/15

I have been busy instructing today. This evening I flew another type of machine which was a Martinside scout. These are very small machines but well built and fly at 80 mph on the level. These machines climb very well and with the nose slightly down fly at 100 mph. After dark this evening I did my first night flying. This I am rather happy over as there are very few of the best pilots in the army that have flown at night. It is rather a funny sensation going through space and not being able to see the ground. I passed over Bulford and Tidworth camps and the lights were very pretty all arranged in groups and the whole lot making quite a pretty picture.

21/10/15

I have been busy instructing today.

22/10/15

I had word today that I am to be moved from 21 squadron to no 8 squadron as instructor. This evening Mr Johnston a friend of mine and I set off for London on weekend leave. We arrived there at 8.30 and went to the Strand Palace Hotel for the night.

23/10/15

This morn I went to the High Commissioners office and several other places on business, one being Stirlings to get some crystals for wireless purposes. I met my friend again at 12.10 and we had some lunch after which we went to the YMCA and at 2 o'clock went to the opera and saw Romeo and Juliet. It is a lovely play and the music is magnificent. After the opera we did a little shopping, had some supper and then set off for Netheravon where we arrived at 12.30 Sunday morn.

24/10/15

I spent a nice quiet day today reading and writing.

25/10/15

Today I started in my new squadron and spent the day rigging Henri Farmans.

26/10/15

I have been busy rigging again today and have only been up once. It has been very windy this last few days. I was vaccinated this morn and at 11 oclock went to Tidworth and had a tooth that had broken off extracted.

27/10/15

I have been fairly busy today instructing. It is very funny flying a pusher again after flying tractors so long and it is like going on to a completely new machine.

28/10/15, 29/10/15

There has been very little doing besides sending pupils up on different machines and noticing what they do wrong. I expect to start instructing with dual controll very shortly.

30/10/15

I was supposed to go on leave today but I was so light headed and sick through vaccination I went to bed.

31/10/15, 1/11/15 to 6/11/15

Still in bed but slightly better.

7/11/15

I went to Tidsworth hospital today.

8/11/15

It is very comfortable here.

9/11/15

Today I was sent off to a convalescent home at Newbury belonging to Mrs Luke.

10/11/15 to 14/11/15

I have spent a very pleasant time here and have been out nearly every day to evenings, lunch, tea, or supper, I went to Mr Savilles house for supper yesterday and had a great talk for I found he was a son of Mr Saville of Shaw Saville and Albion Co shipping merchants. I also had an invitation from Lady Abuthnet to her house for tea any day next week but as I am feeling quite well again now I hope to get back to Netheravon before the time comes off.

15/11/15

I spent a busy day today writing Xmas cards and sending them off.

16/11/15

I returned to Netheravon today and right glad I was to be feeling fit again.

17/11/15

Started flying again today and it was good. I took several passengers up on the Henri.

18/11/15

Today I started instructing dual control on the Henri and made good progress.

19/11/15

Instructing again this morn. At noon I set off with an observer to take photos over Newbury but ran into a bank of fog so had to return.

20/11/15

The usual work again this morn and after lunch went out for revolver practice.

21/11/15

I had to attend the flight this morn and spent the afternoon writing. This evening I went down to the Methodist Church and as the minister did not turn up I spoke on the Sunday Schools in NZ and the work amongst the Maoris.

22/11/15 and 23/11/15

There has been the usual work.

24/11/15

I had some good sport this morn, there was a fog on the ground so I went up to see if it was possible to instruct. I had not got to 100 ft when I ran into a very thick bank of it and did not see the ground again for over 20 min, all of this time I was completely lost so the first chance I got to see the ground I landed, and found out where I was. I had kept as near as possible going around in circles but even then I was 3 miles from Netheravon, so I set off again and passed over Netheravon at 200 ft but the fog was so bad I could see nothing of it so landed 1/2 mile the other side. This time knowing I had good country between me and the sheds I flew lower and managed to get back.

25/11/15

I was busy instructing this morn when an inlet valve broke and the machine caught fire. I landed straight away and with the help of the pupil managed to get the flames out in about 5 min. I managed to keep the flames off the planes and there was not more than 5 shillings worth of damage done. I landed quite well but the machine had to be towed back because of the engine being broken.

