

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



Libreria - Cartoleria SALVATORE MAZZOLINO

TARANTO, Via Duomo -- SUCCURSALE: Via Cirio Giovinazzi



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

## INTRODUCTION



My dad, Thomas Lewis Roworth, was born on 10th March 1920 after the outbreak of the second world war he tried to join up with the Royal Corps of Signals. They told him to come back when he was 21. Undaunted he went to the Marines and tried to join them but they gave him the same answer. He finally joined the the Royal Corps of Signals on 6th May, 1940 number 25928578.

### Training

The diary does not start until after his training but I remember him talking about going to dances at The Pump Room, Bath during this time. After my Mum died clearing the house I found an autograph book of Dad's which fills in parts of the picture.

This has entries from:

- Warrington 8/7/40
- Rudloe (Near Bath) 1941
- Shrivenham 1943

I also found both Mum & Dad's army release book and many letters written by Dad during the war.

He served for most of this time in Italy starting at the toe of the boot and finishing up in Austria before being

demobbed on the 14th June, 1946. During this time he kept a diary in two exercise books the front cover shows book 1 and the back cover Book 2..

He did not write every day but





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I have included for each a scan of the entry and transcription as far as I can make it out. I have kept most misspellings and grammatical errors.

Text in blue is the historical background of what is going on in the war or the places described.

Footnotes contain clarifications, my observations or where his later telling differed from what was in the diaries.

He was awarded four medals

- The 1939-45 Star
- The Italy Star
- The Defence Medal 1939-1945
- The War Medal 1939-1945
- Oak Leaf Cluster<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This denotes he was mentioned in dispatches. when mounting his medals for the 50 year anniversary he was not sure which medal this should go on so rang the Imperial War Museum to check. It is worn on the ribbon of the The War Medal

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

## Map of Italy and North Africa



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign showing all places mentioned





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## THE D-DAY DODGERS

*Sung to the tune of Lily Marlene - Other versions also exist with minor differences*

Now we're the D-Day Dodgers out in Italy,  
Always drinking vino always on the spree,  
8th Army civvies with the Yanks  
We live in Rome and laugh at tanks,  
Cos we're the D-Day Dodgers way out in Italy.

We landed at Salerno a holiday with pay,  
Gerry brought the band out to cheer us on the way,  
He showed us the sights and made us tea  
We all sang songs, the beer was free,  
Cos we're the D-Day Dodgers way out in Italy.

Naples and Cassino were taken in our stride  
We didn't go to fight there, we just went for the ride,  
Anzio and Sangro were a farce,  
We did damn all but go on pass,  
Cos we're the D-Day Dodgers way out in Italy.

On the way to Florence we had a lovely time,  
They ran a bus to Rimini right through the Gothic Line,  
Soon to Milano we will go  
Now he's cleared off beyond the Po,  
From all the D-Day Dodgers way out in Italy.

Once we heard a "blue light" we were going home,  
Back to dear old Blighty never more to roam.  
Then someone said "In Burma you'll fight"  
We said "Damn That - We'll just sit tight"  
Cos we're the D-Day Dodgers who live in Italy.

Oh, Lady Aster listen to us please,  
Don't stand on the platform talking at your ease,  
You're the 8th Army's sweetheart and nation's pride  
But shut your mouth it's far too wide,  
That's from the D-Day Dodgers, the boys in Italy.

Looking around the mountains in the mud and rain,  
You'll find scattered crosses, some which bear no name.  
Heart break and toil and suffering gone,  
The boys beneath them slumber on.  
Some of the D-Day Dodgers we left in Italy.

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

## JUNE 1943

### Sicily and Surrounding Area



#### Wednesday 9th

The Allies begin an assault on the Italian island of Pantelleria.

#### Friday 11th

Allied shock troops today occupied the Axis stronghold on the Mediterranean island of Pantelleria - and introduced a new tactic to modern warfare. It is the first time that a major fortress has been conquered from the air without the help of land forces.

The island, between Tunisia and Sicily, had been battered by Allied bombers continuously for 13 days. British troops and tanks did not land until noon today, 20 minutes after the garrison commander surrendered.

#### Saturday 12th

The Italian island of Lampedusa falls to the Allies.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Sunday 27th

## Service Abroad.

1943

June 27

Sun.

On this day I was aroused early from my bed in the barracks at Woolwich. We were all excited because this was to be the start of many an experience pleasant & unpleasant. We had full kit including kitbags & marched to the station 30 of us & 4 officers. Here we caught the train to Charing Cross & were conveyed through London in transport to a station where a special train was waiting to convey us to the docks. The ones in question were near home, Liverpool dock. On arriving here we lined up on the side of the water & had a hot mug of tea very welcoming. Then we picked our kit up & were given tickets as we filed aboard which allotted us to a certain Mess Table & position on that table. This we finally reached & here everything became chaotic for a while. This was due to contradictory orders being issued as to what we had to bed with us & to what we had to hand in to pack stores. When we eventually got settled we had tea after which everyone was struggling to erect a hammock in which we had to remain throughout the voyage. Towards the end of the evening we pulled out into midstream & anchored.

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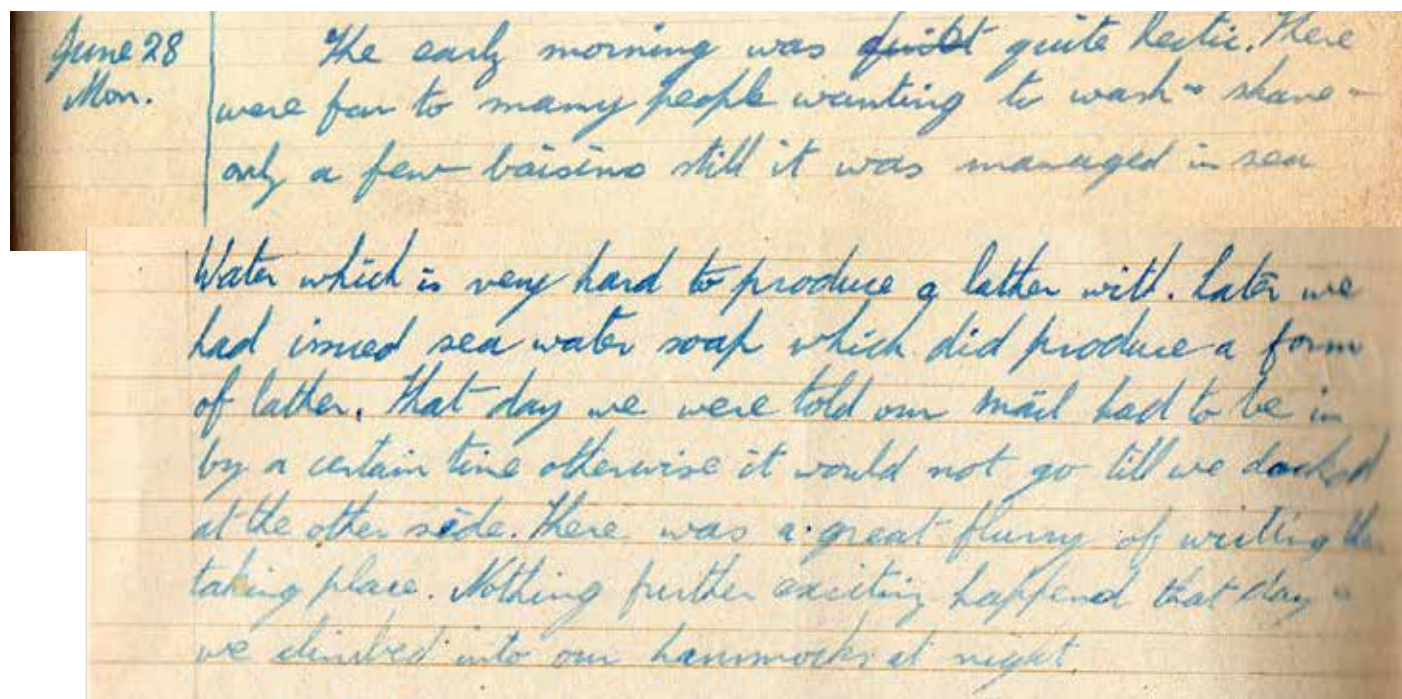
JUNE 1943 7



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

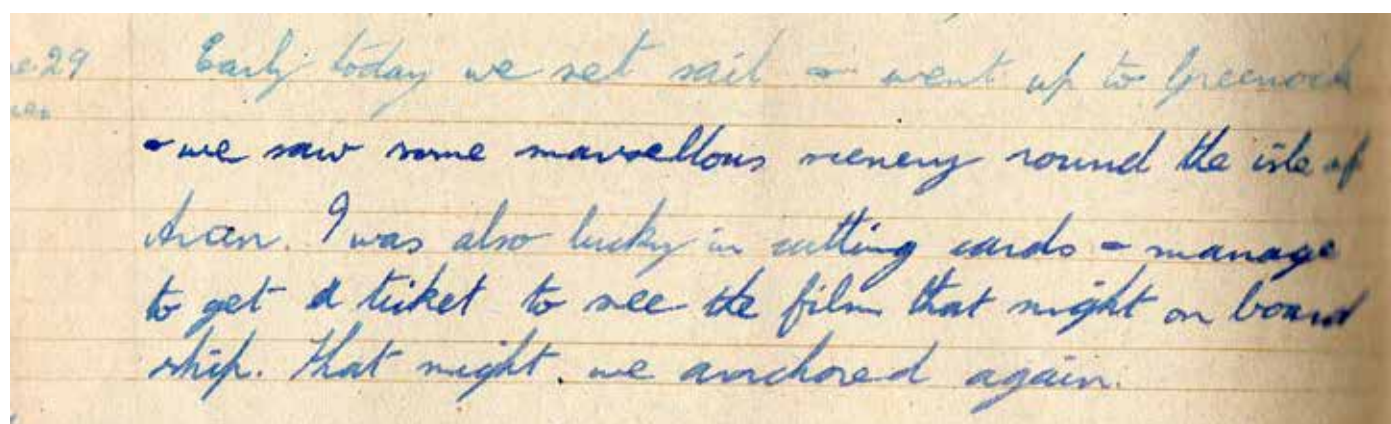
contradictory orders being issued what we had to keep with us & to what we had to hand in to pack stores. When we eventually got settled we had tea after which everyone was struggling to erect a hammock in which we had to sleep throughout the voyage. Towards the end of the evening we pulled out into midstream & anchored.

## Monday 28th



The early morning was quite hectic. There were far too many people wanting to wash and share only a few basins still it was managed in seawater which is very hard to produce a lather with. Later we had issued sea water soap which did produce a form of lather. That day we were told our mail had to be in by a certain time otherwise it would not go till we docked at the other side. There was a great flurry of writing then taking place. Nothing further exciting happened that day & we climbed into our hammocks at night.

## Tuesday 29th

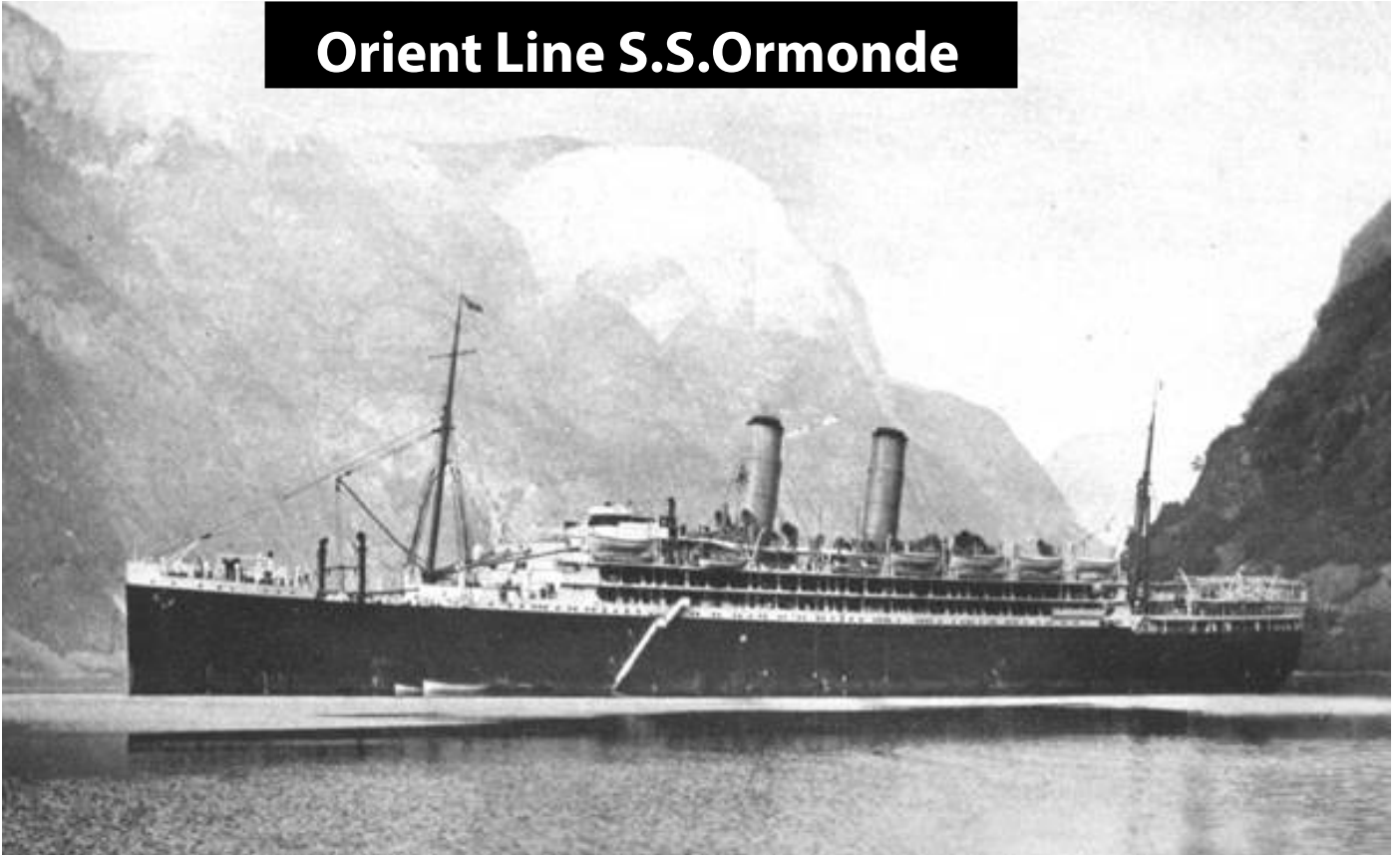


Early today we set sail & went up to Greenock & we saw some marvellous scenery round the Isle of Aran. I was also lucky in cutting cards & managed to get a ticket to see the film that night on board ship. That night we anchored again.

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## THE VOYAGE

### Orient Line S.S.Ormonde



S.S. Ormonde 15,000 tons Built at Clydebank by John Brown for the Orient Steam Navigation Co her completion being delayed because the ship builders were needed by the British Navy; Launched in June 1918, she was completed as a troopship and didn't start her maiden voyage until 15th Nov. 1919. Requisitioned again as a troopship in 1939, she took part in the evacuations from Norway and France. In 1944 she was based at Bombay for Far East trooping work and returned to commercial service in 1947; she was sold for breaking up at Dalmuir, Scotland in Dec.1952.

The voyage. We eventually set sail & we settled down to the ship's routine & trying to find amusement for ourselves & also a place to sit or lie on deck. The vessel was the S.S. Ormonde the smallest ship of the Orient line it carried 3,496 troops including Officers & men. On it we had some good food three meals a day. Also on board was a bulk issue canteen & for the mess table you could get any amount



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of sugar fruit (tinned) jam & chocolate etc which was very good. Fresh water was available in the mornings & evenings for a short time - we all used to fill our water bottles. The weather & sea throughout the trip

was glorious. I being a bad sailor could not have wished for any better. The trip itself was very uneventful only twice did the "tugates" which were escorting us have to drop depth charges. We saw no aircraft of Genji at all - judging by the armaments of the ships he would have got a hot reception. The way everyone amused oneself was chiefly by playing cards - also the game of "housey house" was always being shouted out. Every afternoon for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr we had P.T which at times was quite vigorous. Each morning we had a parade at 1030 hrs while the O.C. Troops on the ship inspected it. During one of these parades towards the end of the voyage we heard of the job we were to do & where we were going. Before going through the straits of Gib. there was organised a sweep on the line we should pass "Europa Pt." this <sup>we passed.</sup> was done at night - none of our crowd won it. The next day we docked outside Algiers the famous North African port but no one was allowed ashore. That evening we sailed again along the north African coast - in the morning we heard read out to us Gen Montgomery's message to the 8<sup>th</sup> Army before the invasion of



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message  
Sicily which had that night started. Later we  
were told we were members of the 8<sup>th</sup> Army  
we were going to be the G.O.R. at Catania and

Sicily's main ports. We were also given an outline  
of the general points of the attack. Later we passed the  
island of Pantelleria & then eventually after cruising  
about the Med dock at Malta. Here we anchored for  
while waiting for the attack to be sufficiently far ad  
for us to land. One evening we sailed again & the next  
day had our first glimpse of Sicily.

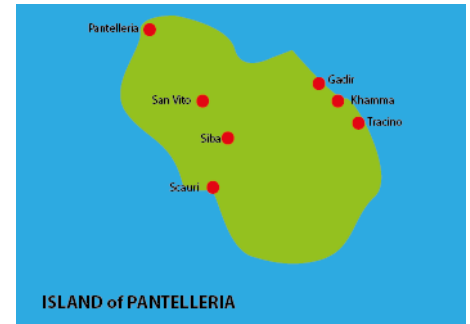
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1 See Appendix C

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night started. Later we were told we were members of the 8th Army & we were going to be the G.O.R. at Catania one of Sicily's main ports. We were also given an outline of the general points of the attack. Later we passed the Island of Pantelleria & then after cruising about the Med docked at Malta. Here we anchored while waiting for the attack to be sufficiently far advanced for us to land. One evening we sailed again & the next day had our first glimpse of Sicily.





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## JULY 1943

### Saturday 10th

The first Allied troops go ashore on Sicily along a 100-mile front.

### Tuesday 13th

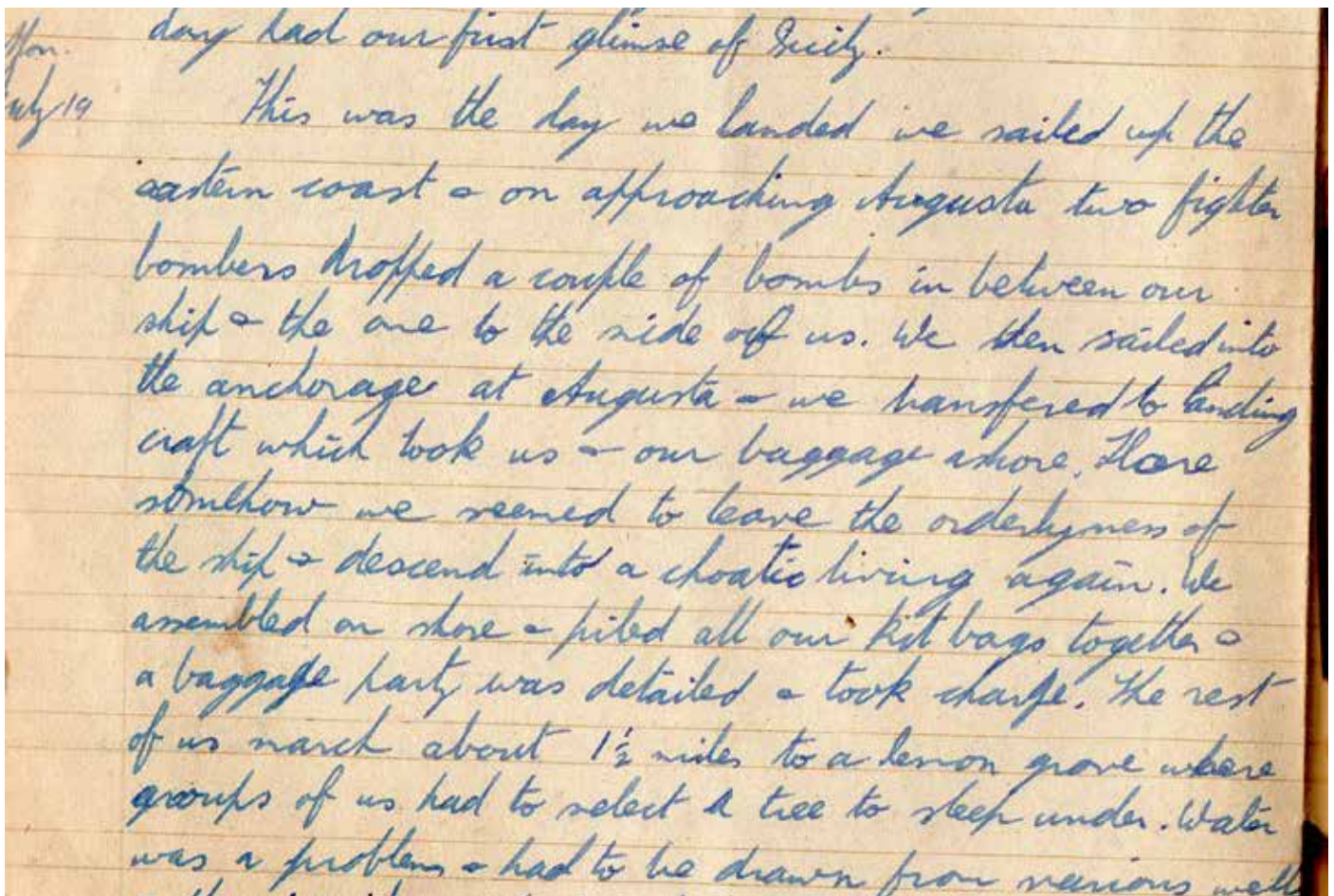
The Allies capture Augusta<sup>1</sup> and Ragusa and land new forces near Catania.

### Monday 19th

Hitler and Mussolini meet in northern Italy to discuss the worsening military situation.

Five hundred US bombers rained down 1,000 tons of high explosive onto the Italian capital today in a massive daylight raid. For two and a half hours Rome shuddered under its first air-raid, as 4,000 pound bombs devastated the city's railyards, airfields, factories and government offices, but pilots were under strict orders to avoid Rome's famous historical buildings and the Vatican.

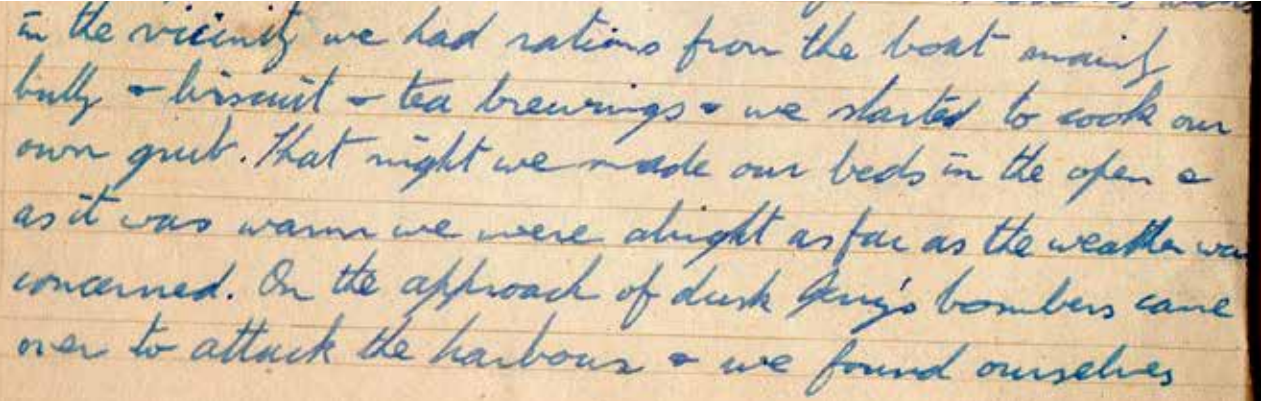
A Swedish newsman who toured the city immediately afterwards reported: "All well-known streets and squares beloved by the world's tourists, look as peaceful as ever." But around the US targets, he said, "fires were still raging, and the dead were being dragged from under the ruins, for the loss of life was extremely high".



1 See Appendix C



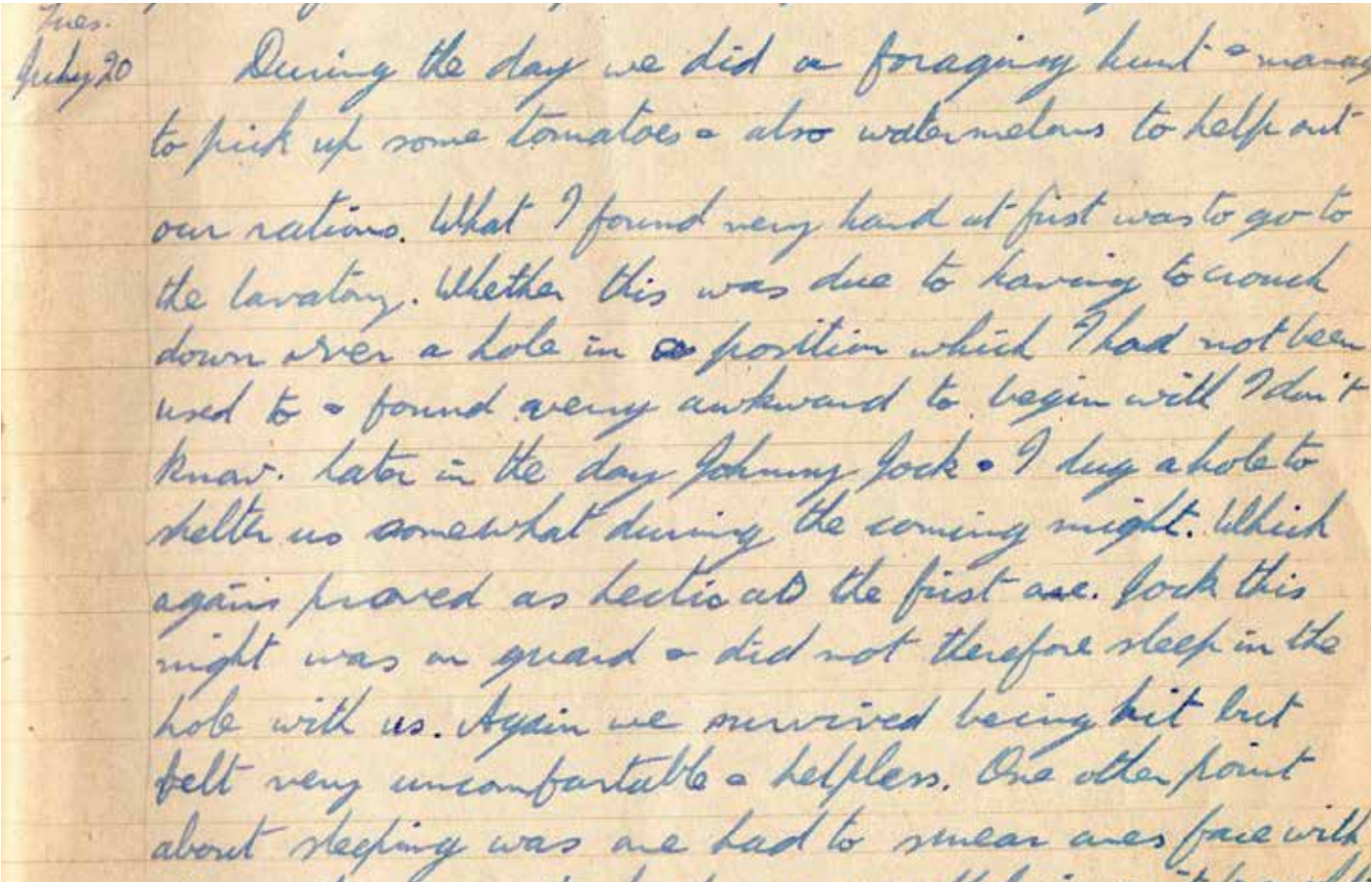
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in the vicinity we had rations from the boat mainly  
bully & biscuit & tea brewings & we started to cook our  
own grub. That night we made our beds in the open &  
as it was warm we were alright as far as the weather was  
concerned. On the approach of dusk Jerry's bombers came  
over to attack the harbour & we found ourselves

This was the day we landed we sailed up the eastern coast & on approaching Augusta two fighter bombers dropped a couple of bombs in between our ship & the one to the side of us. We then sailed into the anchorage at Augusta & we transferred to landing craft which took us & our baggage ashore. There somehow we seemed to leave the orderliness of the ship & descend into a chaotic living again. We assembled on shore & piled our kit bags together & a baggage party was detailed & took charge. the rest of us marched about 1/2 miles to a lemon grove where groups of us had to select a tree to sleep under. Water was a problem & had to be drawn from various wells in the vicinity we had rations from the boat mainly bully & biscuit & tea brewings & we started to cook our own grub. That night we made our beds in the open & as it was warm we were alright as far as the weather was concerned. On the approach of dusk Jerry's bombers came over to attack the harbour & we found ourselves in the centre of flying shrapnel from our own A.A. guns which was very unpleasant & dangerous judging by the pieces of metal we picked up next day.

## Tuesday 20th



Tues.  
July 20 During the day we did a foraging hunt & managed  
to pick up some tomatoes & also watermelons to help out  
our rations. What I found very hard at first was to go to  
the lavatory. Whether this was due to having to crouch  
down over a hole in a position which I had not been  
used to & found very awkward to begin with I don't  
know. Later in the day Johnny Lock & I dug a hole to  
shelter us somewhat during the coming night. Which  
again proved as hectic as the first one. Lock this  
night was on guard & did not therefore sleep in the  
hole with us. Again we survived being hit but  
felt very uncomfortable & helpless. One other point  
about sleeping was we had to smear our face with



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Mosquito cream to keep away malaria & it brought quite a perspiration out on the face. Which was altogether very uncomfortable sleeping. During this day as well we went for a swim in a disused hole which had filled up with water. Bathing costumes were not necessary - I had quite a good swim the water being very warm.

During the day we did a foraging hunt & managed to pick up some tomatoes & also watermelons to help out our rations. What I found very hard at first was to go to the lavatory<sup>2</sup>. Whether this was due to having to crouch down over a hole in a position which I had not been used to & found very awkward to begin with I don't know. Later in the day Johnny Jock & I dug a hole to shelter us somewhat during the coming night which again proved as hectic as the first one. Jock this night was on guard & did not therefore sleep in the hole with us. Again we survived being hit but felt very uncomfortable & helpless. One other point about sleeping was one had to smear ones face with mosquito cream to keep away malaria & it brought quite a perspiration out on the face. Which was altogether very uncomfortable sleeping. During this day as well we went for a swim in a disused hole which had filled up with water. Bathing costumes were not necessary & I had quite a good swim the water being very warm.

## Wednesday 21st

July 21  
Wed. This day passed very similar to the previous ones mainly getting food & cooking it. One unpleasant job we had that was to go down on the banks of a nearby river cut down bamboos which grew to a height of 10 feet. These were used for camouflaging the trees under which we slept. There was plenty of air activity during the day but they were always ours we never saw a German plane. At night it was unfortunately my turn for guard & after digging the hole further down to sleep in I had to sleep on top of the ground again under a tree which served as a guard room. I got very little sleep as during the period off we were kept awake by the A.P. Nothing extraordinary happened on guard.

2 This is the first reference to the lavatory which is a recurring theme throughout the diary. In fact this is still a major topic of conversation with certain members of the family.



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## Thursday 22nd

July 22  
Thurs. Today we moved our locations. All our kit except wabbling a small packs rifle went by lorry - we walked rather marched & it was pretty grueling due to the heat from the sun which we were not used to. Half way there we had a halt by a stream which we immediately stripped off at & got in. On the other side was a big lemon grove with some lovely big ripe lemons in. We finally arrived at our destination rather done up a couple of fellows had to fall out on the way. After much racking of kit up & down a terraced hill to find a suitable spot we finally settled & were issued with mosquito nets. Two to each one. Johnny & I slept together. We erected these & were soon in bed. During the evening rations were issued in the form of tins. These are boxes of tinned food for 12 or 14 men the latter are best having for example beans & bacon for breakfast. M.V & pudding for dinner & sardines

or cheese for tea. Of course the inevitable tin of biscuits which one is always running up against. Also a bar of chocolate & 7 cigarettes & a few matches & also some lavatory paper. Making the days ration pretty comprehensive. The nights were much more quiet although we still saw the A.A. over the harbour but were in no danger from it. Our days consisted mainly of getting wood for the fires & digging latrines each day. We were very



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fortunate in having a very deep artificial pool at hand which had running water through it & provided irrigation for the grove. In this we swam numerous times during the day again without any bathing costumes on. During our stay here I contracted a violent diarrhoea which later landed me in hospital. I went sick with it & it was getting cured somewhat although at times I felt extremely ill & could not eat or do any work at all. This during our stay here though I managed to hitch hike to a town nearby called Badentini & had a wander round. Here I had my first taste of Italian ice cream. I was not very impressed by the town which had narrow streets & a pauper look about the houses. The people on the whole were very friendly & were very ready to talk to me even though we only understood a word here & there. We struck camp here eventually on:-

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3 Compo rations (composite rations) came in a wooden crate and had enough food for one man for 14 days or 14 men for 1 day.

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was getting cured somewhat although at times I felt extremely ill & could not eat or do any work at all. During our stay here though we managed to hitch hike to a town nearby called Carlentini & had a wander round. Here I had my first taste of Italian ice cream. I was not very impressed by the town which had narrow streets & a pauper look about the houses. The people on the whole were very friendly & were very ready to talk to one even though we only understood a word here or there. We struck camp eventually on August 5th:-

## Friday 23rd

The Sicilian capital, Palermo, has fallen to the Americans without a struggle. In a rapid thrust to the north from the Allied-held southern part of the island, US troops overwhelmed the city yesterday, trapping an estimated 45,000 Axis troops who must now surrender or be annihilated.

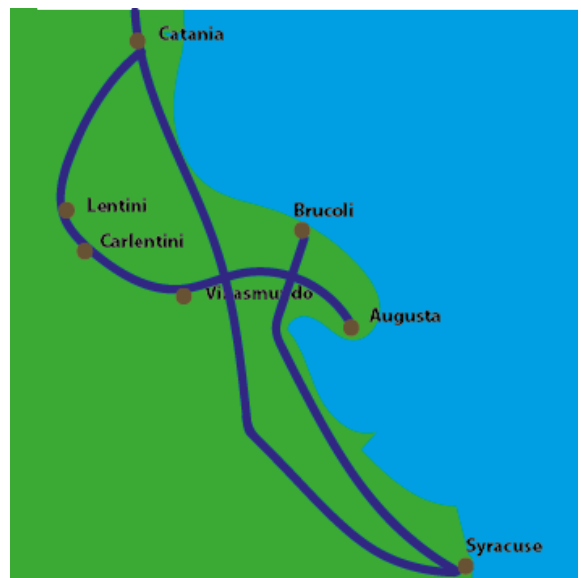
General Eisenhower, the Allied C-in-C, described the success as "the first page in the story of the liberation of the European continent". Axis troops are now on the run right across the island.

Further south, the Axis-held port of Catania is besieged. It is being softened up with a fierce bombardment from sea and air while the British Eighth Army, under General Montgomery, advances on it from the south, and Canadian troops drive east, against fierce resistance from German panzers, to cut off the city from behind.

Meanwhile, the American Seventh Army is today advancing along the island's northern coast road, pursuing Italian troops towards the volcanic massif of Mount Etna. It is here that Axis forces plan to fight a final rearguard action, to allow the evacuation that has just begun from the port of Messina to be completed.

The attack on Palermo - the result of a 60-mile advance in just 58 hours - was so swift that the defenders had no time to demolish dock and railhead facilities which had escaped Allied bombs.

The victory also deprives the Axis of one of its chief Mediterranean submarine bases, and has given the Allies access to a new airfield, from which planes can strike at German and Italian positions far behind the battle lines. US Warhawks, for instance, today shot down 17 enemy fighters in a raid over the island of Sardinia, and Flying Fortress bombers plastered the railway marshalling yards at Foggia, on the eastern side of southern Italy.



## Sunday 25th

Mussolini, Fascist dictator of Italy for 21 years, has fallen from power. King Victor Emmanuel has assumed command of the Italian armed forces, and the anti-Fascist Marshal Badoglio has been appointed Prime Minister and Chief of Government.

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This dramatic news, broadcast by Rome radio tonight, comes at a time when Italian soldiers in Sicily are surrendering in their thousands, and it is obvious that the Allied invasion of Italy itself will not be long delayed.

Both the King and the Marshal appealed to the Italian people for loyalty and said that the war would continue, but it is expected that the Duce's downfall will soon be followed by Italy's surrender.

Mussolini has made no public appearances for weeks; none of the recent events has brought him into the open. He neither visited bombed cities nor rallied his followers when the Allied invasion of Sicily rendered all his pledges worthless.

The news of his resignation did not come as a surprise in London, in view of the obvious difficulties of his regime and the vain appeals for help which the Fascist leaders have recently made to Germany.

At the same time it is being received with the greatest satisfaction as the first sign of the inevitable collapse of Fascism and, after it, of Nazism.

## **Monday 26th**

In Rome Badoglio declares martial law to prevent civil war.

## **Tuesday 27th**

In Rome Badoglio asks the Allies for peace terms as demonstrations celebrate Mussolini's downfall.

## **Wednesday 28th**

The Fascist Party is abolished in Rome.

## **Thursday 29th**

Political prisoners are released; Eisenhower offers "peace with honour" if Italy ends aid to Germany.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## AUGUST 1943

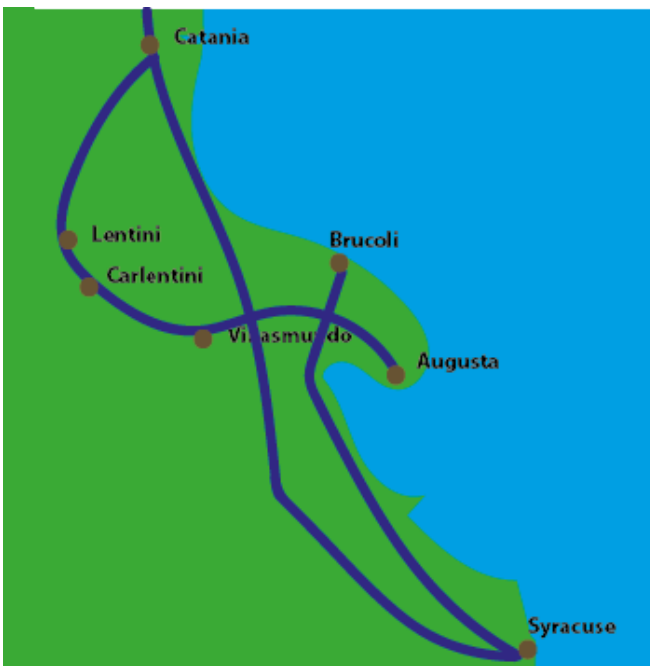
### Monday 2nd

The Allies break through the final Axis defence lines on Sicily.

### Thursday 5th

Aug 5 This day we moved to near Lentini which  
Thurs. is more inland & nearer Catania our final

objective. We did not get there till the evening being  
part of the rear party. Johnny & I immediately after a  
meal set to work erecting our net & camouflaging  
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### Friday 6th

Aug 6 I woke up & felt really weak & ill & when I went  
Fri. on parade the officer told me I could go & be down, which  
was all I could do anyway. The Professor one of the R.A.  
fellow had also diarrhoea badly & they arranged for  
the transport to an M.O. in the afternoon. This took the

1 See Appendix C



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

form of a jeep & with the bumping on the roads I felt pretty sore in the stomach when I arrived. He just gave us a dose of the old castor oil & told us to eat nothing until the following day & keep off all fruits with skins & pips including tomatoes. That night I felt pretty bad & also sore about the behind. During the evening "Dusty" was taken very ill with the complaint & was sick as well he was carted off immediately to hospital. That night I was in the net on my own Johnny was on guard. I must say all the fellows had been very decent to me while I had been ill & it meant the fatigues came round a lot quicker.

I woke up & felt really weak & ill & when I went on parade the officer told me I could go & lie down, which was all I could do anyway. "The Professor" one of the R.A. fellows had also diarrhoea badly & they arranged for the transport to an M.O. in the afternoon. This took the form of a jeep & with the bumping on the roads I felt pretty sore in the stomach when I arrived. He just gave us a dose of the old castor oil & told us to eat nothing until the following day & keep off all fruit with skins & pips including tomatoes. That night I felt pretty bad & also sore about the behind. During the evening "Dusty" was taken very ill with the complaint & was sick as well he was carted off immediately to hospital. That night I was in the net on my own Johnny was on guard. I must say all the fellows had been very decent to me while I had been ill & it meant the fatigues came round a lot quicker.

## Saturday 7th

Aug 7. This was a very memorable day for me & the  
Sat. beginning of what proved to be a very tiresome journey. I went sick for treatment again but we went this time to a nearer M.O. in "Intini". I took no bit with me never imagining I would

need it. The M.O. saw me & looked at my situation & said I had external piles. This shook me somewhat & he said I would have to go into hospital & have them removed. I therefore made my way from there to the 7 C.C.S. nearby & the lads who were going back said they would send my



## Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Small kit on to me. Well I got to this place & after hanging around in a marbled floored passage. A bunch of us went into a room & were interviewed by an Officer who verified the M.O. diagnosis & put on my card "Evacuate Sitting". We then went into the passage again & ate dinner of which I had little. I also managed to ring up & asked for my kit to be sent by D.R. Due to it not coming early I did not go with the first lot evacuated which I believe stopped in Sicily. I went eventually & was told I would be going by air. This shook me again for the second time in the day. We went by lorry to the airfield & our names were taken & we clambered aboard a D.C.3. which I noticed had no Red Cross markings on & off we went to N. Africa & I flew over this time Pantelleria. We landed at El Aouina (Tunis) & went to a R.A.F. Gen Hosp. Here we were interviewed & the M.O. decided not to lop off the piles & I was put in a Medical ward.

This was a very memorable day for me & the beginning of what proved to be a very tiresome journey. I went sick for treatment again but we went this time to a nearer M.O. in "Lentini". I took no kit with me never imagining I would need it. The M.O. saw me & looked at my sit upon & said I had external piles. This shook me somewhat & he said I would have to go into hospital & have them removed. I therefore made my way from there to the 7 C.C.S nearby & the lads who were going back said they would send my small kit on to me. Well I got to this place & after hanging around in a marbled floored passage. A bunch of us went into a room & were interviewed by an officer who verified the M.O. diagnosis & put on my card "Evacuate Sitting". We then went into the passage again & ate dinner of which I had little. I also managed to ring up & asked for my kit to be sent by D.R. Due to it not coming early I did not go with the first lot evacuated who I believe stopped in Sicily. I went eventually & was told I would be going by air. This shook me again for the second time in the day. We went by lorry to the airfield & our names were taken & we clambered aboard a D.C.3 which I noticed had no Red Cross markings on & off we went to N. Africa & I flew over Pantelleria this time. We landed at El Aouina (Tunis) & went to an R.A.F. General Hospital. Here we were interviewed & the M.O. decided not to



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

lop off the piles & I was put in a Medical ward.

## In Hospital

*Postscript.* Things passed much the same each day we were roused very early & went to sleep early. To begin with I was only allowed solid fluids to drink & felt really hungry I was also getting medicine & ointment for the piles although they never really pained me at all. Everything was quite pleasant & I was sleeping between sheets in lovely well sprung beds. I had just got onto solid food & was feeling a lot better when they decided to evacuate all the army personnel & on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> we went down to the aerodrome again & into the D.C.2's & were flown from there along the coast west to Philippeville. Here we were taken to the 67 Gen Hospital & our ward here was a big Marquee but very comfortable. I had quite a good time & did a little work being an up patient by now & helped to collect meals from the cookhouse & serve them out & wash up. I also had issued here a suit of blues. I also managed a swim in the blue Mediterranean which was about 100 yds from the hospital. I was eventually passed as fit & told I would be going to the G.R.T.D the following day. Had issued to me a blanket K.D. long kit bag & Mosquito net.

Things passed much the same each day we were roused very early & went to sleep very early. To begin with I was only allowed fluids to drink & felt very hungry I was also getting medicine and ointment for the piles although they never really pained me at all. Everything was quite pleasant & I was sleeping between sheets in lovely well sprung beds. I had just got onto solid food & was feeling a lot better when they decided to evacuate all the army personnel & on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> we went down to the aerodrome again & into the D.C.2's & were flown from there along the coast west to Philippeville. Here we were taken to the 67 General Hospital & our ward here was a big marquee but very comfortable. I had quite a good time & did a little work being an up patient by now & helped to collect meals from the cookhouse & serve them out & wash up. I also had issued here a suit of blues. I also managed a swim in the blue Mediterranean which was about

23 August 1943



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

100 yds from the hospital. I was eventually passed as fit & told I would be going to the G.R.T.D. the following day & had issued to me a blanket, KD longs, kit bag & mosquito net.

## Friday 13th

The allies bomb Rome, Turin and Milan.

## Saturday 14th

Badoglio declares Rome an open city.

## Sunday 15th

The allies launch an assault on Messina.

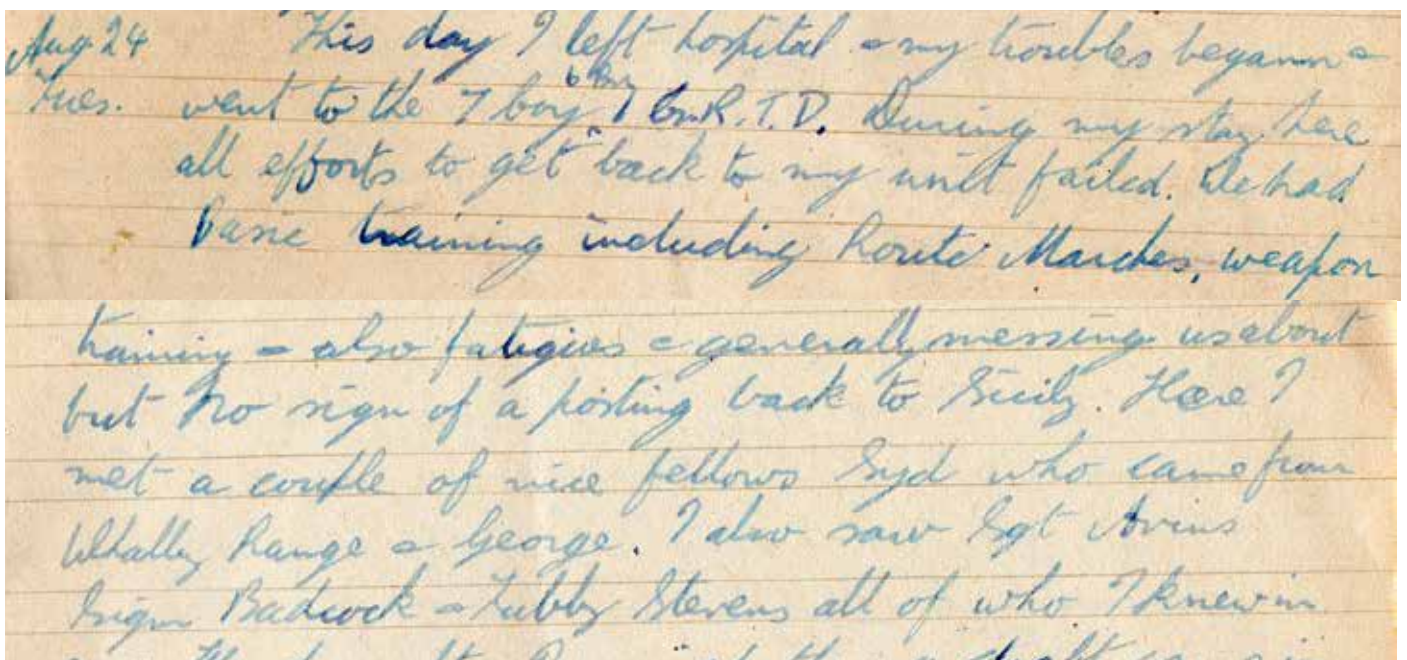
## Tuesday 17th

The last Axis defences on Sicily crumbled today as British and American troops met up in Messina, opposite the toe of Italy. The whole of Sicily is now in Allied hands. Long-range guns are already pounding coastal batteries on the mainland, Allied warships are shelling the coast roads out of Reggio, and bombers are harrying targets along the length of Italy.

John Daly, an American broadcaster, was with the first platoon to reach Messina city hall at 8:25 am - 50 minutes ahead of the British. "We did not arrive in style," he reported. "In fact we walked the last seven miles practically on tip-toe, fearing to touch abandoned equipment lest it contained booby-traps. We watched the ground for mines until our eyes ached."

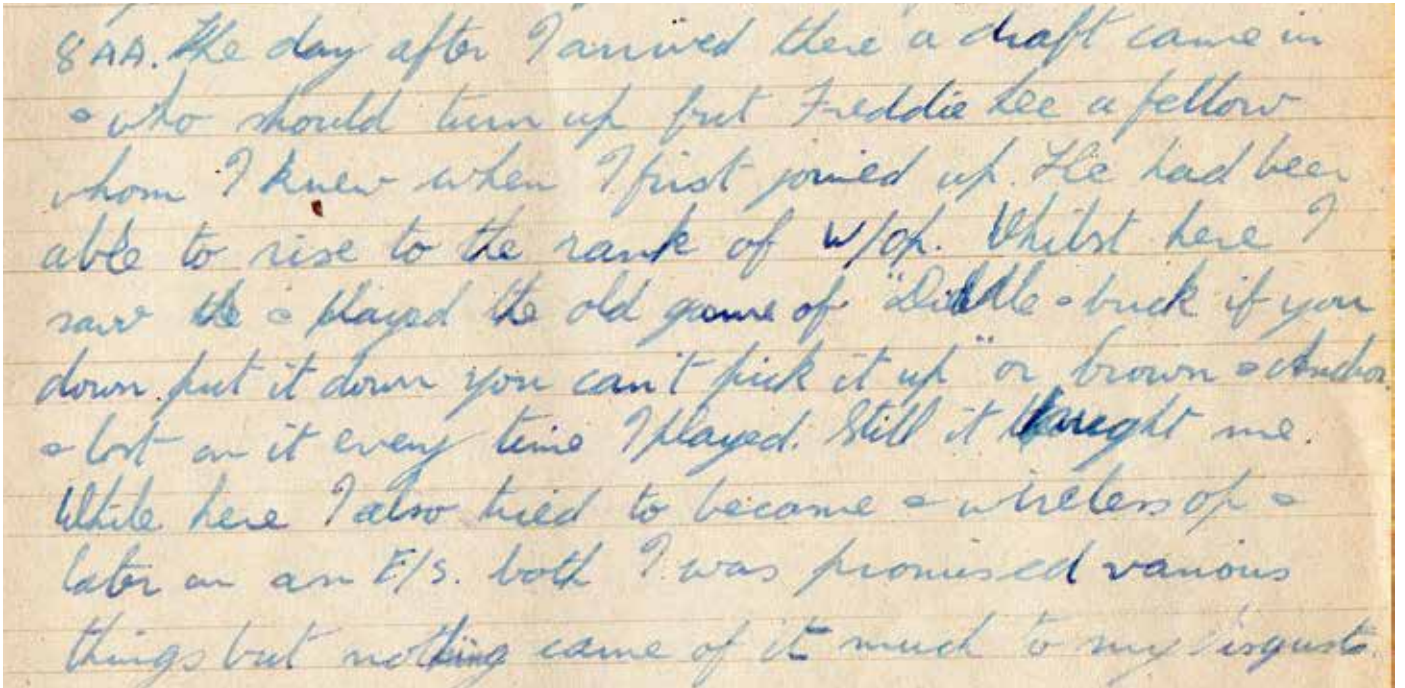
Then, at 9:15 am, "a lieutenant colonel of the Eighth Army drove up to the advancing Americans. All he said was: "Hello, Yanks. Congratulations." Daly added: "The city is a complete ruin. Bombs and craters take the place of streets and buildings. The few people were listless and haggard with the horror of what they had been through."

## Tuesday 24th



Aug 24  
Tues. This day I left hospital & my troubles began -  
went to the 7<sup>th</sup> Coy 1<sup>st</sup> G.R.T.D. During my stay here  
all efforts to get back to my unit failed. We had  
gone training including Route Marches, weapon  
training - also fatigues & generally messing us about  
but no sign of a posting back to Sicily. Here I  
met a couple of nice fellows Syd who came from  
Whalley Range & George. I also saw Sgt Avins  
Sgt Bredcock & Tubby Stevens all of who I knew in  
the 1<sup>st</sup> Coy 1<sup>st</sup> G.R.T.D. I had a talk with Syd & George

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

A photograph of a handwritten diary entry on aged, lined paper. The handwriting is in cursive and somewhat slanted. The text describes the author's experience in 8 AA, mentioning a draft, Freddie Lee, and various activities like playing 'Diddle & buck' and trying to become a wireless operator or E/S. The entry ends with a note about promises that were not fulfilled.

8 AA. The day after I arrived there a draft came in  
• who should turn up but Freddie Lee a fellow  
whom I knew when I first joined up. He had been  
able to rise to the rank of w/Op. Whilst here I  
saw he played the old game of "Diddle & buck if you  
down put it down you can't pick it up" or brown & anchor  
& lost on it every time I played. Still it taught me.  
While here I also tried to become a wireless op &  
later on an E/S. both I was promised various  
things but nothing came of it much to my disgust.

This day I left hospital & my troubles began & went to 7 Company 6 Brigade 1 G.R.T.D. During my stay here all efforts to get back to my unit failed. We had Basic training including Route Marches, weapon training & also fatigues & generally messing us about but no sign of a posting back to Sicily. Here I met a couple of nice fellows Syd who came from Whally Range & George. I also saw Sgt. Avins, Signalman Badcock & Tubby Stevens all of whom I knew in 8 AA. The day after I arrived there a draft came in & who should turn up but Freddie Lee a fellow whom I knew when I first joined up. He had been able to rise to the rank of W/Of. Whilst here I saw & played the old game of "Diddle & buck if you put it down you can't pick it up" or Crown & Anchor & lost on it every time I played. Still it taught me. While here I also tried to become a wireless op & later on an E/S both I was promised various things but nothing came of it much to my disgust.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

## SEPTEMBER 1943

### Friday 3rd



The allies land on the mainland opposite Messina. In Rome, Badoglio signs a secret armistice with the allies

### Saturday 4th

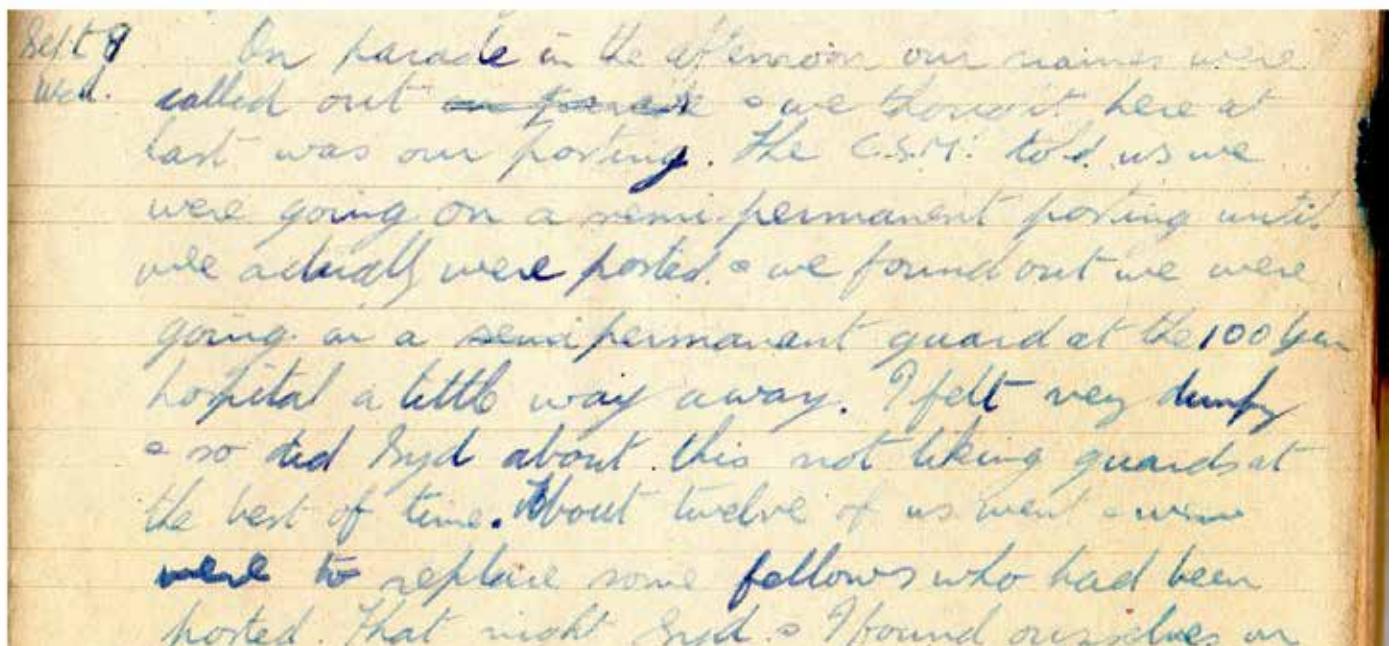
The allies capture Reggio di Calabria<sup>1</sup>, a vital centre on the "toe" of Italy

### Wednesday 8th

Italy has surrendered to the Allies unconditionally. In a broadcast this evening, General Eisenhower announced that a representative of Marshal Pietro Badoglio, Prime Minister of Italy Since the fall of Mussolini in July, had signed a military armistice with the Allies several days earlier.

Hostilities between the armed forces of the Allies and those of Italy terminated at once, Eisenhower declared. Then, in a clear invitation to Italy to turn on its former ally, he added "All Italians who now act to help eject the German aggressor from Italian soil will have the assistance and support of the Allies." In the wake of the broadcast, which followed a secret meeting four days ago between Eisenhower and Badoglio, the Italian government halted all ships, trains and vehicles carrying German troops, and the Italian garrison on Corsica was reported to have overpowered German forces on the island.

The sudden capitulation took the Nazis by surprise. Less than an hour before the broadcast, Berlin radio was reporting "solid resistance" by Italian and German troops to the British invasion of southern Italy.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

guard. We did 2 on four off three of us & we  
were guarding sick P.O.W's Gerys & Ities  
We found this on the whole to be a good job  
as we had 24 hrs on & 24 hrs off. In our off  
time we were free to do as we please & managed  
to get into Philippeville quite often & also got  
plenty of swimming in the Med. It was lovely  
& clean & warm. Altogether we were much better  
off than at the G.R.T.D. I also had a great thrill in  
receiving my first mail here an airgraph from  
Betty & a letter from Jock & Johnny. I had a few  
more after those too. One sticky job we had though  
was being <sup>bearers</sup> escorts for any dead to be buried  
which was not so good but did not happen often.  
We were in tents again & the trouble with them was  
we had a lot of fleas & were bitten a lot. Eventually  
we were recalled as the job faded out they removed  
the prisoners to another hospital.

On parade in the afternoon our names were called out & we thought here at last was our posting. The C.S.M. told us we were going on a semi-permanent posting until we actually were posted & we found out we were going on permanent guard at the 100 General Hospital<sup>2</sup> a little way away. I felt very dumpy & so did Syd about this not liking guards at the best of time. About twelve of us went & were to replace some fellows who had been posted. That night Syd & I found ourselves on guard. We did 2 on four off three of us & we were guarding sick P.O.W.s Gerys & Ities.

We found this on the whole to be a good job as we had 24 hrs off. In our off time we were free to do as we please & managed to get into Philippeville quite often & also got plenty of swimming in the Med. It was lovely & clean & warm. Altogether we were much better off than at the G.R.T.D. I also had a great thrill receiving my first mail here an airgraph from Betty<sup>3</sup> & a letter from Jock & Johnny. I had a few more after those too. One sticky job we had though was being bearers for any dead to be buried which was not so good but did not happen often. We were in tents again & the trouble with them was we had a lot of fleas & were bitten a lot. Eventually we were recalled as the job faded out. They removed the prisoners to another hospital.

2 See Appendix C

3 See Appendix B.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

## Thursday 9th

The Allies land at Salerno, near Naples, meeting stiff German resistance.

## Friday 10th

German troops occupy Rome.

## Sunday 12th

The Allies take Brindisi on the “heel” of Italy.

The Germans claimed tonight to have rescued Mussolini from his prison somewhere in Italy. A special announcement from Hitler’s HQ in Berlin said: “German parachutists, and men of the security service and the armed SS, today carried out an operation for the liberation of Mussolini, who had been imprisoned by the clique of traitors. The coup succeeded. The Duce is at liberty.”

This is the first definite news of Mussolini since he resigned seven weeks ago. There are no details yet of how his rescue was carried out, but the involvement of parachutists suggests a daring behind-the-lines operation.

## Friday 17th



The Germans are retreating from Salerno as the Allies join in a continuous line across southern Italy.

## Sunday 19th

Italian troops seize control of Sardinia.

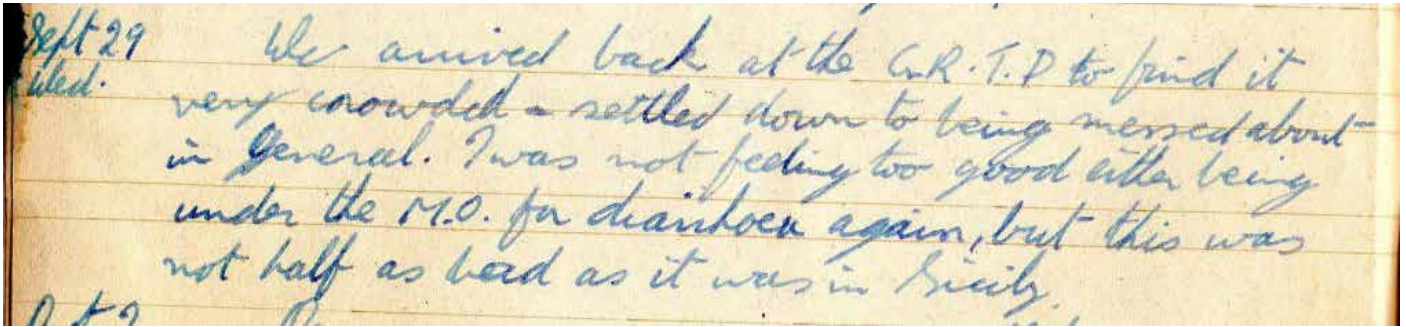
28 September 1943

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

**Monday 20th**

The Allies begin an attack on Naples.

**Wednesday 29th**



We arrived back at G.R.T.D. to find it very crowded & settled down to being messed about in general. I was not feeling too good either being under the M.O. for diarrhoea again, but this was not half as bad as it was in Sicily.

**Thursday 30th**

The Allies enter Naples as the Germans pull back.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## OCTOBER 1943

Saturday 2nd

Oct 2  
Sat. Our names were again called out & we were really on our way out for good. Syd was not though but Bob another fellow who had been on the guard with me was & he was a real decent fellow came from Hamilton. We said cheerio to Syd who was sorry he was not with us.

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Sunday 3rd

Oct 3  
Sun. This began one of the most amazing journeys I have had. We were awaked early & had breakfast & given haversack rations & went to the Station in horries. We were split up into parties by now there being 27 Signals in ours. - we were all due to ride the train together in the same cattle truck. On the outside of which there read. "Hommes 32 Chevaux 8" We were given rations for five days which shook us. We found out we were going to Bizerta which was about 180 miles away. This was easy a days travelling at the most yes in England but alas not in Nord Afrique" no four days we were shunted & stopped & messed about with it was terrific. We were nipping off the



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

train a brewing up at every stoppage - hanging  
the fire on the carriage - getting on again if  
caught in the middle of it. We had also  
a very rough crowd of fellows with us  
two of whom were drunk before starting  
from Ph. 6 of them were left behind at Constantine  
but they managed to catch the train up  
again somehow. We ended the journey with  
one man down he was left in the "mush" at  
Constantine. Sleeping was a horror as there  
was no room to lie down. Here Bob & I fell

in with two other fellows Len & Fred the former being  
a T.S.B.O like myself.

This began one of the most amazing journeys I have had. We were awakened early & had breakfast & given haversack rations & went to the station in lorries. We were split up into parties by now there being 27 signals in ours. We were all due to ride the train together in the same cattle truck. On the outside of which there read "Hommes 32 Chevaux 8".<sup>1</sup> We were given rations for five days which shook us. We found out we were going to Bizerta which was about 180 miles away. This was easy a days traveling at the most yes in England but alas not in "Nord Afrique" no four days. We were shunted & stopped & messed about with, it was terrific. We were nipping off the train & brewing up at every stop & hanging the fire on the carriages & getting on again if caught in the middle of it. We had also a very rough crowd of fellows with us two of whom were drunk before starting from Ph. 6 of them were left behind at Constantine but they managed to catch the train up again somehow. We ended the journey with one man down he was left in the "mush" at constantine. Sleeping was a horror as there was no room to lie down.<sup>2</sup> Here Bob & I fell in with two other fellows Len & Fred the former being a T.S.B.O like myself.

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1 This was one of my Dad's favourite stories. I think this probably prepared him for commuting from Bookham to London and back again every weeking day for twenty years

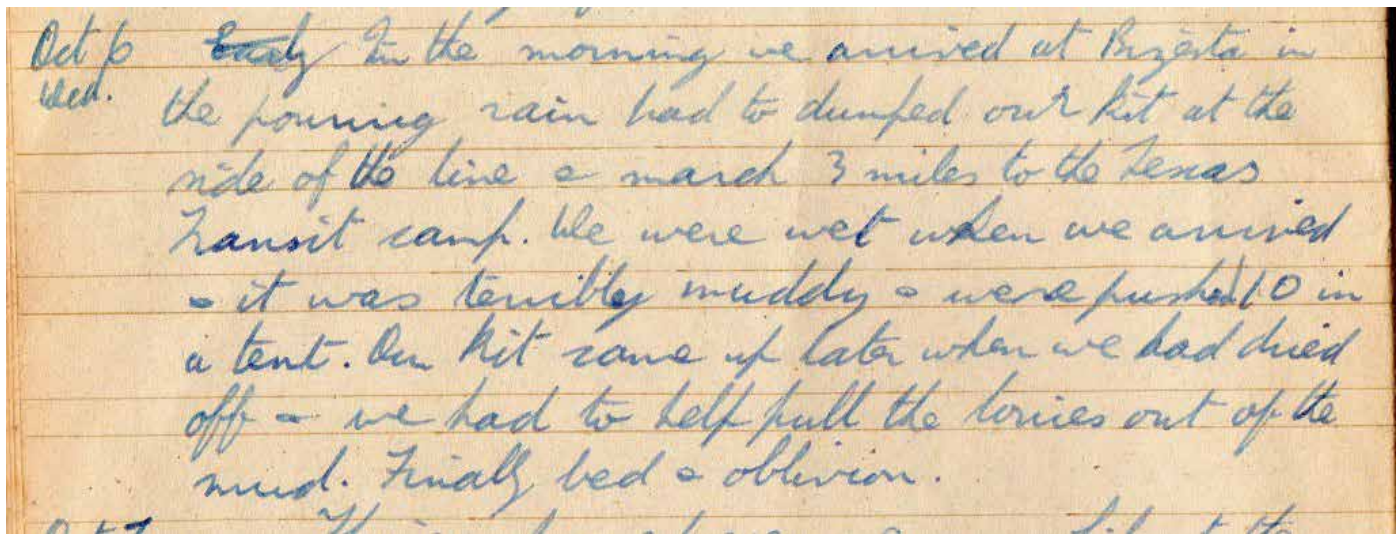
2 One thing he doesn't mention here but told later is that at one stop some Americans threw in some girls and said something like "Do you guys want some \*\*\* in there?"



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Wednesday 6th

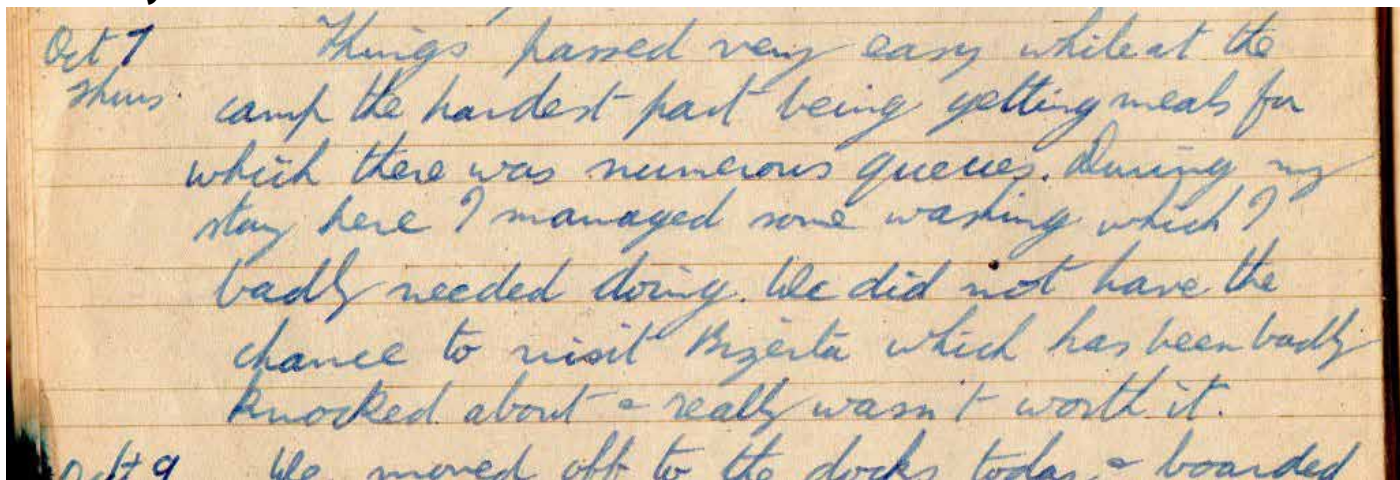
The Germans are reported to be looting Rome of art treasures ahead of the Allied advance.



Oct 6  
Wed. Early in the morning we arrived at Bizerta in the pouring rain had to dump our kit at the side of the line & march 3 miles to the Texas Transit camp. We were wet when we arrived - it was terribly muddy & were pushed 10 in a tent. Our kit came up later when we had dried off & we had to help pull the lorries out of the mud. Finally bed & oblivion.

In the morning we arrived at Bizerta<sup>3</sup> in the pouring rain had to dump our kit at the side of the line & march 3 miles to the Texas Transit Camp. We were wet when we arrived & it was terribly muddy & were pushed 10 in a tent. Our kit came up later when we had dried off & we had to help pull the lorries out of the mud. Finally bed & oblivion.

Thursday 7th



Oct 7  
Thurs. Things passed very easy while at the camp the hardest part being getting meals for which there was numerous queues. During my stay here I managed some washing which I badly needed doing. We did not have the chance to visit Bizerta which has been badly knocked about & really wasn't worth it.

Oct 9 We moved off to the docks today & boarded

Things passed very easy while at the camp the hardest part being getting meals for which there was numerous queues. During my stay here I managed some washing which I badly needed doing. We did not have the chance to visit Bizerta which had been badly knocked about & really wasn't worth it.

3 See Appendix C



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Saturday 9th

Oct 9 Sat We moved off to the docks today & boarded the LST's which were to transport us. There was also some Yanks on board & as usual they got the bunks & we had to sleep on the deck. Bob & I found a nice place under one of the gun mountings forward. Our kit bags nearly missed us as the lorries which were due to go back for a second load didn't & some commandeered transport just made it before we sailed. The food on the voyage was good being for the most part American rations. I was in high spirits thinking I was due to go to Sicily but on the second day out we learnt we were bound for Taranto which was a bit of a blow. On the night of 11<sup>th</sup> a storm broke & there was lightning & a deluged of rain which wet us through & washed us down below & we spent a very wet night half awake & sleep below.

We moved off to the docks today & boarded the LSTs<sup>4</sup> which were to transport us. There was also some Yanks on board & as usual they got the bunks & we had to sleep on the deck. Bob & I found a nice place under one of the gun mountings forward. Our kit bags nearly missed us as the lorries which were due to go back for a second load didn't & some commandeered transport just made it before we sailed. The food on the voyage was good being for the most part American rations. I was in high spirits thinking I was due to go to Sicily but on the second day out we learnt we were bound for Taranto which was a bit of a blow. On the night of 11th a storm broke & there was lightning & a deluged of rain which wet us through & washed us down below & we spent a wet night half awake & asleep below.

<sup>4</sup> Landing Ship, Tank, or tank landing ship, is the naval designation for ships first developed during World War II to support amphibious operations by carrying tanks, vehicles, cargo, and landing troops directly onto shore with no docks or piers. This enabled amphibious assaults on almost any beach



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Tuesday 12th

Oct-12.  
Tues. About midday we sighted land which finally got nearer & in the evening just as it was going dark we steamed into the inner harbour at Taranto. I have never seen such a fine harbour or such a big one & there were plenty of warships etc there including a number of units of the Italian fleet. We docked & disembarked at night & spent the night in a big shipbuilders place on the quays which was quite comfy for the night sleeping on planks of wood.

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Wednesday 13th



Italy completed her military about-face today by declaring war on Germany, her ally until little more than five weeks ago. The Prime Minister, Marshal Badoglio, urged Italian soldiers to fight against the Germans "to their last man" because of Germany's "repeated and intensified acts of war".

The declaration follows a wave of atrocities and looting since the Italian surrender last month. In Rome, German troops have been stealing Old Masters, priceless manuscripts and art treasures. Naples, now under Allied control, was subjected to a five-day reign of terror as retreating soldiers took revenge on their Italian "betrayers". In one case, the Germans planted land mines under a room, herded more than 100 civilians into it - then detonated them.

Soldiers roamed the city almost at random, looting and blowing up buildings. Hospitals were attacked to destroy their stocks of food. Water mains and sewers were dynamited to foul water supplies. Thousands of civilians have died. Resistance has been savagely put down. In the village of Aversa, near Naples, 80 Italian policemen and 20 civilians were shot in reprisal for the death of a single German.

October 1943 34



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of disarmed Italian soldiers are being crammed into sealed trains under guard and taken to Germany as slave labour.

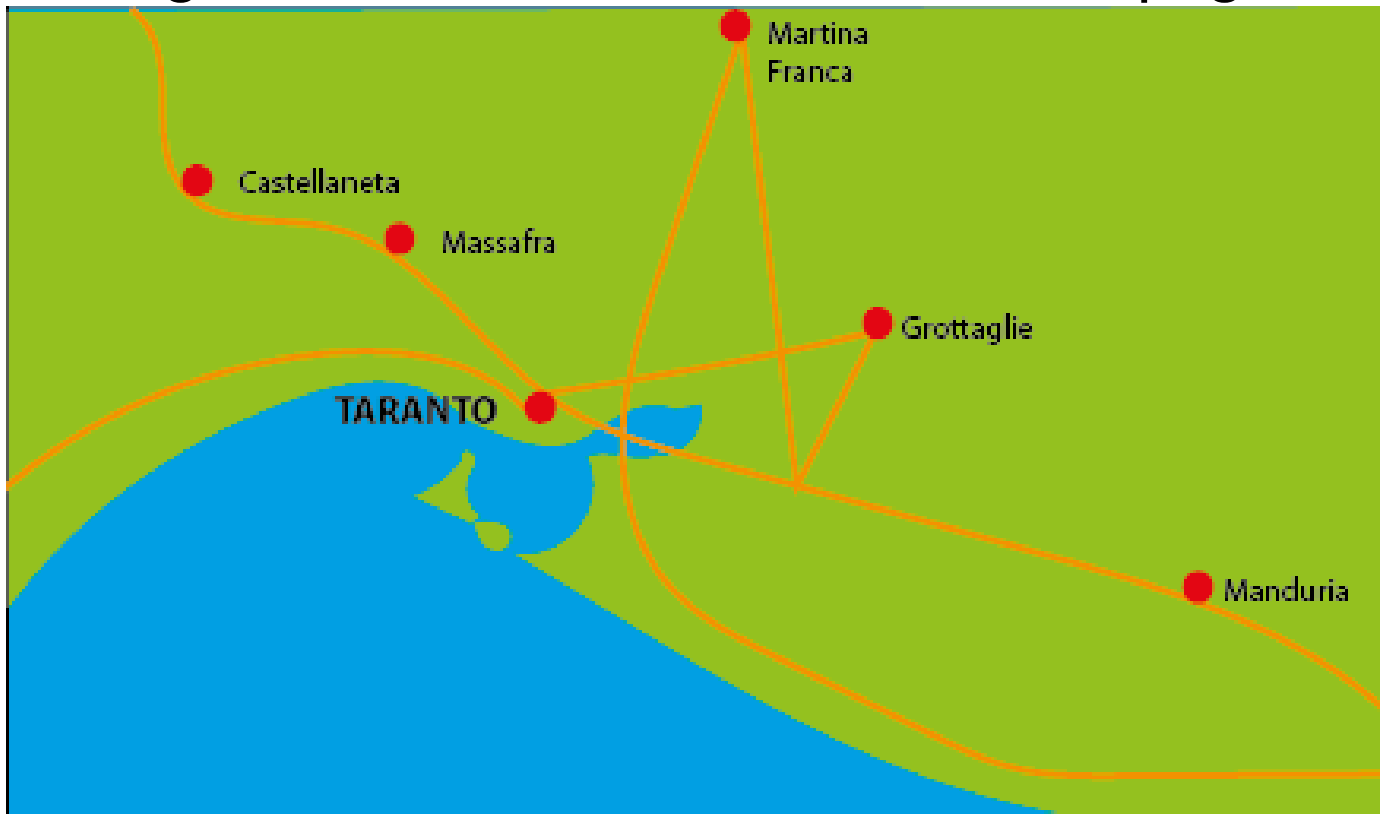
Oct 13  
Wed.

We arose & shaved etc & had one of the best breakfasts I had seen whilst in transit who organised it I don't know but it amazed me. We then donned our kit & marched to the X Transit camp at Taranto. After putting us down in one spot - Bob & I had a tent made out of our groundshets we had to pack up &

move about 1/2 mile away. Here in the dark amid much confusion we were placed in huts wood, which had been an Italian barracks until the army had blasted it & they were in various states of collapse. Whilst at this camp we again got worried about having various fatigues to do if & when they could catch or find us. I went into the town about 3 times after which I had not money & did not bother again. I found very little to buy of any value most of the goods having a very cheap look about them. The Italian themselves are a very poor type of people & I am not impressed by them. While we were in the huts, which had no holes on the roofs, we got wet through about 3 times & eventually moved in house confiscated by the army this lasted two days & we then moved into tents again. These though were very good being I.P. & also having floor boards in them. We spent our nights here playing bridge & had some good games. Our lights were made by putting 4x2 in tins filled with margarine. The latter we collected at meal times from old bits thrown about. On Oct 27 our names were read out again & we were to move the next day.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



We arose & shaved etc. & had one of the best breakfasts I had seen whilst in transit who organised it I don't know but it amazed me. We then donned our kit & marched to the transit camp at Taranto. After putting us down in one spot & Bob & I had a tent made out of our groundsheets we had to pack up & move about 1/4 mile away. Here in the dark amid much confusion we were placed in wooden huts, which had been an Italian barracks until the army had blasted it & they were in various states of collapse.<sup>5</sup> Whilst at this camp we again got messed about having various fatigues to do if & when they could catch or find us. I went into the town about 3 times after which I had no money & did not bother again. I found very little to buy of any value most of the goods having a very cheap look about them. The Italians themselves are a very poor type of people & I am not impressed by them. While we were in the huts, which had no tiles on the roofs, we got wet through about 3 times & eventually moved in house confiscated by the army this lasted two days & we then moved into tents again. These though were very good being I.P. & also having floor boards in them. We spent our nights here playing bridge & had some good games. Our lights were made by putting 4 x 2 in tins filled with margarine. The latter we collected at meal times from odd bits thrown about. On Oct 27 our names were read out again & we were to move the next day.

## Thursday 14th

The allies break through German defence lines along the River Volturno

<sup>5</sup> I think Dad must have been having a bad day, this actually reads: Here in the dark amid much confusion we we placed in huts wood, which had been an Italian barracks untill the army had *blasted* it & they were in various states of colaspe. *blasted* - this looks more like bloated. I originally transcribed this on the 13th October, 2003 exactly 60 years after my Dad wrote it!

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Thursday 28th

Oct 28  
Thurs. We started out & marched to the station  
this time the journey was much better riding  
in the classe Italian coaches. It only lasted a couple  
of hours we arrived at the 2(Br) Corps Reinforcement  
Unit. Here I learnt finally that due to me being  
away from my unit so long I would not be  
returning there & was placed in the pool. The first  
thing we had on arriving was a kit check  
& the 2 confiscated all surplus stuff. The first  
night here due to our tent only having been  
put up that day it had no drainage <sup>ditch</sup> &  
it poured down again I got washed out &  
evacuated to a drier tent. Most of our time here  
was spent in fatigues digging drainage & whatnot  
Oh I got caught for guard & was on with Ben  
it was cushy though but exceptionally cold.  
Bob lucky fellow got sent back to his own unit  
& broke up our bridge school. One remarkable  
thing about the place was what was termed  
"the market" which was a congregation of Italian  
vendors selling odd things it also sported a number  
of barbers. Eventually our names were called  
again & I found myself going to 8<sup>th</sup> Army Sig  
Ben unfortunately was going elsewhere.

We started out & marched to the station this time the journey was much better riding in the II classe Italian coaches. It only lasted a couple of hours we arrived at the 2(br) Corps Reinforcement Unit. Here I learnt finally that due to me being away from my unit so long I would not be returning there & was placed in the pool. The first thing we had on arriving was a kit check & the 2 confiscated all surplus stuff. The first night here due to our tent only having been put up that day it had no drainage ditch & it poured down again. I

37 October 1943



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

got washed out & evacuated to a drier tent. Most of our time here was spent in fatigues digging drainage & whatnot. Oh I got caught for guard & was on with Len it was cushy though but exceptionally cold. Bob lucky fellow got sent back to his own unit & broke up our bridge school. One remarkable thing about the place was what was termed "the market" which was a congregation of Italian vendors selling odd things it also sported a number of barbers. Eventually our names were called again & I found myself going to 8th Army Sigs Len unfortunately was going elsewhere.

## **Sunday 31st**

Allied armies trying to inch their way up the boot of Italy - "like a bug on one leg" as Winston Churchill put it - have run into stiff resistance north of the Volturno River. The Nazis have transformed the Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino into an almost impenetrable fortress.

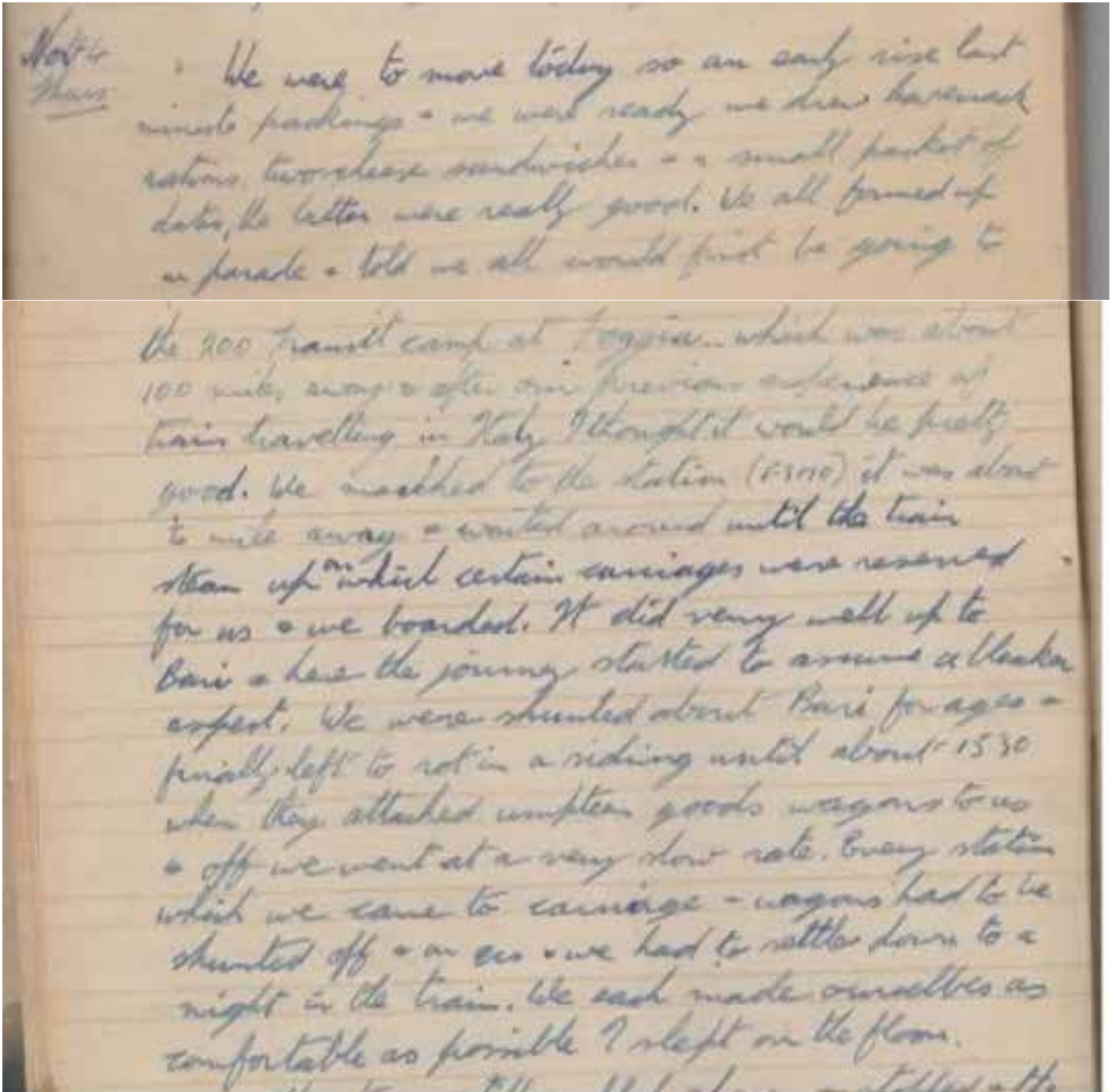
The Allies are short of men, and geography is against them: the rugged Appenines make ideal shelter for Nazi machine gun nests; there are few roads; the land is marshy. The weather is against them, too: fog hampers Allied planes, and winter is close.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## NOVEMBER 1943

Thursday 4th

The allies seize Isernia, a key German position on the way to Rome.



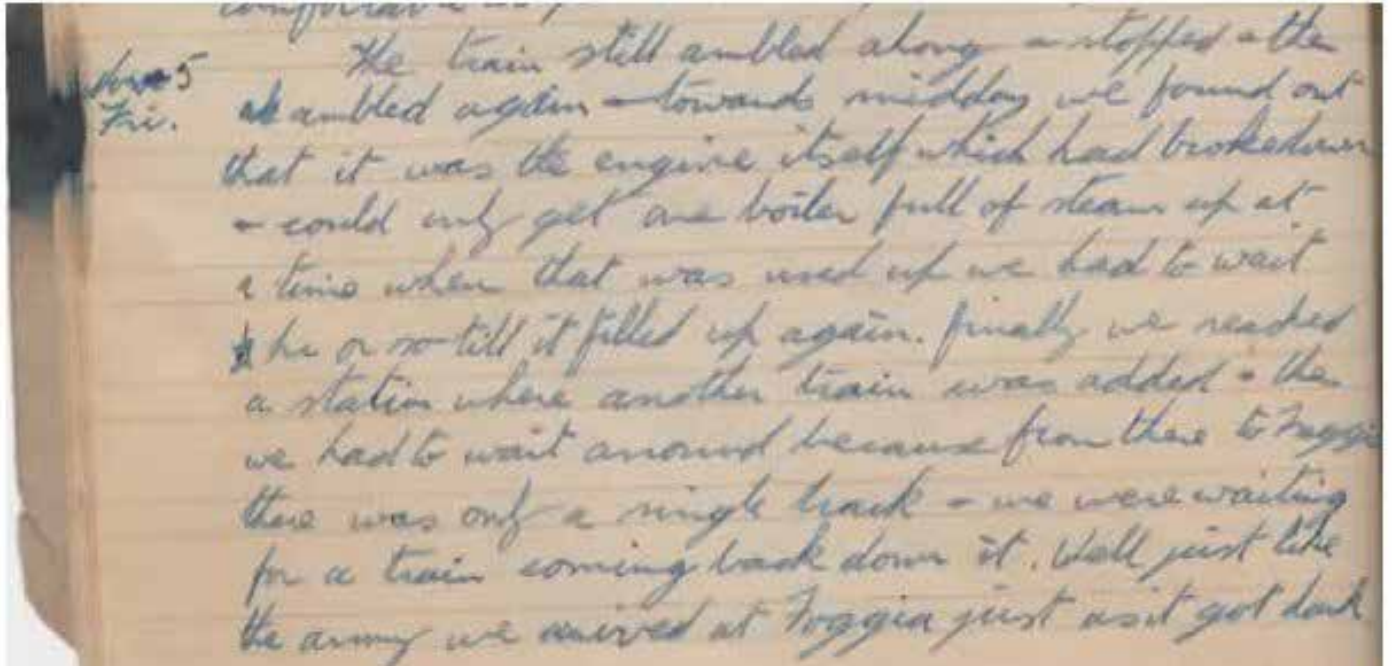
We were to move today so an early rise last minute packings & we were ready we drew haversack rations two cheese sandwiches & a small packet of dates, the latter were really good. We all formed up on parade & told we all would be going to the 200 transit camp at Foggia which was about 100 miles away & after our previous experience of train travelling in Italy I thought it would be pretty good. We marched to the station (FSMO) it was



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

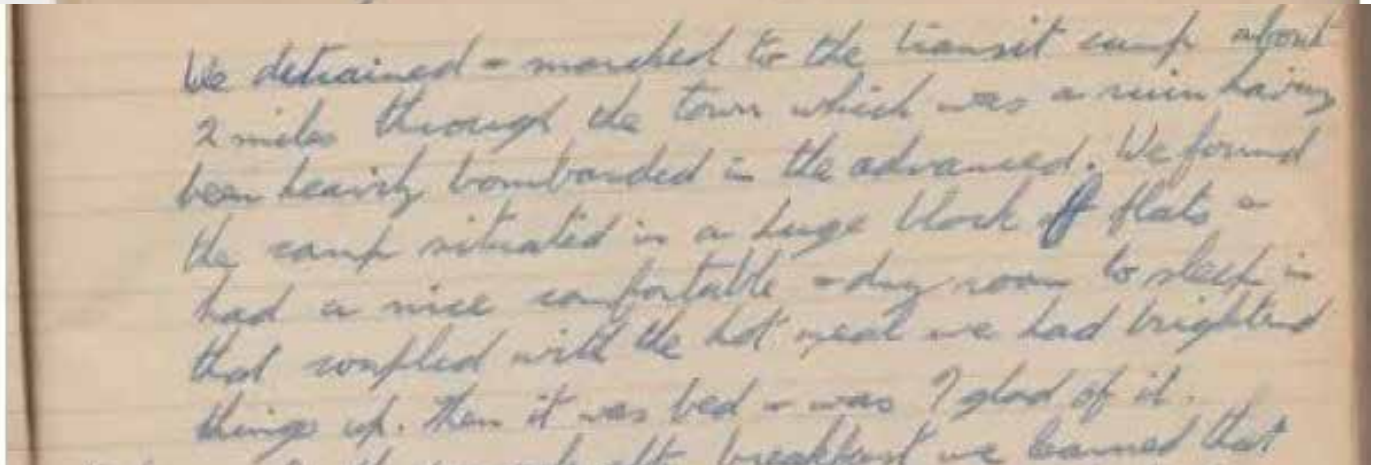
about 1/4 mile away & waited around until the train steam up on which certain carriages were reserved for us & we boarded. It did very well up to Bari & here the journey started to assume a bleaker aspect. We were shunted about Bari for ages & finally left to rot in a siding until about 15:30 when they attached umpteen goods wagons to us & off we went at a very slow rate. Every station which we came to carriage & wagons had to be shunted off & on us & we had to settle down to a night in the train. We each made ourselves as comfortable as possible I slept on the floor.

## Friday 5th



40 Nov 5  
Fri.

The train still ambled along & stopped & then ambled again & towards midday we found out that it was the engine itself which had broke down & could only get one boiler full of steam up at a time when that was used up we had to wait 1/2 hr or so till it filled up again. Finally we reached a station where another train was added & then we had to wait around because from there to Foggia there was only a single track & we were waiting for a train coming back down it. Well just like the army we arrived at Foggia just as it got dark.

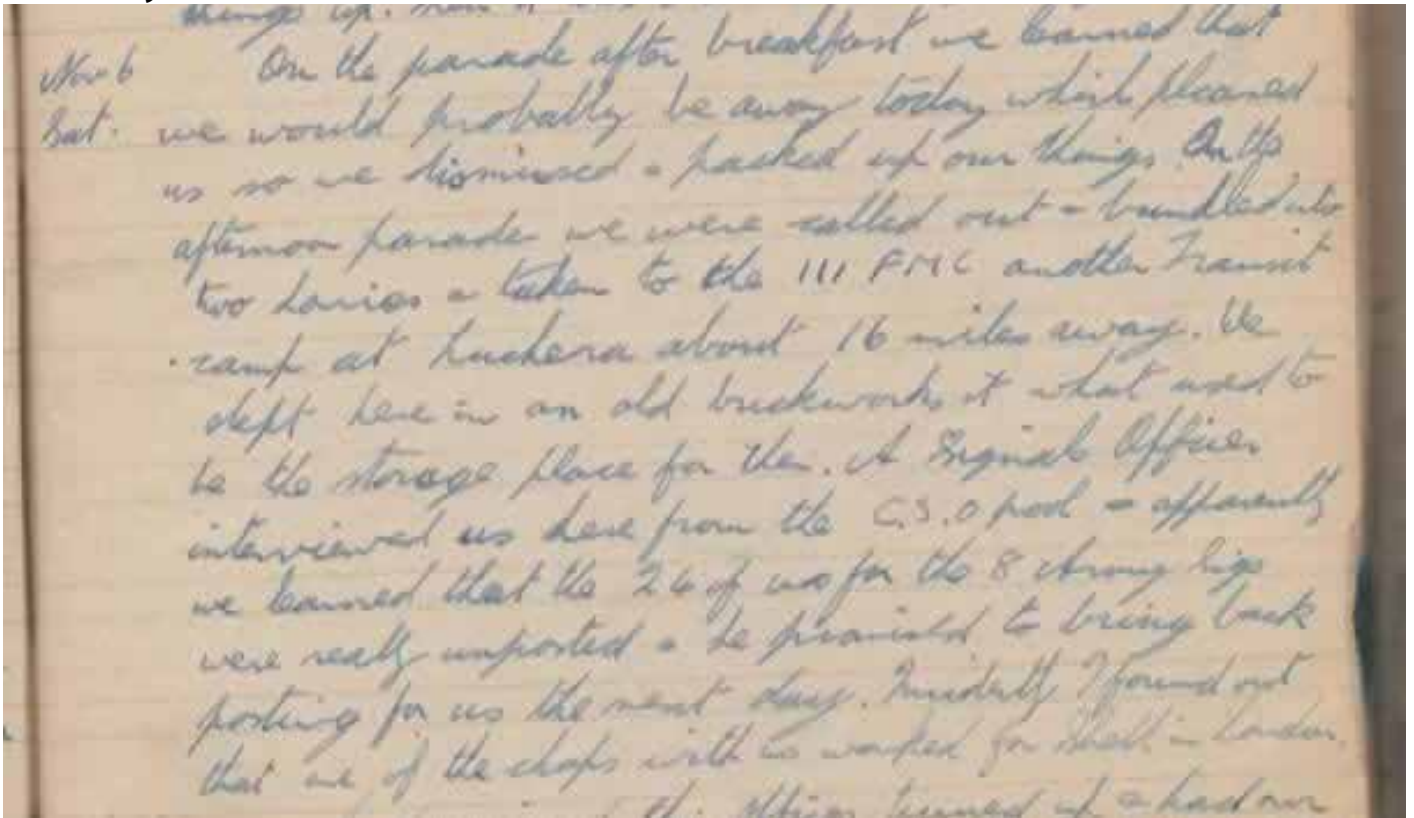


We detrained & marched to the transit camp about 2 miles through the town which was a ruin having been heavily bombarded in the advance. We found the camp situated in a huge block of flats & had a nice comfortable & dry room to sleep in that coupled with the hot meal we had brightened things up. Then it was bed & was I glad of it.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

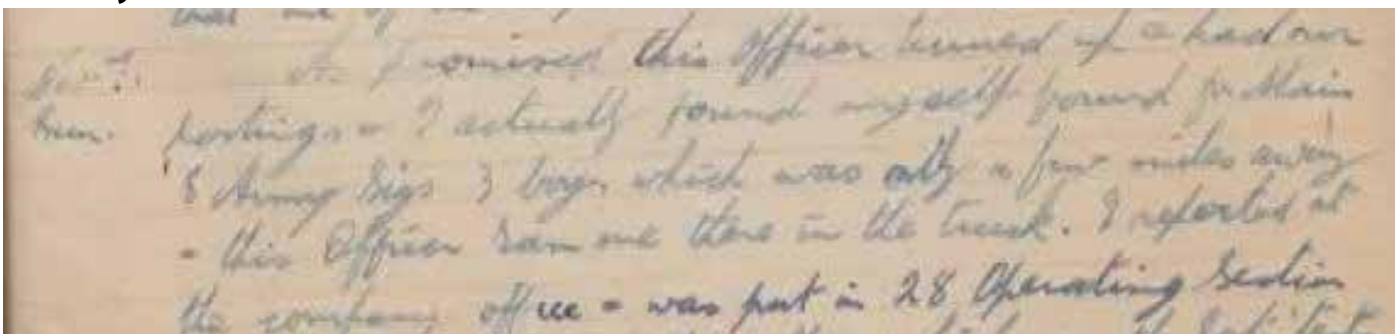
Saturday 6th



On the parade after breakfast we learned that we would probably be away today which pleased us so we dismissed & packed up our things. On the afternoon parade we were called out & bundled into two lorries & taken to the 111 FMC another transit camp at Luchera<sup>1</sup> about 16 miles away. We slept here in an old brickworks it what used to be the storage for them. A Signals Officer interviewed us here from the C.S.O. pool & apparently we learned that the 24 of us for the 8 Army Sigs were really unposted & he promised to bring back posting for us the next day. Incidentally I found out that one of the chaps with us worked for Shell<sup>2</sup> in London.