26/11/15

I had hardly started instructing this morn when a mechanic told me one of the machines I am responsible for had a forced landing so I put my pupil out of the machine and went out to it and found that the engine had suddenly "cut out" due to ignition trouble so I flew back and brought out a tender and some mechanics and after 2 hrs was able to fly the machine back.

27/11/15

I went on leave today and took a run down to Weston S.M. to see my Auntie. I had a very pleasant time and they were very pleased to see me. I left Netheravon at 8.30 and arrived at Ebdon at 2 pm where I saw my cousin and then went on to "Dynever House" Barnwell a place just out of Weston Super More where I arrived at my Aunties at 4 pm.

28/11/15 Barnwell

I set off for Netheravon again this morn at 11 am arriving there at 9.15 pm. I had a good long wait at Trowbridge and when I got to Bath had 2 1/2 hrs wait so hired a taxi and had a look around. All places of interest were closed it being Sunday but I got a peep at the Roman Baths through the windows and by the little I could see they seemed to be lovely, so I intend to go and have a good look round Bath, the first week day I can get off.

29/11/15

It has been very rough today.

30/11/15

I was busy instructing this morn and the pupil had controll when a connecting rod in the engine broke. I switched off instantly and took controll, we were only 90 ft high at the time so had no chance of picking a landing ground. I landed her allright but the machine running forward after landing hit a raised road and broke a landing wire and bent and axle. I got a tender out and some mechanics and fixed the axle and wire and at 2 in the afternoon fixed the tail of the machine to the tender and started towing it back but the ground was so wet and soft that even with chains on the wheels the tenders wheels just buzzed round and she would not shift. We tried putting sacks under the wheels but as soon as she got off them she stopped again so I had to get 10 men down and tow the machine until we got about 1/2 a mile further on where the ground was better and the tender could get a hold. Eventually we reached the sheds at 5.30.

1/12/15 to 9/12/15

It has been very rainy windy and foggy this last week. I took a flight each day but could only get in 1 hrs instructing in the week.

10/12/15, 11/12/15, 12/12/15

Very windy and wet.

13/12/15

It has been quite a nice day today and this evening I drove into Salisbury with a friend in his car. We went to the theatre but it was nearly as bad as the last time we went.

14/12/15

I flew a Voisin this morn for the first time. This is a very large machine and carries three people. It has a Canton Unni engine of 140 horse power. I got on fine with it and found it rather a nice machine to fly. I just landed and it started to snow and kept on for about an hour. There was just enough to make the ground as white as if there had been a very heavy frost. Last week although it was such bad weather it was quite warm but this week the frosts have started again.

15/12/15

I had another run on the Voisin today and this time took a passenger.

16/12/15

I did 3/4 hr instructing this morn and then it started to rain and has continued all day.

17/12/15, 18/12/15, 19/12/15

Raining and blowing very little flying. I have now got 5 pupils in the flight an only me instructing so it is a job to give them much time in the air at all this bad weather.

20/12/15

I received word at about 10 this morn to proceed to Castle Bromich (an aerodrome just out of Birmingham on the east side) at once to take a machine up North to Cattrick Bridge a distance of about 250 miles. I arrived at Castle Bromich at 4 pm and was sent to a billet.

21/12/15

It is very foggy today and there is a fairly strong north wind. I forgot to mention that there are two machines to be sent North and another officer was sent from Netheravon to take the second one. The machine my mate flew was a Longhorn Maurice Farman. We set out at 12 am and after 2 1/2 hrs run landed at Loughborough with my petrol tank leaking. We left the machines at the Brush Engineering Co to be fixed and went to the Bulls Head Hotel where we spent the night.

22/12/15

This morn was wet and foggy. I spent an hour looking over a portion of the Brush Co works which I found very interesting. One thing I noticed particularly was the number of machines not working due to the want of men. Some of the machines there were marvellous and I wish I had a day to look at things more carefully. I saw portions of large steam turbines, the casings of 4 inch shells and electric motors and dynamos being made. You see quite small boys working different power driven machines (most of the machines the boys work on turning out stampings of various parts of turbines, and dynamos), and girls do quite a large amount of the wiring of the dynamos and motors. I saw several steam hammers working and they set their largest hammer working to show me, this hammer when striking a full blow hits with a force of 40 ton. I intend to try and get through several of the large engineering firms in my New Years leave. We set off on our journey again in the afternoon after getting the tanks filled with petrol and oil. We flew abreast until we got to Nottingham where the fog was so thick I lost sight of the other machine and when I got north of Nottingham I could only occasionally see the ground when flying at 300 ft. When over East Retford after flying for 1 1/2 hrs the baffle plate that keeps the exhaust off the centre struts came off and broke the propellor. I shut off straight away and landed. I hardly reached the ground before the usual crowd arrived but the police turned up almost as quick and I left the machine in their charge and proceeded to get a guard from a neighbouring military camp to look after her for the night. After this I pegged her down and sent off for a new propellor. Several officers from the 5th Durham Light Infantry invited me along to their mess where I spent the night.

23/12/15

This morn a gentleman offered his services with his car to take some petrol along to the machine and as mechanics arrived with a propellor at 10 am he also drove them along. At 2.30 the machine was ready again and I set off to do the rest of the journey. I arrived safely at Cattrick Bridge at 4.15 just 1/4 hr before dark. I found when I got there that they had just received word of my mate who had lost his way and landed about 6 miles off and broke a wheel of his undercarriage.

24/12/15

I set off for Netheravon by the 10.45 am train which reached London at 5 pm. I then went to the bank and afterwards set off on another 3 hrs run in the train to Salisbury. At Salisbury I met an RFC tender and arrived at Netheravon at 10 pm.

25/12/15 Christmas

I went up to the sheds this morn and carried on work the same as usual. For dinner we had turkey and plum duff and after dinner I went for a long walk across the plain returning in time for tea. After supper I had a dip and turned in early thus ending a very uneventful Christmas away from home.

26/12/15 Sunday

Work as usual this morn. This afternoon I spent writing and went to church in the evening. After church I had supper with the vicar and spent the evening talking.

27/12/15

There is almost a hurricane blowing today. A new shed that was being built to hold 20 machines was blown down and a tent that was put up for an RE7 was also blown down.

28/12/15

It is raining today but the wind is not near as strong as yesterday.

29/12/15

The weather is much better today and this afternoon I flew a Vickers fighter for the first time. She has a 100 HP Monosoupape Gnome driving the propellor and she climbed fine.

30/12/15

The weather has been very bad today. This afternoon I took the Voisin up with two passengers in she climbed very well and we reached 1,500 ft in 15 minutes. We attracted quite a lot of attention as one very rarely sees more than one passenger on a military machine and in six months I have only seen one machine take two passengers up as well as the pilot and this was done just to see what the machine would lift. The Voisin climbed so well with three in that the first fine day I get I intend to take up three passengers making a total of four aboard. This evening I set off for London on 3 days leave. I arrived there at 8.30 and went to the Kingsley Hotel with another New Zealander from Nelson who is in the RFC.

31/12/15

I sent some money off to NZ and did some shopping this morn. I also went to the High Commissioners and was sorry to hear that Mr Donne has been laid up for the past month. After lunch I went to South Kensington Museum and spent several very interesting hours but of course did not see 1/4 of it and in fact did not even see the whole of the Science Museum. I returned to the hotel at 6 pm had some supper and then went to see the opera "Madam Butterfly" at the Shaftesbury Theatre. The first act was very slow but the other two were fine and the music was also very good.

1/1/15 (16)

This morn we went to the war museum at the war office where they have a very fine collection of instruments of war and some very fine scale models of ships and big gun mountings. After lunch we went to Madame Tussards wax works which we found very interesting and lifelike and then later saw the first moving pictures ever taken under the ocean, these were extremely interesting and some of the animal life under water was marvellous. It showed the sponges growing and the fishes swimming about amongst them and the various shapes of coral. It also showed diving operations and the sponge industry / both collecting them under water and the work with them on shore. There was also a fight with a shark but this looked as if it were faked. After this we returned to the hotel had supper and then went to the YMCA where we had some shots on the rifle range and later went to the opera "Il Travatore" at the Shaftesbury Theatre. This opera is simply lovely right through and the music and scenery are magnificent.

2/1/15 (16)

This morn I went with my friend to his Grandmothers who lives near Crystal Palace. I spent quite a nice day there and in the evening we went to Crystal Palace. Everything is cleared out of the Palace at present and it is full of Naval men. The buildings are lovely and what we could see of a few palms and ferns that were left and also the crystal fountain the place must have been really lovely when in full swing. I caught the seven oclock train from Paddington this evening and arrived at Netheravon at 9.35.