Sunday 7th

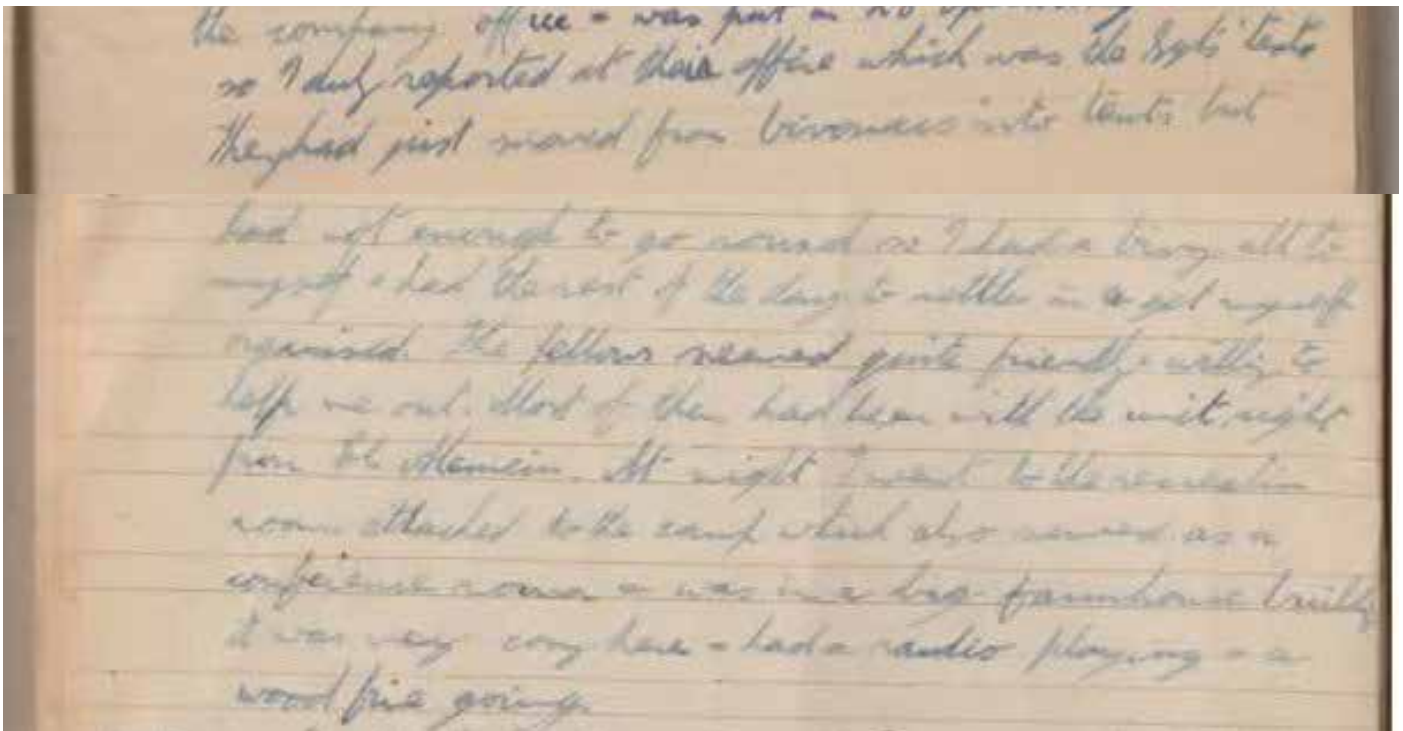


1 I think this is probably Lucera (See Appendix C).

2 Dad worked for Shell-Mex and BP, and then Shell, for forty-three years.

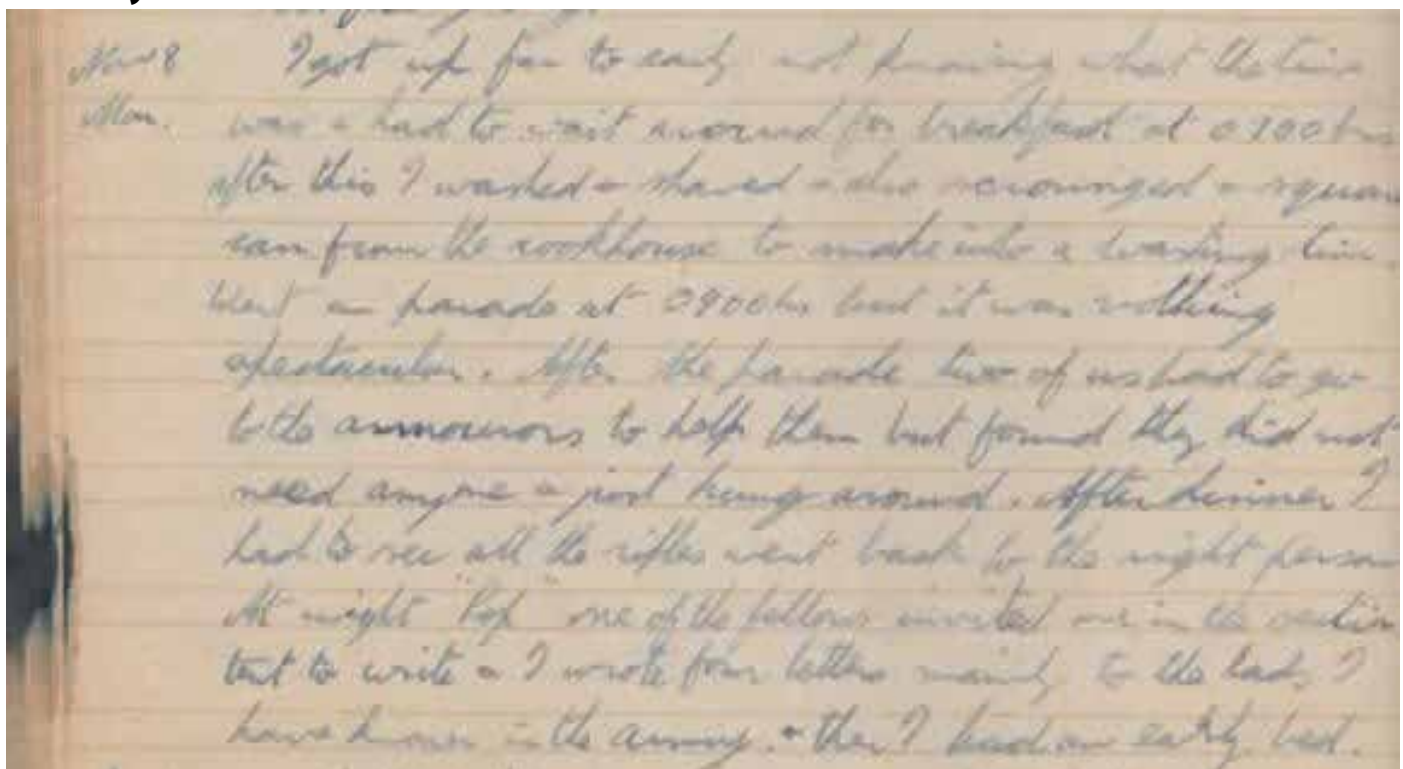


# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



As promised this officer turned up & had our postings & I actually found myself bound for Main 8 Army Sigs 3 Coy which was only a few miles away & this Officer saw me there in the truck. I reported at the company office & was put in 28 Operating Section so I duly reported at their office which was the Sgts' tent. They had just moved from bivouacs into tents but had not enough to go round so I had a bivy all to myself & had the rest of the day to settle in & get myself organised. The fellows seemed quite friendly & Willing to help me out. Most of them had been with the unit right from El Alemain. At night I went to the recreation room attached to the camp which also served as a conference room & was in a big farmhouse building. It was very cosy here & had a radio playing & a wood fire going.

## Monday 8th

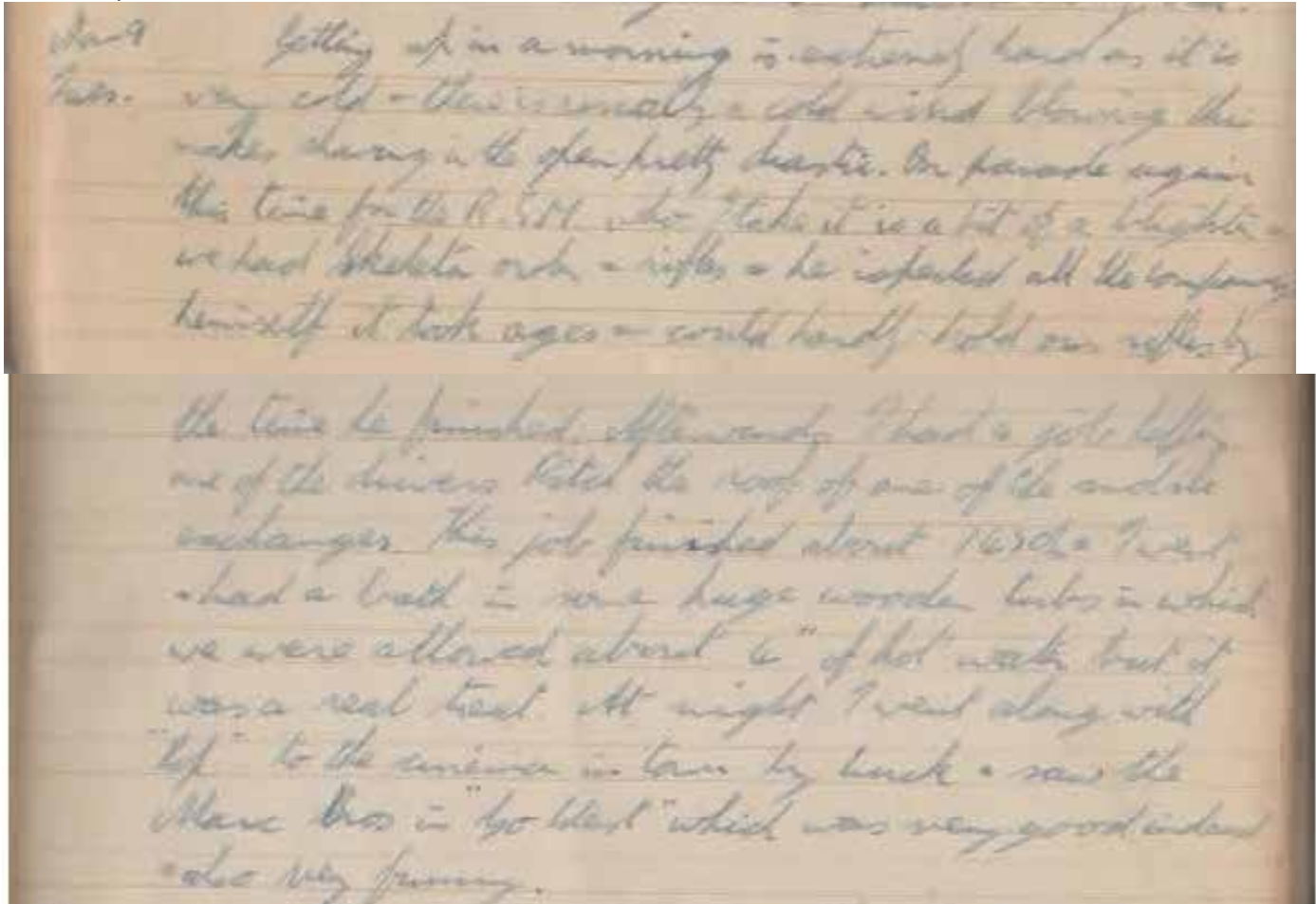


42 November 1943

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

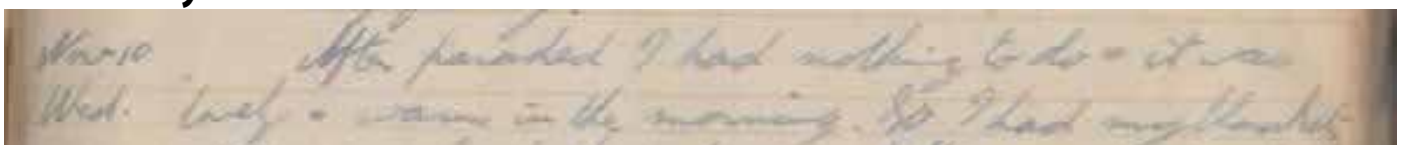
I got up far too early not knowing what the time was & had to wait around for breakfast at 0700 hrs after this I washed & shaved & also scrounged a square can from the cook-house to make into a washing tin. Went on parade at 0900 hrs but it was nothing spectacular. After the parade two of us had to go to the armorers to help them but found they did not need anyone & just hung around. After dinner I had to see all the rifles went back the right persons. At night "Pop" one of the fellows invited me in the section tent to write and I wrote four letters mainly to the lads I had known in the army & then I had an early bed.

## Tuesday 9th



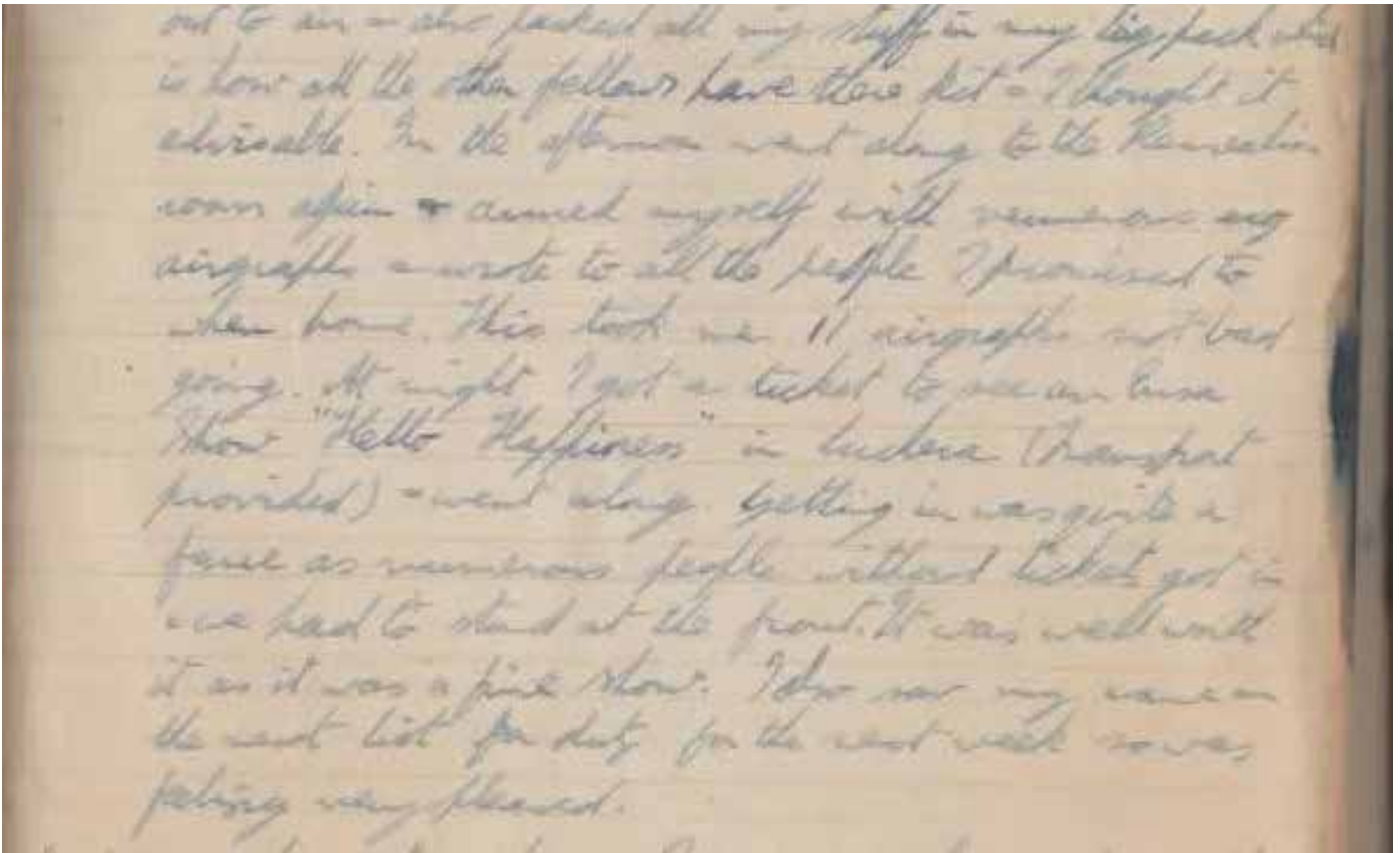
Getting up in a morning is extremely hard as it is very cold & there is usually a cold wind blowing this makes shaving in the open pretty drastic. On parade again this time for the R.S.M. who I take it is a bit of a blighter & we had skeleton order & rifles & he inspected all the company himself it took ages & could hardly hold our rifles by the time he finished. Afterwards I had a job helping one of the drivers pitch the roof of one of the mobile exchanges. This job finished about 1430h & I went & had a bath in some huge wooden tubs in which we were allowed about 4" of hot water but it was a real treat. At night I went along with "Pop" to the cinema in town by truck & saw the Marx Bros in "Go West" which was very good indeed & also very funny.

## Wednesday 10th





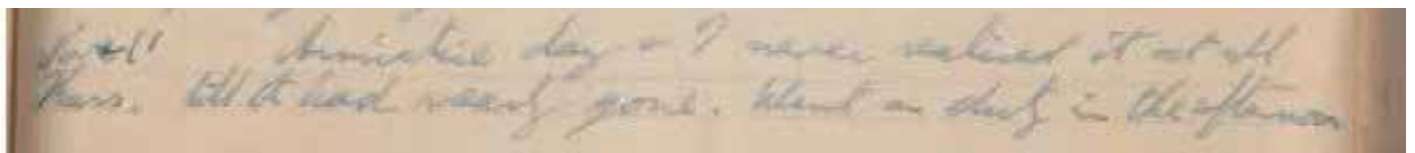
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



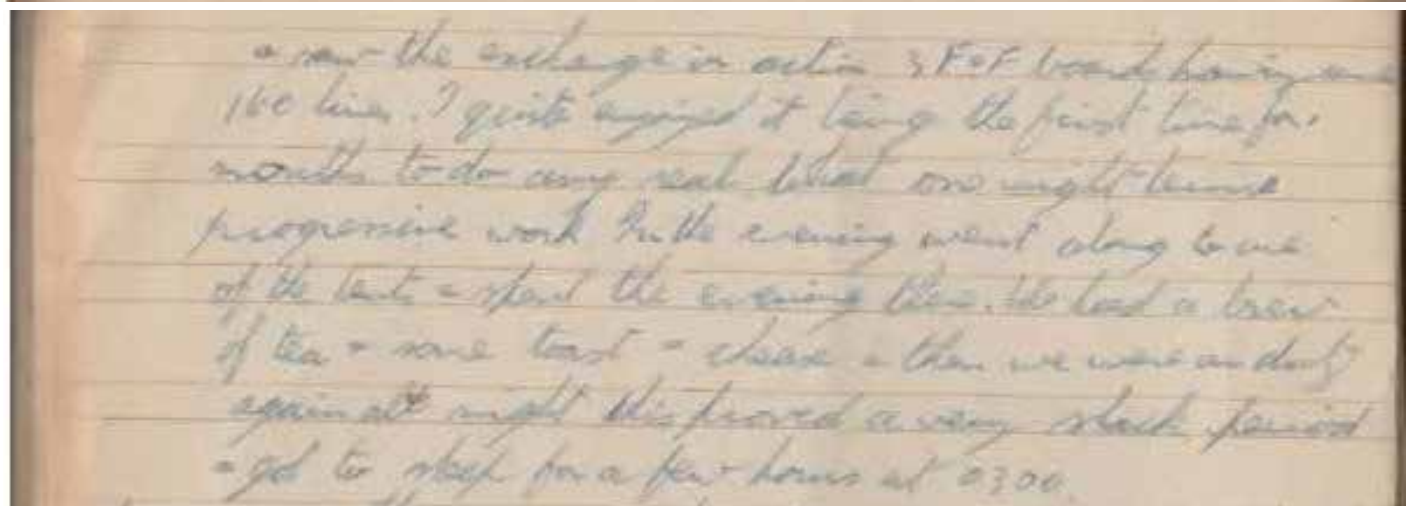
out to air - she packed all my stuff in my big pack which is how all the other fellows have their kit - I thought it advisable. In the afternoon went along to the Recreation room again & armed myself with numerous airgraphs & wrote to all the people I promised to when home. This took me 11 airgraphs not bad going. At night I got a ticket to see an ENSA show "Hello Happiness" in Luchera (transport provided) & went along. Getting in was quite a farce as numerous people without tickets got in & we had to stand at the front. It was well worth it as it was a fine show. I also saw my name on the next list for duty for the next week so was feeling very pleased.

After parade I had nothing to do & it was lovely & warm in the morning. So I had my blankets out to air & also packed all my stuff in my big pack which is how all the other fellows have their kit & I thought it advisable. In the afternoon went along to the Recreation room again & armed myself with numerous airgraphs & wrote to all the people I promised to when home. This took me 11 airgraphs not bad going. At night I got a ticket to see an ENSA show "Hello Happiness" in Luchera (transport provided) & went along. Getting in was quite a farce as numerous people without tickets got in & we had to stand at the front. It was well worth it as it was a fine show. I also saw my name on the next list for duty for the next week so was very pleased.

## Thursday 11th



11th Nov. A busy day - I never realised it at all. Went on duty in the afternoon.

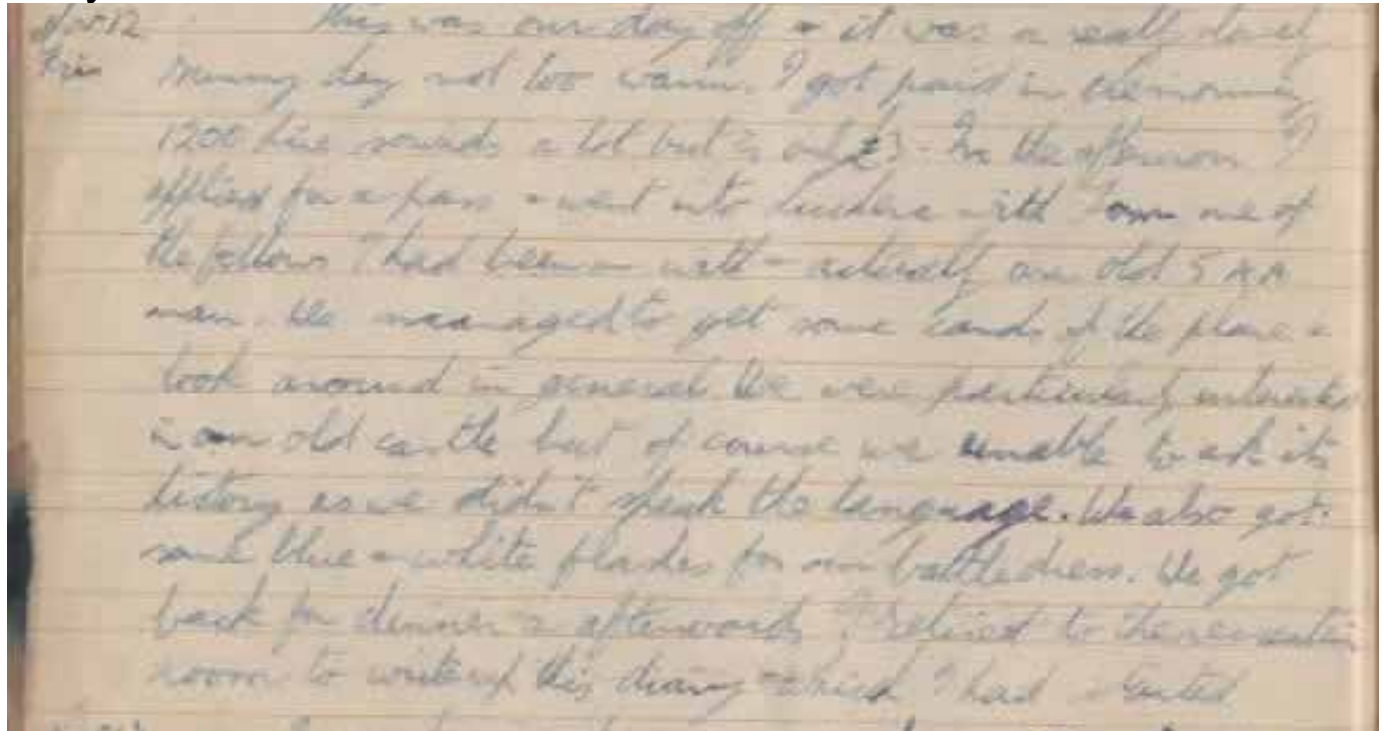


a saw the exchange in action 3 F.O.F. board having 160 lines. I quite enjoyed it being the first time for months to do any real what one might term progressive work. In the evening went along to one of the tents & spent the evening there. We had a brew of tea & some toast & chess & then we were on duty again all night. We proved a very slack period & got to sleep for a few hours at 0300.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

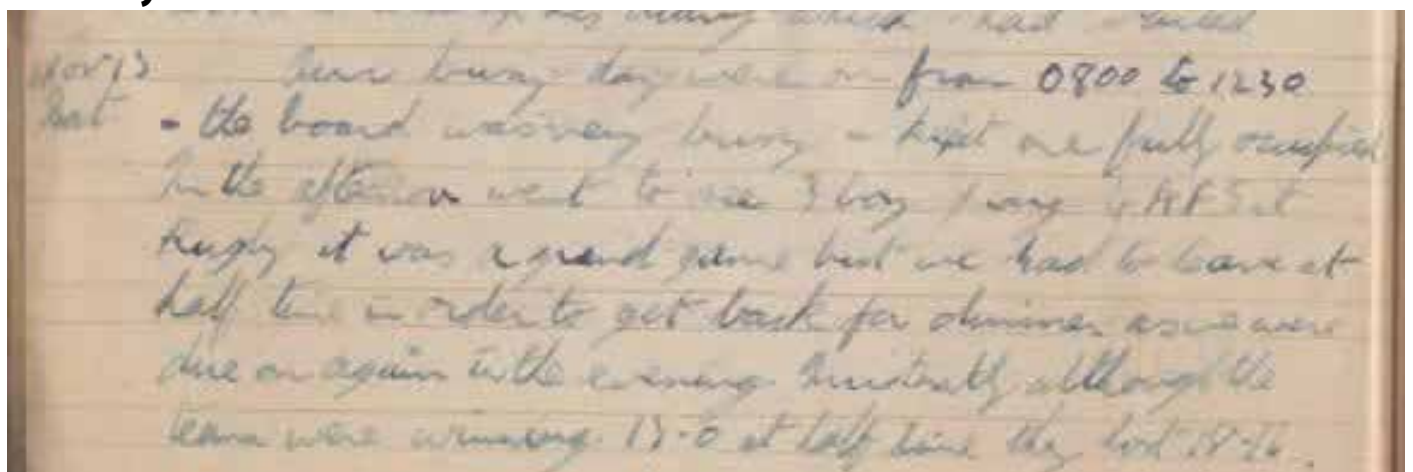
Armistice Day & I never realised it at all till it had nearly gone. Went on duty in the afternoon & saw the exchange in action. 3 FoF boards having some 160 lines. I quite enjoyed it being the first time for months to any real, what one might term, progressive work. In the evening went along to one of the tents & spent the evening there. We had a brew of tea & some toast & cheese & then we were on duty again all night this proved a very slack period & got to sleep a few hours at 0300.

## Friday 12th



This was our day off & it was a really lovely sunny day not too warm. I got paid in the morning 1200 Lire sounds a lot but it is only £3. In the afternoon I applied for a pass & went into Luchera with Tom one of the fellows I had been on with and actually an old SAA man. We managed to get some cards of the place<sup>3</sup> & look around in general. We were particularly interested in an old castle but of course we were unable to ask its history as we didn't speak the language. We also got some blue & white flashes for our battle dress. We got back for dinner & afterwards retired to the recreation room to write up this diary which I had started.

## Saturday 13th

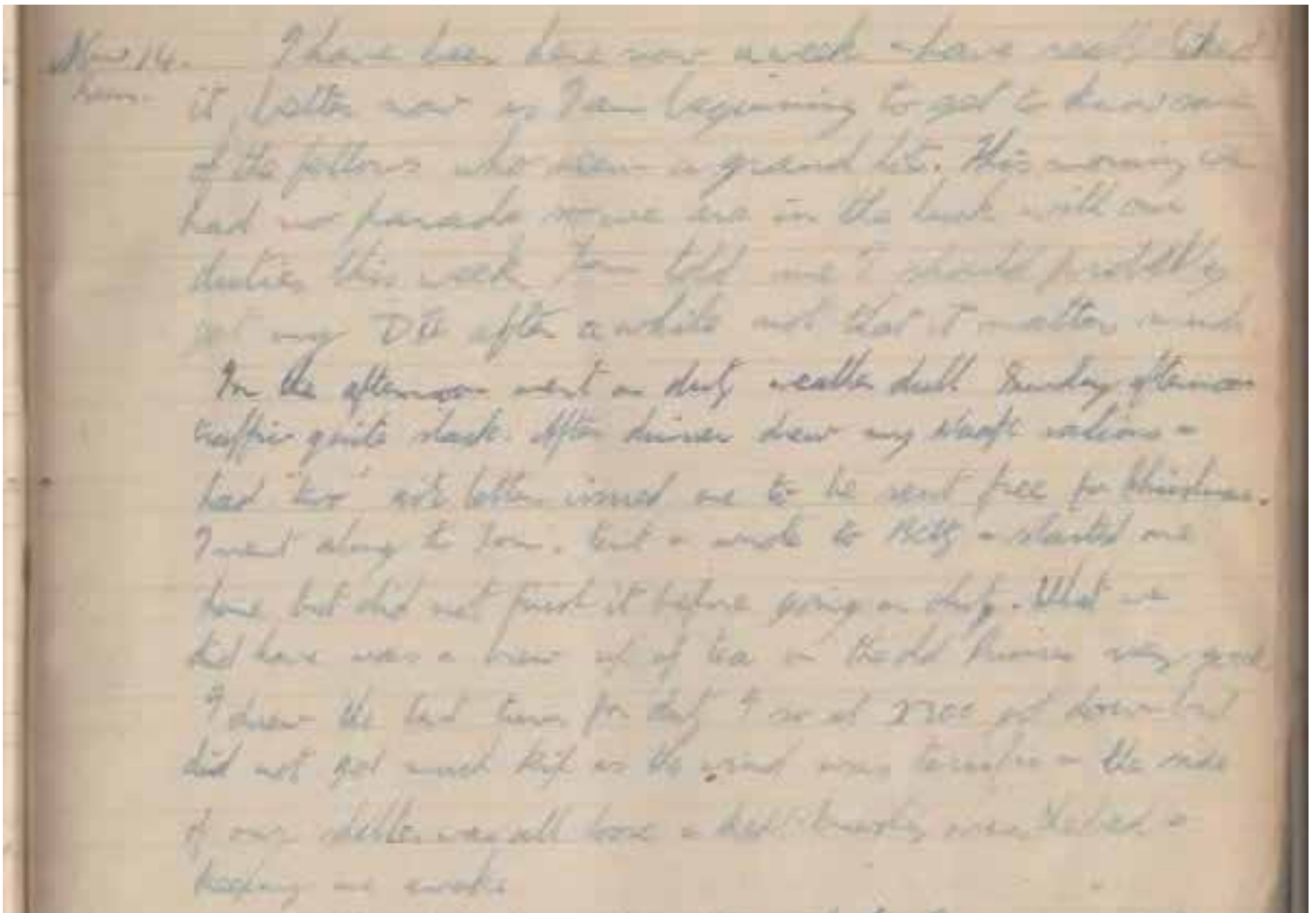




# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Our busy day were on from 0800 to 1230 & the board was very busy & kept one fully occupied. In the afternoon went to see 3 Coy play 4 A.F.S. at rugby it was a grand game but we had to leave at half time in order to get back for dinner as we were due on again in the evening. Incidentally although the team were winning 13-0 at half time they lost 18-16.

## Sunday 14th



I have been here now a week & have really like it, better now as I am beginning to get to know some of the fellows who seem a grand lot. This morning we had no parade so we are in the luck with our duties this week. Tom told me I should probably get my DII after a while not that it matters much. In the afternoon went on duty weather dull Sunday afternoon traffic quite slack. After dinner drew my NAAFI rations & had "two" air letters issued one to be sent free for Christmas. I went along to Tom's tent & wrote to Betty & started one home but did not finish it before going on duty. What we did have was a brew of tea on the old primus very good. I drew the last turn for duty & so at 2300 got down but did not get much kip as the wind was terrific & the side of our shelter was all loose & kept brushing over the bed & keeping me awake.

## Monday 15th

RAF Wellington bombers are reported to be using new techniques to allow night-time precision bombing.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Nov 15  
The duty passed quite calmly I managed to finish off the letter home & handed them in when I came off. After breakfast got the rest of my Naffi ration & then made my bed & went to sleep. Tom woke me up for tiffin. In the afternoon it was fine & did a little washing a pair of socks my two handkerchiefs & my tea cloth. Later I had a hot bath in the 5" of water in huge wooden tubs & I felt much better the weather altered & it rained a little followed by the wind. When it cleared just before dinner Tom & I went to the well for some water & got wet through coming back into the bargain. After dinner which was also a wet affair we went to the pictures & saw a great film Ginger Rogers & Ray Milland in "The Major & the Minor" it was really funny & I felt sorry when it was over. When we came out of the cinema it was a lovely night with a full moon. I felt like making use of it & going for a walk but crawled into my bed instead.

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## Tuesday 16th

Nov 16  
Managed to get up early about 0645 hrs & wash & then have coffee breakfast & go on duty. In the morning the weather was pretty hot but I managed to get to know the board now. When I came off the Sergeant said I could go into one of the tubs



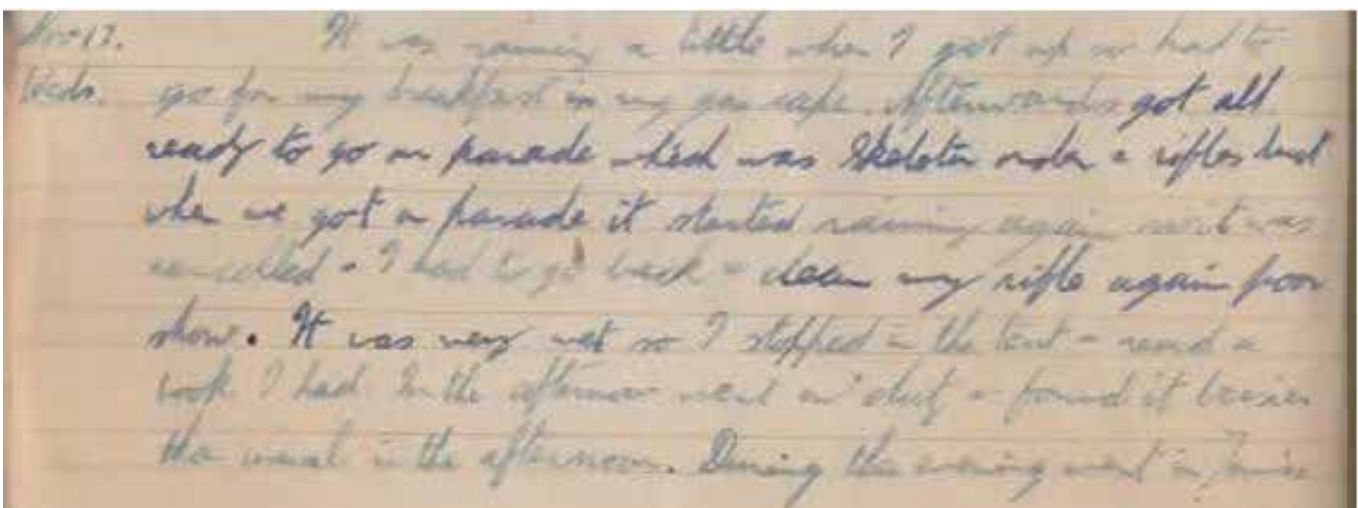
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



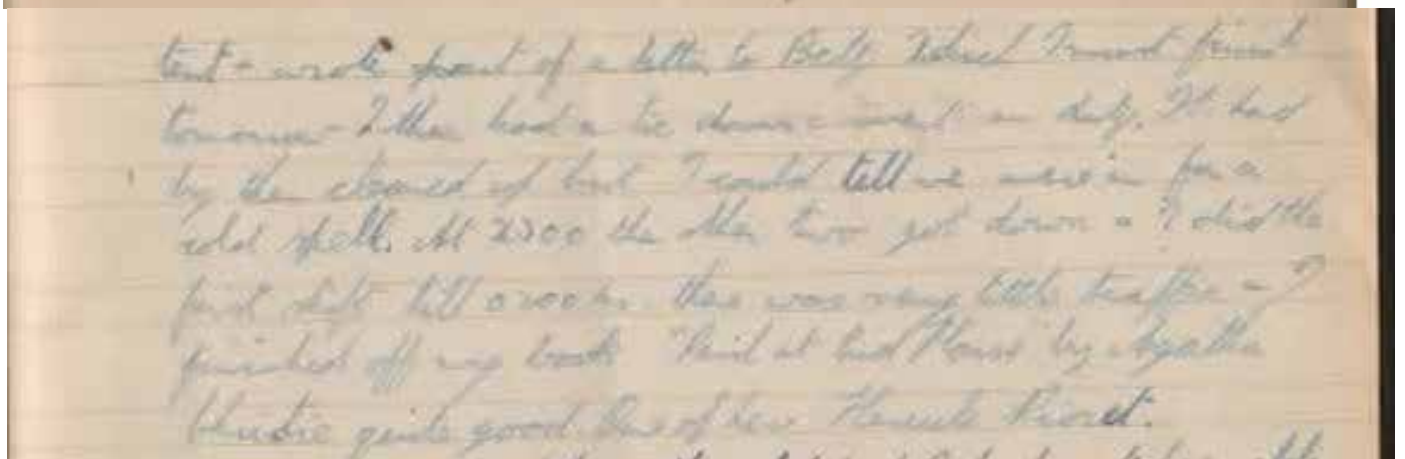
as there was a space, so I moved my stuff over & packed up my bivouac. Went on duty in the evening again were kept going. It rained as well - I felt a lot better about my kit now it was in a tent. When I came off duty the lads in the tent offered me a mug of tea which was quite good. I found it much warmer in the tent - did not have my overcoat over me.

Manage to get up early about 0645 had wash & shave before breakfast & go on duty. As usual in the morning this was pretty hectic but I survived. I am getting to know the board now. When I came off the Sergeant said I could go into one of the tents as there was a space, so I moved my stuff over & packed up my bivouac. Went on duty in the evening again were kept going. It rained as well & I felt a lot better about my kit now it was in a tent. When I came off duty the lads in the tent offered me a mug of tea which was quite good. I found it much warmer in the tent & did not have my overcoat over me.

## Wednesday 17th



Nov 17. It was raining a little when I got up so had to go for my breakfast in my gas cape. Afterwards got all ready to go on parade which was skeleton order & rifles but when we got on parade it started raining again so it was cancelled. I had to go back & clean my rifle again for show. It was very wet so I stopped in the tent & read a book I had. In the afternoon went on duty & found it better than usual in the afternoon. During the evening went in a tent



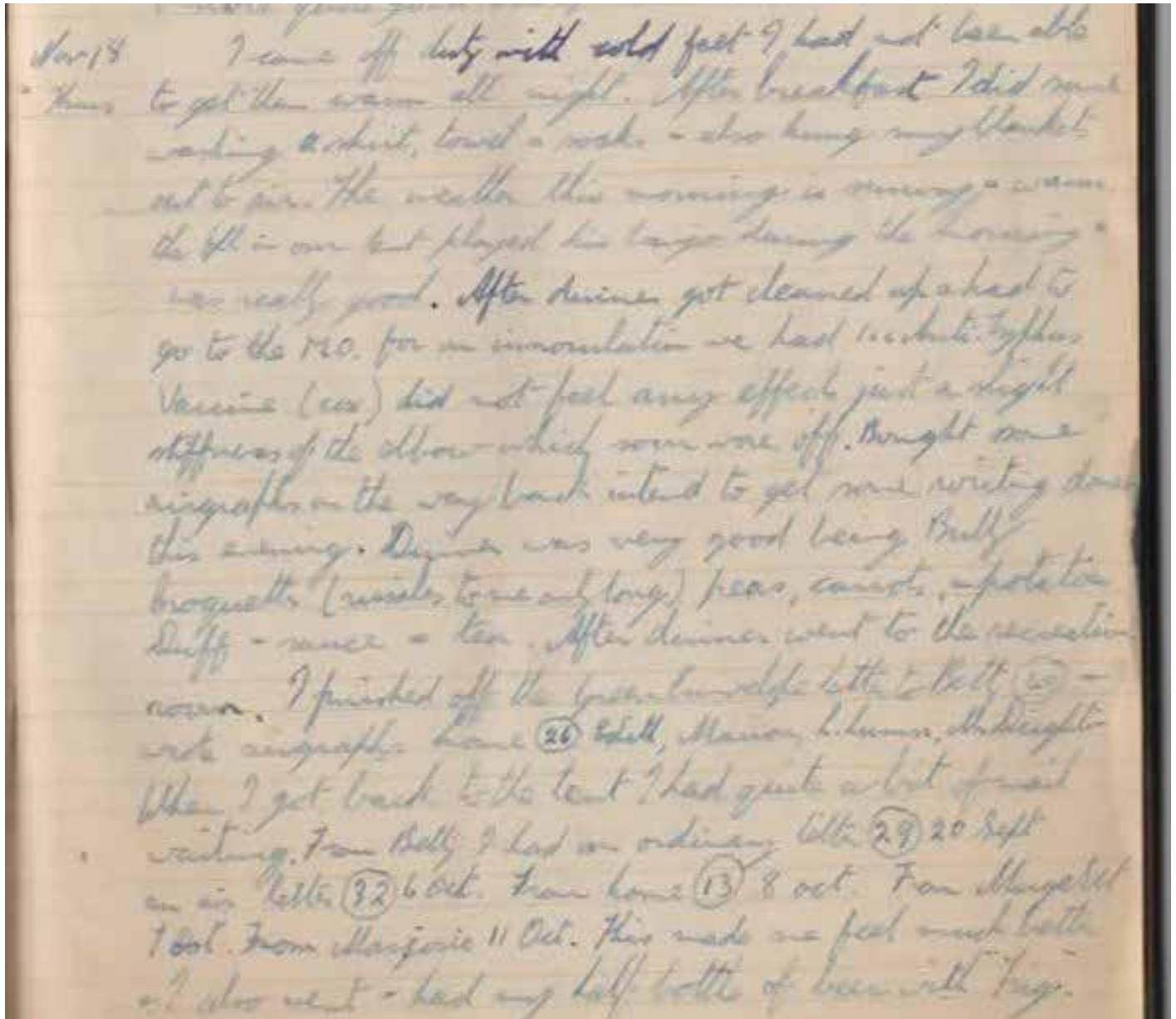
& wrote part of a letter to Betty. Found friend tomorrow - I then had a lie down & went on duty. It had by the chance of but I could tell we were in for a cold spell. At 2300 the other two got down - I did the first shift till 0100 hrs. There was very little traffic - I finished off my book. Read at bed hours by Agatha Christie quite good. One of her books is best.

It was raining a little when I got up so had to go for my breakfast in my gas cape. Afterwards got all ready to go on parade which was a skeleton order & rifles but when we got on parade it started raining again so it was cancelled. I had to go back & clean my rifle again for show. It was very wet so I stopped in the tent & read a book I had. In the

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

afternoon went on duty & found it busier than usual in the afternoon. During the evening went in Tom's tent & wrote part of a letter to Betty which I must finish tomorrow I then had a lie down & went on duty. It had by then cleared up but I could tell we were in for a cold spell. At 2300 the other two got down & I did the first shift till 0200 hrs there was very little traffic & I finished off my book "Peril at end house" by Agatha Christie quite good one of her Hercule Poirot.

## Thursday 18th



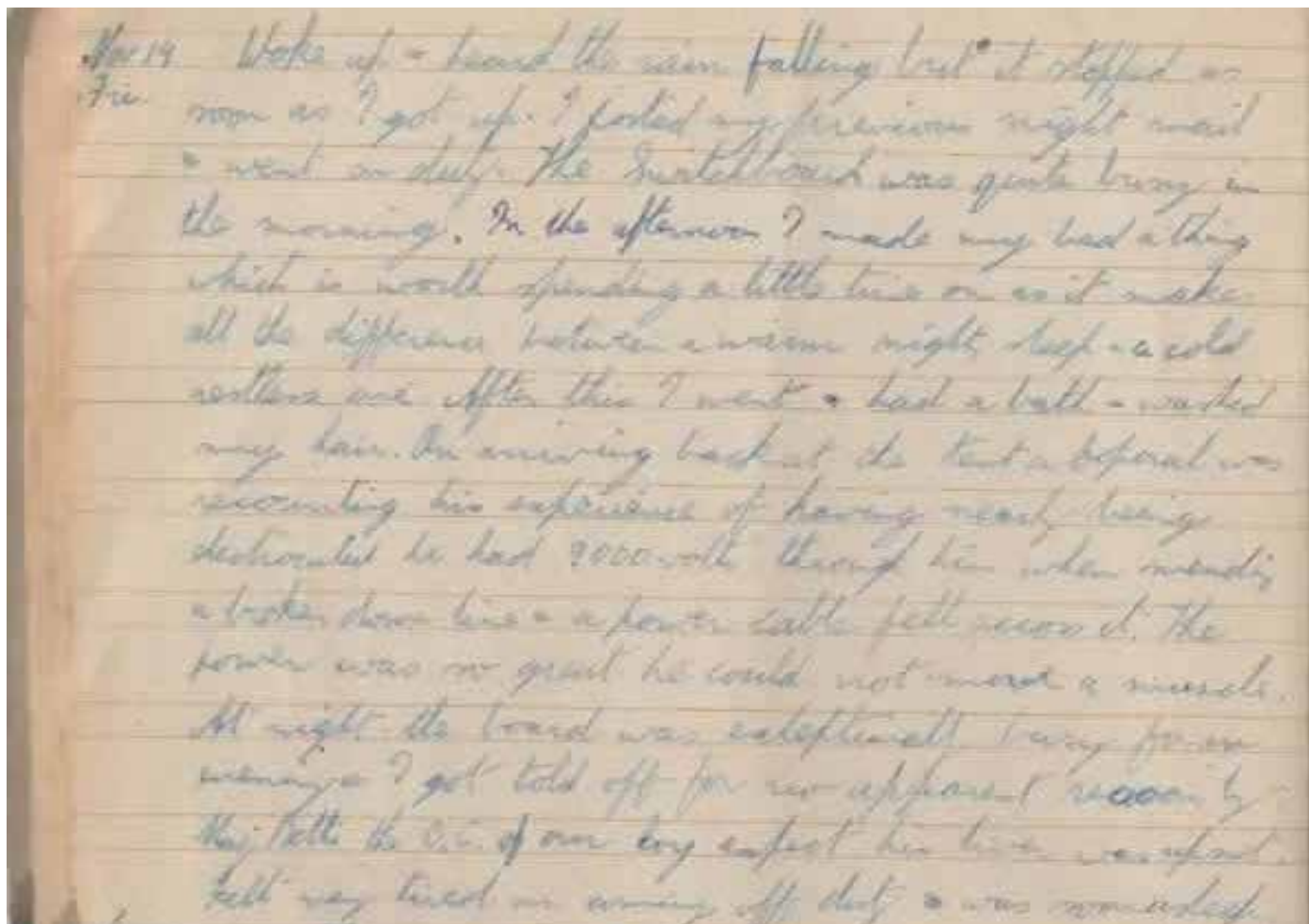
I came off duty with cold feet I had not been able to get them warm all night. After breakfast I did some washing a shirt towel & socks & also hung my blankets out to air. The weather this morning is sunny & warm the Cpl in our tent played his banjo during the morning & was really good. After dinner got cleaned up & had to go to the MO. for an inoculation we had 1cc anti typhus Vaccine (cox) did not feel any effects just a slight stiffness of the elbow which soon wore off. Bought some airgraphs on the way back intend to get some writing done this evening. Dinner ws very good being Bully croquetts (rissoles to me only long) peas, carrots & potatoes Duff & sauce & tea. After dinner went to the recreation room. I finished off the green envelope letter to Betty (40) & wrote airgraphs home (26) Edith, Marion, [L Lumn, Mr Deighton] When I got back to the tent I had quite a bit of mail waiting. From Betty I had an ordinary letter (29) 20 Sept an air letter (32) 6 Oct. From home (13) 8 Oct. From Margie (11) 7 Oct. From Margorie 11 Oct. This made me feel much better & I also went - had my half bottle of beer with Tragi.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

mail waiting from Betty I had an ordinary letter (29) 20 Sept an air letter (32) 6 Oct. From home (13) 8 Oct. From Margaret<sup>4</sup> 7 Oct From Marjorie<sup>5</sup> 11 Oct. This made me feel much better & I also went and had my half bottle of beer with "frigs"

## Friday 19th



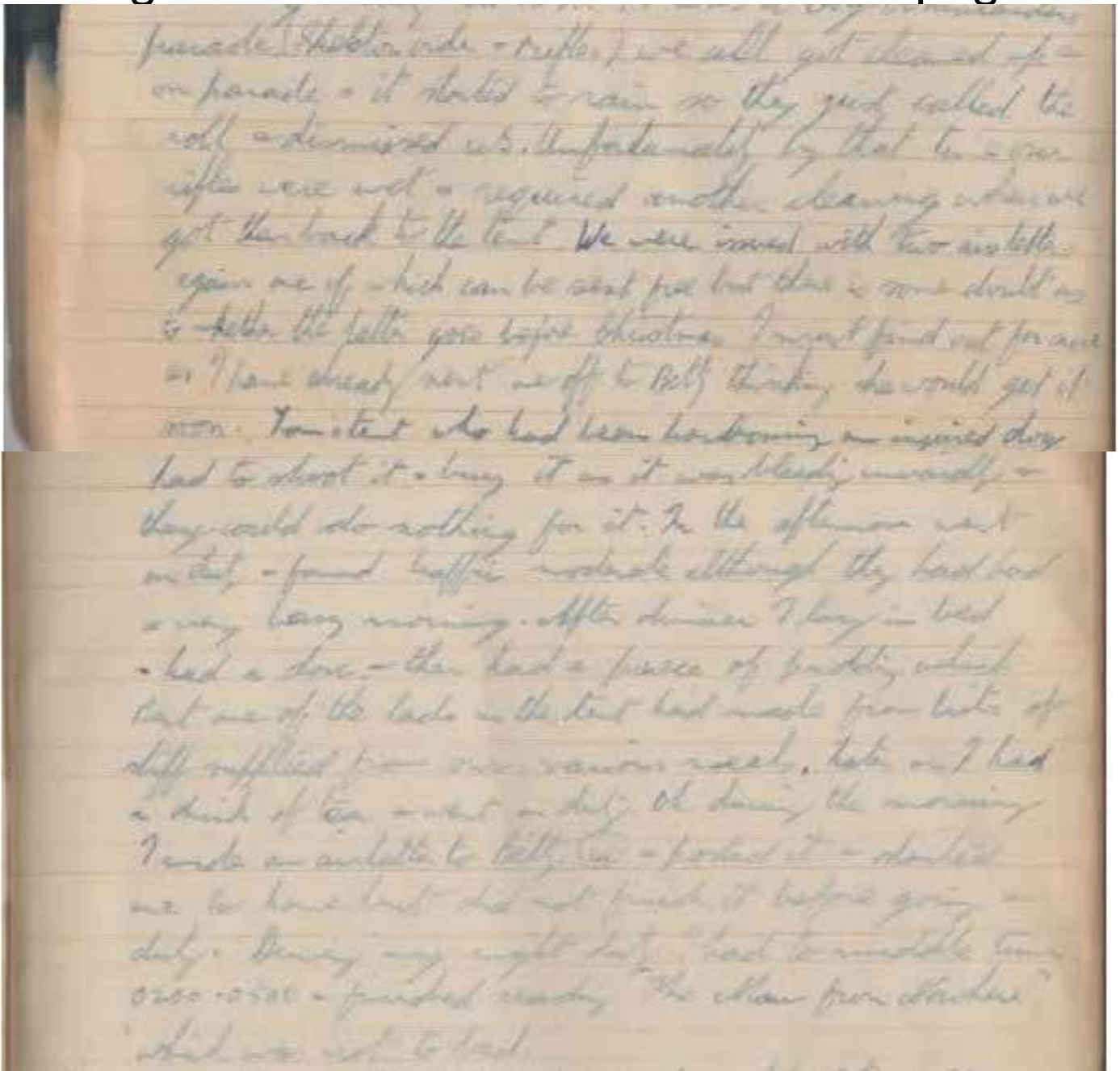
Woke up and heard the rain falling but it stopped as I got up. I posted my previous night mail & went on duty. The switchboard was quite busy in the morning. In the afternoon I made my bed a thing which is worth spending a little time on as it makes all the difference between a warm nights sleep & a cold restless one. After this I went & had a bath & washed my hair. On arriving back at the tent a corporal was recounting his experience of having nearly being electrocuted he had 9000 volts through him when mending a broken down line & a power cable fell across it. The power was so great he could not move a muscle. At night the board was exceptionally busy for an evening & I got told off for no apparent reason by Maj Betts the O.C. of our Coy expect his liver was upset. Felt very tired on coming off duty & was soon asleep

## Saturday 20th



4 My Mum's sister  
5 His cousin, I think

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

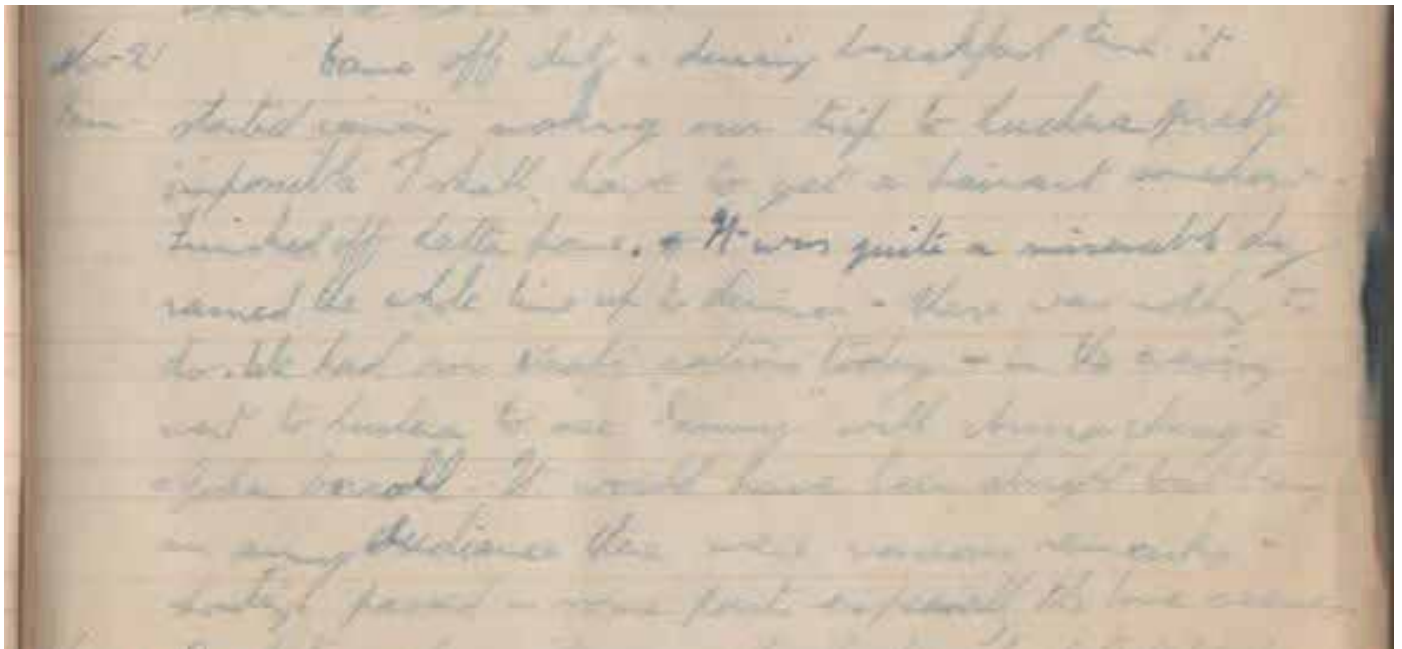


This morning it was my turn to go on parade not being on duty till 12:30. It was a Coy Commanders parade. (skeleton order & rifles) we all got cleaned up & on parade & it started to rain so they just called the roll & dismissed us. Unfortunately by that time our rifles were wet & required another cleaning when we got back to the tent. We were issued with two air letters again one of which could be sent for free but there is some doubt as to whether the latter goes before Christmas. I must find out for sure as I have already sent one off to thinking she would get it soon. Tom's tent who had been harbouring an injured dog had to shoot it & bury it as it was bleeding inwardly & they could do nothing for it. In the afternoon went on duty & found traffic moderate although they had had a very busy morning. After dinner I lay in bed & had a doze & then had a piece of pudding which Bert one of the lads in the tent had made from bits of stuff supplied from our various meals. Later on I had a drink of tea & went on duty. Oh during the morning I wrote an airletter to Betty (41) & posted it & started one to home but did not finish it before going on duty. During my night duty I had to middle turn 0200-0500 & finished reading "The Man from Nowhere" which was not too bad.



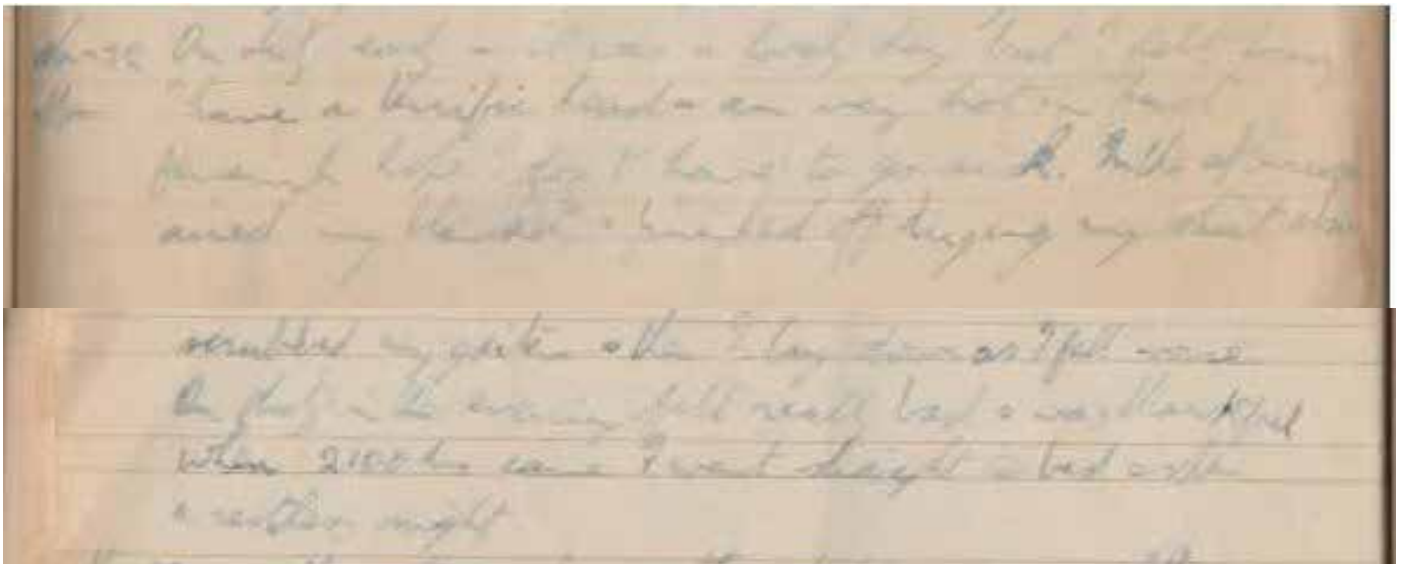
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Sunday 21st



Came off duty & during breakfast time it started raining making our trip to Lucera pretty impossible. I shall have to get a haircut somehow. Finished off letter home. It was quite a miserable day rained the whole time up to dinner & there was nothing to do. We had our Naafi rations today & in the evening went to Lucera to see "Sunny" with Anna Neagle & John Carroll. It would have been alright but being an army audience there were various remarks & shouting passed in some parts especially the love scenes.

Monday 22nd

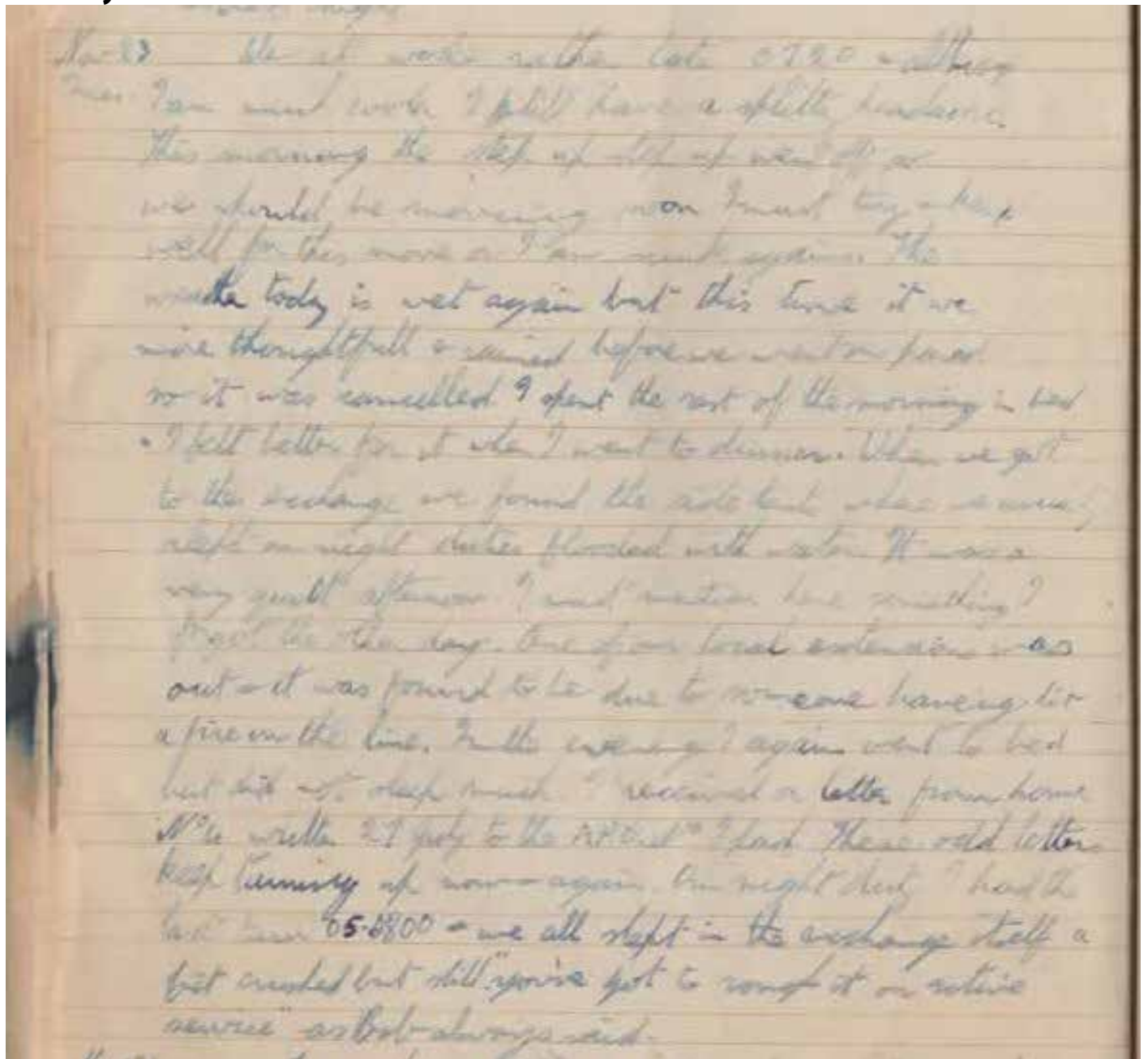


On duty early & it was a lovely day but I felt lousy. I have a terrific head & am very hot in fact feverish hope I don't have to go sick. In the afternoon aired my blankets & finished off drying my shirt also scrubbed my garter & then lay down as I felt worse. On duty in the evening felt really bad and was thankful when 21:00 hrs came I went straight to bed & spent a restless night.

52 November 1943

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Tuesday 23rd

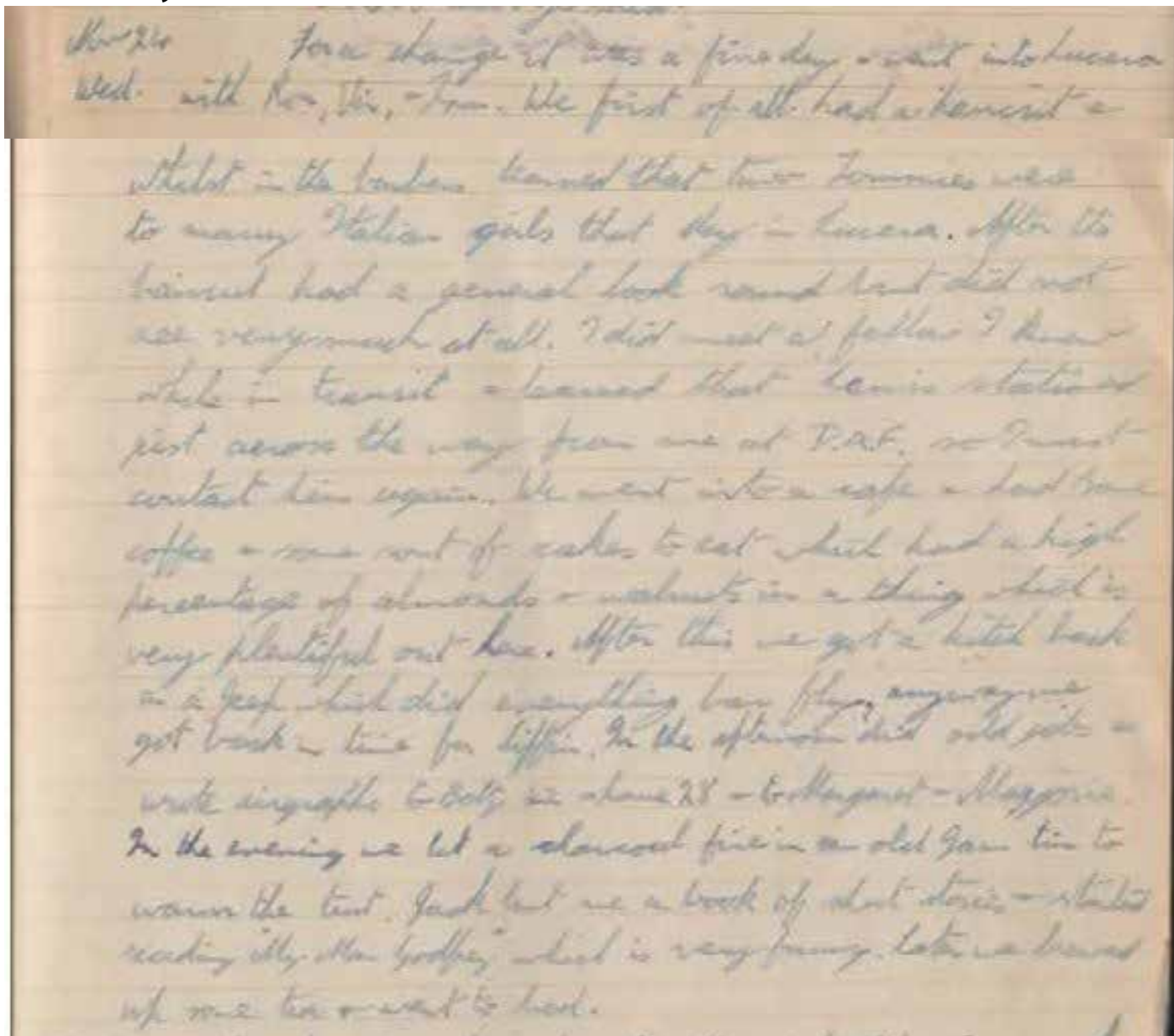


We all woke rather late 07:20 & although I am a lot cooler I still have a splitting headache. This morning the step up went off so we should be moving soon. I must try & keep well for this move or I am sunk again. The weather today is wet again but this time it was more thoughtful & rained before we went on parade so it was cancelled. I spent the rest of the morning in bed & I felt better for it when I went for dinner. When we got to the exchange we found the side tents where we usually slept on night duties flooded with water. It was a very quiet afternoon. I must mention here something I forgot the other day. One of our local extensions was out & it was found to be due to someone having lit a fire on the line. In the evening I again went to bed but did not sleep much. I received a letter from home N°4 written 27 July to the A.P.O. N° I had these odd letters keep turning up now & again. On night duty I had the last turn 05-0800 & we all slept in the exchange itself a bit crushed but still "you've got to rough it on active service" as Bob always said.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

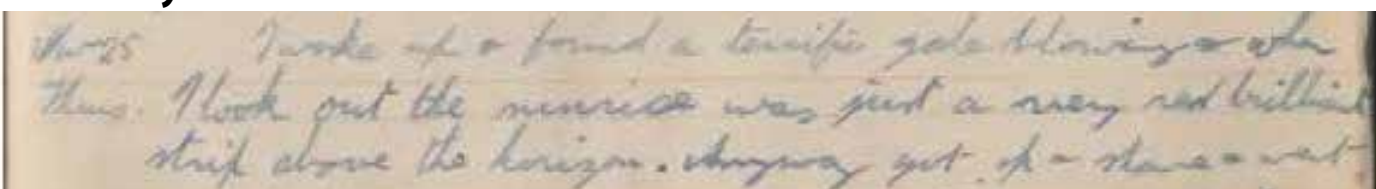
Wednesday 24th



Nov 24 For a change it was a fine day & went into Lucera Wed. with Ron, Vic, Tom. We first of all had a haircut & whilst in the barber learned that two Tommies were to marry Italian girls that day in Lucera. After the haircut had a general look round but did not see very much at all. I did meet a fellow I knew whilst in transit & learned that he is stationed just across the way from me at D.A.F. so I must contact him again. We went into a cafe & had some coffee & some sort of cakes to eat which had a high percentage of almonds & walnuts in a thing which is very plentiful out here. After this we got a hitch back on a jeep which did everything bar fly, anyway we got back in time for tiffin. In the afternoon did odd jobs & wrote airgraphs to Betty in home 28 & to Margaret & Marjorie. In the evening we lit a charcoal fire in an old jam tin to warm the tent. Jack lent me a book of short stories & started reading "My Man Godfrey" which is very funny. Later we brewed up some tea & went to bed.

For a change it was a fine day & went into Lucera with Ron, Vic & Tom. We first of all had a haircut & whilst in the barber learned that two tommies were to marry Italian girls that day in Lucera. After the haircut had a general look round but did not see very much at all. I did meet a fellow I knew whilst in transit & learned that he is stationed just across the way from me at D.A.F. so I must contact him again. We went into a cafe & had some coffee & some sort of cakes to eat which had a high percentage of almonds & walnuts in a thing which is plentiful out here. After this we got a hitch back on a jeep which did everything bar fly, anyway we got back in time for tiffin. In the afternoon did odd jobs & wrote airgraph to Betty 42 & home 28 & to Margaret & Marjorie. In the evening we lit a charcoal fire in an old jam tin to warm the tent. Jack lent me a book of short stories and started reading "My Man Godfrey" which is very funny. Later we brewed up some tea & went to bed.

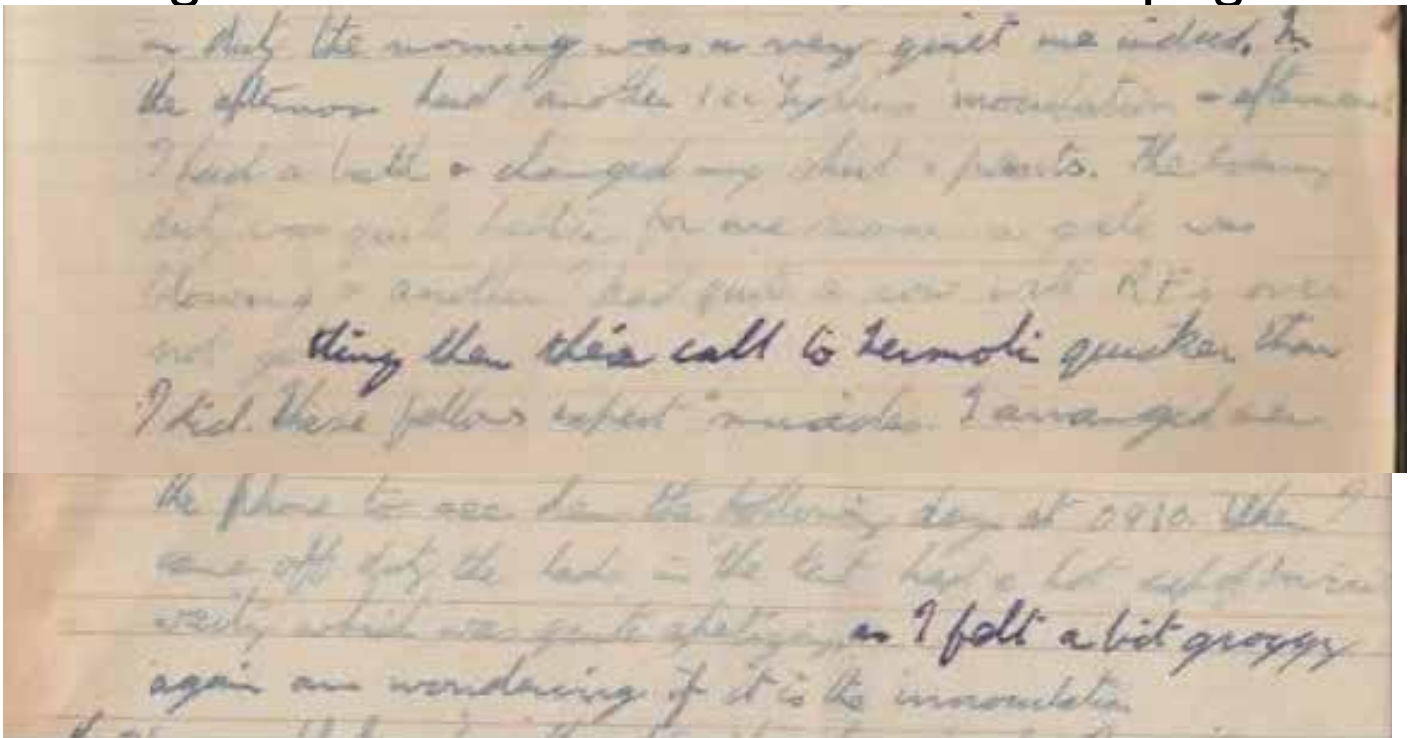
Thursday 25th



Nov 25 Woke up & found a terrific gale blowing & when thus. Look out the sunrise was just a very red brilliant strip above the horizon. Anyway got up & shaved & washed.

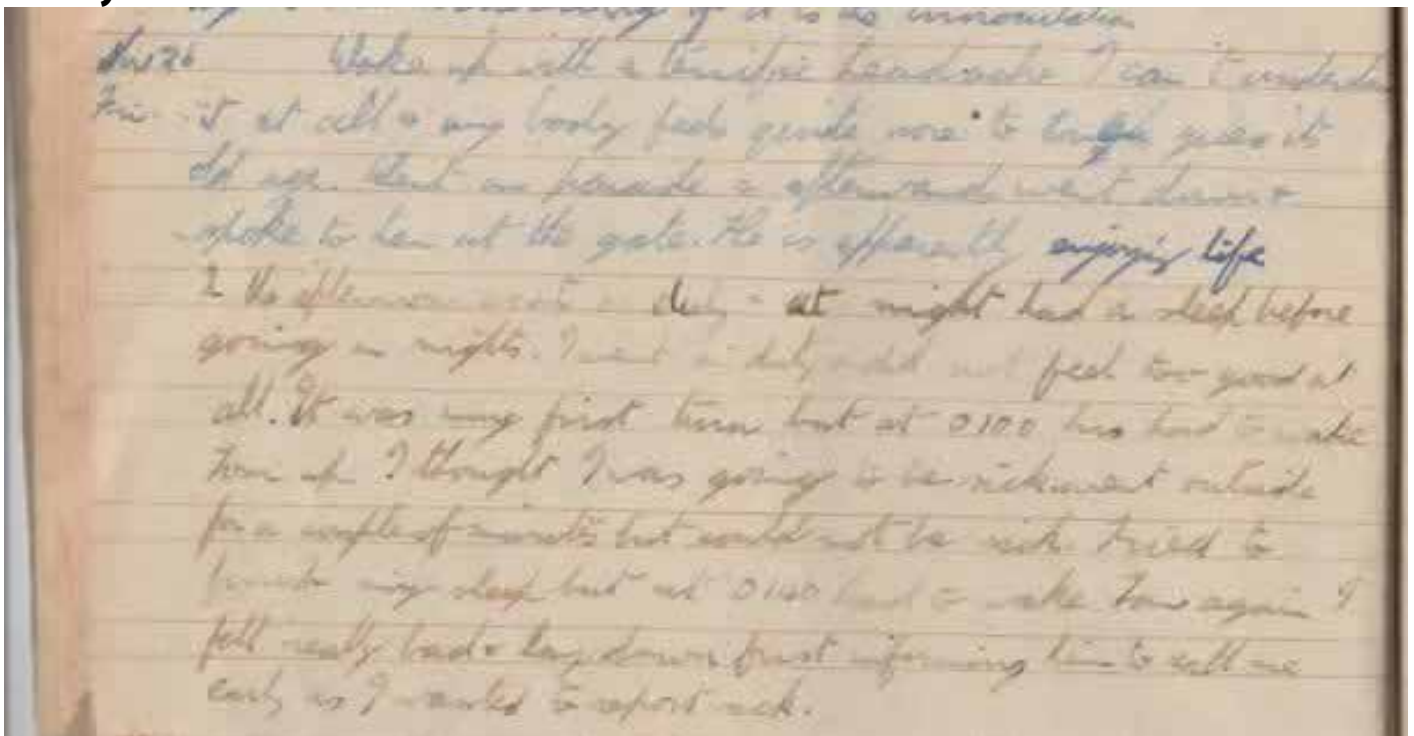
54 November 1943

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



I woke up & found a terrific gale blowing & when I look out the sunrise was just a very red brilliant strip above the horizon. Anyway got up & shave & went on duty the morning was a very quiet one indeed. In the afternoon had another 1cc Typhus inoculation & afterwards I changed my shirt & pants. The evening duty was quite hectic for one reason a gale was blowing & another I had quite a row with REs over not getting their call to Lemoli quicker than I did. These fellows expect miracles. I arranged over the phone to see Len the following day at 0930. When I came off duty the lads had a hot cup of bovril waiting which was apetizing as I felt a bit groggy again am wondering if it is the innoculation.

## Friday 26th



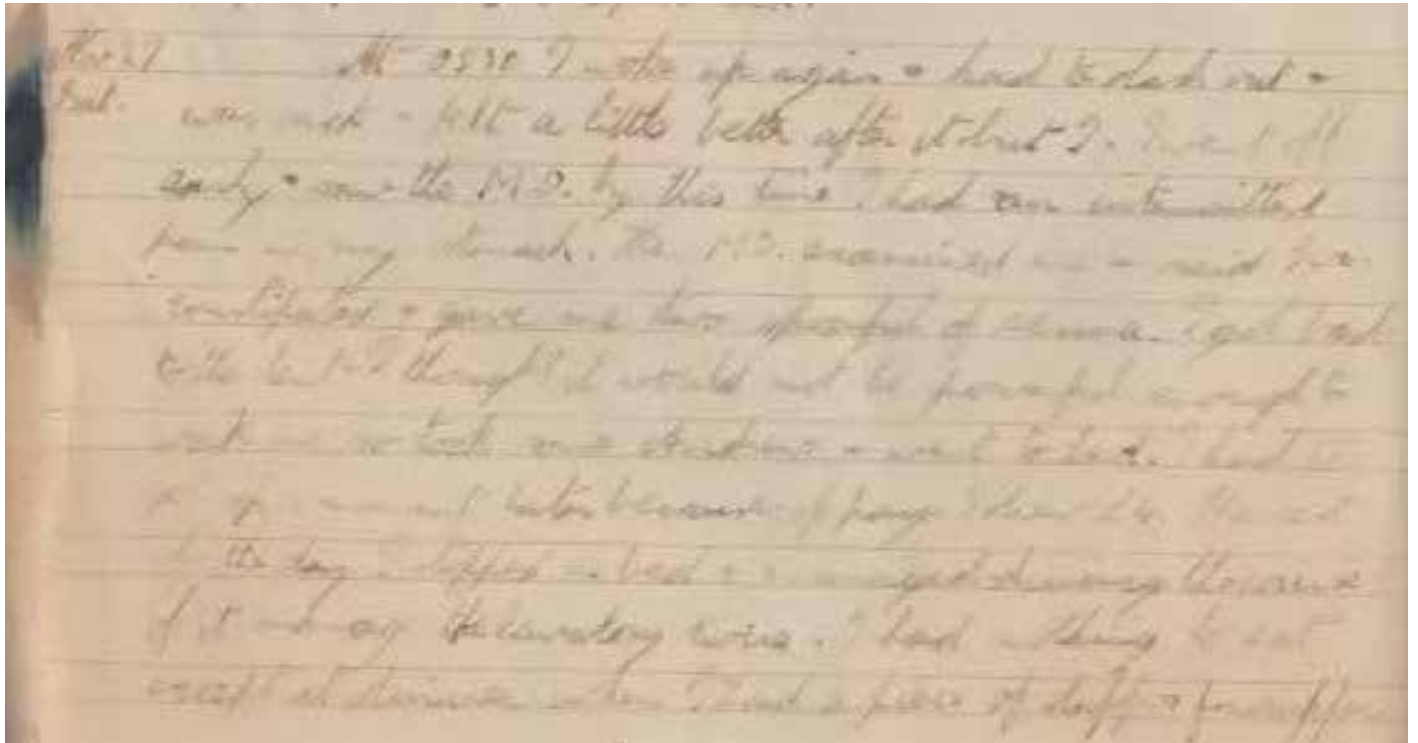
Woke up with a terrific headache. I can't understand it at all & my body feels quite sore to touch guess its old age. Went on parade & afterwards went down & spoke to Len at the



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

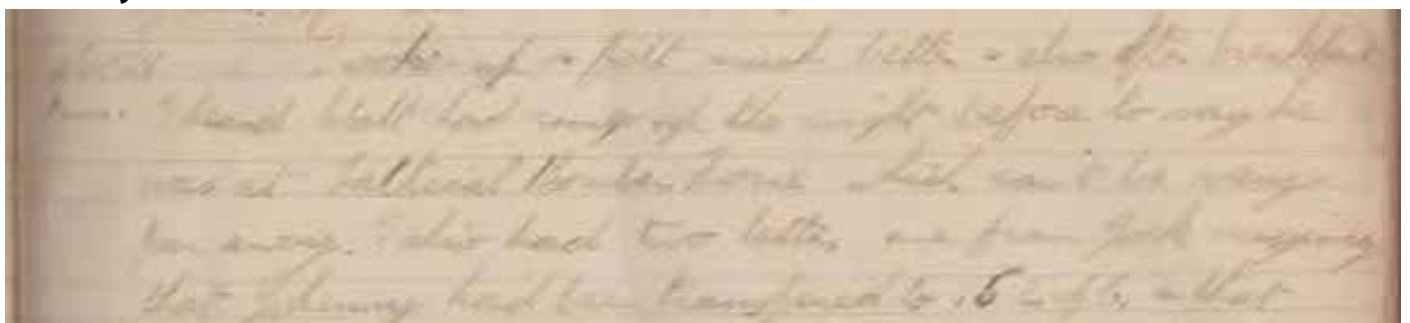
gate. He is apparently enjoying life. In the afternoon went on duty & at night had a sleep before going on nights. I went on duty & did not feel too good at all. It was my first turn but at 0100 hrs had to wake Tom up. I thought I was going to be sick went outside for a couple of minutes but could not be sick. Tried to finish my sleep but at 0140 had to wake Tom again I felt really bad & lay down first informing him to call me early as I wanted to report sick.

## Saturday 27th



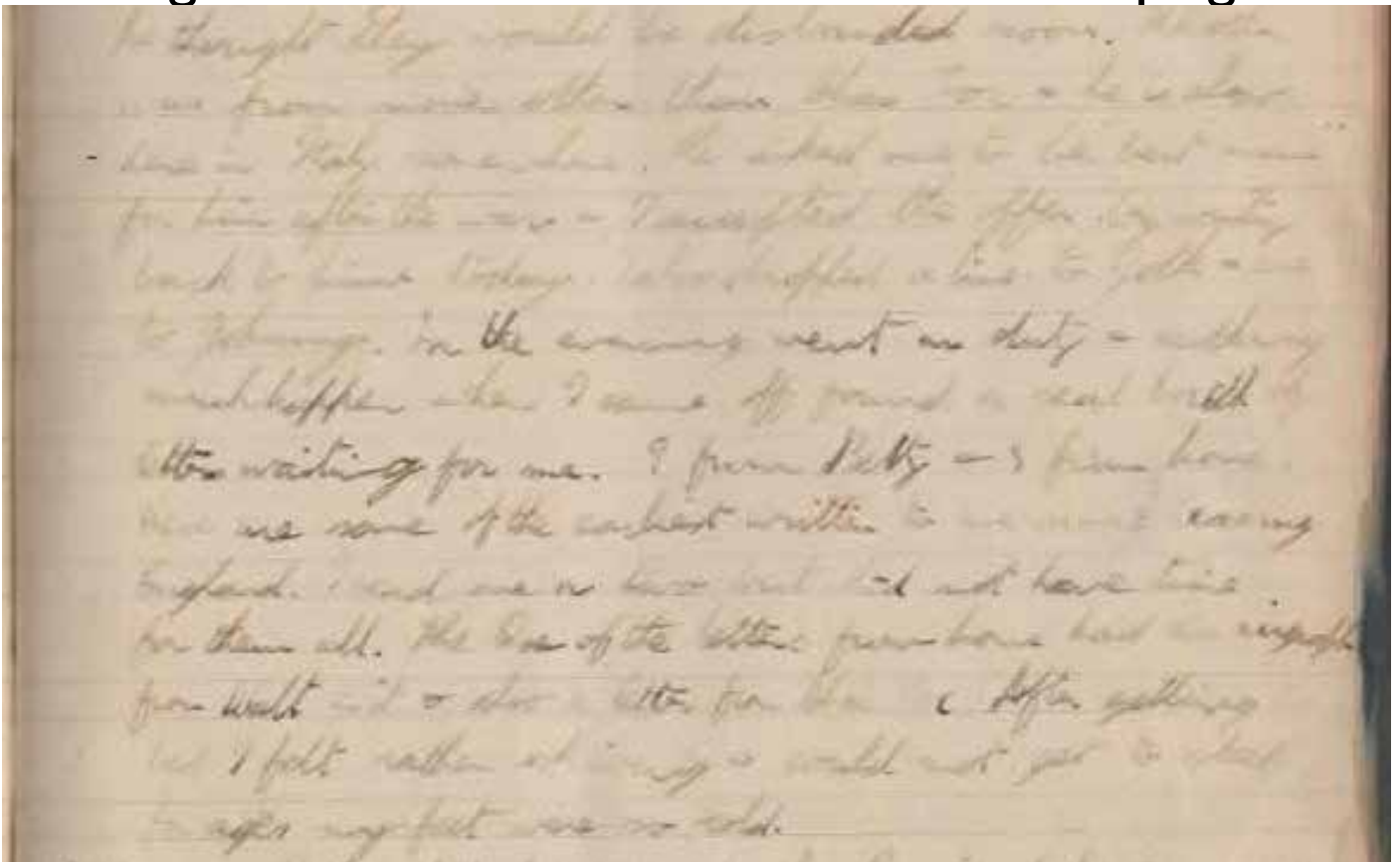
At 0530 I woke up again and had to dash out & was sick & felt a little better after it but I went off early and saw the M.O. by this time I had an intermittent pain in my stomach. The M.O. examined me and said I was constipated & gave me two spoonfuls of senna. I got back to the tent & I thought it would not be powerful enough to work me so took some Andrews & went to bed. I had to get up a moment later because of pay. I drew £4. The rest of the day I stopped in bed & managed during the course of it manage the lavatory twice. I had nothing to eat except at dinner when I had a piece of duff & for supper made some toast on the old charcoal fire & had a cup of tea. After that I went to sleep.

## Sunday 28th



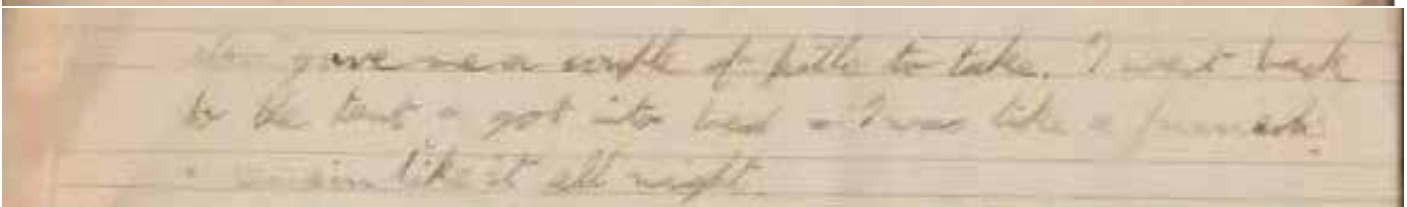
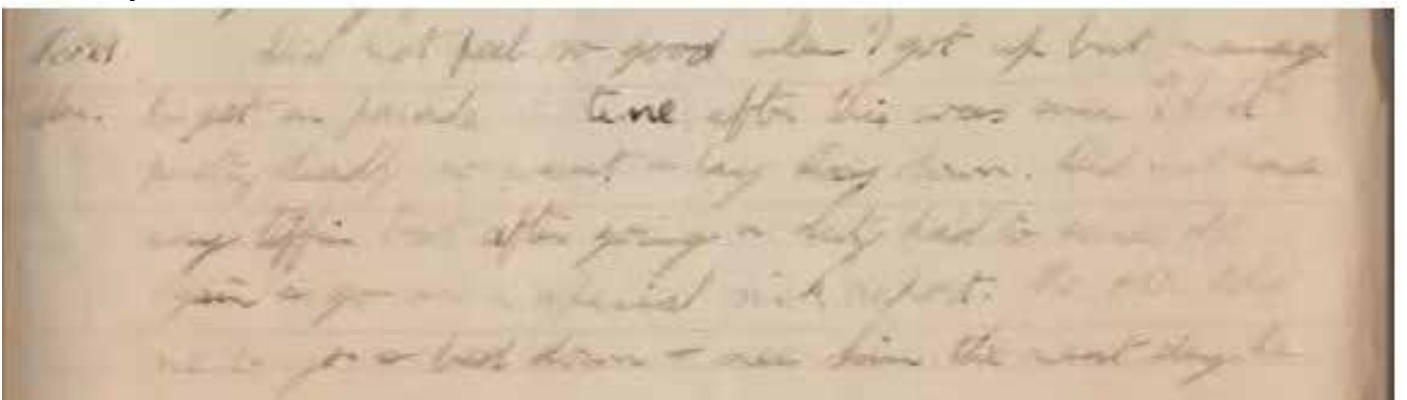
56 November 1943

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



I woke up & felt much better & also after breakfast I heard Walt was at Tactical Bomber Force which can't be very far away. I also had two letters one from Jock saying that Johnny had been transferred to 15 C of G & that he thought they would be disbanded soon. The other was from none other than Chas doc & he is also here in Italy somewhere. He asked me to be be "best man" for him after the war & I accepted the offer by writing back to him today. I also dropped a line to Jock & one to Johnny. In the evening went on duty & nothing much happen when I came off found a real batch of letters waiting for me some of the earliest written to me since leaving England. Read one or two but did not have time for them all. The one of the letters from home had an airgraph from Walt in it & also a letter from Chas Doc. After getting in bed I felt rather shivery & could not get to sleep for ages my feet were so cold.

## Monday 29th



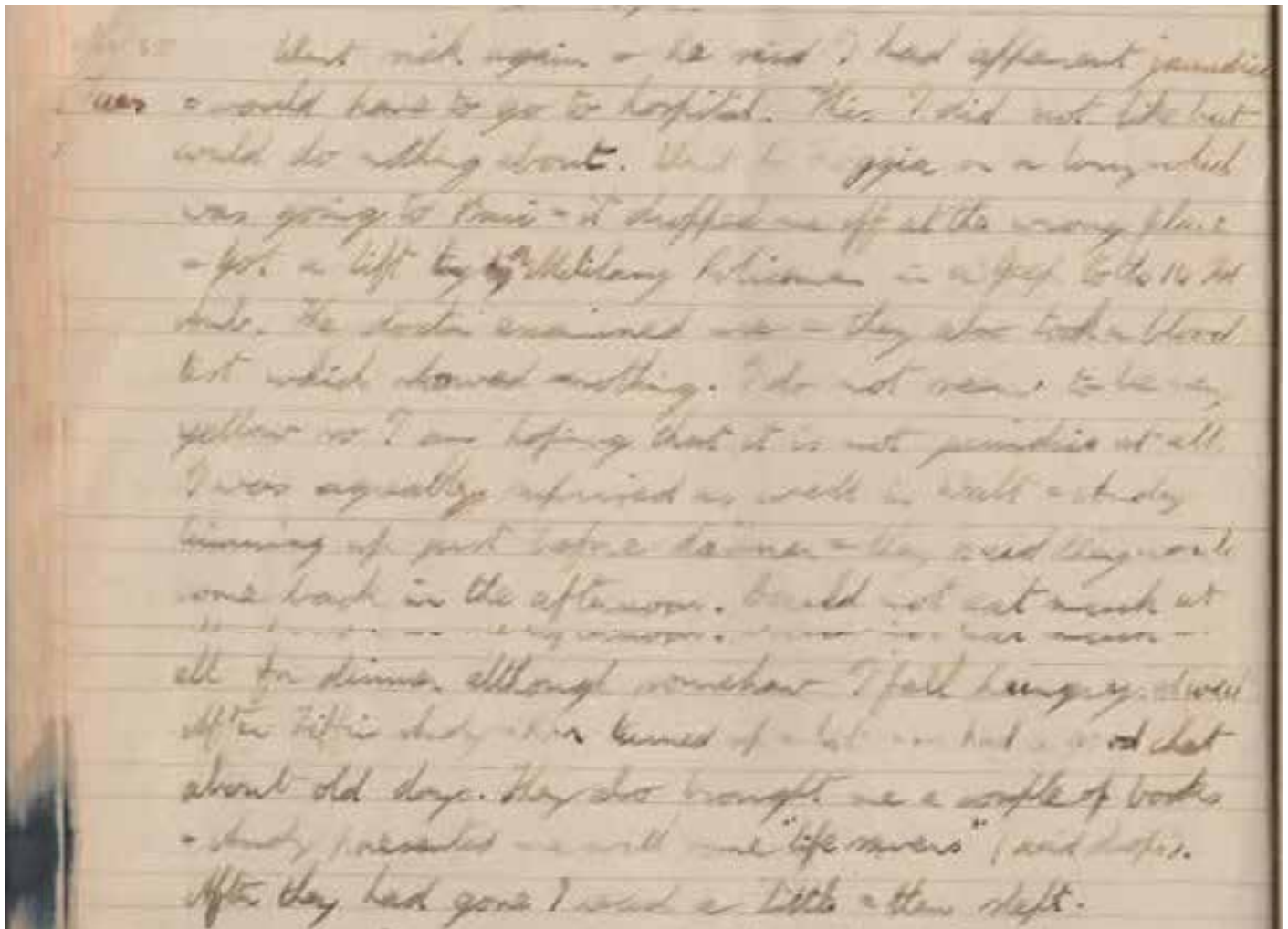


# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Did not feel so good when I got up but managed to get on parade in time after this was over I felt pretty deadly so went & lay down. Did not have any tiffin but after going on duty had to come off again & go on a special sick report. The M.O. told me to go & bed down & see him the next day he also gave me a couple of pills to take. I went back to the tent & got into bed & I was like a furnace & remain like it all night.