3/1/15 (16)

There was not much flying today. I managed to do a little instructing and also took the Voisin up three times with various passengers.

4/1/16, 5/1/16

Weather bad. I did a little dual controll.

6/1/16

I took an officer up in a Henri today and let him have controll for his first time without previous instruction on any machine. It was very funny, the machine instantly started turning and also dropped her wing, I corrected the machine several times but whenever I gave over the controls she started doing the same thing and all the officer did was to hold the controls tight and just let her go where she wanted.

7/1/16

An observer was boasting as to what he would do with an aeroplane if he had the chance so I took him up and let him have controll for his first time (he swore he could fly it for 2 mins). This man certainly tried a good deal more than the man did yesterday but the machine got into some weird and wonderful positions. The machine got a slight upward bump on the tail so he pushed the stick forward (too much) and then he started seesawing backwards and forwards untill at last he got out of step with the machine or forgot which way the controls worked or something, and put her nose down when he should have brought it up with the consequence that we nose dived after him only having controll 1/4 of a minute. I set the machine straight again and after giving him a short flight landed, with much of his former confidence in himself shaken.

8/1/16

I did quite a lot of dual work this morn and later when it was too rough for dual controll I took a sergeant up in the Voisin to take photographs. We went as far as Marlborough and took photos of all the small villages between here and there. We got to 7,200 ft in 70 minutes and had quite a glorious run.

9/1/16 Sunday

Work just the same as usual today.

10/1/16, 11/1/16, 12/1/16

I have been flying each day but the weather is totally unfit for instructional purposes.

13/1/16

A new squadron is being started at Netheravon and I had to hand over all my pets to them (Henri Farmans) and instead of Henris I am going to have Avro's. I will have five Avros and one BE2C. I am keeping the 2C for my own use when too rough for instructing and have arranged with the flight commander of A flight that he will let me have a Martinside Scout occasionally in exchange for a flight on the BE2C so that besides instructing I will have a little practice on other machines. I took a passenger up on the Voisin today on photography as it was far too rough for instructing. We went to Pewsey and Andover and were away for 2 hrs 5 min, in this time we had been to 10,000 ft. We set straight off into wind and by the time we reached Pewsey were 5,500 ft, from then I steered dead into wind by compass until we reached 10,000 ft. Above the clouds it was really lovely, the sun was shining brightly and every cloud truly had a silver lining. Looking down on the clouds they just looked like mighty masses of ice, covered with snow and here and there were high banks of cloud looking like snow clad mountain peaks. Just after we reached 10,000 ft a slight gap appeared in the clouds and we could see amongst the mighty mass of white a little village 10,000 ft below framed in this solitary gap in the clouds. At this height of just on two miles the wind was so strong that although the machine was travelling at 65 miles an hour through the air, we were, relative to the ground travelling backwards at 5 miles an hour, so that after we got below the clouds we found we had been blown backwards nearly to Andover. It was really magnificent flying just above the clouds and we just skimmed over the tops of them and once went down into a huge valley in them and flew along with the white sides only about 30 ft off our wing tips and the pure blue sky above. When I shut off the engine to come down I headed the machine down a valley in the clouds and flew down this until we came to a large bank at the end. This we went straight into and for the next ten minutes floated down through pure white surroundings and when we got down to 4,000 ft we suddenly came through the cloud in sight of mother earth again. At 4,000 the wind was not near as strong but even so it took us 1 hr to get from Andover back to Netheravon. Just after we landed, a Henri Farman that I had just transferred to 32 squadron turned completely over smashing it up badly. There were two men holding it down at the time but when the wind got under the plane one man let go and she went over like a piece of paper. No one was in the machine and the men holding it were not hurt.

14/1/16

I received five Avros today and have been busy fixing up the log books and engines.

15/1/16

I took an Avro up this morn and it seemed quite strange flying a tractor again after being so long on a pusher, but I soon got used to it. I did three circuits and landings solo and then took up a passenger and by the evening had instructed one man on the Avro and sent him up solo. I went for my first trip on a motor bike today and got on fine. It is not nearly as hard as I thought for after 20 minutes on it could turn in the width of the road.