## Tuesday 30th

Badoglio strips King Victor Emmanuel III of his official titles .



Went sick again & he said I had apparent jaundice and would have to go to hospital. This I did not like but could do nothing about. Went to Foggia on a lorry which was going to Bari & it dropped me off at the wrong place & got a lift by Military Policeman in a jeep to the 14 Fld. Amb. The doctor examined me & they also took a blood sample which showed nothing. I do not seem to be very yellow so I am hoping that it is not jaundice at all. I was agreeably surprised as well in Walt & Chalky turning up just before dinner & they said they would come back in the afternoon. Could not eat much at all for dinner although somehow I felt hungry as well. After tiffin Andy & Ron turned up but we had a good chat about old days. They also brought me a couple of books & Andy presented me with some "life savers" (acid drops). After they had gone I read a little & then slept.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## DECEMBER 1943

Wednesday 1st

Dec 1 Continued reading book after the M.O. had been round I was told that I would be evacuated lying which meant on a stretcher. Before we left we had a Naafi issue & after tiffin we were carted away to the ambulance. The latter took us to an airfield where we were transferred to another ambulance & left for quite a while I managed to finish my book. Later the four stretcher cases in the ambulance were taken round & placed in a DC2. & off we went to Bari. When we landed here they unloaded the plane but forgot all about us for a while. Eventually an ambulance turned up & we were taken to the 98 Gen Hosp. where I went to bed between sheets & wearing pyjamas again. There was an air raid on at the time & the lights were out but there were no incidents & the lights soon came on again. I then had some soup & dry bread. I have now finally got jaundice which means a fat free diet - about three weeks hospital, oh away having two blood slides taken before entering here they started to take another I was beginning to feel like a pin cushion.

Continued reading book after the M.O. had been round I was told that I would be evacuated lying which meant on a stretcher. Before we left we had a Naafi issue & after tiffin we were carted away to the ambulance. The latter took us to an airfield where we were transferred to another ambulance & left for quite a while I managed to finish my book. Later the four stretcher cases in the ambulance were taken round & placed in a DC2 & off we went to Bari. When we landed here they unloaded the plane but forgot all about us for a while. Eventually an ambulance turned up & we were taken to the 98 Gen. Hosp. where I went to bed between sheets & wearing pyjamas again. There was an air raid on at the time & the lights were out but there were no incidents & the lights soon came back on again. I then had some soup & dry bread. I have now finally got jaundice which means a fat free diet & about three weeks hospital oh away having had two blood slides taken before entering here they started to take another I was beginning to feel like a pin cushion.

December 1943 59



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Thursday 2nd

The Germans make a surprise attack on the town of Bari, on the eastern coast.

Dec 2  
Thurs I was awakened not to early & managed a wash & shave before breakfast & had my temp & pulse taken. Then the sisters came round & made the beds & then the M.O. made his rounds. There are six in our room 3 Canadians & I have jaundice, a Koyli next to me has trench feet one of the first cases seen over here in this war. There is a Hurvy man who is a survivor from a minesweeper who is going out tomorrow. The day wore on we had chicken or Turkey or some such animal for dinner a bit tough but quite a change. For tea we had some jelly which was also something I had not experienced for a time. After tea things started to happen I was told I was being evacuated & shortly afterwards there was an air raid on Bari after watching the A.A. for some time the bombs started dropping & I evacuated to the cellar one landed nearby & blew all the windows out of the hospital a few

people were hurt by flying glass. Soon the planes went & I went upstairs to bed again & could hear ammunition going off in the harbour & presently a whole shipboard went up what a sight & what a blast finished off the remaining windows in the hospital. After this tried to go to sleep but was woken up for this evacuation had to dress & then chase up my kit for I did not want to lose my great coat. Found out after all this that I was supposed to be a stretcher case & they flanked me on one in the ambulance & off we went. Landed up at a railway station & was put on an ambulance train which was extremely cold. When full we set off for an unknown destination.

I was awakened not to early & managed a wash & shave before breakfast & had my temp & pulse taken. Then the sisters came round & made the beds & then the M.O. made his

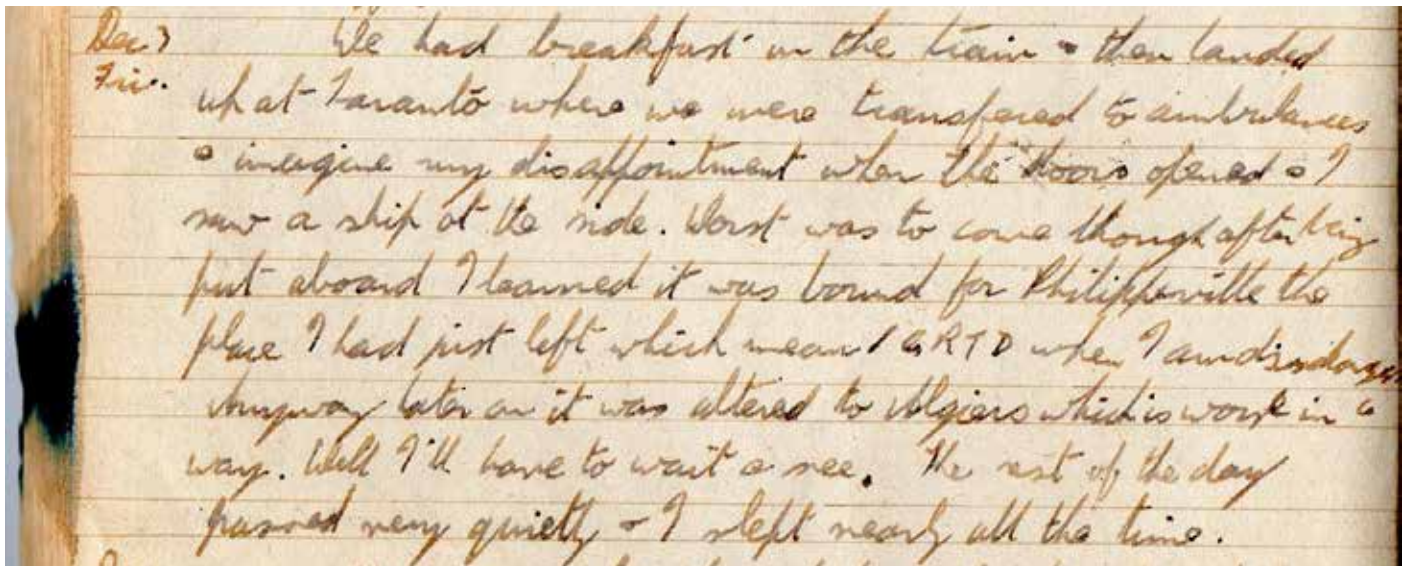
60 December 1943



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

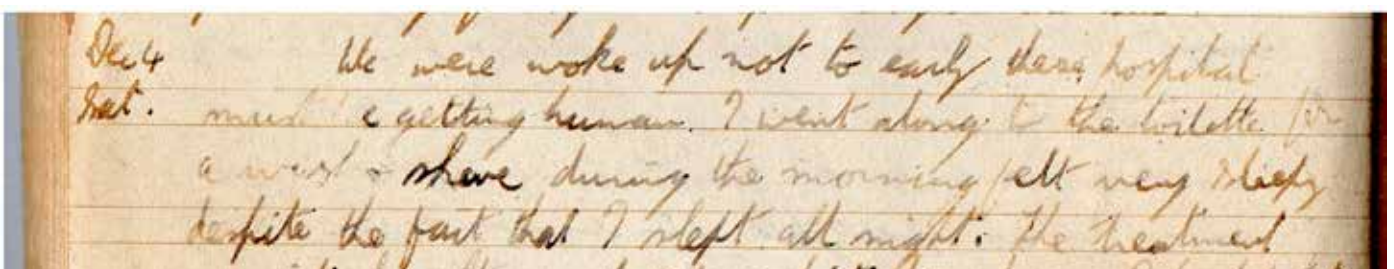
rounds. There are six in our room 3 Canadians & I have jaundice. a Royli next to me has trench feet one of the first cases seen over here in the war & there is a Navy man who is a survivor from a minesweeper who is going out tomorrow. The day wore on we had chicken or turkey or some such animal for dinner a bit tough but quite a change. for tea we had some jelly which was also something I had not experienced for a time. After tea things started to happen I was told I was being evacuated & shortly afterwards there was an air raid on Bari after watching the A.A. for some time the bombs started dropping & I evacuated to the cellar one landed nearby & blew all the windows out of the hospital a few people were hurt by flying glass. Soon the planes went & I went upstairs to bed again & could hear amunition going off in the harbour & presently a whole ship load went up what a sight & what a blast finished off the remaining windows in the hospital. After this tried to go to sleep but was woken up for this evacuation had to dress & then chase up my kit for I did not want to loose my great coat. Found out after all this I was meant to be a stretcher case & they plonked me on one in the ambulance & off we went landed up at the railway station & was put on an ambulance train which was extremely cold. When full we set off for an unknown destination.

## Friday 3rd



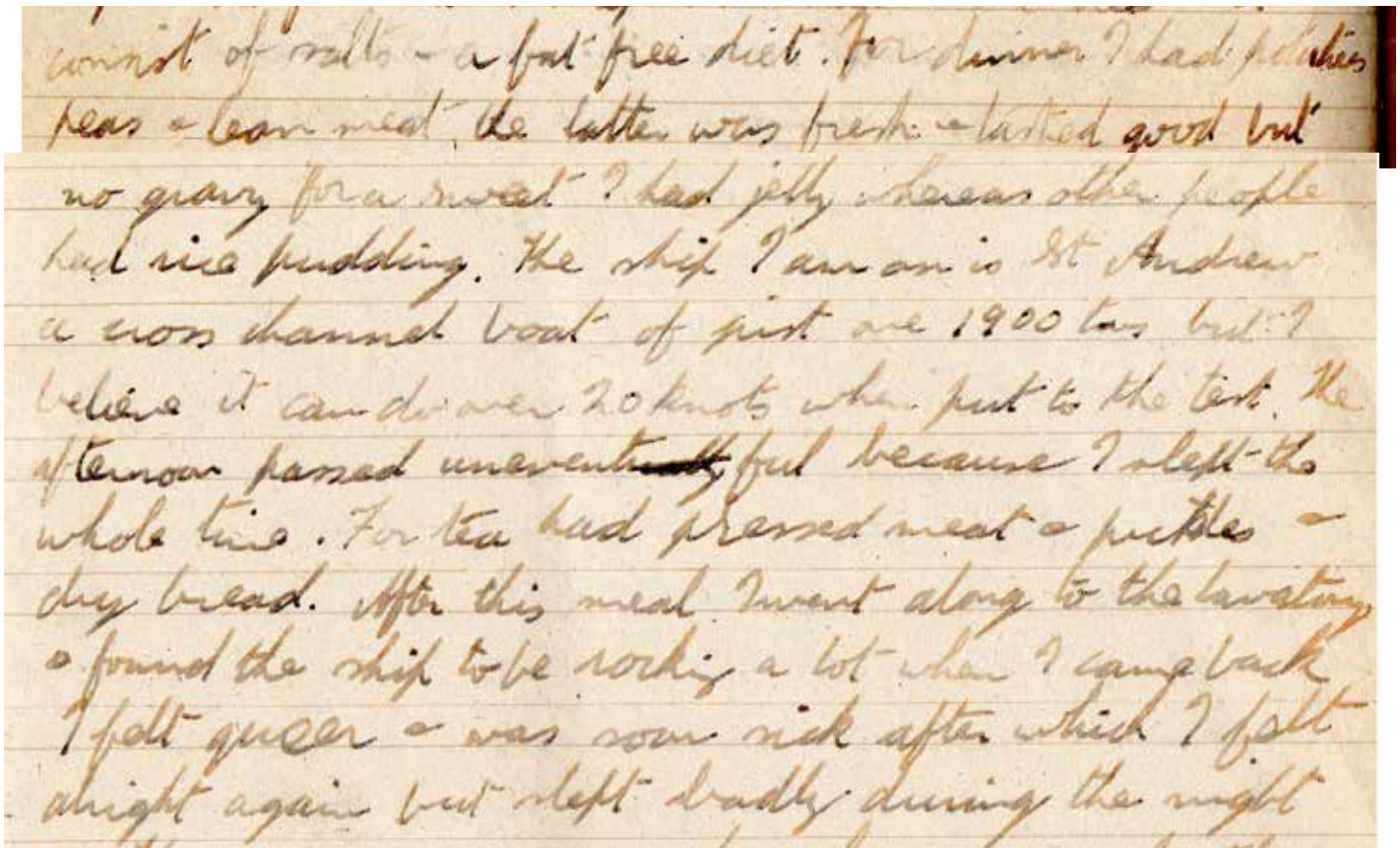
We had breakfast on the train then landed up at Taranto where we were transferred to ambulances and imagine my disappointment when the doors opened. I saw a ship at the side. Worse was to come though after being put aboard I learned it was bound for Philippeville the place I had just left which meant I GRTD when I am discharged. Anyway later on it was altered to Algiers which is worse in a way. Well I'll have to wait and see. The rest of the day passes very quietly & I slept nearly all the time.

## Saturday 4th





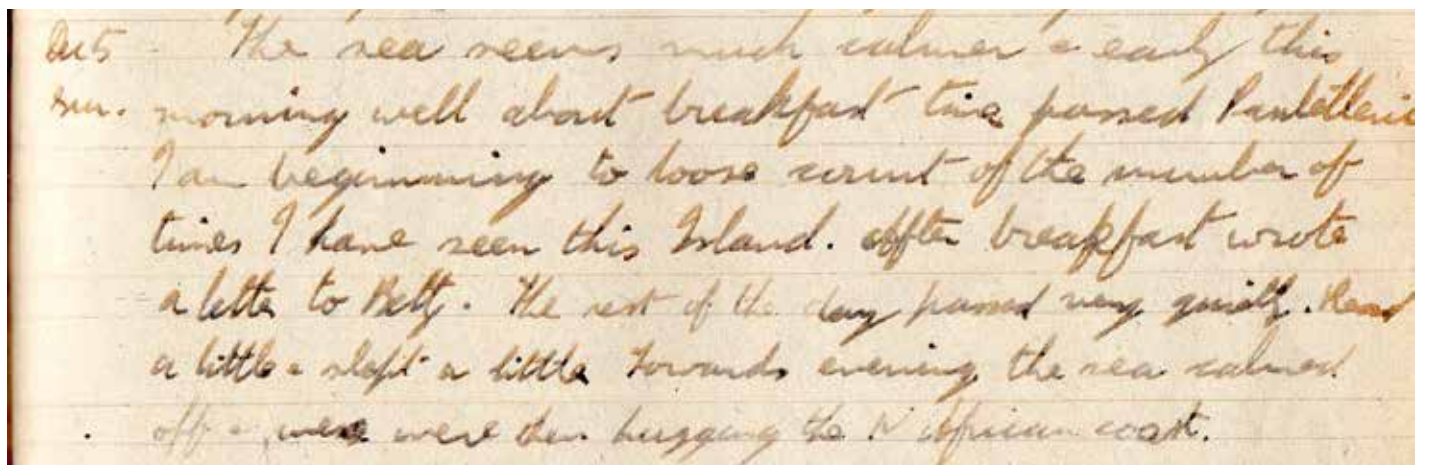
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



consist of salt - a fat free diet. For dinner I had potatoes  
peas & lean meat, the latter was fresh & tasted good but  
no gravy for a sweet I had jelly whereas other people  
had rice pudding. The ship I am on is St. Andrew  
a cross channel boat of just over 1900 tons but I  
believe it can draw over 20 knots when put to the test. The  
afternoon passed uneventfully, but because I slept the  
whole time. For tea had pressed meat & pickles &  
dry bread. After this meal I went along to the lavatory  
& found the ship to be rocking a lot when I came back  
I felt queer & was soon sick after which I felt  
alright again but slept badly during the night

We were woke up not to early these hospitals must be getting human. I went along to the toilette for a wash and shave during the morning felt very sleepy despite the fact that I slept all night. The treatment consists of salt & a fat free diet for dinner I had potatoes peas & lean meat. The latter was fresh & tasted good but no gravy for a sweet I had jelly whereas other people had rice pudding. The ship I am on is St. Andrew a cross channel boat of just over 1900 tons but I believe it can draw over 20 knots when put to the test. The afternoon passed uneventfully because I slept the whole time. For tea had pressed meat & pickles & dry bread. After this meal I went along to the lavatory and found the ship to be rocking a lot when I came back I felt queer & was soon sick<sup>1</sup> after which I felt alright again but slept badly during the night

## Sunday 5th



Dec 5 - The sea seems much calmer & early this  
morning well about breakfast time passed Pantelleria  
I am beginning to loose count of the number of  
times I have seen this Island. After breakfast wrote  
a letter to Betty. The rest of the day passed very quietly. Read  
a little & slept a little. Towards evening the sea calmed  
off & we were seen hugging the Sicilian coast.

The sea seems much calmer & early this morning well about breakfast time passed Pantelleria. I am beginning to loose count of the number of times I have seen this Island.

1 Dad was always a bad sailor.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

After breakfast wrote a letter to Betty. The next rest of the day passed very quietly. Read a little & slept a little towards evening the sea calmed off & we were then hugging the N. African coast

## Tuesday 7th

*me now.*  
Dec 7  
Tues. This morning after breakfast we sighted Algiers but did not finally dock till after dinner - they started unloading at about 1400. We were all placed on stretchers & they passed through a hatch in the side of the ship like so much baggage. outside a Red cross sister gave me a packet of cigarettes & then was put in an ambulance & away we went on arriving at the hospital 95 Gen we were docketed again & I was taken to ward M17 which was a marquee it was very cold in here & I felt quite miserable for a bit. Some orderly or other brought me pyjamas & a suit of blues etc & went to bed after first managing to get a book to read. The supper for the new arrivals another fellow & I was quite good as we had chicken & potatoes & after was peaches (sliced) I read after this till nearly lights out by which time I was feeling a little warmer & I had a good nights sleep.

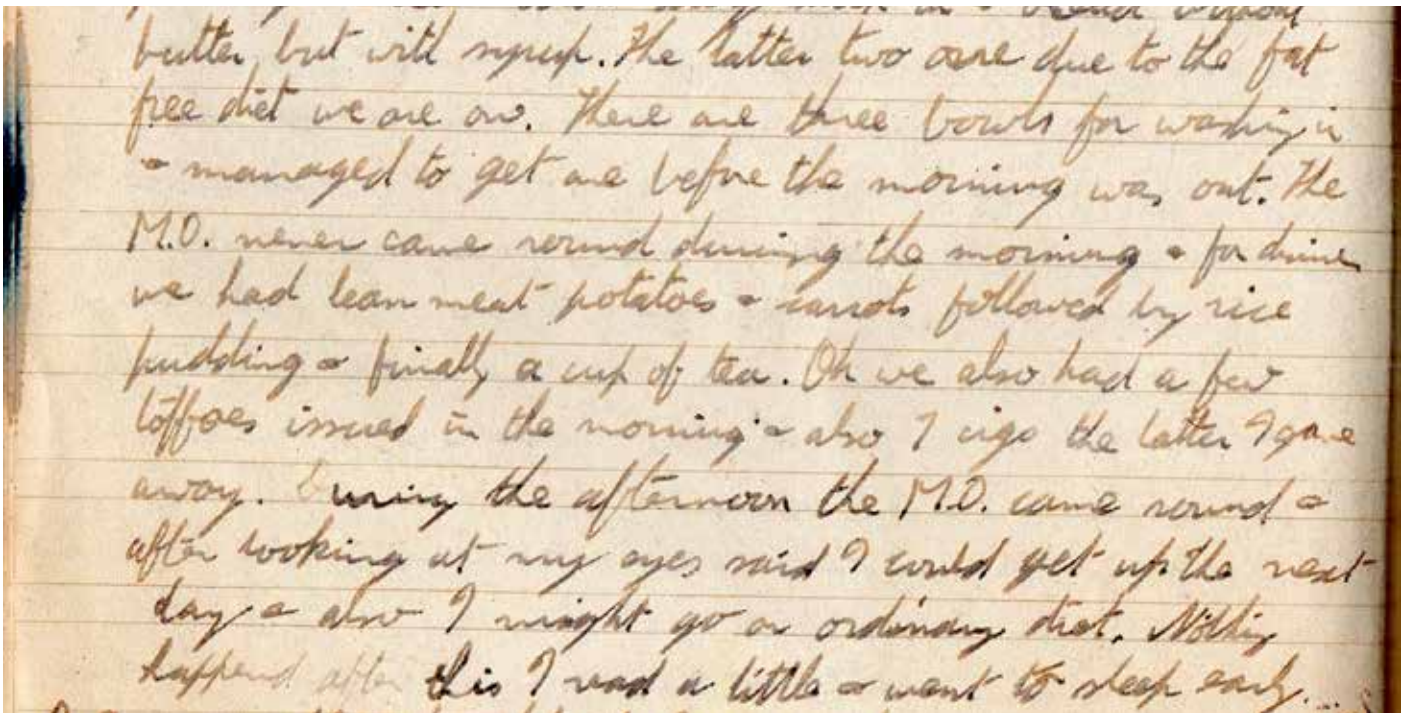
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## Wednesday 8th

Dec 8  
Wed. Was awakened with the lights being put on soon after this breakfast came along a grapefruit & a plate of porridge & tea without any milk in & bread without



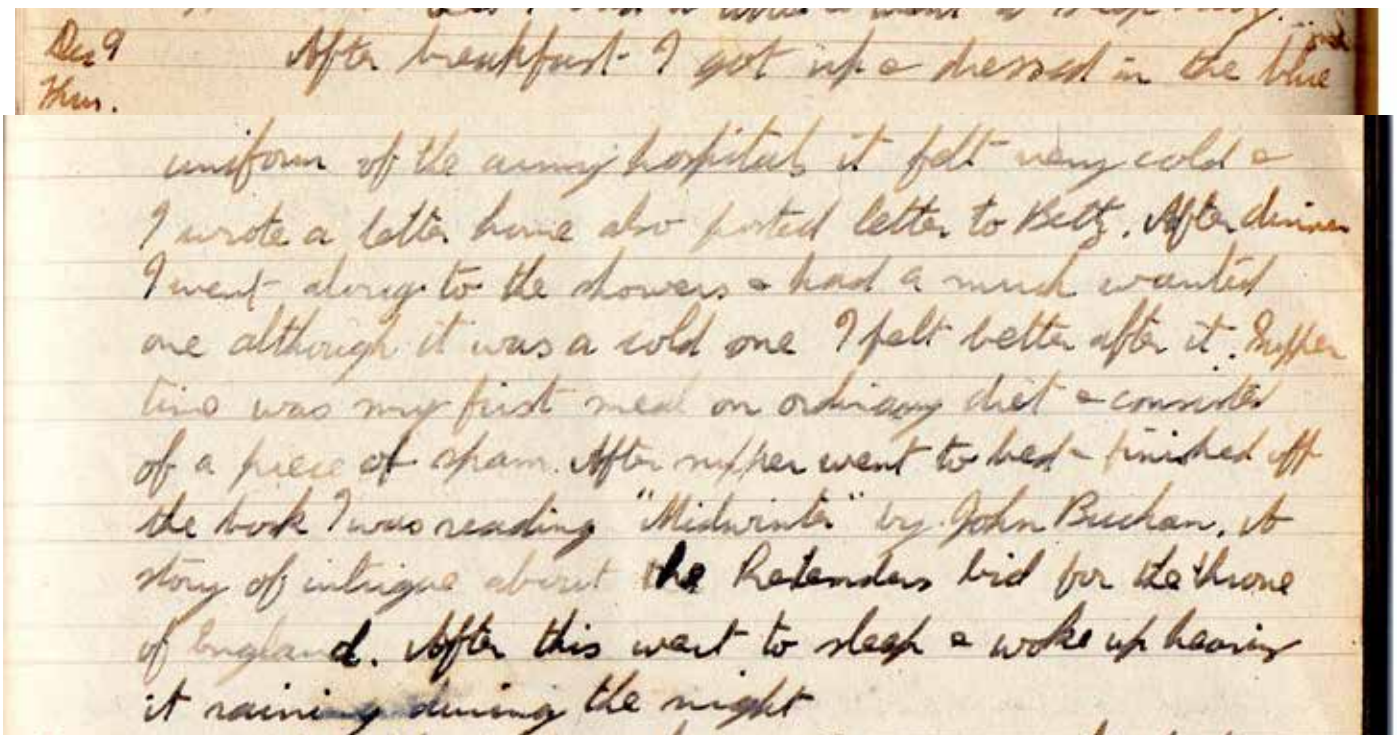
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



but with syrup. The latter two are due to the fat free diet we are on. There are three bowls for washing in & managed to get one before the morning was out. The M.O. never came round during the morning & for dinner we had lean meat potatoes & carrots followed by rice pudding & finally a cup of tea. Oh we also had a few toffees issued in the morning & also 7 cigs the latter I gave away. During the afternoon the M.O. came round & after looking at my eyes said I could get up the next day & also I might go on ordinary diet. Nothing happened after this I read a little & went to sleep early.

Was awakened with the lights being put on soon after this breakfast came along a grapefruit & a plate of porridge & tea without any milk in & bread without butter but with syrup. The latter two are due to the fat free diet we are on. there are three bowls for washing in & managed to get one before the morning was out. The M.O. never came round during the morning & for dinner we had lean meat potatoes & carrots followed by rice pudding & finally a cup of tea. Oh we also had a few toffees issued in the morning & also 7 cigs the latter I gave away<sup>2</sup>. During the afternoon the M.O. came round & after looking at my eyes said I could get up the next day & also I might go on ordinary diet. Nothing happened after this I read a little & went to sleep early.

## Thursday 9th



Dec 9  
Thurs. After breakfast I got up & dressed in the blue uniform of the army hospital, it felt very cold & I wrote a letter home also posted letter to Betty. After dinner I went along to the showers & had a much wanted one although it was a cold one I felt better after it. Supper time was my first meal on ordinary diet & consisted of a piece of spam. After supper went to bed - finished off the book I was reading "Midwinter" by John Buchan, a story of intrigue about the Pretender's bid for the throne of England. After this went to sleep & woke up hearing it raining during the night.

<sup>2</sup> Dad did not smoke and told me he always gave them away apart from towards the end of the war when he sold them as he did not know the other people he was with

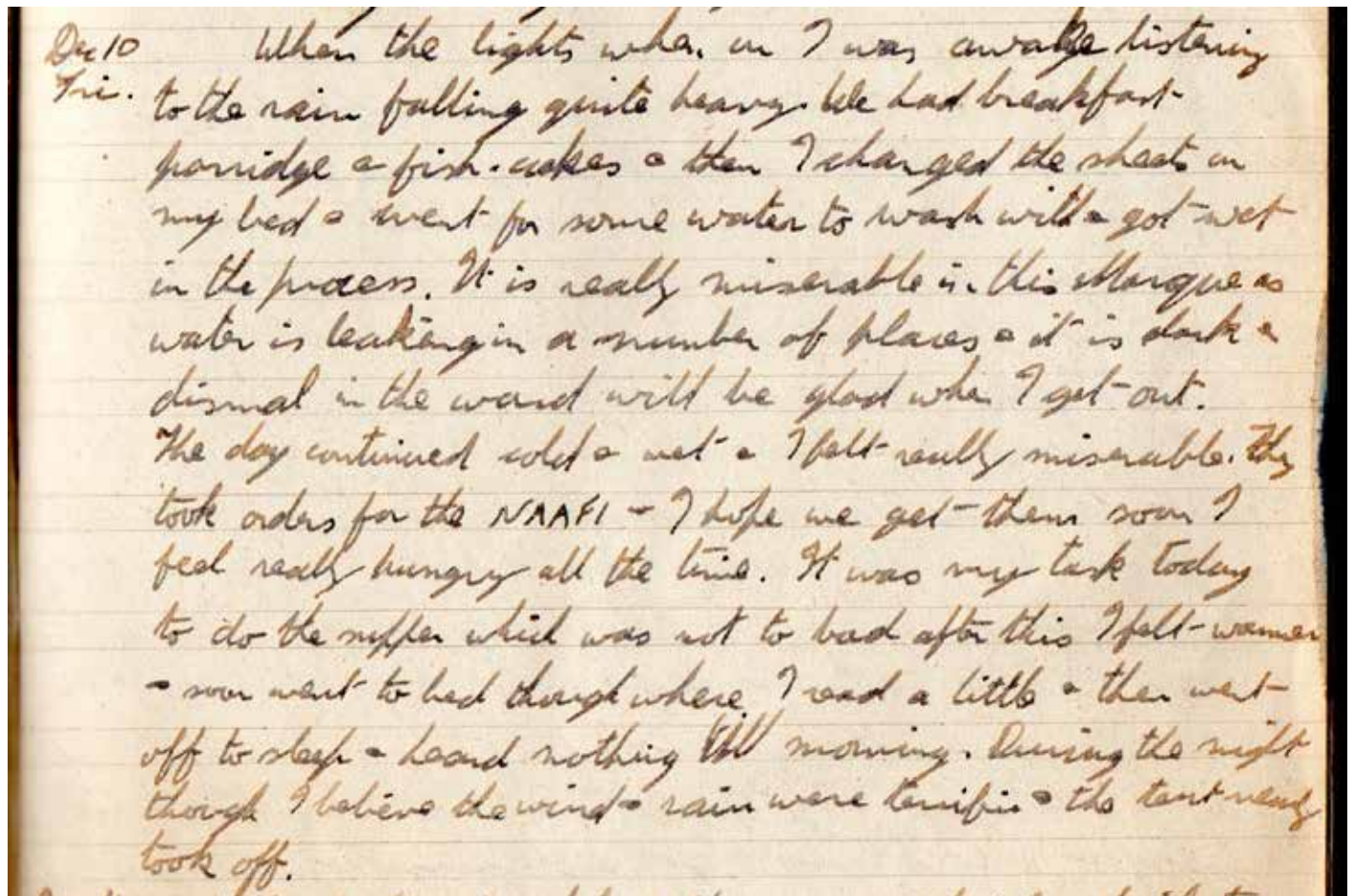
64 December 1943



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

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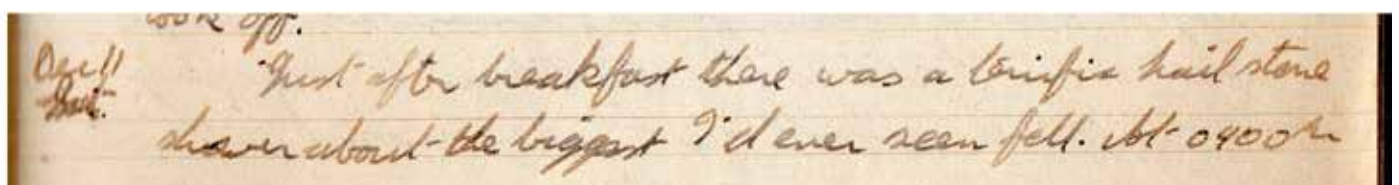
## Friday 10th



Dec 10  
Fri. When the lights went on I was awake listening to the rain falling quite heavy. We had breakfast porridge & fish-cakes & then I changed the sheets on my bed & went for some water to wash with & got wet in the process. It is really miserable in this marque as water is leaking in a number of places & it is dark & dismal in the ward will be glad when I get out. The day continued cold & wet & I felt really miserable. They took orders for the NAAFI - I hope we get them soon I feel really hungry all the time. It was my task today to do the supper which was not too bad after this I felt warmer & soon went to bed though where I read a little & then went off to sleep & heard nothing till morning. During the night though I believe the wind & rain were terrific & the tent nearly took off.

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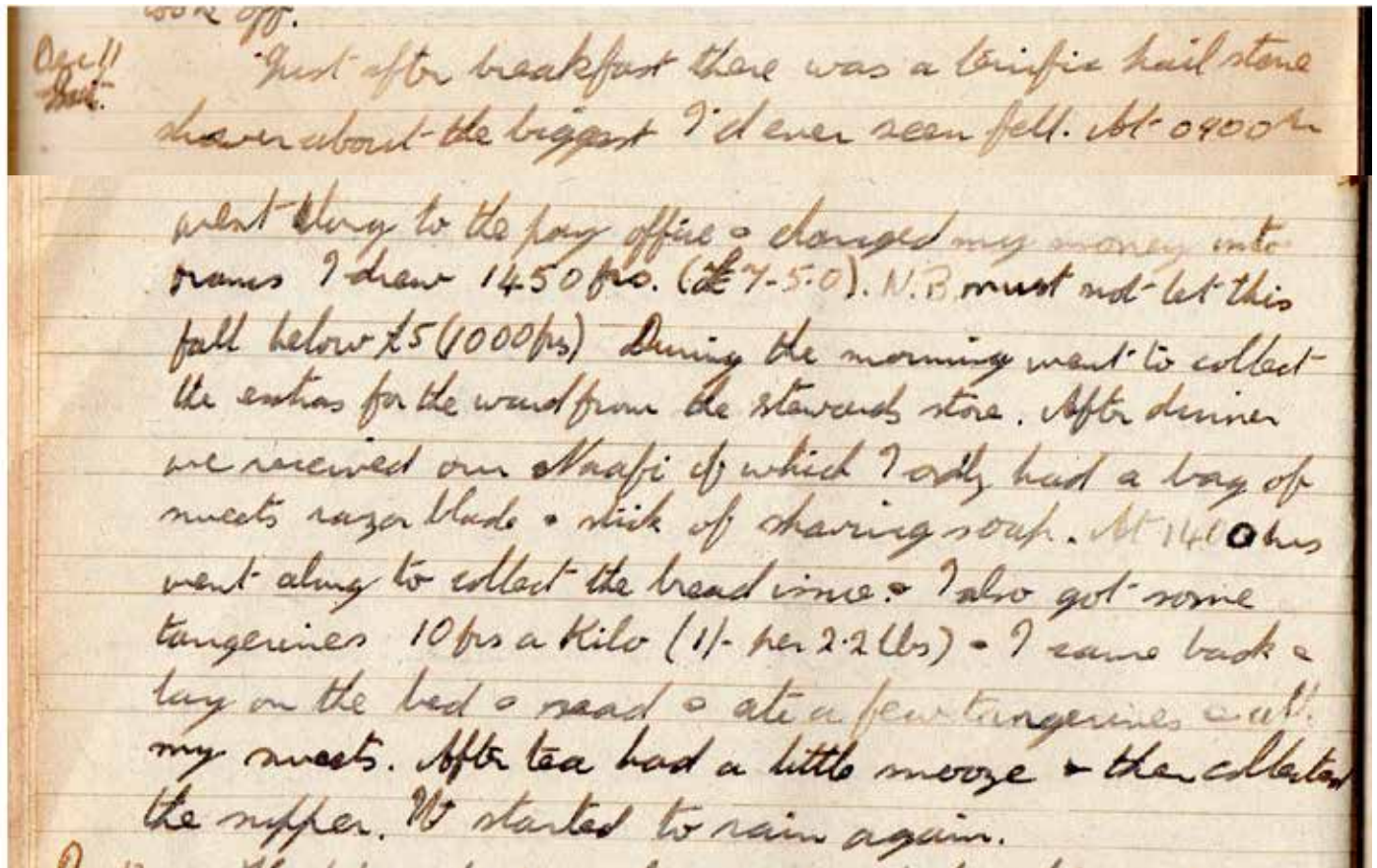
## Saturday 11th



Dec 11  
Sat. Just after breakfast there was a terrific hail stone shower about the biggest I'd ever seen fell. At 0400

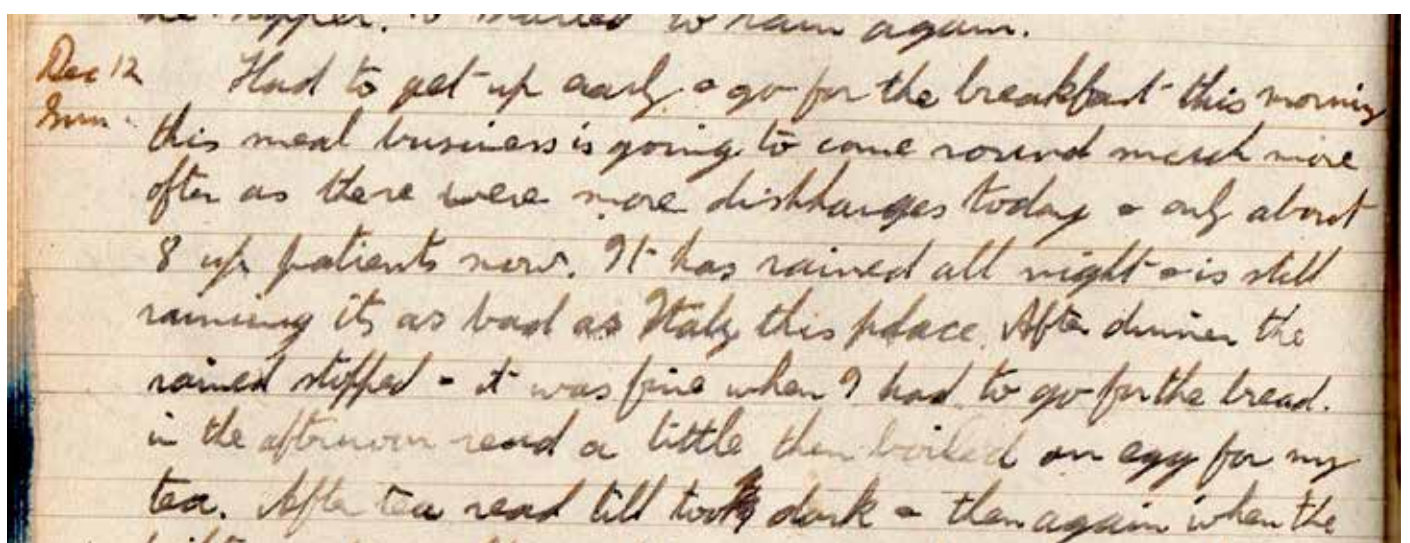


# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



Just after breakfast there was a terrific hail stone shower about the biggest I had ever seen fall. At 0900 hrs went along to the pay office & changed my money into francs. I drew 1450 frs (£7-5-0)<sup>3</sup> N.B. must not let this fall below £5 (1000frs). During the morning went to collect the rations for the ward from the stewards store. After dinner we received our Naafi of which I only had a bag of sweets razor blade & stick of shaving soap. At 1400 hrs went along to collect the bread issue & I also got some tangerines 10 frs a kilo (1/- per 2.2 lbs)<sup>4</sup> & I came back & lay on the bed & read & ate a few tangerines & all my sweets. After tea had a little snooze & then collected the supper. It started to rain again

## Sunday 12th

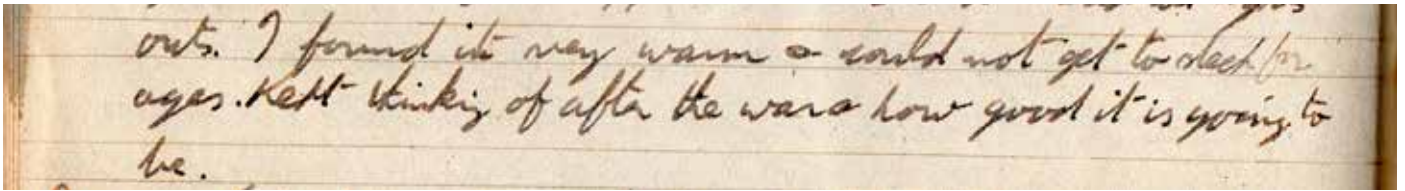


3 7 pounds 5 shillings and no pence - which is £7.25

4 1 shilling (5p) per kilo (2.2 lbs) Dad has converted everything to pounds, shilling and pence (predecimalisation money) and imperial weights



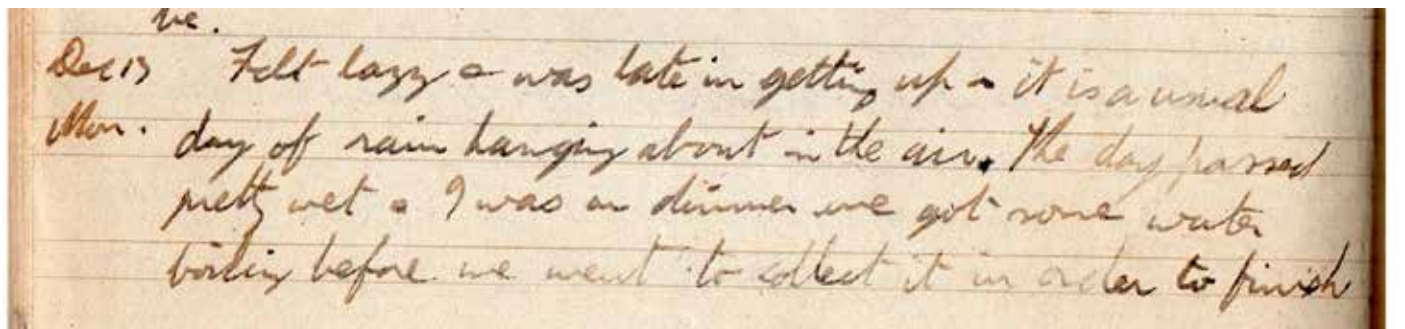
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



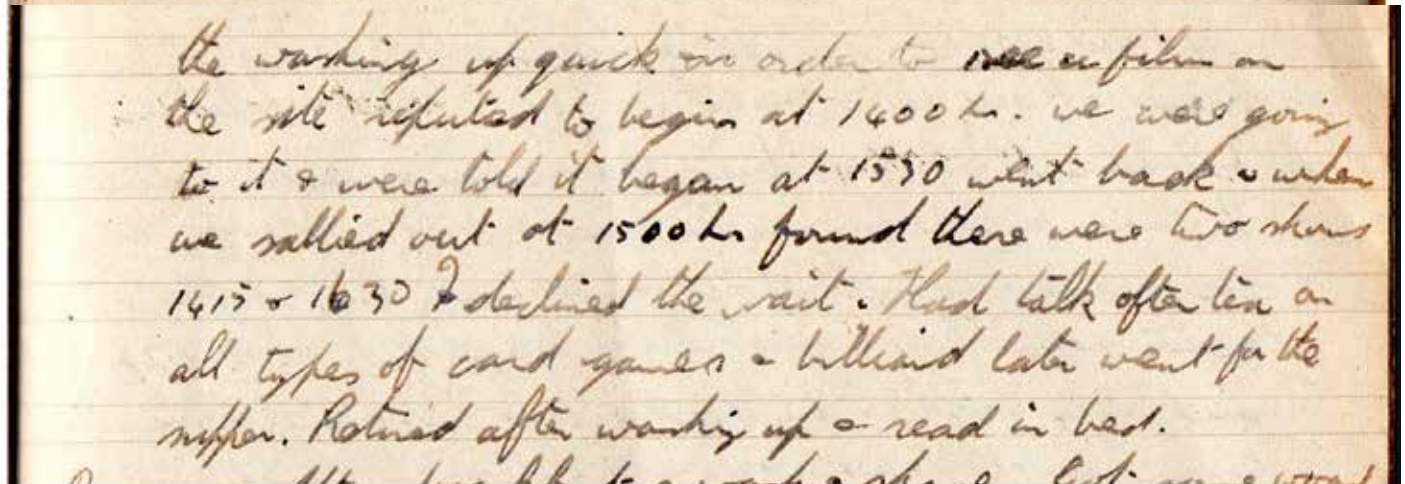
outs. I found it very warm & could not get to sleep for ages. Kept thinking of after the war how good it is going to be.

Had to get up early & go for breakfast this morning this meal business is going to come round much more often as there were more discharges today & only about 8 up patients now. It has rained all night and is still raining its as bad as Italy this place. After dinner the rain stopped & it was fine when I had to go for the bread in the afternoon read a little then boiled an egg for my tea. After tea read till too dark & then again when the lights went on after supper went to bed & read till lights out. I found it very warm & could not get to sleep for ages. Kept thinking of after the war how good it is going to be.

## Monday 13th



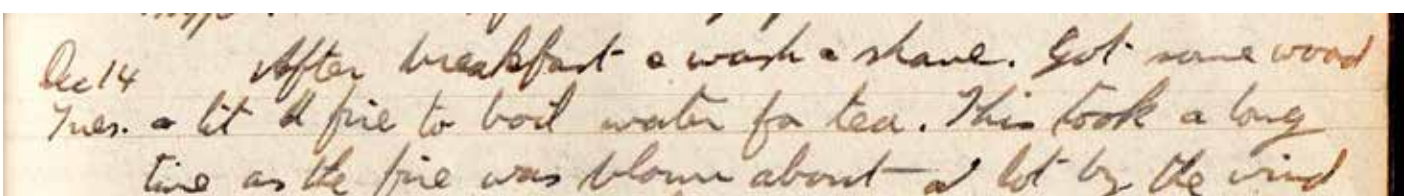
Dec 13  
Mon. Felt lazy & was late in getting up & it is a usual day of rain hanging about in the air. The day passed pretty wet & I was on dinner we got some water boiling before we went to collect it in order to finish



the washing up quick in order to see a film on the site expected to begin at 1400 hrs. we were going to it & were told it began at 1530 went back & when we sallied out at 1500 hrs found there were two shows 1415 & 1630 I declined the wait. Had talk after tea on all types of card games & billiard later went for the supper. Returned after washing up & read in bed.

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## Tuesday 14th



Dec 14  
Tues. After breakfast & wash & shave. Got some wood & lit a fire to boil water for tea. This took a long time as the fire was blown about a lot by the wind



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Today is fine but cold due to the wind. On the M.O.'s inspection he said I better stop here a little longer. Went for the extras & had a bottle of guinness from them this I had before dinner. After dinner went for the bread & then read a little just before I went for tea the ward filled up with a lot of new patients who had come by train from Philippeville 69 & 100 General. Went to bed after supper went to bed & read a little then went off to sleep.

After breakfast & wash & shave. Got some wood & lit a fire to boil water for tea. This took a long time as the fire was blown out by the wind. Today is fine but cold due to the wind. On the M.O.'s inspection he said I better stop here a little longer. Went for the extras & had a bottle of guinness from them this I had before dinner. After dinner went for the bread & then read a little just before I went for tea the ward filled up with a lot of new patients who had come by train from Philippeville 69 & 100 General. Went to bed after supper went to bed & read a little then went off to sleep.

## Wednesday 15th

Dec 15 It was terribly cold - I had to get up for breakfast Wed. after washing up in cold water my hands were nearly frozen also I found I had developed a cold plus a headache. The day itself was sunny enough but it persisted quite cold. One of the fellows lit the fire & we brewed up some coffee which tasted tainted after all our trouble after dinner I went & lay down for the afternoon as I felt rather muggy in the head. After tea went a short stroll round & after having supper went to bed read a little & then soon fell asleep.

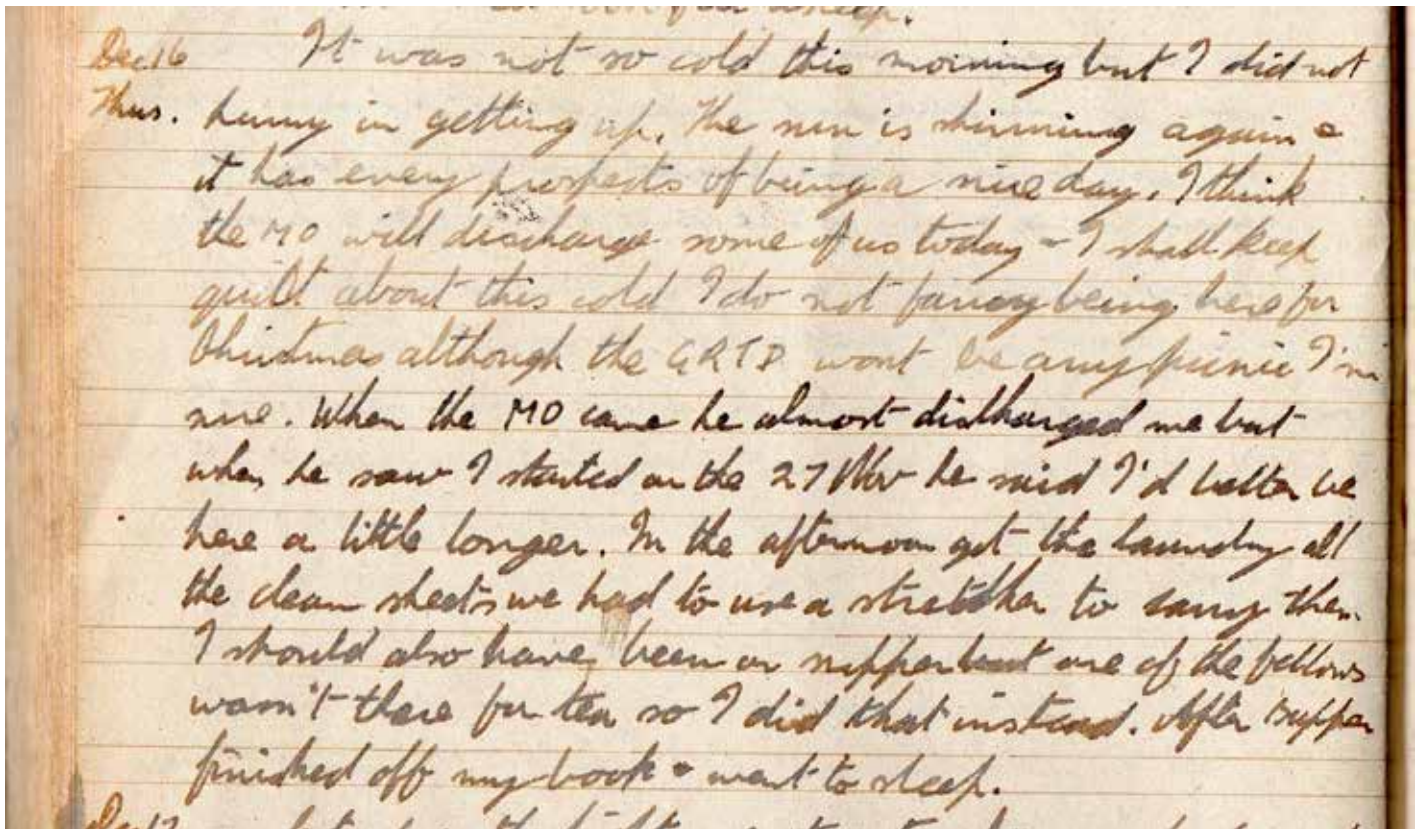
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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

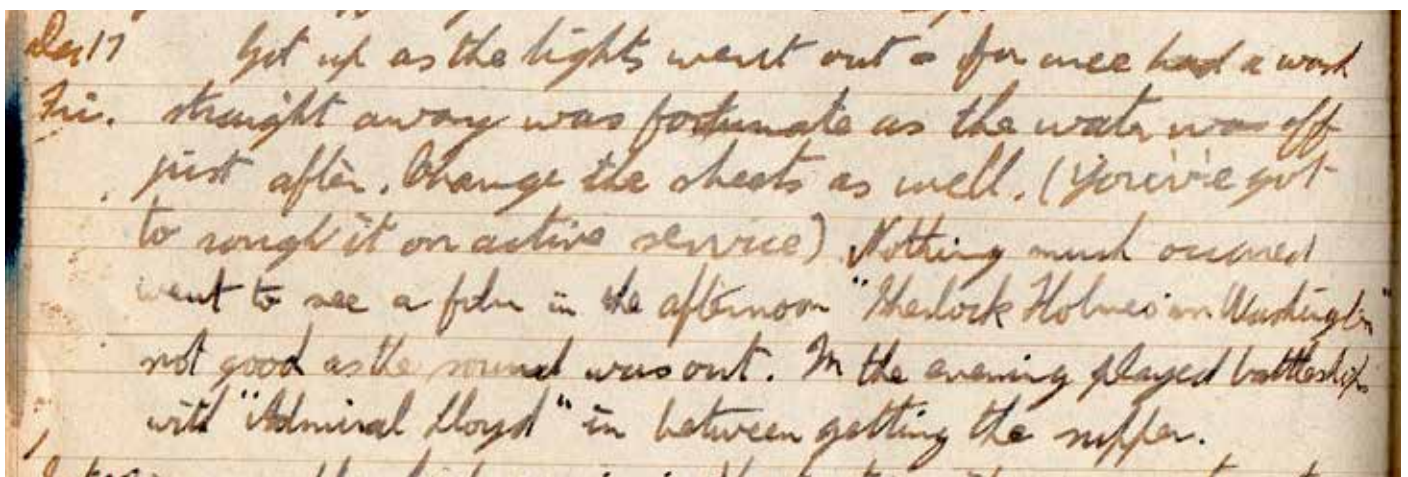
Thursday 16th



Dec 16 It was not so cold this morning but I did not  
hurry in getting up. The sun is shining again &  
it has every prospect of being a nice day. I think  
the M.O. will discharge some of us today - I shall keep  
quiet about this cold I do not fancy being here for  
Christmas although the G.R.T.D. won't be any picnic I'm  
sure. When the M.O. came he almost discharged me but  
when he saw I started on the 27th he said I'd better be  
here a little longer. In the afternoon got the laundry all  
the clean sheets we had to use a stretcher to carry them.  
I should also have been on supper but one of the fellows  
wasn't there for tea so I did that instead. After supper  
finished off my book & went to sleep.

It was not so cold this morning but I did not hurry to get up. The sun is shining again & it has every prospect of being a nice day. I think the M.O. will discharge some of us today & I shall keep quiet about this cold I do not fancy being here for Christmas although the GRTD won't be any picnic I'm sure. When the MO came he almost discharged me but when he saw I started on the 27th he said I better be here a little longer. In the afternoon got the laundry all the clean sheets we had to use a stretcher to carry them. I could also have been on supper but one of the fellows wasn't there for tea so I did that instead. After supper finished my book and went to sleep.

Friday 17th



Dec 17 Got up as the lights went out & for once had a wash  
straight away was fortunate as the water was off  
just after. Change the sheets as well. (You've got to rough it on active  
service). Nothing much occurred went to see a film in the afternoon "Sherlock Holmes in Washington"  
not good as the sound was out. In the evening played battleship  
with "Admiral Lloyd" in between getting the supper.

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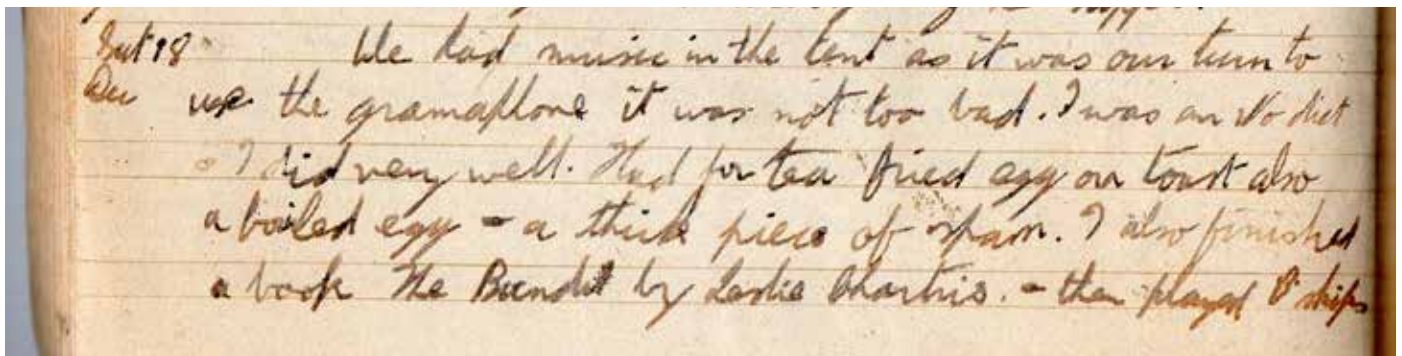
December 1943 69



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

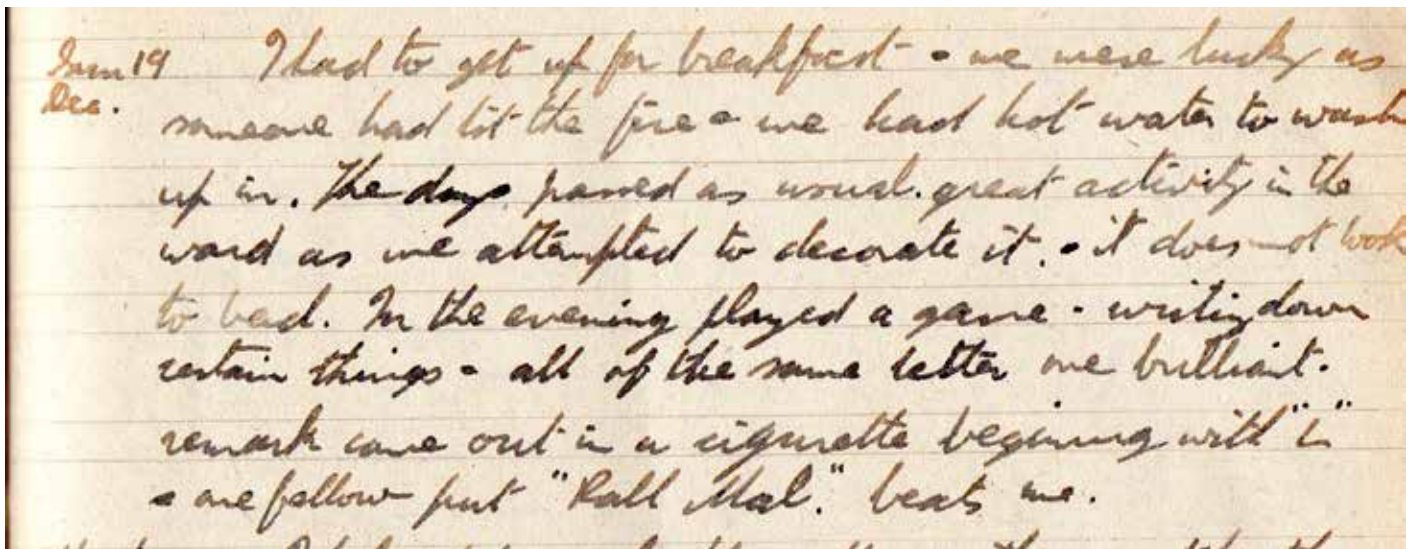
in Washington" not good as the sound was out. In the evening played battleships with "Admiral Lloyd" in between getting the supper.

## Saturday 18th



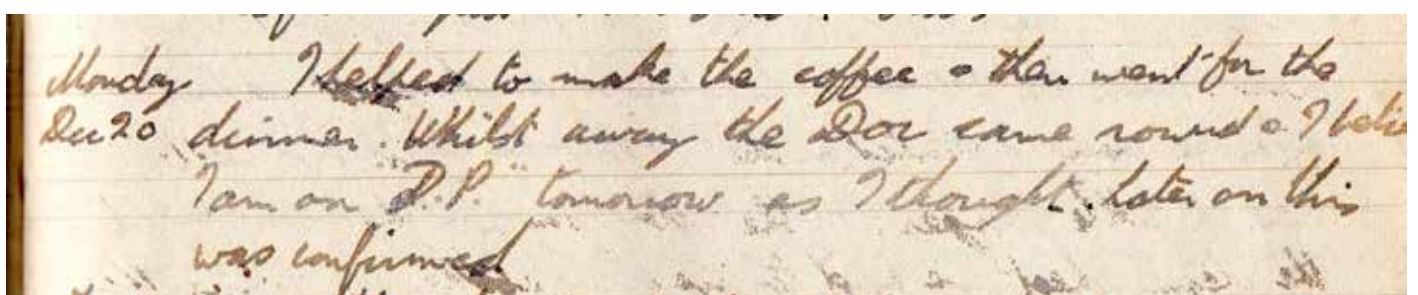
We had music in the tent as it was our turn to use the gramophone it was not too bad. I was on no diet & I did very well. Had for tea fried egg on toast also a boiled egg & a thick piece of spam. I also finished a book The Bandit by Leslie Chartris & then played B ships

## Sunday 19th



I had to get up for breakfast & we were lucky as someone had lit the fire & we had hot water to wash up in. The days passed as much great activity in the ward as we tried to decorate it & it does not look to bad. In the evening played a game - writing down certain things - all of the same letter one brilliant remark came out in a cigarette beginning with "L" & one fellow put "Pall Mall" beats me.

## Monday 20th



I helped to make the coffee & then went for the dinner. Whilst away the Doc came round &



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

I believe "I am on D.P." tomorrow as I thought later on this was confirmed.

## Tuesday 21st

Wed Dec 21. This the shortest day of the year. At 11:45 parade was interviewed by the M.O. who asked me if I was satisfied with the treatment etc. I said yes. In the afternoon collected my stuff & went for a shower & got changed in khaki again. After tea went into El Biar a small village nearby. We had a drink of Muscatel & went into the canteen which was quite good. We just got back in time for supper which it was our turn to collect. Incidentally it looks like rain tonight. I hope it is fine tomorrow.

This is the shortest day of the year. At 11:45 parade was interviewed by the M.O. who asked me if I was satisfied with my treatment etc. I said yes. In the afternoon collected my stuff & went for a shower got changed in khaki again. After tea went into El Biar (Algeria) a small village nearby. We had a drink of Muscatel & went into the canteen which was quite good. We just got back in time for supper which it was our turn to collect. I wonder if it looks like rain tonight. I hope it is fine tomorrow.

## Wednesday 22nd

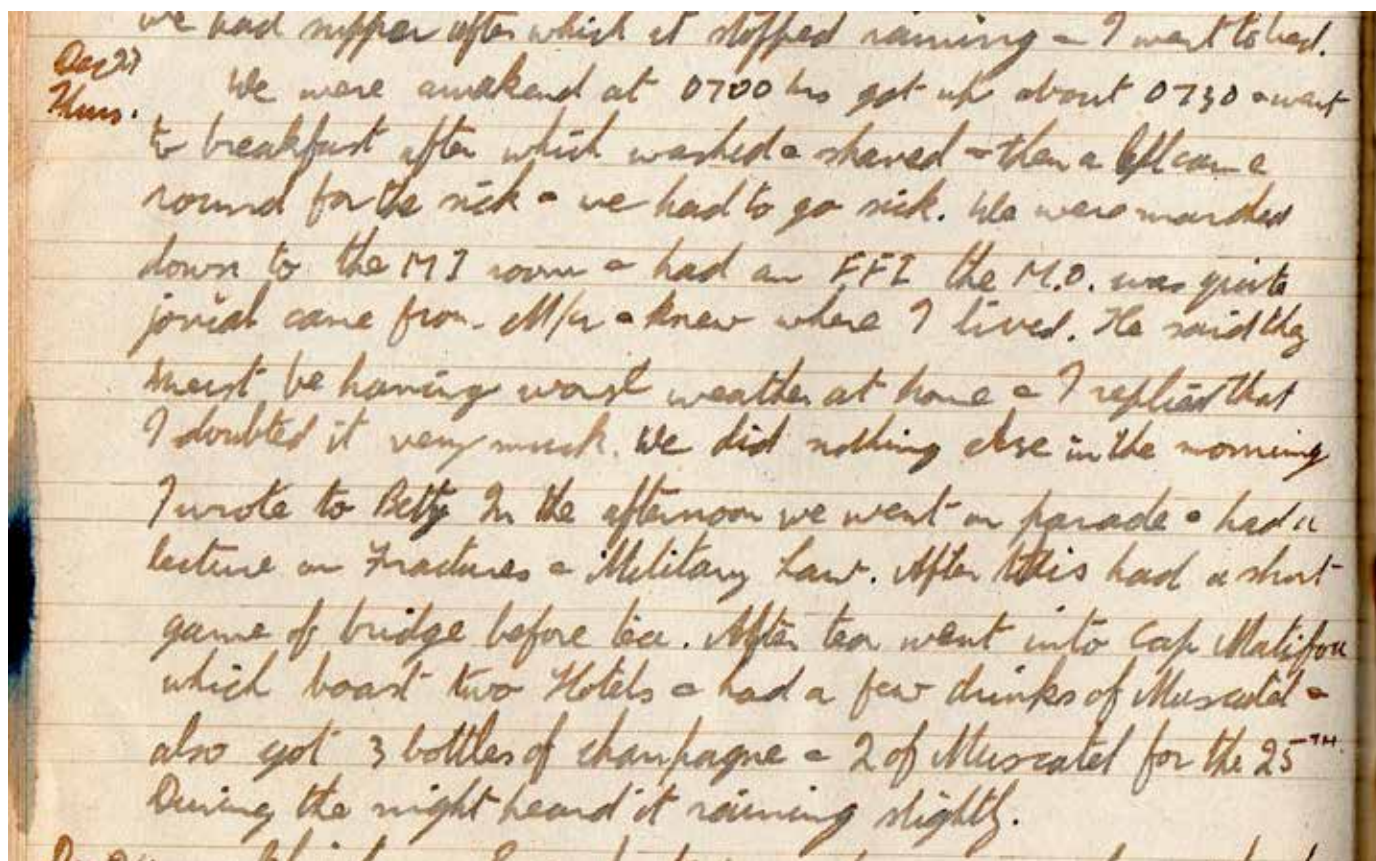
Dec 22 Wed. Woke up to hear it raining - went got shaved - had breakfast & packed up my stuff & made my bed up etc. We then went along to the Reception office & signed ourselves off. After this we hung around in between waiting got our Naafi for the week. We then boarded the transport & were taken through Algiers to the G.R.D. here we were dropped off at V. Bay 5 bn. 16 R.D. (near) this comprised RAMICA R.C.D.s. After taking our particulars we were detailed to a tent which was leaking all over the place & tried to make ourselves comfortable. After dinner we went along to the Q.M.'s & got a few extra items of kit including four blankets. I came back made my bed & had tea. After tea we managed a four at bridge. Unfortunately, a dud, but quite good. Later



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Woke up to hear it raining & got shaved & had breakfast & packed up my stuff & made my bed up etc. We then went along to the Reception office signed ourselves off. After this we hung around in between got our Naffi for the week. We then boarded the transport & were taken through Algiers to the GRTD here we were dropped off at "V" coy 5Bn 1 GRTD (rear) this confirmed RAMC & RC ofs. After taking our particulars we were detailed to a tent which was leaking all over the place & tried to make ourselves comfortable. After dinner we went along to the DMs and got a few extra items of kit including four blankets I came back made my bed & had tea. After tea we managed a four at bridge. Unfortunately auction, but quite good. Later we had supper after which it stopped raining & I went to bed.

## Thursday 23rd



We were awakened at 0700 hrs got up about 0730 & went to breakfast after which washed & shaved & then a Cpl came round for the sick & we had to go sick. We were marched down to the MI room & had an FFI the M.O. was quite jovial came from M/cr<sup>5</sup> & knew where I lived. He said they must be having worse weather at home & I replied that I doubted it very much. We did nothing else in the morning I wrote to Betty In the afternoon we went on parade & had lecture on Fractures & Military Law. After this had a short game of bridge before tea. After tea went into Cap Matifoa boast two hotels & had a few drinks of muscatel & also got 3 bottles of champagne & 2 of muscatel for the 25th. During the night heard it raining slightly.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Friday 24th

Dec 24 Christmas Eve but parade as usual & we had  
Fri. to go on the range & fired 28 rounds from a Bren  
gun & 36 (two mags) from a Tommy gun after which  
we had to clean them & then went to dinner. Afterwards  
we were working out who owed who for the wine we  
had bought & it proved awkward at first. Until someone  
suggested we all pay one man & then every was easy.  
In the afternoon it was pay parade but all we  
went for was my free issue of cigs etc which I gave  
away there was no airletter issued unfortunately. At  
night we went out to get another bottle of champagne  
& what a fed carnos at the two pubs we managed  
what we wanted but there were one or two fights  
at finishing time which was at 1900 hrs (too early).

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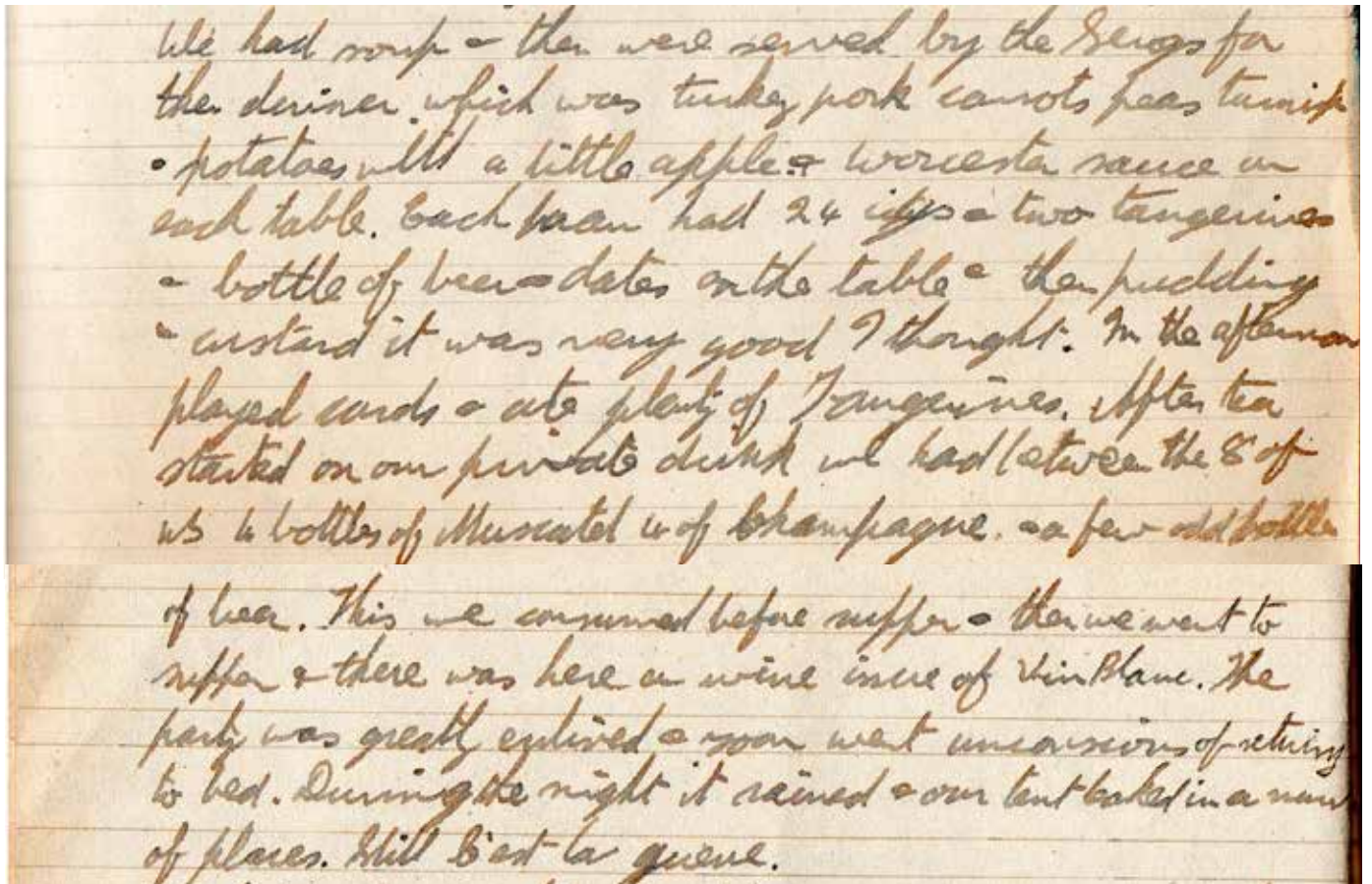
Saturday 25th

Dec 25 For once I did not go to bed in the early hours  
Sat. of the morning as I would have liked to. Nevertheless  
we were awakened in the morning by two  
Sergeants bringing us a mug of tea each.  
before we got up. The breakfast was quite good spam  
beans & fried bread. All we did in the morning  
was play bridge & went to church which was very  
good especially the sermon by the minister.  
Dinner was really excellent & more than I expected

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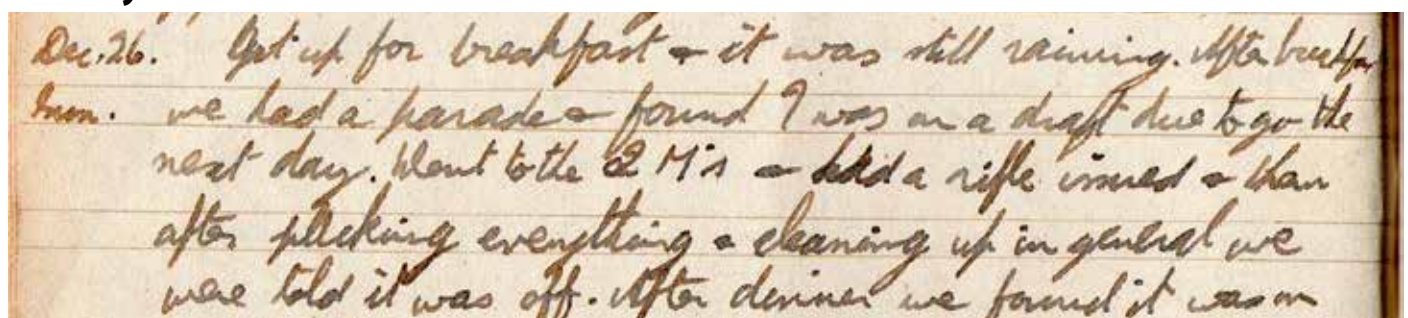
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



We had soup & then were served by the Sergs for the dinner which was turkey, pork, carrots, peas, turnips & potatoes with a little apple & worcester sauce on each table. Each man had 24 cigs & two tangerines & bottle of beer & dates on the table & then pudding & custard it was very good I thought. In the afternoon played cards & ate plenty of tangerines. After tea started on our private drink we had between the 8 of us 6 bottles of muscatel & 4 of champagne & a few odd bottles of beer. This we consumed before supper & then we went to supper & there was here a wine issue of Vin Blanc. The party was greatly enlived & soon went unconscious of retiring to bed. During the night it rained & our tent leaked in a number of places. Still C'est la guerre.

For once I did not go to bed in the early hours of the morning as I would have liked to<sup>6</sup>. Nevertheless we were awakened in the morning by two Sergeants bringing us a mug of tea each before we got up. The breakfast was quite good spam, beans & fried bread. All we did in the morning was play bridge & went to Church which was very good especially the sermon by the minister. Dinner was really excellent & more than I expected. We had soup & then were served by the Sergs for the dinner which was turkey pork carrots peas turnips & potatoes with a little apple & worcester sauce on each table. Each one had 24 cigs & 2 tangerines & bottle of beer & dates on the table & then pudding & custard it was very good I thought. In the afternoon played cards & ate plenty of tangerines. After tea started on our private drink we had between the 8 of us 6 bottles of muscatel 4 of champagne & a few odd bottles of beer. This we consumed before supper & then we went to supper & there was here a wine issue of Vin Blanc. The party was greatly enlived & soon went unconscious on retiring to bed. During the night it rained & our tent leaked in a range of places. Still C'est la guerre.

## Sunday 26th

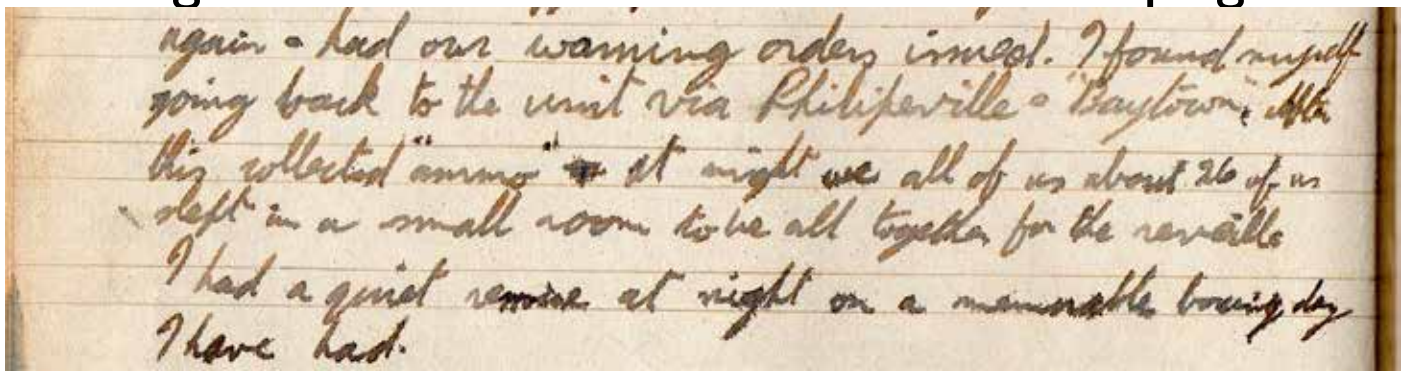


Dec. 26. Get up for breakfast & it was still raining. After breakfast we had a parade & found I was on a draft due to go the next day. Went to the Q M's & had a rifle issued & then after picking everything & cleaning up in general we were told it was off. After dinner we found it was on

<sup>6</sup> It was a family tradition for the adults to wait up until midnight of Christmas Eve and then open their presents.



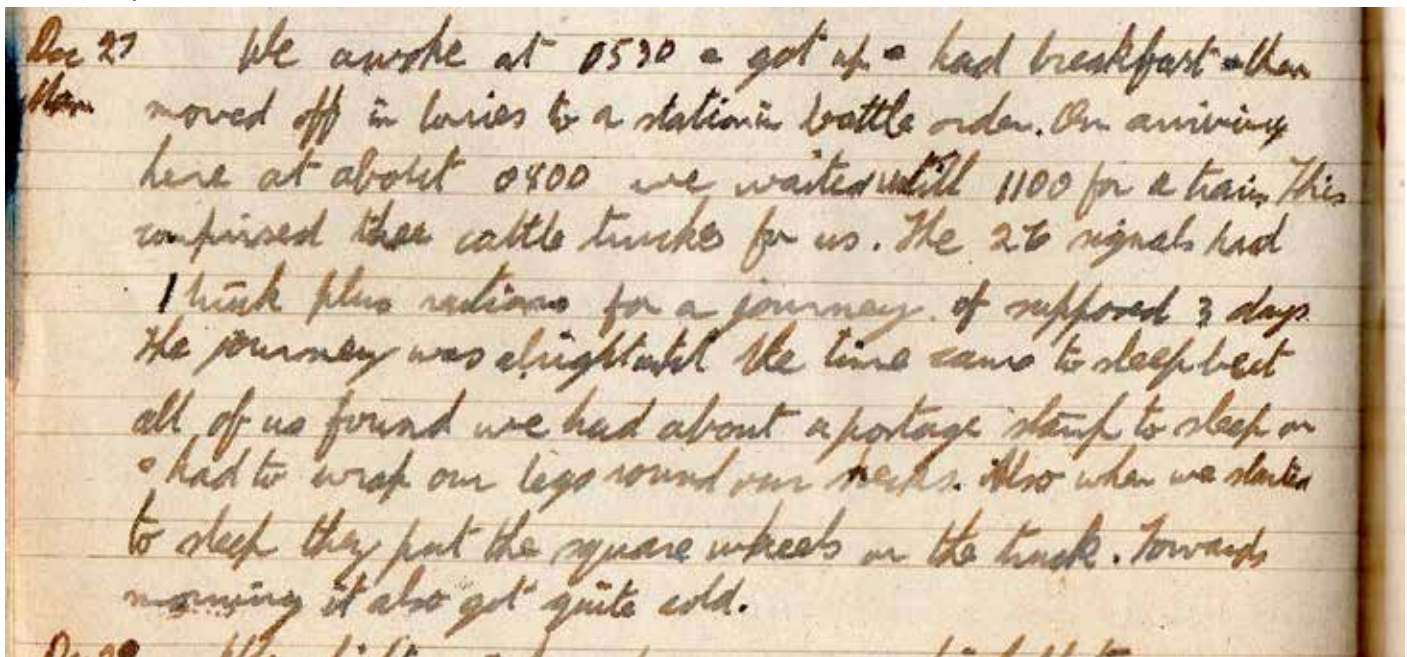
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



again - had our warning orders issued. I found myself going back to the unit via Philiperville - Baytown. After this collected "ammo" at night we all of us about 26 of us slept in a small room to be all together for the reveille. I had a quiet remain at night on a memorable boxing day I have had.

Got up for breakfast & it was still raining. After breakfast we had a parade & found I was on a draft due to go the next day. Went to the QMs & had a rifle issued & then after packing everything & cleaning up in general we were told it was off. After dinner we found it was on again & had our warning orders issued. I found myself going back to the unit via Philiperville & "Baytown". After this collected "ammo" at night we all of us about 26 of us slept in a small room to be altogether for the reveille. I had a quiet remain at night on a memorable boxing day I have had.

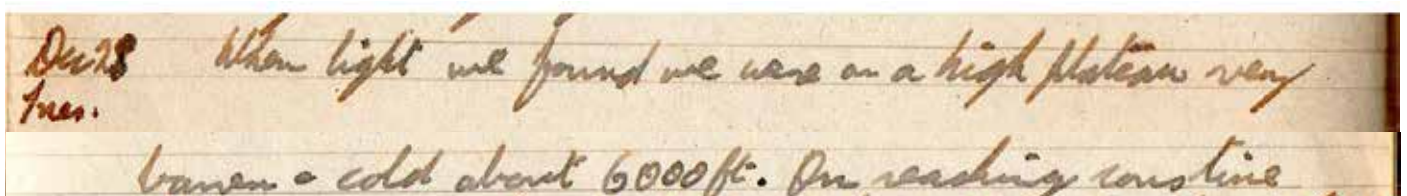
## Monday 27th



Dec 27 Mon We awoke at 0530 & got up & had breakfast & then moved off in lorries to a station in battle order. On arriving here at about 0800 we waited until 1100 for a train. This comprised three cattle trucks for us. The 26 signals had I think plus rations for a journey of supposed 3 days. The journey was alright until the time came to sleep but all of us found we had about a postage stamp to sleep on & had to wrap our legs round our necks. Also when we started to sleep they put the square wheels on the truck. Towards morning it also got quite cold.

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## Tuesday 28th



Dec 28 Tues. When light we found we were on a high plateau very barren & cold about 6000ft. On reaching constant



## Diary of a D-Day Dodger

about tea time they took off the last three trucks of which ours was one & we had to pile on to the others. We had a very quick run to Philippeville being all down hill - when we arrived there instead of going to the transit camp we were sent to the GRTD again. There we slept in the quiet room & boy did I sleep.

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### Wednesday 29th

Canadian troops seize the Adriatic port of Ortona.

Dec 29  
Wed. A big draft went off this morning thought we should be in it. Got a shave which was pretty hard as it was the first for three days & then had breakfast which was good & went to the office. After booking in here we learned we had come to the wrong place & should have gone on the boat in the morning. We then were allocated to tents & managed seven of us to get together. Later we learned that we would probably be moving off in the afternoon. This was good as we intended moving off ourselves if not. More Gen later we were going on a boat within two days this rather cramped our style as I doubt it very much. During the afternoon we were caught for pulling a tent down & putting up another also detailed for officer mess the next day. After tea learned that a lot who had gone to catch the boat we should have done had been turned back. Oh well!! Wrote a letter to Betty & Tom. After this went to bed - was soon asleep.

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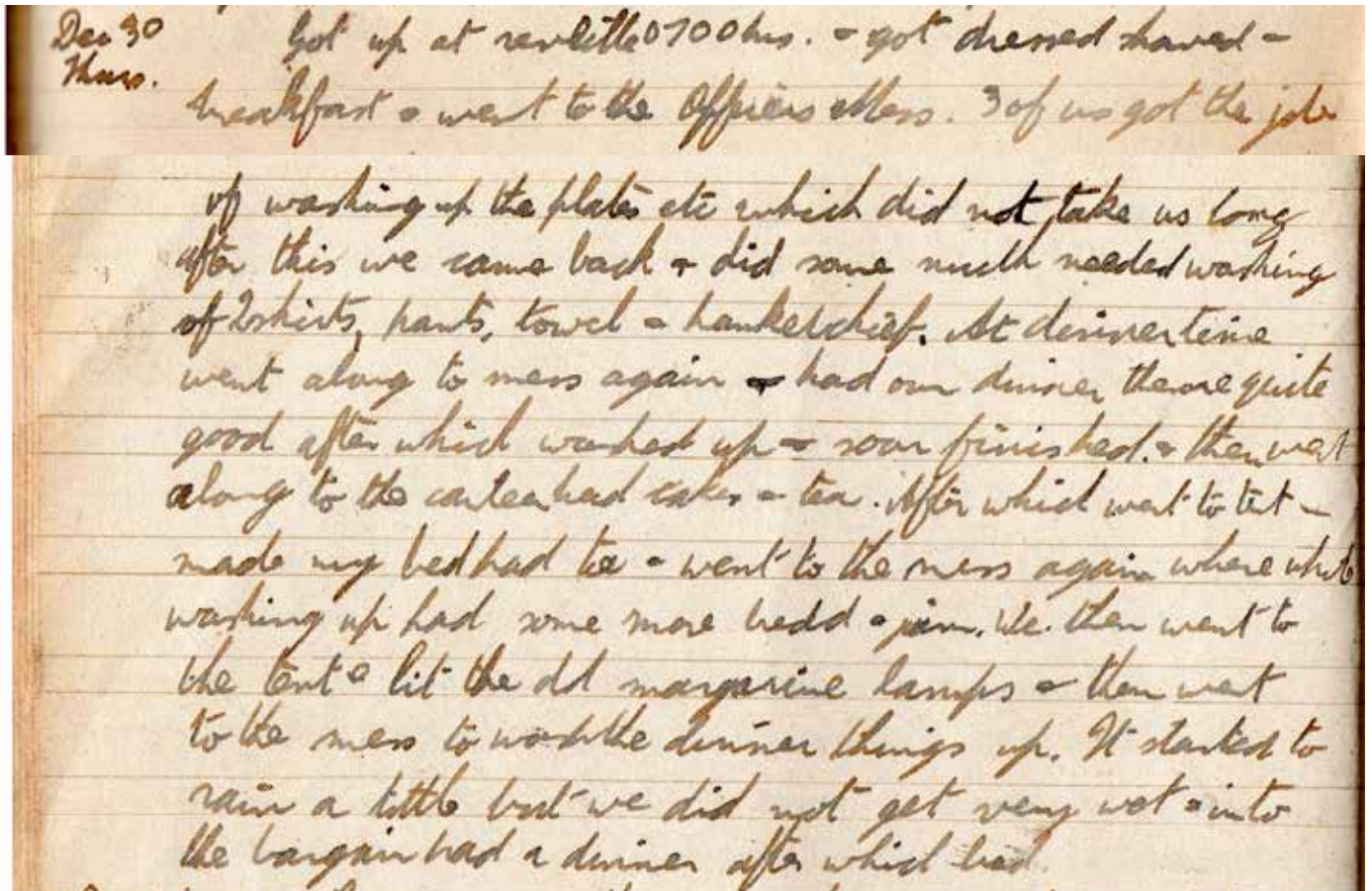
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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

to get together. Later we heard that we would probably be moving off in the afternoon. This was good as we intended moving off ourselves if not. More gen later we were going on a boat within two days this rather cramped our style as I doubt it very much. During the afternoon we were caught for putting a tent down & putting up another also detailed for officers mess the next day. After tea learned that a lot who had gone to catch boat we should have done had been turned back. Ah well?! wrote a letter to Betty & Tom. After this went to bed & was soon asleep.

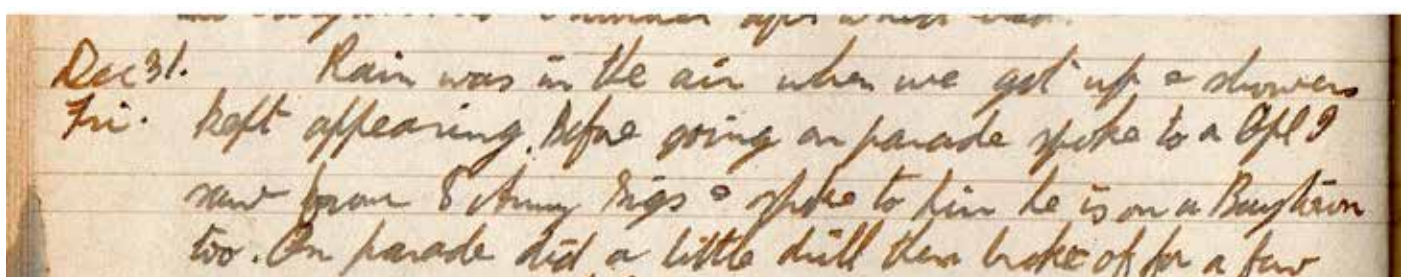
## Thursday 30th



Dec 30  
Thurs. Got up at reveille 0700 hrs. - got dressed shaved - breakfast - went to the Officers mess. 3 of us got the job of washing up the plates etc which did not take us long after this we came back & did some much needed washing of 2 shirts, pants, towel & handkerchief. At dinner time went along to mess again & had our dinner there quite good after which washed up & soon finished. & then went along to the canteen had cakes & tea. After which went to tent - made my bed had tea - went to the mess again where while washing up had some more bread & jam. We then went to the tent & lit the old margarine lamps & then went to the mess to wash the dinner things up. It started to rain a little but we did not get very wet & into the bargain had a dinner after which had bed.

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## Friday 31st



Dec 31.  
Fri. Rain was in the air when we got up & showers kept appearing. Before going on parade spoke to a Cpl I met from 8 Army Regt & spoke to him he is on a Boughtron too. On parade did a little drill then broke off for a few



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

minutes after which I was part of a tug of war team in practice for a sports day tomorrow but nothing came of it I don't think I can have pulled as hard as I should. After dinner we dropped a gooly. When we heard a whistle for parade we waited for them to shout our coy out & nothing happened. The next thing we knew was the CSM taking our names for not being on parade & we had a job to do - two more have to move some bed tonight. Later we had pay parade & then our Naafi & free issue. After tea went to writing room & wrote to home, Aunty Mag<sup>7</sup> & Betty. Oh during the later part of the morning Tony who was in the

cavalry at the outbreak of war was telling us all about the life - some quite funny experiences. Later it moved round to spiritualism & hypnotism & some quite interesting facts came out. Nothing came of the bed moving but we did have a terrific gale & it pulled a lot of tent pegs out & we thought the tent was down had to get up & fix it but found it to be pretty hopeless.

Rain was in the air when we got up & showers kept appearing. Before going on parade spoke to Cpl. I saw from 8 Army Sigs & spoke to him he is on a Baytown too. On parade did a little drill then broke off for a few minutes. After which I was part of a tug of war team in practice for a sports day tomorrow but nothing came of it I don't think I can have pulled as hard as I should. After dinner we dropped a gooly. When we heard a whistle for parade we waited for them to shout our coy out & nothing happened. The next thing we knew was the CSM taking our names for not being on parade & we had a job to do & two more have to move some bed tonight. Later we had pay parade & then our Naafi & free issue. After tea went to writing room & wrote to home, Aunty Mag<sup>7</sup> & Betty. Oh during the later part of the morning Tony who was in the cavalry at the outbreak of war was telling us all about the life & some quite funny experiences. Later it moved round to spiritualism & hypnotism & some quite interesting facts came out. Nothing came of the bed moving but we did have a terrific gale & it pulled a lot of tent pegs out & we thought the tent was down had to get up & fix it but found it to be pretty hopeless.

7 Aunty Mag was the name he always called my Grandmother



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## JANUARY 1944

Saturday 1st

1944. Found it to be pretty hopeless.  
Jan 1  
Sat  
The morning found us very tired but the tent was still standing. The wind still blowing had to put up some tents for Officers 6 of them pull down a couple of marquees - got shouted at by some ignorant Col. On parade in the afternoon Tony Ken, Ken, Chang Wally & I & the L/Cpl in the tent found ourselves on picket & had the afternoon off to get ready. It was pretty cushy we just strolled about & kept 3 fires in & had to light 6 more at 0230 ready for morning. Tony & I were together - found it real hard work as all the wood was wet & that was all there was to keep them going.

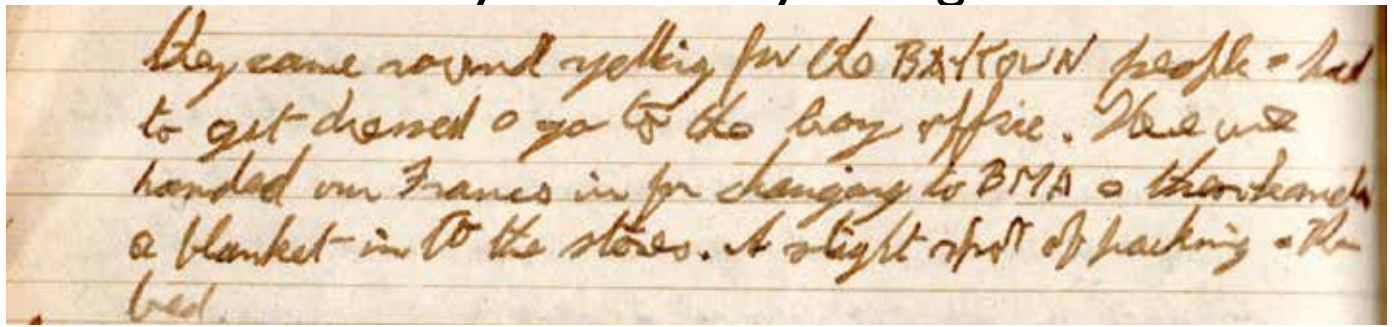
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Sunday 2nd

Jan 2  
Sun  
After a wash & shave we all retired to the tent & got our beds down. I did some mending & cleaned up again. In the afternoon a sgt came round & took all our names & then asked us if there was any good reason why we should not do a guard the following day. With one word the whole tent informed him we were on the previous night. Went to naafi later & at night went to the canteen managed to buy some sweets. After this went to bed & had just got settled in when



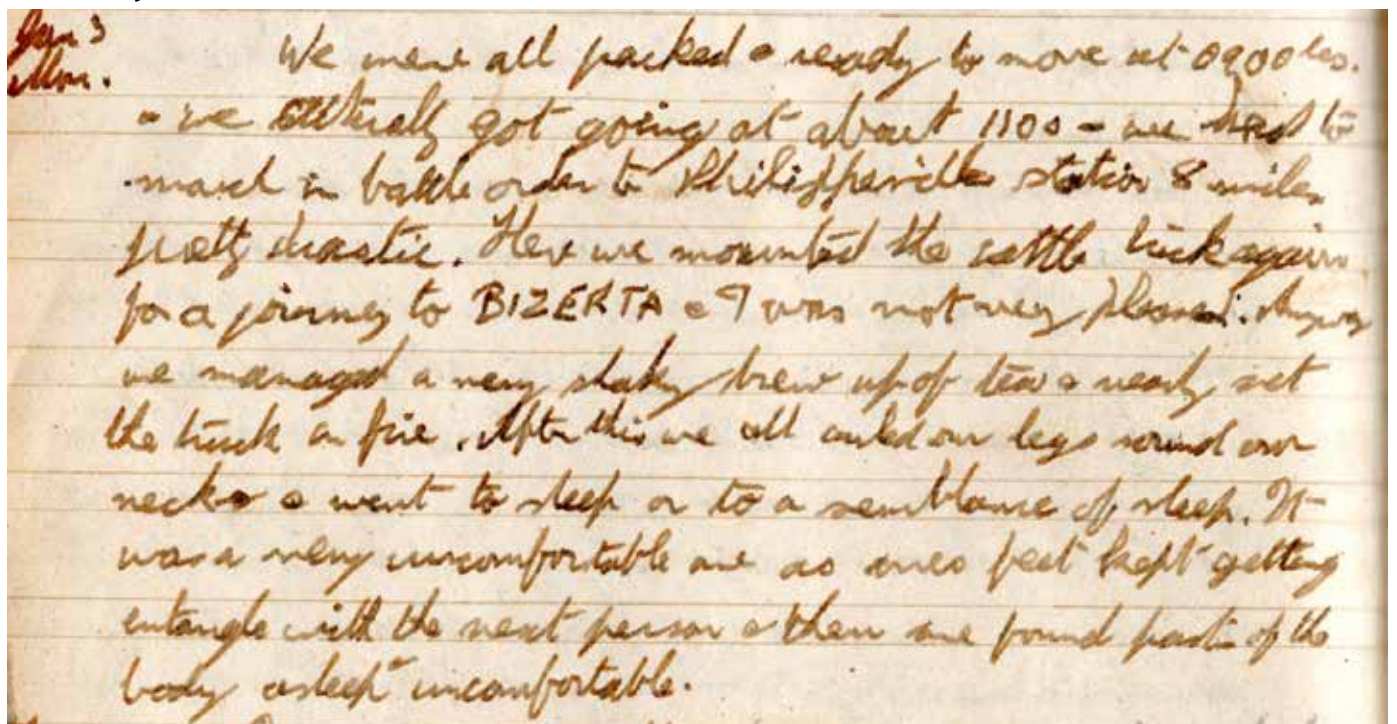
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



They came round yelling for the BAYTOWN people - had to get dressed & go to the Coy office. Here we handed our Francs in for changing to BMA & then handed a blanket in to the stores. A slight spot of packing & then bed.