16/1/16 Sunday

I spent about an hour instructing this morn and the rest of the time spent examining the machines. This afternoon I spent writing and went to the English church this evening.

17/1/16

It has been very windy and wet today. This afternoon several battalions of men and quite a big transport came over the aerodrome, (a place where they had absolutely no right to be) so the Colonel told a Captain and myself to take aeroplanes out and chase them off (as they, after being told to get off the aerodrome took several hours to do so.) I went up in an Avro and had the time of my life. There were about 50 men close to the sheds laying a cable, these I shifted on to the road in about five minutes. The horses were terrified and the men no less so. After these were off I went after the main lot and in about 30 min cleared all them off. I did this by going into the air and then swooping down on them at about 70 miles an hour and when about 10 ft above their heads and they think the machine is coming right amongst them I pulled the joy stick back and shot into the air about 100 ft ready to swoop again. The Captain went over them twice but as his engine was not pulling well he came down and left me to it alone.

18/1/16

I have been busy instructing today and put through three men on the Avro all of which got on quite well solo. This evening I took the photographic officer up in the Voisin to 4,200 ft.

19/1/16

It has been a miserable wet and windy day today and there has been no flying.

20/1/16

I did very little flying again today as the wind is blowing a gale and the showers are frequent.

21/1/16

I spent the whole day making up aeroplane and engine log books.

22/1/16 Saturday

Several of my old squadron 21, machines set off for France this morn but before they could all get away it started to pour in torrents so the rest did not go. This afternoon I went for a run to Amesbury on a "New Hudson" motor bike that I was thinking of buying from a friend of mine. She ran fine and I had quite a nice ride. The machine is a three speed and free engine machine fitted with a 3 1/2 HP engine and is in fine condition, there is also a coach built sidecar and he wants 30 pounds for the machine and 37 pounds for machine and sidecar so apart from the usefulness of it I think it a bargain. I had word this evening that I have to proceed to Farnborough to fly a Voisin back for no 32 squadron tomorrow as I am the only one in the 4th Wing that has flown this type of machine.

23/1/16

I set off first thing this morn for Farnborough in a light tender. It took Lieut Maxwell the photographic officer with me so he could take photos on the way back. When I arrive at Farnborough I found the machine had a broken propellor so I had to wait until tomorrow.

24/1/16

I left Farnborough at 10 am flying a Voisin with Lieut Maxwell as passenger. We had a glorious run of 1hr 40 min and took 48 photos from 6,000 ft. The weather was ideal and it was so clear that from Netheravon at 3,000 ft one could plainly see the boats on Southampton Water.

25/1/16 and 26/1/16

I have not done any flying this last two days but have been busy in the flight.

27/1/16

I have bought a motor bike now and find it very handy in my work, going out to breakdowns etc. I have been doing a little flying today but things are about the same as usual.

AEROPLANES FLOWN

Tractors

- 1 Avro (instructing)
- 2 B.E.8.A. (cross country for wings)
- 3 Armstrong Whitworth (photography)
- 4 Curtiss
- 5 Martinside (scout)

Pushers

- 1 Maurice Farman Longhorn (ticket)
- 2 Maurice Farman Shorthorn
- 3 Henri Farman (instructing)
- 4 Voisin (fighters) (photography)
- 5 Vickers (fighter) (in France) patrol, photos, registration.
- 6 FE2B (fighter) (in France) registration, patrol.

Hotels & boarding houses stayed at

Mrs Bullen "The Aviary" Brooklands Byfleet Surrey	<i>No Good</i>
Kingsley Hotel Hart St Bloomsbury WC Temperance London	<i>Nice quiet</i>
Y.M.C.A. Tottenham Court London	<i>Cannot stay single night</i>
Strand Palace Strand	<i>Stylish</i>
Royal Hotel Weston Supermeso	<i>Fairly good & quiet</i>
Hotel Commerce off square St Omar France	<i>Fair for France but very bad ordinary</i>

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No intentional alterations from the original diary have been made.

My thanks to my family for their help and to those who tried so hard to reproduce photograph negatives Harold sent to his nephew Winstone McLean (Mac) Brookes. It was Mac who sent me the original diary, which is now held in the Archives of the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

Marion Kelly (nee Butterworth), Titirangi, Auckland. 1993.