After a wash & shave we all retired to the tent & got our beds down. I did some mending & cleaned rifle again. In the afternoon a Sgt. came round & took all our names & then asked us if there was any good reason why we should not do a guard the following day with one accord the whole tent informed him we were on the previous night. Went to naafi later & at night went to day canteen managed to buy some sweets. After this went to bed & had just got settled in when they came round yelling for the BAYTOWN<sup>1</sup> people & had to get dressed & go to the Coy office. Here we handed our Francs in for changing to BMA & then handed a blanket in to the stores. A slight spot of packing & then bed.

## Monday 3rd



Jan 3  
Mon. We were all packed & ready to move at 0900 hrs. - we actually got going at about 1100 - we had to march in battle order to Philippeville station 8 miles pretty drastic. Here we mounted the cattle truck again for a journey to BIZERTA & I was not very pleased. Anyway we managed a very shaky brew up of tea & nearly set the truck on fire. After this we all curled our legs round our necks & went to sleep or to a semblance of sleep. It was a very uncomfortable one as ones feet kept getting entangled with the next person & then we found parts of the body asleep uncomfortable.

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<sup>1</sup> Operation Baytown was an Allied amphibious landing that took place on the 3rd September 1943, Reggio Calabria, Italy

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Tuesday 4th

Jan 4  
Tue. Dawn came & we all got up & made tea & had some fried bacon then the day passed very slowly by dinnertime we had reached Souk Aras & later on we started & then it was time to bed down & we organized things better & managed to be straight out. We found it very hot though & could not settle down for ages.

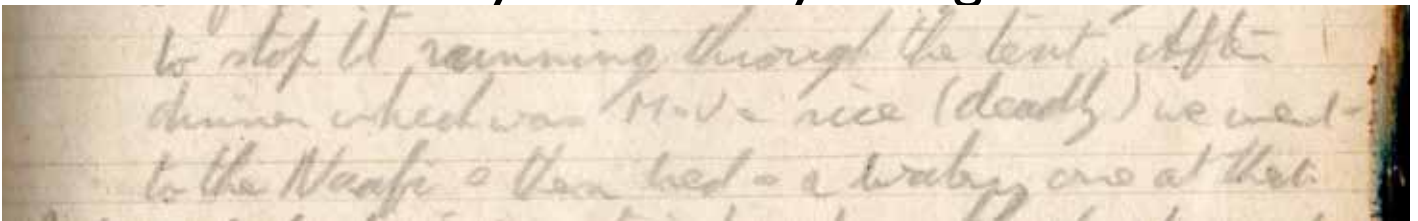
Dawn came & we all got<sup>2</sup> up & made tea & had some fried bacon then the day passed by slowly by dinnertime we had reached Souk Aras & later on we started & then it was time to bed down & we arranged things better & managed to be straight out. We found it was very hot though & could not settle down for ages.

Wednesday 5th

Jan 5  
Wed. Although the train seemed to move very little we found ourselves at Mateur in the morning. We stopped here quite a bit & managed to buy some bacon & we exchange some of our tea about 1lb for 30 eggs & we had fried eggs as well. NB. 1lb of tea cost 300 frs = £1-10-0. Later on after dinner we arrived at La Penche at the stop before this. Here we gave a lot of biscuit & bully to some French people & they were very grateful & gave us a bottle or two of wine in exchange. When we got off the train we marched to the Texas Transit camp which had grown considerably since I last visited it. We were first put in a tent but two more arrived & we were left with quite a good eight fellows. We had to dig round our tent as it had just been put up & it was on a hill. This we did inefficiently at first & had to redo it in the pouring rain.

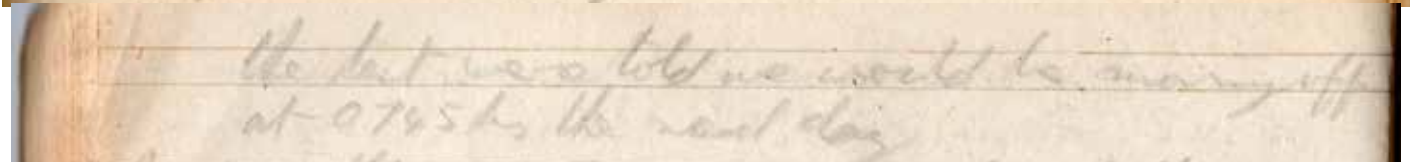
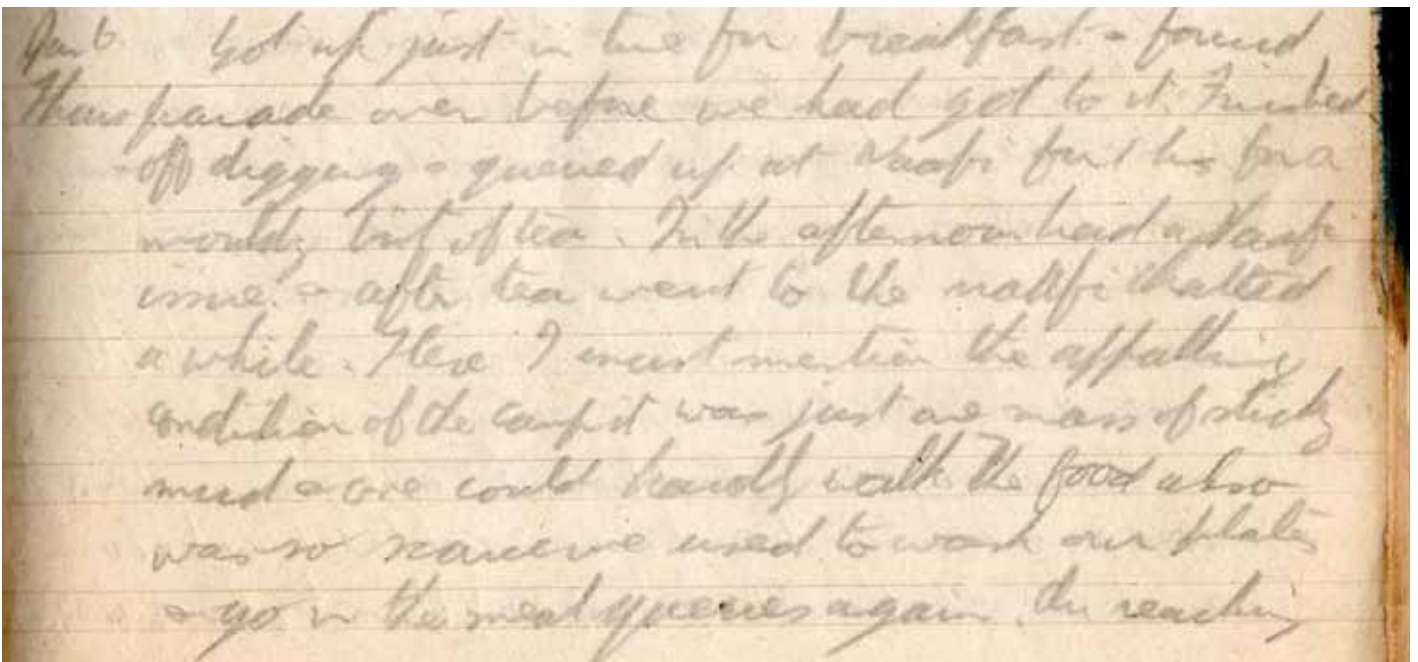


# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



Although the train seemed to move very little we found ourselves at Mateur in the morning. We stopped here quite a bit but we managed to fry some bacon & we exchange some of our tea about 1 lb for 30 eggs & we had fried eggs as well. N.B. 1 lb of tea cost 300 francs = (1-10-0)<sup>3</sup> later on after dinner we arrived at La Percherie at the stop before this Tinja we gave a lot of biscuits & bull to some French people & they were very grateful & gave me a bottle or two of wine in exchange. When we got off the train we marched to the Texas transit camp which had grown considerably since I last visited it we were first put ten to a tent but two move out & we were left with quite a good eight fellows we had to dig round our tent as it had just been put up & it was on a hill. This we did inefficiently at first & had to redo it in the pouring rain to stop it raining through the tent. After dinner which was M&V & rice (deadly) we went to the Naafi & then bed & a watery one at that

## Thursday 6th



Got up just in time for breakfast & found parade was before we had got to it. Finished off digging & queued up at Naafi for hours just for a mouldy bit of tea. In the afternoon had a Naafi issue & after tea went to the Naafi chatted a while. Here I must mention the appalling condition of the camp it was just one mass of sticky mud & one could hardly walk the food also was so scarce we used to wash our plates & go in the meal queue again. Then reaching the tent was told we would be moving off at 0745 hrs the next day.

3      £1 & 10 shillings = £1.50 post-decimal)

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Friday 7th

Jan 7 After various arguments as to the correct time we must have got up at 06:30 & parade & went to breakfast on returning found everyone on parade & we got bawled out for being late. This was annoying as we stood around for hours afterwards & did not march to the docks till about 1800. When we got there we hung around again & felt very hungry managed to get a little coffee & found an old tea & brewed up with some milk & sugar we had later we boarded an LCP & soon after getting settled had a dinner of peas potatoes & stewed steak & fruit. Then we soon pulled off. The LCP is a small vessel & the sleeping accommodation is very cramped. They are berths which fold up from high & the deck itself was about 8' in a space of about 18' x 20' we had 64 persons sleeping. I was on a top one at least. I will be out of the way when the sick starts flying. Went to bed after having half mug of luke warm tea & some bull & biscuits. I woke up during the night & had to make a dash for the lavatory.

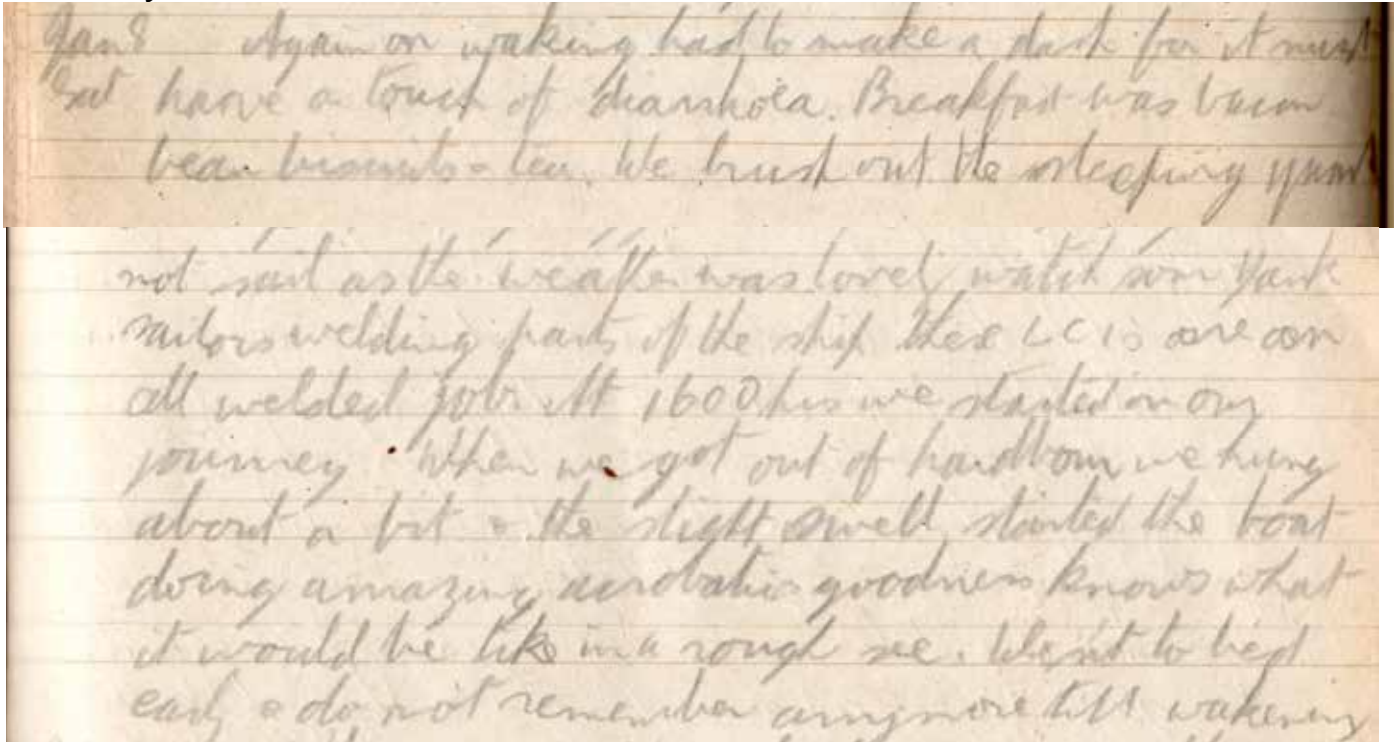
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January 1944 83



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

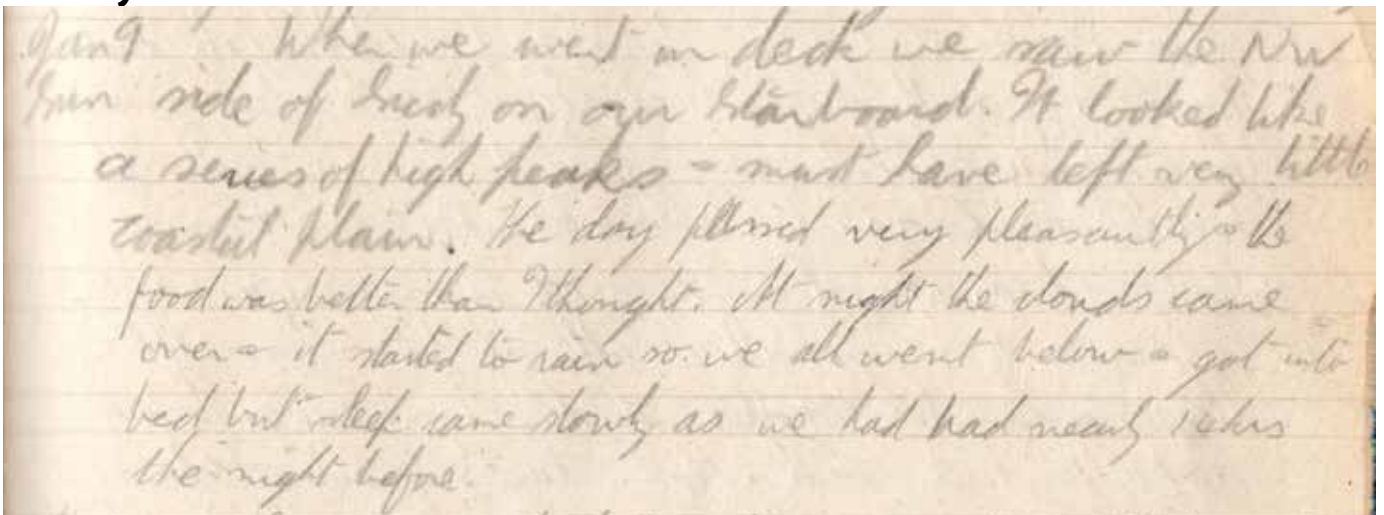
**Saturday 8th**



Jan 8 Again on waking had to make a dash for it must have a touch of diarrhoea. Breakfast was bacon bean biscuits & tea. We brush out the sleeping gear & an officer came round & made a nominal roll of the ship. The day dragged on & I was very sorry we did not sail as the weather was lovely watched some yank sailor welding parts of the ship. These LCPs are all welded job. At 1600 hrs we started on our journey. When we got out of harbour we hung about a bit & the slight swell started the boat doing amazing acrobatics goodness knows what it would be like in a rough one. Went to bed early & do not remember any more till wakening

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**Sunday 9th**



Jan 9 When we went on deck we saw the NW side of Sicily on our starboard. It looked like a series of high peaks - must have left very little coastal plain. The day passed very pleasantly & the food was better than I thought. At night the clouds came over & it started to rain so we all went below & got into bed but sleep came slowly as we had had nearly 14 hrs the night before.

When we went on deck we saw the NW side of Sicily on our starboard. It looked like a series of high peaks & must have left very little coastal plain. The day passed very pleasantly & the food was better than I thought. At night the clouds came over & it started to rain so we all went below & got into bed but sleep came slowly as had nearly 14 hours the night before.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Monday 10th

Mussolini's son-in-law and ex-foreign minister Count Ciano is amongst 18 sentenced to die for treason.

Jan 10 On going on deck found we were passing between the  
Isle of Capri & the mainland soon we saw Mt Vesuvius  
which was capped by cloud but as we passed it the clouds  
cleared & we saw smoke issuing from the top. We were not  
able to see Naples as it was shrouded in mist. Just as  
we were about to enter the harbour a ship signalled for a  
doctor & one LCI started chasing round all the anchored  
Merchantmen trying to find the one who needed. This they  
gave up eventually & the mist had cleared - we sailed into  
the harbour & saw Naples which seemed to have many  
fine buildings all built in terraces. Tony & I were  
detailed to the ration store & had to carry them off plus our  
kit. At first we thought we were due for a train journey  
immediately but found we were due for a transit camp  
so we bagged two tins of evaporated milk each & ate the tins  
of pears which were awfully good. While waiting for transport  
for kit etc we brewed up. All the time we were surrounded  
by starving Italians who went mad for a biscuit.  
We gave jackets away. The drive through Naples  
gave me the impression of a once beautiful city but  
it was very dirty & thrashed about quite a bit in parts.  
The people too looked more starved than any other Italian  
place I have been to. On arriving at the 159 Transit  
Camp chaos reigned & Tony & I the last to arrive were  
first in a tent - got all the other rations with us. After tea  
there were a lot of fellows dashing about till quite late  
looking for tents & kit. Had a lovely night's sleep.

On going on deck found we were passing between the Isle of Capri & the mainland soon

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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

we saw Mt Vesuvius<sup>4</sup> which was capped by cloud but as we passed it the clouds cleared &



we saw smoke issuing from the top we were not able to see Naples<sup>5</sup> as it was shrouded in mists. Just as we were about to enter the harbour a ship signalled for a doctor our LCP started chasing round all the anchored merchantmen trying to find the one we need. This they gave up eventually & the mist had cleared as we sailed into the harbour & saw Naples which seemed to have many fine buildings all built in terraces. Tony & I were detailed to the rations & had to carry them

off plus our kit. At first we thought we were due for a train journey immediately but found we were due for a transit camp so we bagged two tins of milk each & ate the tins of peas which were jolly good. While waiting for transport for kit etc. we heard of all the line we were surrounded by starving Italians who went mad for a biscuit we gave packets away. The drive through Naples gave me the impression of a once beautiful city but it was very dirty & knocked about quite a bit in parts the people too looked more slovenly than any other Italian here. I have been to. On arriving at the 159 transit camp chaos reigned & Tony & I the last to arrive were first in a tent & got all the other chaps with us. After tea there were a lot of fellows dashing about till quite late looking for tents & kit. Had a lovely nights sleep

## Tuesday 11th

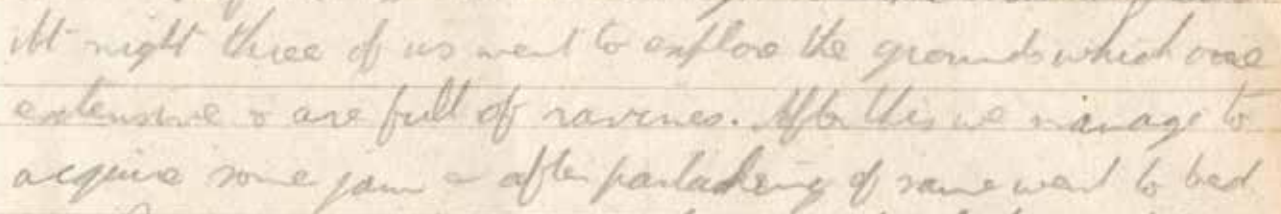
Count Ciano and four others found guilty of treason against Mussolini are shot.

Jan 11th ... were awaked by someone yelling quite early  
Tues 0600hrs got up at 0700 hrs - managed breakfast & went  
on shore in our cups & mess tins. Then we heard soft  
yelling on parade & after nearly hearing our names  
on a list to leave. To say found we were at the wrong  
office - our lot were on parade at another part of camp  
We lined up here & were dismissed till 1100 hrs. In the  
afternoon we just had to clean up our camp area & then  
we went for a shower. This was in a small marquee  
- & since the whole camp about 5,000 fellows the crowd  
was terrific. But Tony & I by worming our way through  
a mass of naked bodies manage to see a bucket of water.

4 Mount Vesuvius erupted in March 1944 - See Appendix C.

5 In 1983 we went for a holiday to the Amalfi coast. We climbed Vesuvius and had a tour of Pompeii & Herculaneum. It was quite amusing as people asked Dad if he had been to Italy before. " Yes 1943"

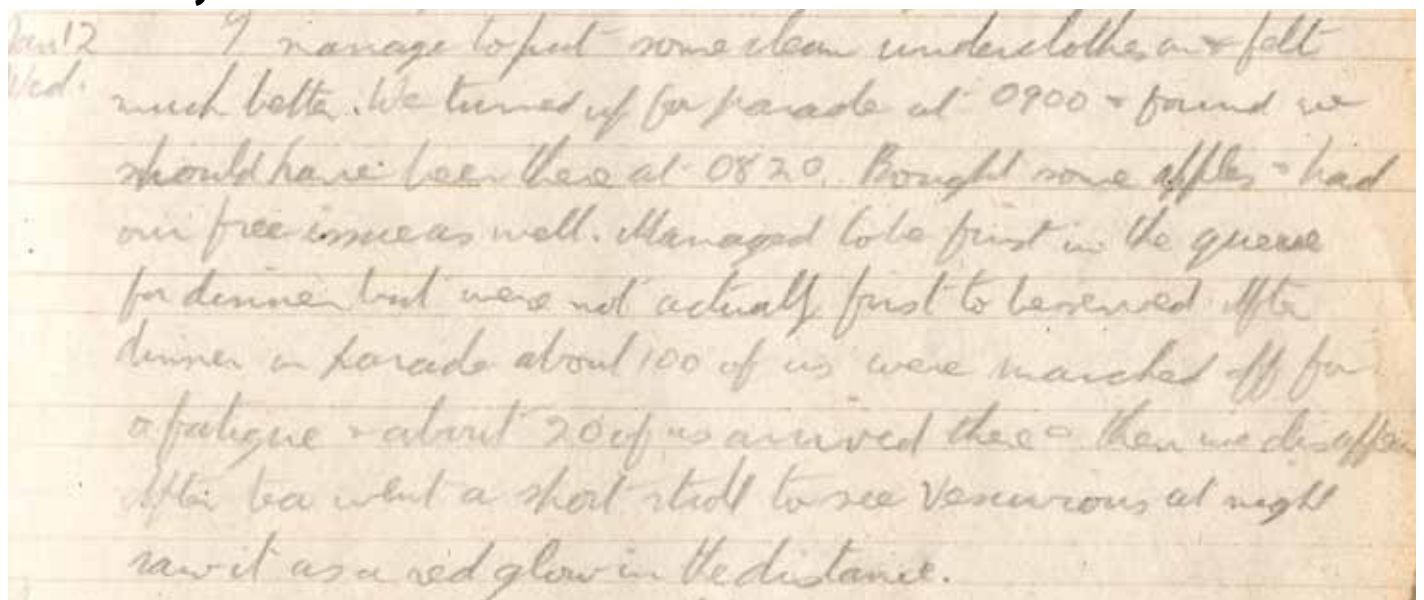
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



At night three of us went to explore the grounds which are extensive & are full of ravines. After this we managed to acquire some jam & after partaking of same went to bed

Were awakened by someone yelling quite early 0600 hrs. Got up at 0700 hrs & managed breakfast & had wash & shave in our cups & mess tins. Then we heard people yelling on parade & after merely having our names on a list to leave today found we were at the wrong office & our lot were on parade at another part of camp. We lined up here & were dismissed till 1400 hrs. In the afternoon we just had to clean up our camp area & then we went for a shower. This was in a small marquee & served the whole camp about 5000 fellows the crowd was terrific but Tony & I by moving our way through a lot of naked bodies managed to see a trickle of water. At night three of us went to explore the grounds which are extensive & are full of services. After this we managed to acquire some jam & after partaking of some went to bed.

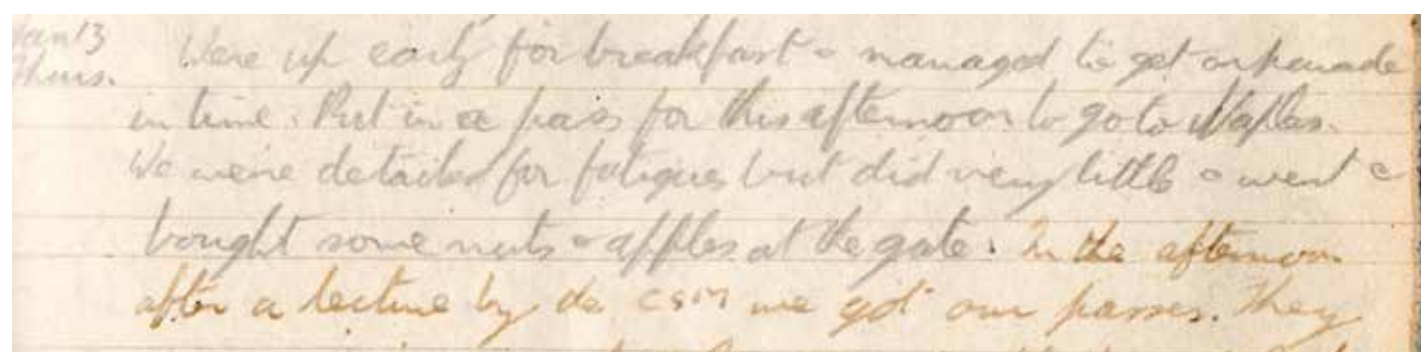
## Wednesday 12th



Jan 12 Wed. I manage to put some clean underclothes on & felt much better. We turned up for parade at 0900 & found we should have been there at 0820. Bought some apples & had our free issue as well. Managed to be first in the queue for dinner but were not actually first to be served. After dinner on parade about 100 of us were marched off for a fatigue & about 20 of us arrived there & then we disappeared. After tea went a short stroll to see Vesuvius at night saw it as a red glow in the distance.

I manage to put some clean underclothes on & felt much better. We turned up for parade at 0820 Bought some apples & had our free issue as well. Managed to be first in the queue for dinner but was not actually first to be served. After dinner on parade about 100 of us were marched off for a fatigue & about 20 of us arrived there & then we disappeared. After tea went a short stroll to see Vesuvius at night saw it as a red glow in the distance.

## Thursday 13th



Jan 13 Thurs. Were up early for breakfast & managed to get on parade in time. Put in a pass for this afternoon to go to Naples. We were detached for fatigue but did very little & went & bought some nuts & apples at the gate. In the afternoon after a lecture by the CSM we got our passes. They



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

were issuing pay but I conveniently forgot I should be on the parade - went to Naples. We had a good look round & had tea at the Army & Navy club. The place itself is very dirty & the people are rather a slovenly lot. One sees notices warning one about VD - Typhus, a typical one was "VINO, VENUS, VD." Managed to buy some cards of Naples also milk & nuts on the way back. The shops seem to contain quite a lot of stuff but anything of any value has to be looked for. During the night at about 0200 a drunk Canadian lurched into the tent & slept for about 0400 hrs when he went out due to feeling cold.

Were up early for breakfast & managed to get on parade in time. Put in a pass for this afternoon to go to Naples. We were detailed for fatigues but did very little & went & bought some nuts & apples at the gate. In the afternoon after a lecture by the CSM we got our passes. They were issuing pay but I conveniently forgot I should be on the parade & went to Naples. We had a good look round & had tea at the Army & Navy club. The place itself is very dirty & the people are rather a slovenly lot. One sees notices warning about VD, Typhus & typhoid one was "VINO VENUS VD". Managed to buy some cards<sup>6</sup> of Naples also milk & nuts on the way back. The shops seem to contain quite a lot of stuff but anything of any value has to be looked for. During the night at about 0200 a drunk Canadian lurched into the tent & slept for about 0400 hrs when he went out due to feeling cold.

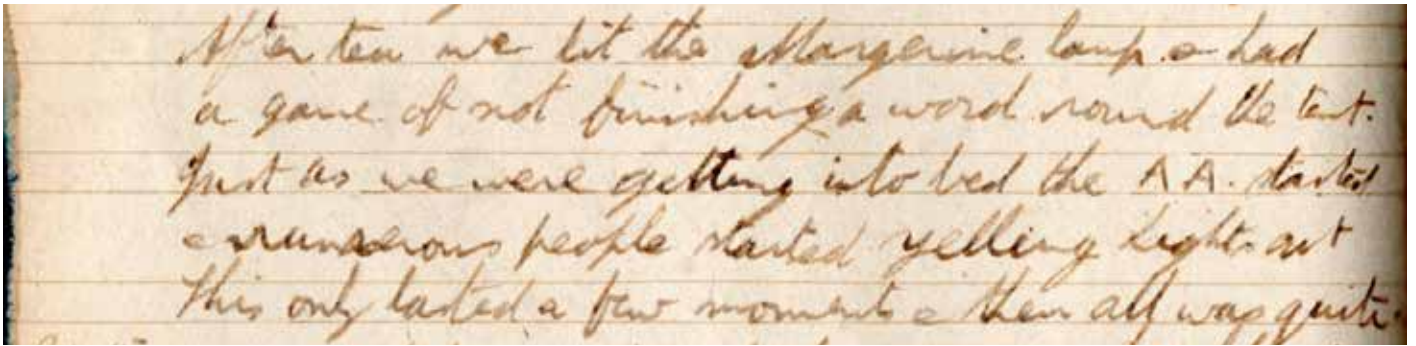
## Friday 14th

Jan 14. Had my pay book returned with the five amount ruled out. We had our Chiapi moved & just moved about the tent. Heard that Naples was again out of bounds. After dinner very little happened there was some talk of games being organised. Made bed got some water to have after tea & then queued for tea. Saw some more men coming in which will make it worse for nuts.

6 He must have also bought a guide book - See Appendix C



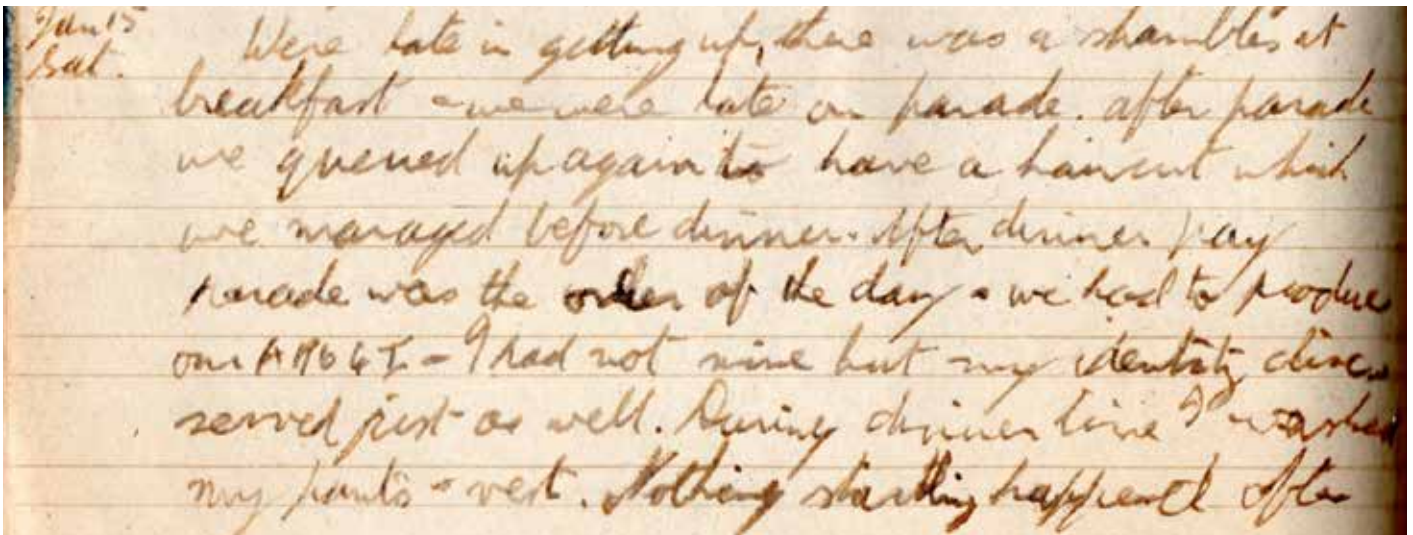
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



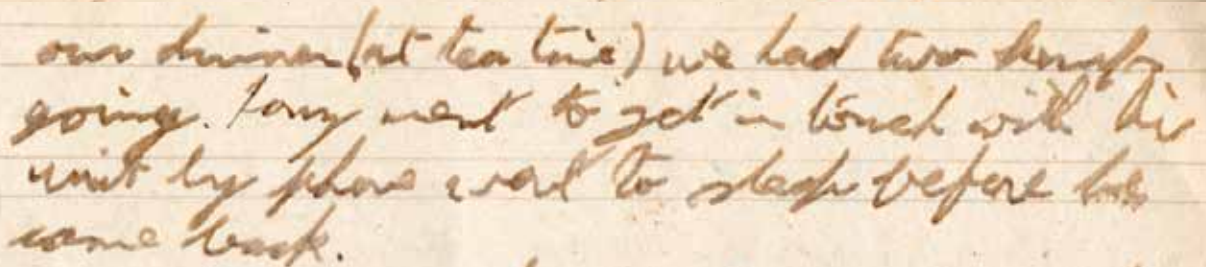
After tea we lit the margarine lamp & had a game of not finishing a word round the tent. Just as we were getting into bed the A.A. started & numerous people started yelling lights out this only lasted a few moments & then all was quiet.

Had my pay book returned with the amount ruled out. We had our Naafi issued & just messed about the tent. Heard that Naples was again out of bounds. After dinner very little happened there was more talk of games being organised. Made bed got some water to shave after tea & then queued for tea. Saw some more men coming in which will make it worse for meals. After tea we lit the margarine lamp & had a game of not finishing a word round the tent. Just as we were getting into bed the AA started & numerous people started yelling lights out. This only lasted a few moments & then all was quiet.

## Saturday 15th



Jan 15 Sat. Were late in getting up, there was a shambles at breakfast & we were late on parade. After parade we queued up again to have a haircut which we managed before dinner. After dinner pay parade was the order of the day & we had to produce our AB64I<sup>7</sup> - I had not mine but my identity disc served just as well. During dinner time I washed my pants & vest. Nothing startling happened after



our dinner (at tea time) we had two lines going. Tony went to get in touch with his unit by phone & went to sleep before he came back.

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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Sunday 16th

Jan 16 We were awakened at 0001 hrs & told to get ready to move breakfast at 0230 & move off 0330 hrs. We lay in till 0100 & then got dressed & packed by the light of a candle & a resurrected lamp. The so called breakfast consisted of a cup of tea wet & warm. We moved to the gate at 0330 & went from there by lorry at 0530 to the station. Here a complete shambles took place we were dashing about from one cattle truck to another. These were very similar to the N. Africa ones except they still contained the animal droppings in them & we had to clean them out first. Rations were eventually got & we had 1/4 loaf spam & tea we finally started at 1000 hrs. We went along very merrily till we had gone two stations out of Naples & here we again stopped & we heard that they had not yet decided whether to send the train to Foggia or Taranto. Toward evening we eventually started back to Naples & at the next station we stopped again & it gave us time to brew up. After this we settled down to try & sleep.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Monday 17th

Jan 17  
The train seemed to move quite a lot during the night but at daybreak we found ourselves parked at Salerno Station. We eventually started & went south towards Taranto but it was not until evening that we finally knew we were going to Taranto. The journey during the day was all uphill & through some very picturesque scenery & many tunnels. One very fine view we had was down a valley & saw a range of snow capped mountains in the distance but quite clear. After reaching Poterna the journey became downhill but we travelled it at the night.

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Tuesday 18th

Jan 18  
At 0600 we stopped at Taranto station & as soon as it was daylight we detrained & marched to the X Transit camp again. We waited around a little & then we were given quarters in a house & had 10 in a round which was quite good. We also were given breakfast as soon as we were settled in after which we had a much needed wash & shave. Then it was time for dinner & we noted the ~~fast~~ rapidity with which they got rid of the queues & we were very thankful. Dinner we were not called out on parade & after much indecision Tony & the lft went into town & "accidentally" forgot about the parade before tea. In town we had a quick look round most shops were closed we managed a cup.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

of tea cocoa in a cafe at exorbitant prices after this we went to the YMCA & had a nice cup of tea & sherbert & cake. During the time we were having this a concert was going on. Later we went round the town saw very

little & then we visited an E.F.I. canteen it was getting on to 1700 hrs then & we went along to the Fortuna cinema where we found a long queue which we joined. about 1745 they started going in & the door was shut just as we got there & my arm was in the hinge to which proved painful for a while. The doors were then opened a moment & a few more got in including us three. All but Tony got a seat. When the show began there was frequent trouble with the electricity & the lights kept failing in the end we gave it up & left & walk back. Nothing had been said about our absence.

At 0600 we stopped at Taranto station & as soon as it was daylight we detrained & marched to the X transit camp again. We waited around a little & then we were given quarters in a house & had 10 in a round which was quite good. We also was given breakfast as soon as we were settled in after which we had a much needed wash & shave. Then it was time for dinner & we noted the rapidity with which they got rid of the queues & we were very thankful as we were not called out on parade & after much indecision Tony & I & the cpl went into town accidentally forgot about the parade before tea. In town we had a good look round most shops were closed we managed to buy cocoa in a a cafe at exorbitant prices after this we went to the YMCA & had a nice cup of tea & sherbert & cake. During the time we were having this a concert was going on later. We went round the town saw very little & then we visited an E.F.I canteen it was getting on to 1700 hrs then & we went along to the fortuna cinema where we found a long queue which we joined about 1745 they started going in & the door was shut just as we got there & my arm was in the hinge too which proved painful for a while. The doors were then opened for a moment & a few more got in including we three. All but Tony got a seat. When the show began there was frequent trouble with electricity & the lights kept failing in the end we gave it up & left & walked back. Nothing had been said about our absence.

## Wednesday 19th

Jan 19 Reveille was 0530 but we got up at 0650 Wed. & just dashed out for breakfast, which was quite good. After this we had a quick wash & then paraded

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

• we had to clean out the billet. Nothing much occurred after this - we went to dinner which was very good - all the meals were better though being able to sit down & eat them like civilised people. In the afternoon parade we were detailed to clean up an area around the billet which did not take very long at all. Tea was early & we dashed into town & had some more cakes at the E.F.I. canteen. • then went along to the cinema Littoria Teatro. • saw a variety show "Rainbow" given by Italian artists which was very good. The night when we came out was much better than previous in being warmer.

Reveille was at 0830 but we got up at 0650 & just dashed out for breakfast which was quite good. After this we had a quick wash & then paraded & we had to clean out the billet. Nothing much occurred after this & we went to dinner which was very good & all the meals were better though being able to sit down & eat them like civilised people. In the afternoon parade we were detailed to clean up an area around the billet which did not last very long at all. Tea was early & we dashed into town & had some more cakes at the E.F.I. canteen & then went along to the cinema Littoria teatro & saw a variety show Rainbow given by Italian artists which was very good. The night we came out was much better than previous in being warmer.

## Thursday 20th

Jan 20 Did not get up till after 0700 as I was billet  
Thurs. orderly - had to wait till after the other came back  
from breakfast. The latter was good having a pie  
of spam & egg powder mixed which was very  
appetising. I did not go on the parade but had to  
remain in our room & the rest were put on duty  
Picquet to finish at 17.15 tonight. At night I made  
a lamp to burn some mosquito cream in for a  
light & wrote to Betty a green envelope inc. later  
went to supper (cheese & biscuits) - after that bed.

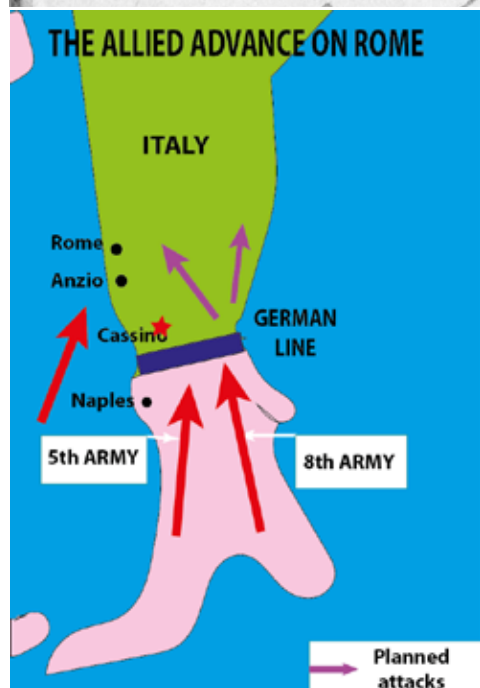


# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Did not get up till after 0900 as I was billeted orderly & had to wait till after the others came back from breakfast. The latter was good having a pile of spam & egg powder mixed which was very appetising<sup>8</sup>. I did not go on the parade but had to remain in our room & the rest were put on inlying picquet to finish at 1715 tonight. At night I made lamp to burn some mosquito cream in for a light & wrote to Betty a green envelope we later went to supper (cheese & biscuits) & after that bed.

## Friday 21st

Jan 21  
Fri  
Went on parade some of our fellows were picked for a 24 hrs inlying picquet again & the rest of us on fatigues. Tony, Phil & I were scrubbing the abattoir & lavatory seats. later we finished this & bought some apples. After dinner we were called out on parade again & told we were to move off the next day to the CRV. We got our kits packed & then went down town. Visited the YMs & EFL canteens & then queued up for the pictures this time we all got a seat & saw "We Dive at Dawn" with John Mills & Eric Portman it was very good.



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## Saturday 22nd

Thousands of British and American troops stormed ashore at Anzio just 30 miles south of Rome.

Jan 22  
Sat.  
Our reveille was due for 0500 hrs but some body had to wake us at 0430 we got up at 0510 & packed our bedding & then had breakfast. We were

8 This must be a new definition of appetising as it sounds disgusting. They seemed to have spent the whole of the previous day eating.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

then hanging about until about 0800 hrs when we marched to the station & hung about again until about 1100 when the train went & we arrived about

1300 hrs at the CRV. Here we had all our particulars taken & then had a good meal after which we were allotted tents. Tony & I did not get together but we soon remedied that. We had our fourth blanket issued & by the temperature this afternoon I can see we will need it. Tea soon came round & was quite a good one. After tea went across to recreation room & read a bit & then came back for supper after which we beat a hasty retreat for bed as it was very cold but quite warm in bed.

Our reveille was due for 0500 hrs but somebody had to wake us at 0430 we got up at 0510 & packed our bedding & then had breakfast. We were then hanging about until about 0800 hrs when we marched to the station & hung about again until about 1100 when the train went & we arrived about 1300 hrs at CRV. Here we had our particulars taken & then had a good meal after which we were allotted tents. Tony & I did not get together but we soon remedied that. We had our fourth blanket issued & by the temperature this afternoon I can see we will need it. Tea soon came round & was quite a good one. After tea went across to recreation room & read a bit & then came back for supper after which we beat a hasty retreat for bed as it was very cold but quite warm in bed.

## Sunday 23rd

Jan 23  
Sun. Getting up was a terrible job as it was extremely cold & a sharp frost lay over everywhere. After breakfast we had a kit check followed by a Naafi issue. The morning developed into a lovely warm day. After dinner went & watched a football match & later we were told we would be going the next day. Had our kit made up after tea. During supper had an interesting conversation about morals.

Getting up was a terrible job as it was extremely cold & a sharp frost lay over everywhere. After breakfast we had a kit check followed by a Naafi issue. The morning developed into



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

a lovely warm day. After dinner went & watched a football match & later we were told we would be going the next day & had our kit made up after tea. During supper had an interesting conversation about morals.

## Monday 24th

Mon 24  
Mon. We got up as usual & had to go on the check parade & later we formed up on parade for an inspection which was quite severe Cpl Sharpe was told to get a shave. We finally got on the train which was carriages for a change & we made very good time to Bari & even when we left there we made good time to Foggia & we arrived there about 2200 hrs & the train stopped right outside the 202 Transit camp. We were allotted a room (the camp being in a block of flats) & then we had supper & afterwards bed oh boy.

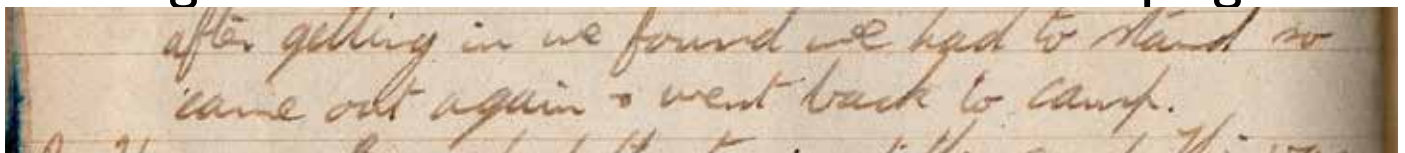
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## Tuesday 25th

25  
Tues On parade our names were called out so it seemed as though they knew we were there. Afterwards we were messed about picking up paper by two sergeants one of whom was bomb happy. I'm sure words fail me. On the afternoon parade we were informed that we were going the next day & that afternoon was also spent in picking up paper. At night we had a pass to Foggia & tried to get into the Bursa Show. This was completely chaotic.



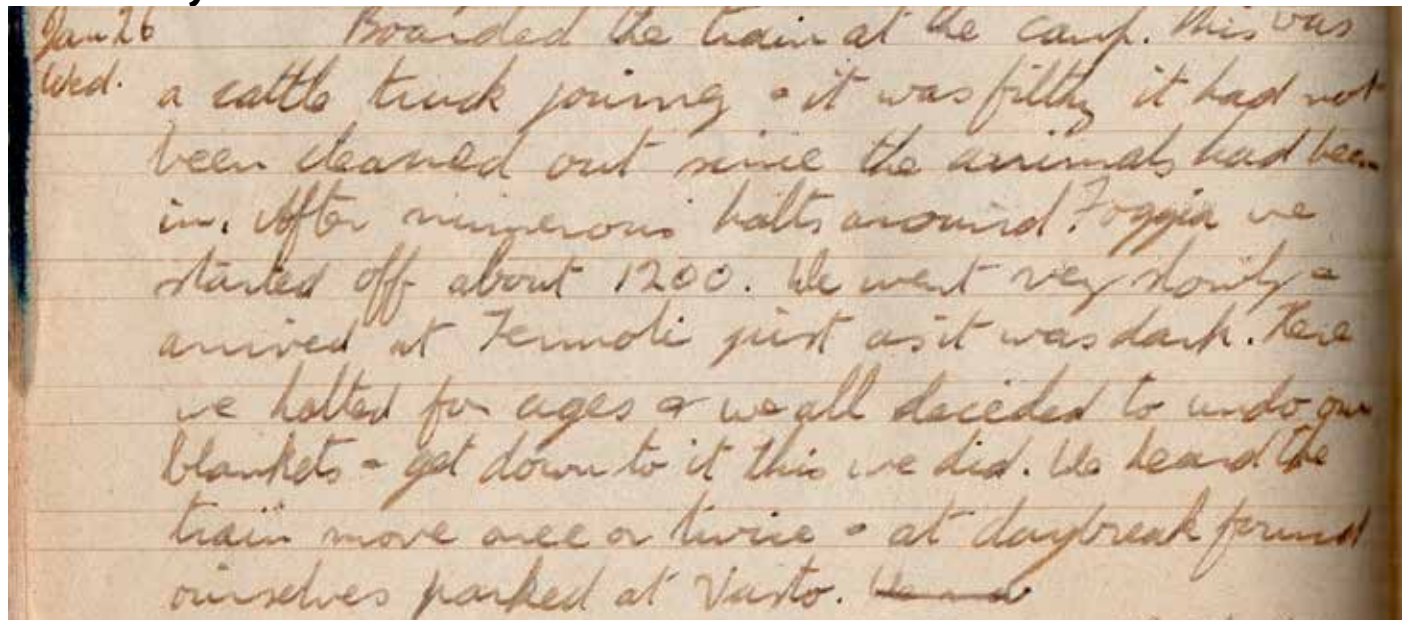
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



after getting in we found we had to stand so  
came out again & went back to camp.

On parade our names were called out so it seemed as though they knew we were there. Afterwards we were messed about picking up paper by two sergeants one of whom was "bomb happy" I'm sure. Words fail me. On the afternoon parade we were informed that we were going the next day & that afternoon was also spent in picking up paper. A night we had a pass to Foggia & tried to get into the Ensa Show. This was completely chaotic & after getting in we found we had to stand up came out again & went back to camp.

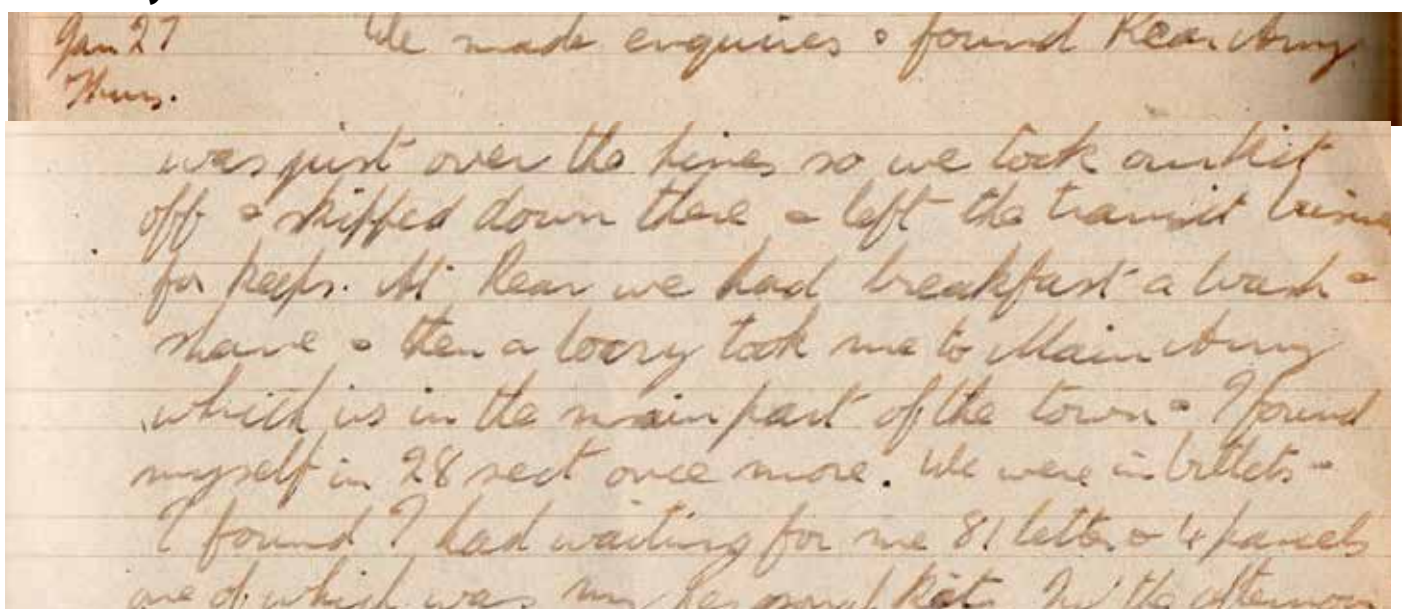
## Wednesday 26th



Jan 26  
Wed. Boarded the train at the camp. This was  
a cattle truck joining & it was filthy it had not  
been cleaned out since the animals had been  
in. After numerous halts around Foggia we  
started off about 1200. We went very slowly &  
arrived at Teramo just as it was dark. Here  
we halted for ages & we all decided to undo our  
blankets & get down to it this we did. We heard the  
train move once or twice & at daybreak found  
ourselves parked at Vasto. Heard

Boarded the train at the camp. This was a cattle truck joining & it was filthy it had not been cleaned out since the animals had been in. After numerous halts around Foggia we started about 1200. We went very slowly & arrived at Taranto just as it was dark. There we halted for ages & we all decided to undo our blankets & get down to it this we did. We heard the train move once or twice & at daybreak found ourselves parked at Vasto.

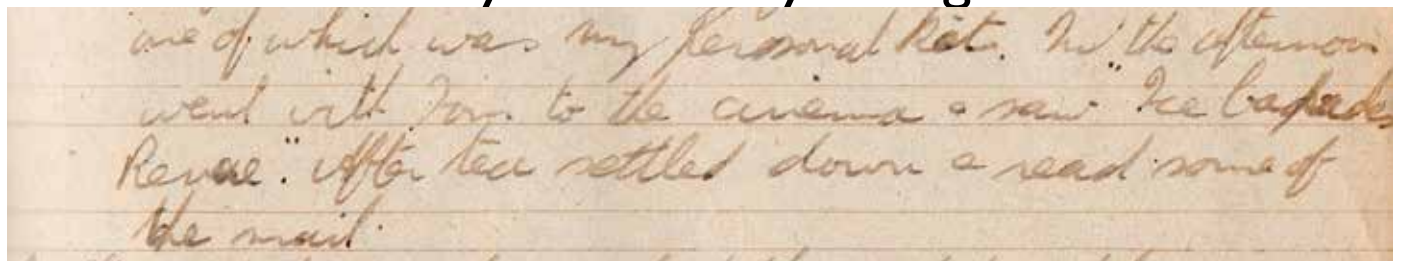
## Thursday 27th



Jan 27  
Thurs. We made enquiries & found Rear Army  
was just over the line, so we took our kit  
off & shipped down there & left the transit train  
for pers. At Rear we had breakfast & wash &  
shave & then a loorry took me to Main Army  
which is in the main part of the town. I found  
myself in 28 sect once more. We were in billets &  
I found I had waiting for me 81 letters & 4 parcels  
one of which was my personal kit. In the afternoon



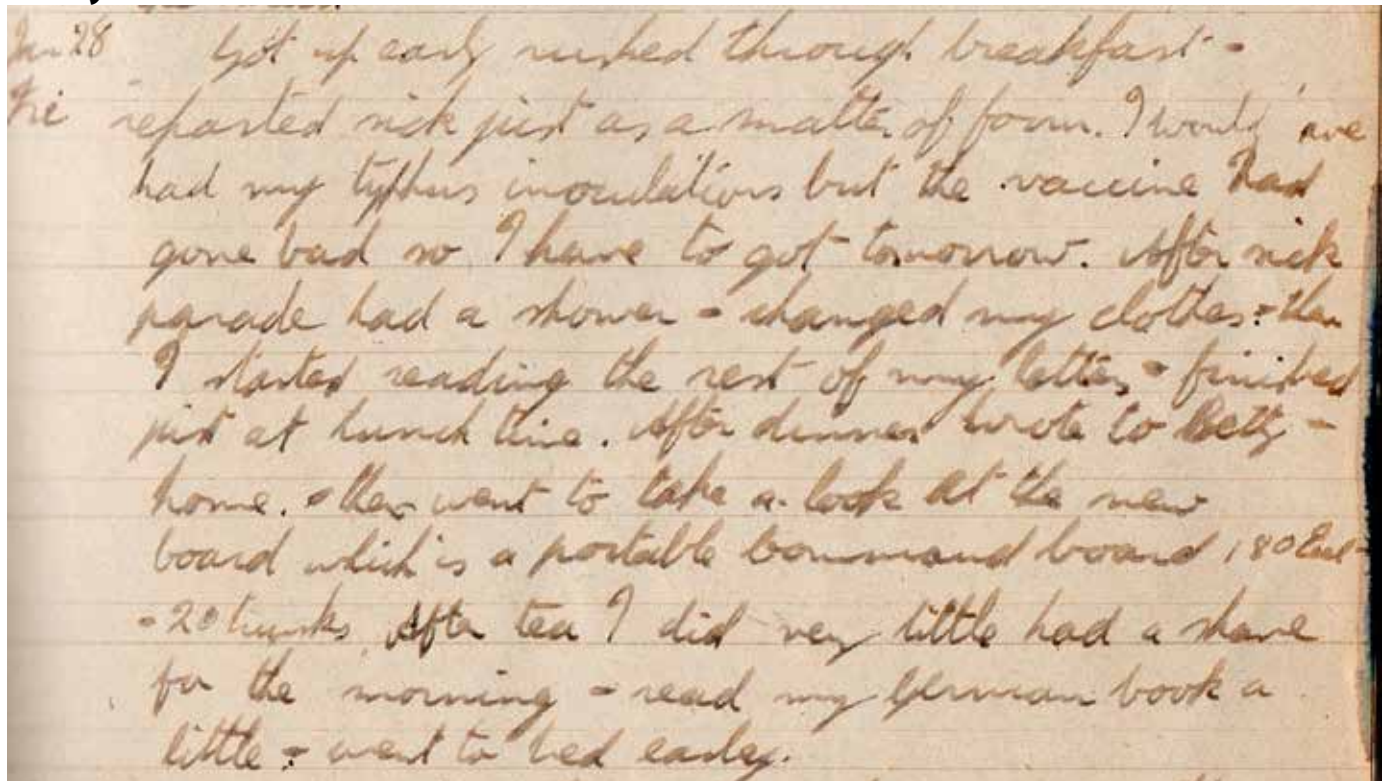
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



one of which was my personal kit. In the afternoon went with Tom to the cinema & saw "Ice Capades Revue". After tea settled down & read some of the mail.

We made enquiries and found Rear Army was just over the lines so we took our kit off & kipped down there & left the transit trains for keeps. At Rear we had breakfast a wash & shave & then lorry took me to main army which is in the main part of the town & I found myself in 28 sect once more. We were in billets & I found I had waiting for me 81 letters & 4 parcels one of which was my personal kit. In the afternoon went with Tom to the cinema & saw "Ice x Revue". After tea settled down & read some of the mail

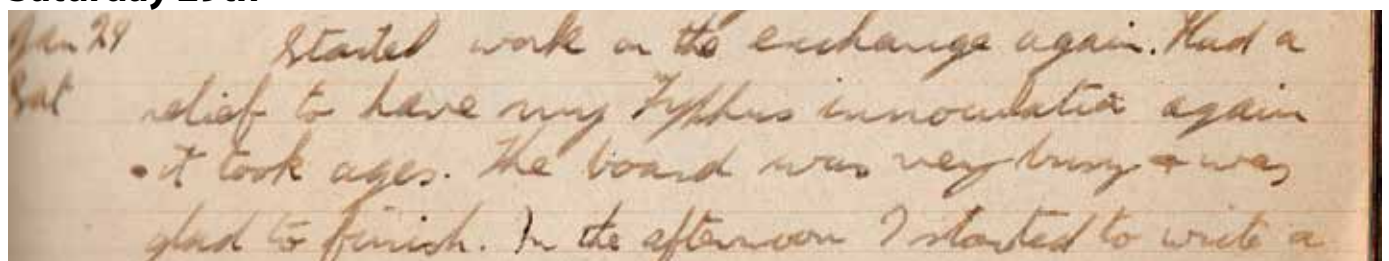
## Friday 28th



Jan 28 Got up early rushed through breakfast & reported sick just as a matter of form. I would have had my typhus inoculations but the vaccine had gone bad so I have to go tomorrow. After sick parade had a shower & changed my clothes & then I started reading the rest of my letters & finished just at lunch time. After dinner wrote to Betty & home & then went to take a look at the new board which is a portable command board 180 lines & 20 trunks. After tea I did very little had a shave for the morning & read my German book a little & went to bed early.

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## Saturday 29th

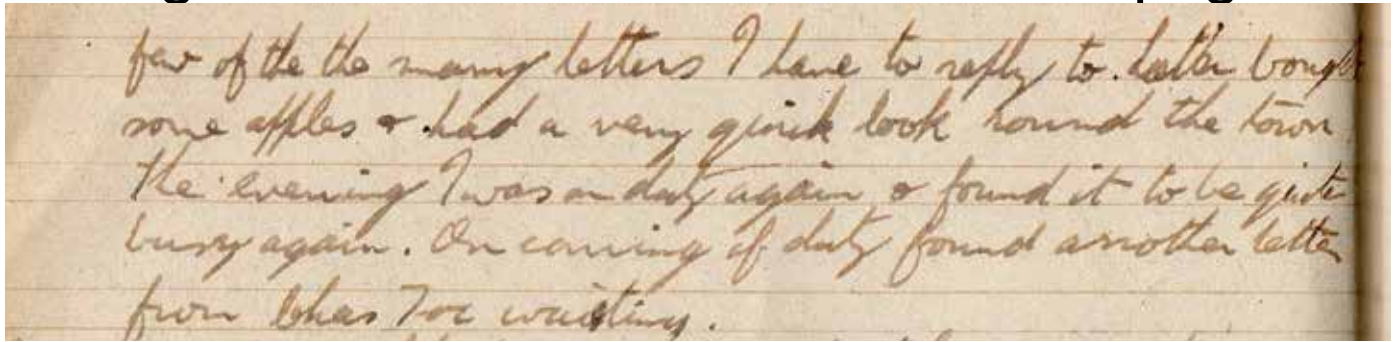


Jan 29 Sat Started work on the exchange again. Had a relief to have my Typhus inoculation again & it took ages. The board was very busy & was glad to finish. In the afternoon I started to write a

98 January 1944



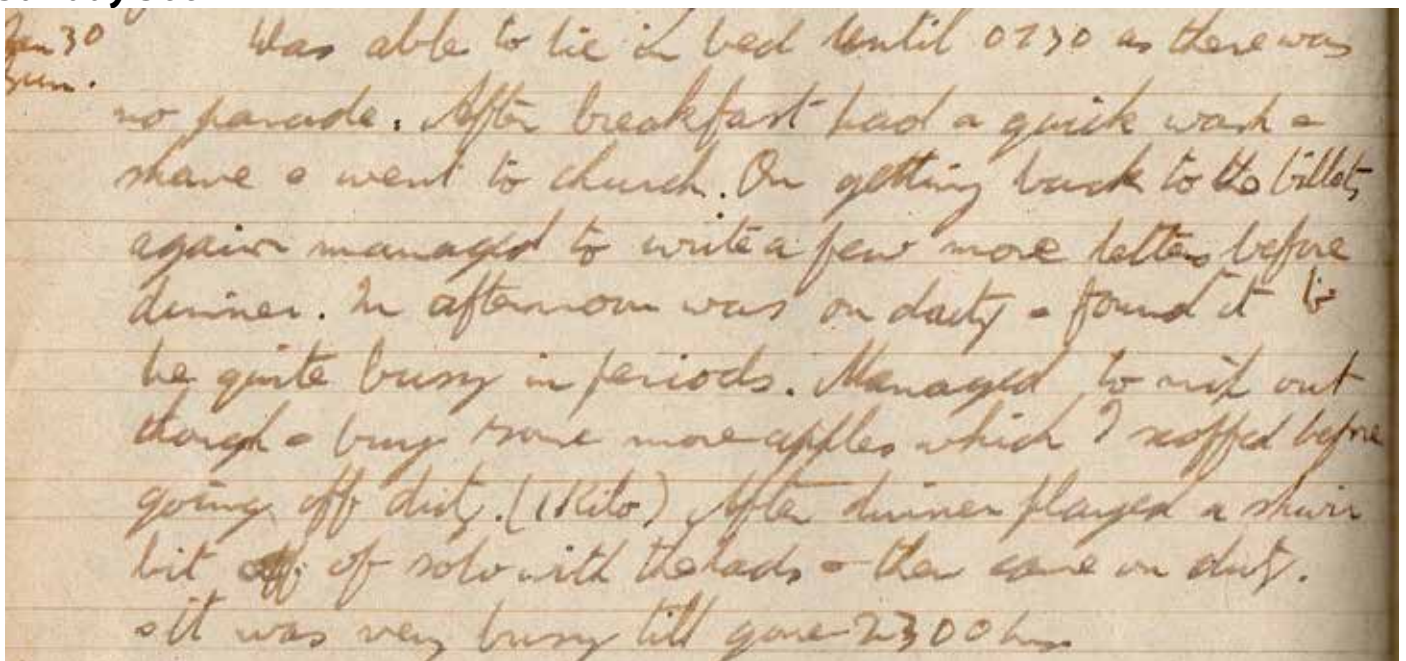
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



far of the the many letters I have to reply to. Later bought some apples & had a very quick look round the town. The evening I was on duty again & found it to be quite busy again. On coming off duty found another letter from Chas Loc waiting.

Started work on the exchange again. Had a relief to have my Typhus inoculation again & it took ages. The board was very busy & was glad to finish in the afternoon. I started to write a few of the many letter I have to reply to. Later bought some apples & had a very quick look round the town. The evening I was on duty again & found it to be quite busy again. On coming off duty found another letter from Chas Loc waiting.

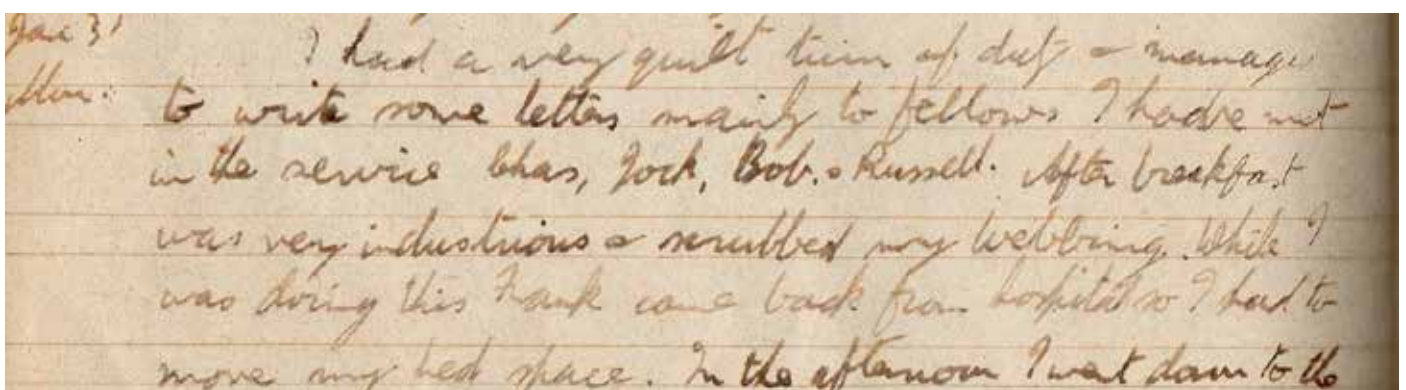
## Sunday 30th



Jan 30  
Sun. Was able to lie in bed until 0830 as there was no parade. After breakfast had a quick wash & shave & went to church. On getting back to the billets again managed to write a few more letters before dinner. In afternoon was on duty & found it to be quite busy in periods. Managed to nip out though & buy some more apples which I scoffed before going off duty. (1 kilo) After dinner played a short bit of solo with the lads & then came on duty. It was very busy till gone 2300 hrs.

Was able to lie in bed until 0830 as there was no parade. After breakfast had a quick wash & shave & went to Church. On getting back to the billet again managed to write a few more letters before dinner. In afternoon was on duty & found it to be quite busy in periods. Managed to nip out though & buy some more apples which I scoffed before going off duty. (1 kilo) After dinner played a short bit of solo with the lads & then came on duty & it was very busy till gone 2300 hrs.

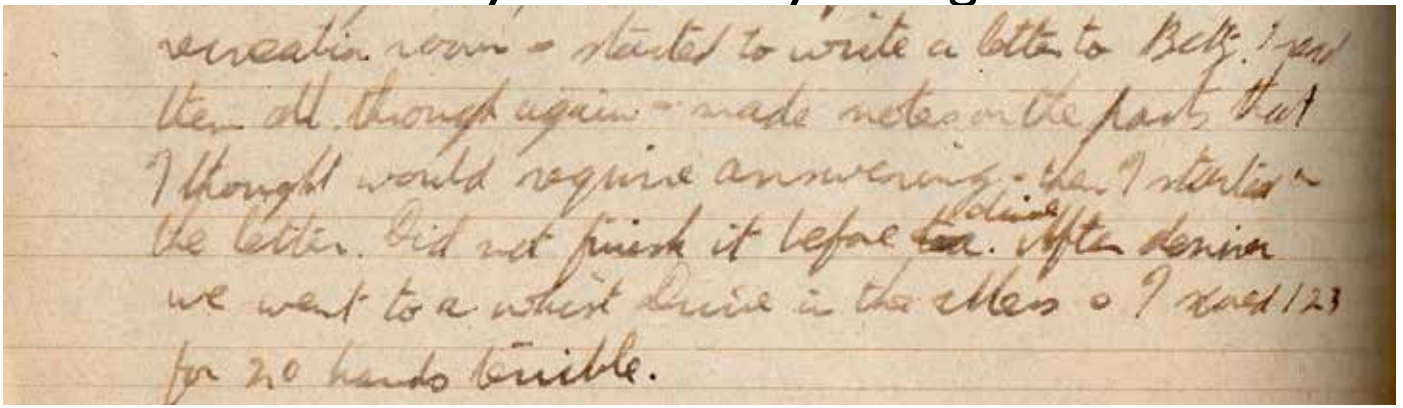
## Monday 31st



Jan 31  
Mon. I had a very quiet turn off duty & managed to write some letters mainly to fellows I had met in the service Chas, Jack, Bob & Russell. After breakfast was very industrious & scrubbed my webbing. While I was doing this Frank came back from hospital so I had to move my bed space. In the afternoon I went down to the



## Diary of a D-Day Dodger



recreation room - started to write a letter to Betty. I read them all through again - made notes on the parts that I thought would require answering - then I started the letter. Did not finish it before ~~tea~~<sup>dinner</sup>. After dinner we went to a whist drive in the mess & I scored 123 for 20 hands terrible.

I had a very quiet time on duty & managed to write some letters mainly to fellows I have met in the service Chas, Jock, Bob & Russell. After breakfast was very industrious & scrubbed my webbing. While I was doing this Frank came back from hospital so I had to move my bed space. In the afternoon I went down to the recreation room & started to write a letter to Betty. I read them all through again & made notes on the parts that I thought would require answering & then I started the letter. Did not finish it before dinner. After dinner we went to a whist drive in the mess & I scored 123 for 20 hands terrible.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## FEBRUARY 1944

Tuesday 1st

Feb 1  
Tues. I was up early & went on duty & the board really was busy & we had no relief at all as the supervisor could not work it properly 'Imagine!' After tiffin went in the mess room & finished off letter to Betty & wrote a similar one to Home. In the evening was again on duty & found it again busy. The new board is due to come in tonight.

I was up early & went on duty & the board really was busy<sup>1</sup> & we had no relief at all as the supervisor could not work it properly 'Imagine!' After tiffin went in the mess room & finished off letter to Betty & wrote a similar one to home. In the evening was again on duty & found it again busy. The new board is due to come in tonight.

Wednesday 2nd

Feb 2  
Wed. Had to get 'clean up' & go on parade. After it was over 12 of us went to fire our rifles with the R.S.M. The range was 200 yds & we were firing at target. I hit two in 15 shots. We had a very fast march back & arrived all hot dash my tiffin off & started on duty this was in the new Exchange (200 line command board). It is a lovely board to work & thought we were doing great. But some officer or other had to wait a little longer than usual & it caused quite a commotion & they took one of our shift off & scuffle the shifts up a bit. At night when we went in it was very quiet but we got very little bit as there is very little room.

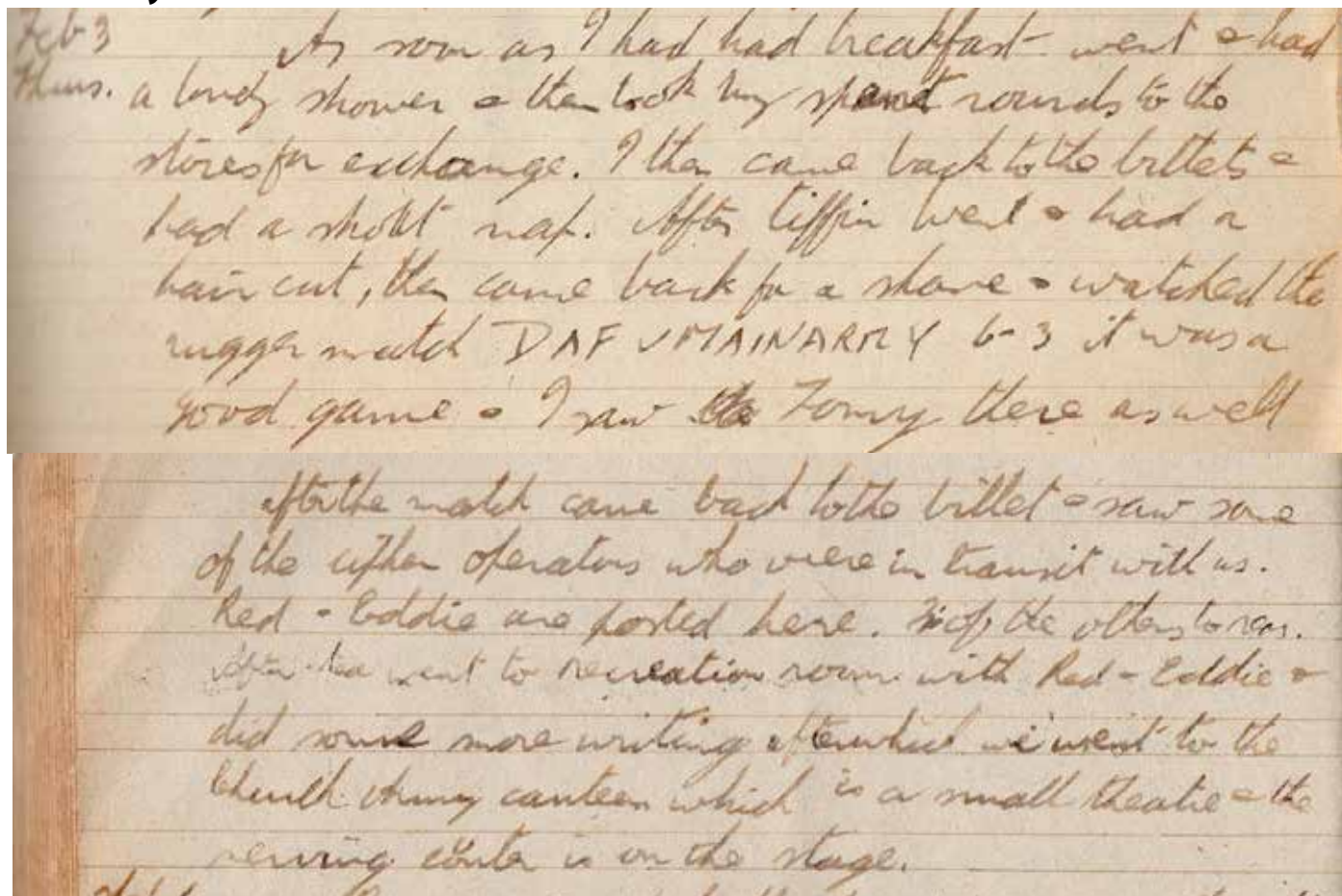
1 Dad does not mention a lot of what is going on in the war around him but "busy" usually means there is an allied offensive going on. From what he told me they had two teleprinter stations & three lots of equipment. The first and second were connected at the front and command. The third was advancing and was then connected up to become the advance station



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

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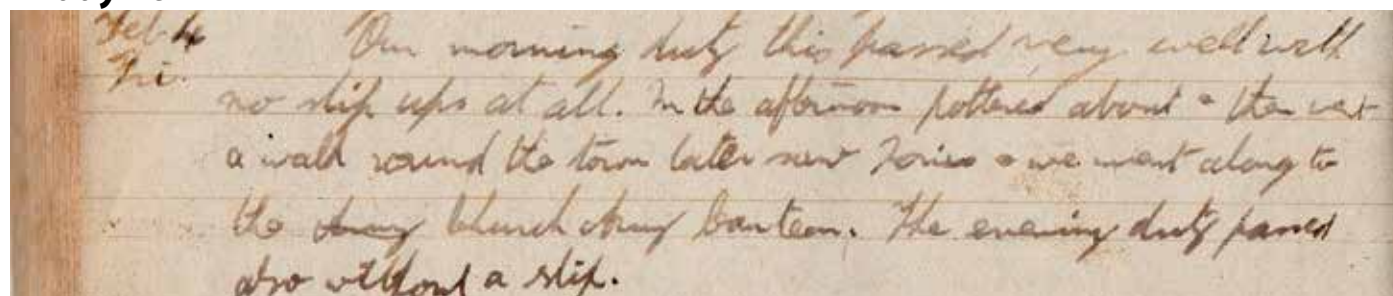
## Thursday 3rd



Feb 3  
Thurs. As soon as I had had breakfast - went & had a lovely shower & then took my spent rounds to the stores for exchange. I then came back to the billets & had a short nap. After tiffin went & had a hair cut, then came back for a shave & watched the ruggar match DAF V MAINARMY 6-3 it was a good game & I saw the Tommy there as well  
after the match came back to the billet & saw some of the cipher operators who were in transit with us. Red & Eddie are posted here. After the others to rear. After tea went to recreation room with Red & Eddie & did some more writing. After which we went to the Church Army canteen which is a small theatre & the serving counter is on the stage.

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## Friday 4th



Feb 4  
Fri. Our morning duty this passed very well with no slip ups at all. In the afternoon potted about & then went a walk round the town later saw Jones & we went along to the Army Church Army canteen. The evening duty passed also without a slip.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Our morning duty this passed very well with no slip ups at all. In the afternoon potted about & then went a walk round the town later saw Tony & we went along to the Church Army canteen. The evening duty passed also without a slip.

## Saturday 5th

Feb 5  
Sat. Instead of being on parade went & had my last inoculation for typhus thank goodness. The day was very cold & wet. Did nothing else in the morning except attempt a German translation & bad German at that. The afternoon was very slack. In the evening I went along to the Church Army again with Tom, Tony & Pete. On arriving back at the billets went to supper & found an auction in progress in aid of the Red Cross. They raised about £30. Went on duty & it was my turn to do the first shift after which I came back to the billet to sleep. I was doing the German translation in between calls & it was 0200hrs before I realised it.

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## Sunday 6th

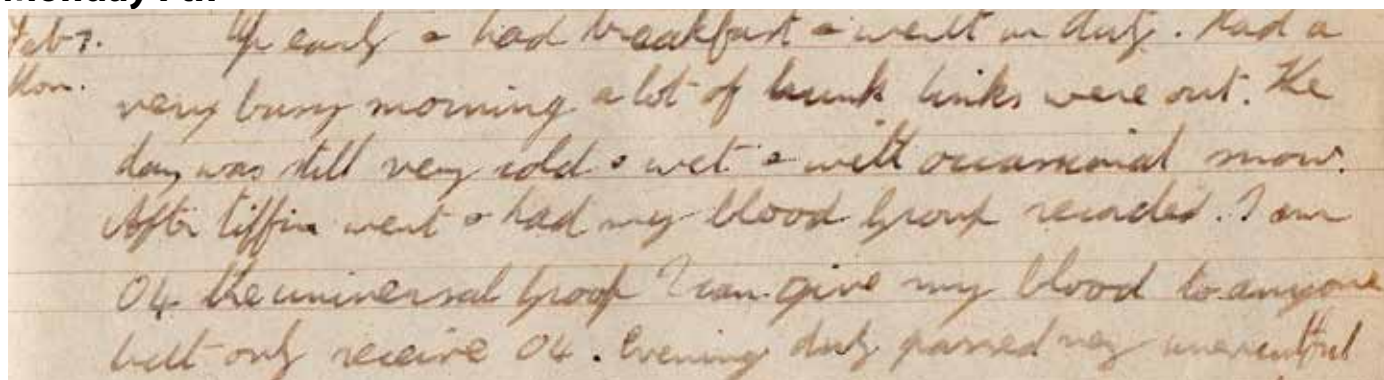
Feb 6.  
Sun. Still cold & wet so just got up for breakfast. Then went back to bed it being the warmest place. After tiffin got up & boiled some water for a wash & shave. I then laid all my newspapers on my bed boards to help to keep me warm. Sewed buttons on great coat & cut my nails & sent some & bought 4 or 5 crucifers off to Betty. After dinner went along to recreation room & wrote to Betty home. John had come back & went to bed.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Still cold & wet so just got up for breakfast & then went back to bed it being the warmest place. After tiffin got up & boiled some water for a wash & shave. I then laid all my newspaper on my bed boards to help to keep me warm. Sewed button on Great Coat & sent my mail & sent some 8 army news & crusaders off to Betty. After dinner went along to recreation room & wrote to Betty home & John. Later came back & went to bed

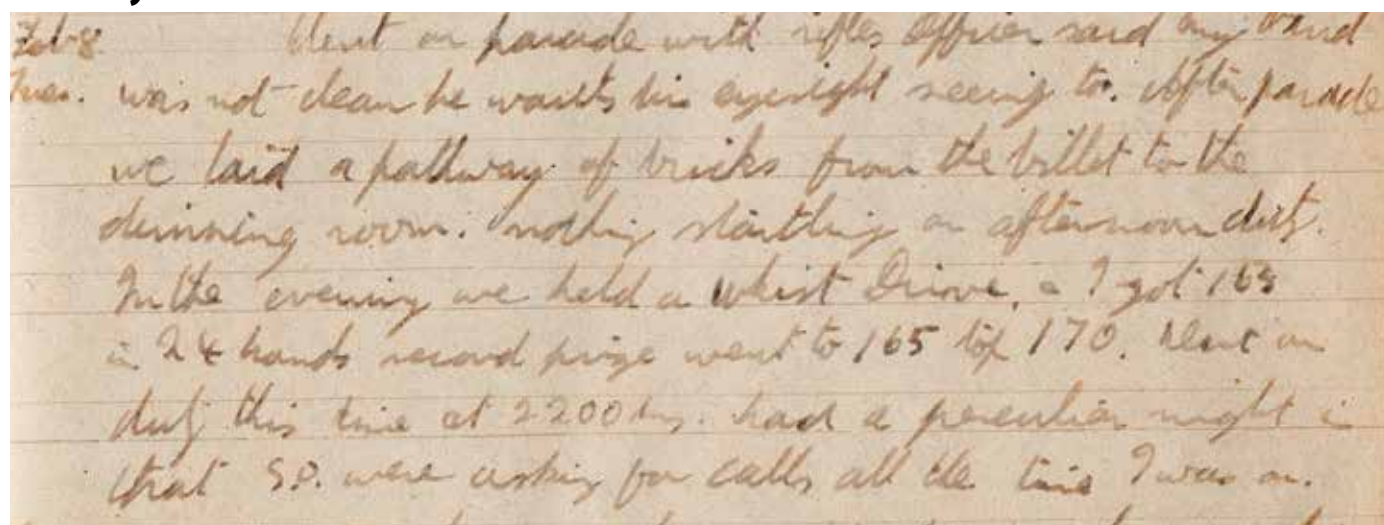
## Monday 7th



Feb 7. Up early & had breakfast & went on duty. Had a very busy morning a lot of trunk links were out. The day was still very cold & wet & with occasional snow. After tiffin went & had my blood group recorded. I am O+ the universal group I can give my blood to anyone but only receive O+. Evening duty passed very uneventful

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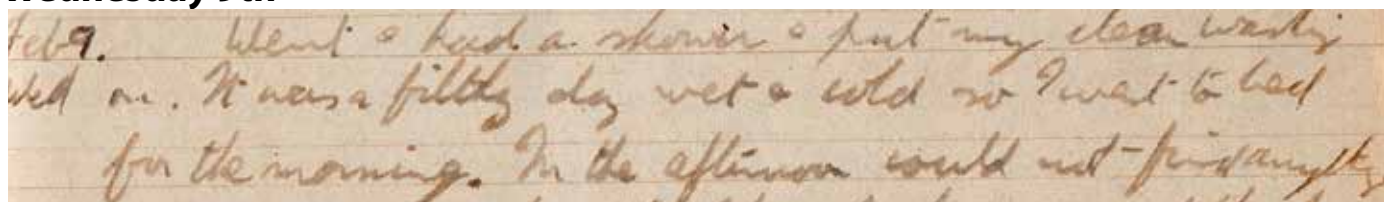
## Tuesday 8th



Feb 8. Went on parade with rifles. Officer said my barrel was not clean he wants his eyesight seeing to<sup>2</sup>. After parade we laid a pathway of bricks from the billet to the dining room. Nothing startling on afternoon duty. In the evening we had a Whist Drive, & I got 163 in 24 hands second prize went to 165 top 170. Went on duty this time at 2200 hrs. Had a peculiar night in that S.O. were asking for calls all the time I was on.

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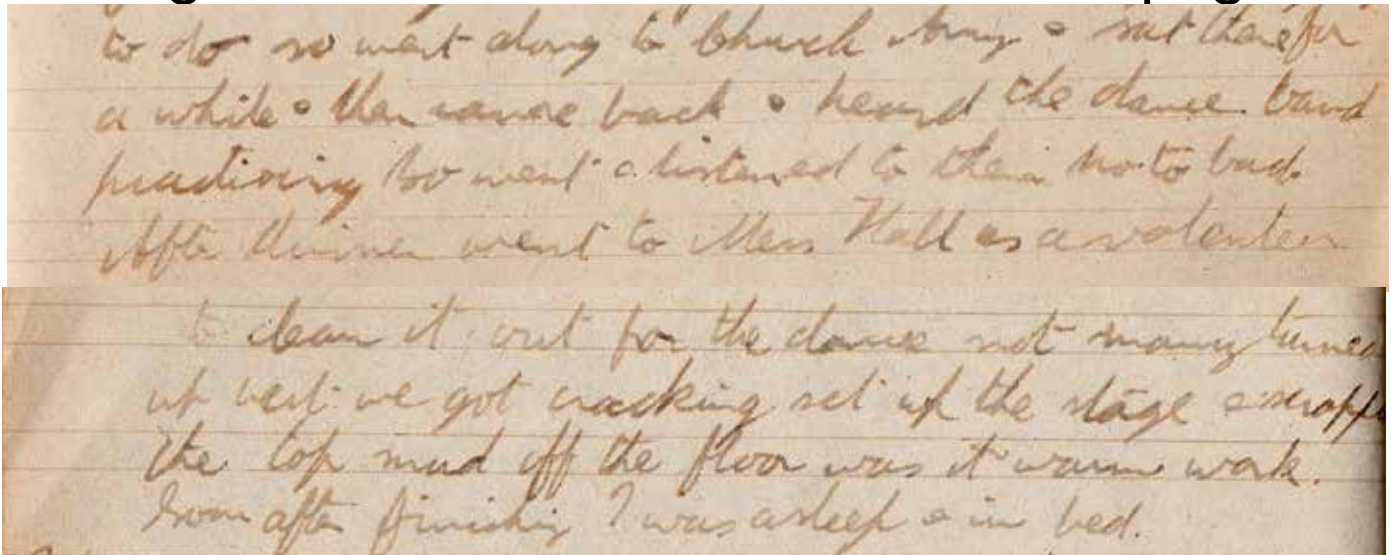
## Wednesday 9th



Feb 9. Went & had a shower & put my clean washing on. It was a filthy day wet & cold so I went to bed for the morning. In the afternoon could not find anything

2 Dad was still complaining about this officer's eyesight 50 years later.

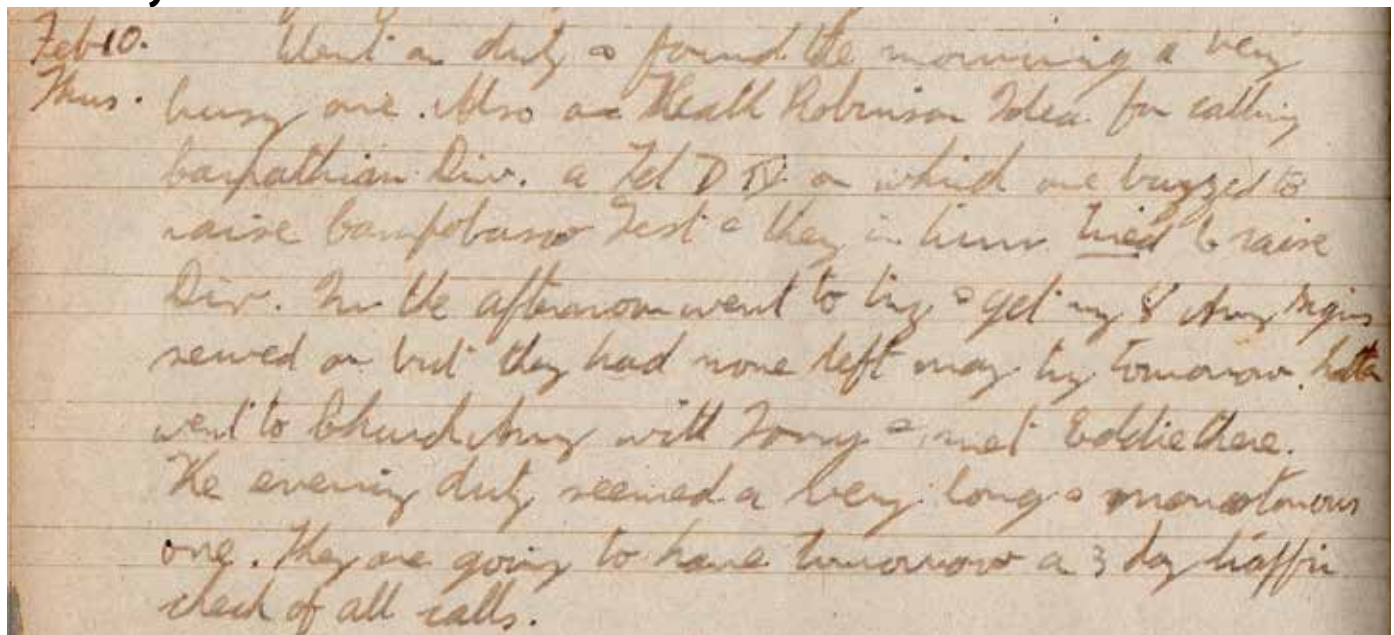
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



to do so went along to Church Army & sat there for  
a while & then came back & heard the dance band  
practising so went & listened to them not to bad.  
After dinner went to Mess Hall as a volunteer  
to clean it out for the dance not many turned  
up but we got cracking set up the stage & scrapped  
the top mud off the floor was it warm work.  
Soon after finishing I was asleep & in bed.

Went & had a shower & put my clean washing on. It was a filthy day wet & cold so I went to bed for the morning. In the afternoon could not find anything to do so went along to Church Army & sat there for a while & then came back & heard the dance band practising so went to listen to them not to bad. After dinner went to Mess Hall as valentines to clean it out for the dance not many turned up but we got cracking set up the stage & scrapped the top mud off the floor was it warm work. Soon after finishing I was asleep & in bed.

## Thursday 10th



Feb 10. Went on duty & found the morning a very  
Thurs. busy one. Also had Heath Robinson idea for calling  
carpathian Div. a tel D IV on which one buzzed to  
raise campobasso test & they in turn tried to raise  
Div. In the afternoon went to try & get my 8 Army sigs  
sewed on but they had none left may try tomorrow. Later  
went to Church Army with Tony & met Eddie there.  
The evening duty seemed a very long & monotonous  
one. They are going to have tomorrow a 3 day traffic  
check of all calls.

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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Friday 11th

Feb 11  
Fri. Got up earlier than usual for a parade morning as the R.S.M. was taking it. I need not have bothered the only thing he did say anything about was my band so that must have been alright. He also kept us standing in the rain till we were quite wet before we were dismissed. Did nothing during the morning except have a walk round the town munching a kilo of apples. The afternoon duty passed very slackly & we managed to slip out & get tea biscuits & toffees each. During the evening went to a debate on the motion being "That Prostitution should be legalised in England." The motion lost. Apart from the two speakers for everyone else spoke against. Nothing much happened on night duty but Frank was feeling sick.

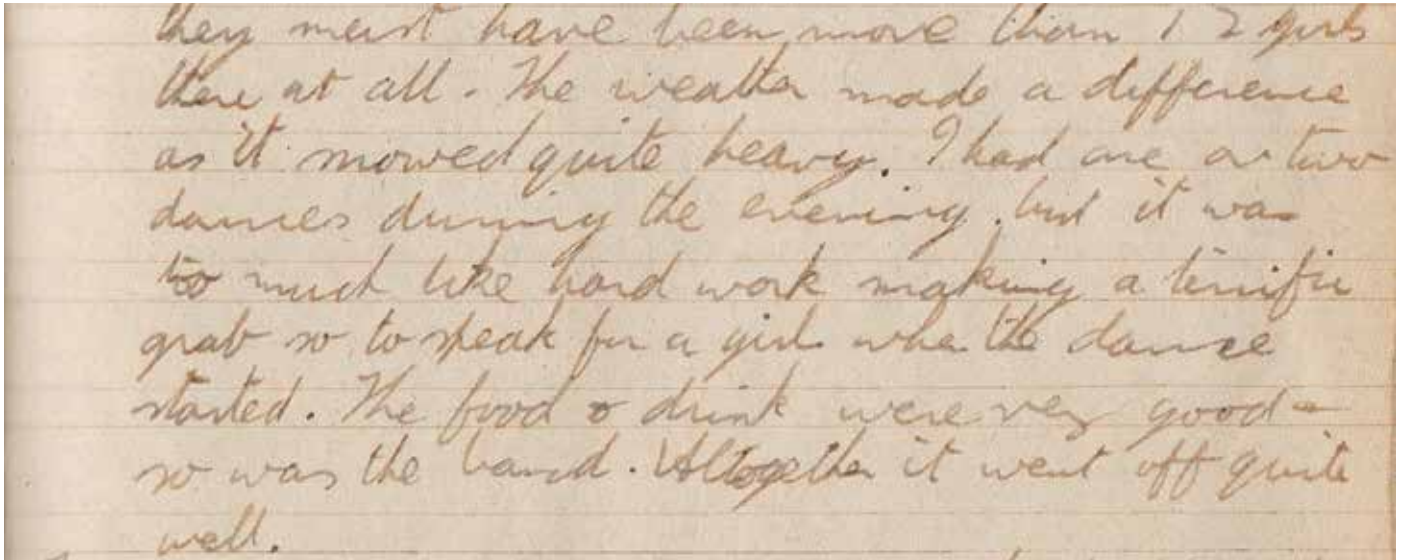
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Saturday 12th

Feb 12  
Sat. Went to bed in the morning as it was morning & cold. but did not get warm in bed even. During the afternoon helped to clear the other hall for the dance. After tea got ready & went along to the dance. This was very amusing it was absolutely full of fellows till gone 11.00 hrs. when about four girls arrived with their chaperons & a little later some more arrived I don't think

106 February 1944

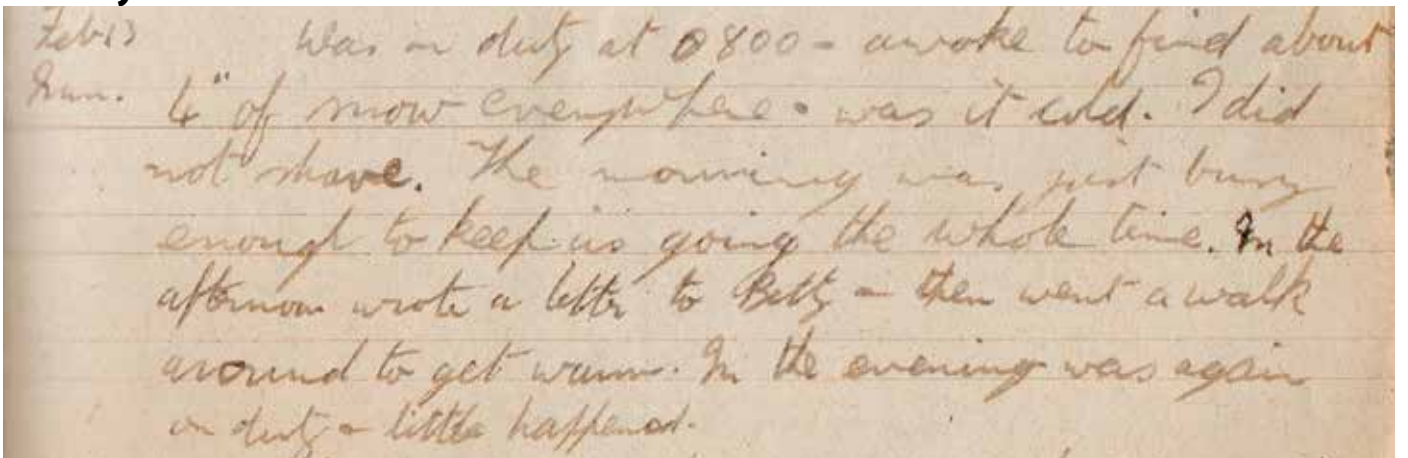
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



they must have been more than 12 girls there at all. The weather made a difference as it snowed quite heavy. I had one or two dances during the evening, but it was too much like hard work making a terrific grab so to speak for a girl when the dance started. The food & drink were very good & so was the band. Altogether it went off quite well.

Went to bed in the morning as it was bitterly cold but did not get warm in bed even. during the afternoon helped to decorate the Mess hall for the dance. After tea got ready & went along to the dance. This was very amusing it was absolutely full of fellows till gone 1900 hrs when about four girls arrived with their chaperones & a little later some more arrived. I dont think there could have been more than 12 girls there at all. The weather made a difference as it snowed quite heavy. I had one or two dances during the evening but it was too much like hard work making a terrific grab so to speak for a girl when the dance started. The food & drink were very good & so was the band. Altogether it went off quite well.

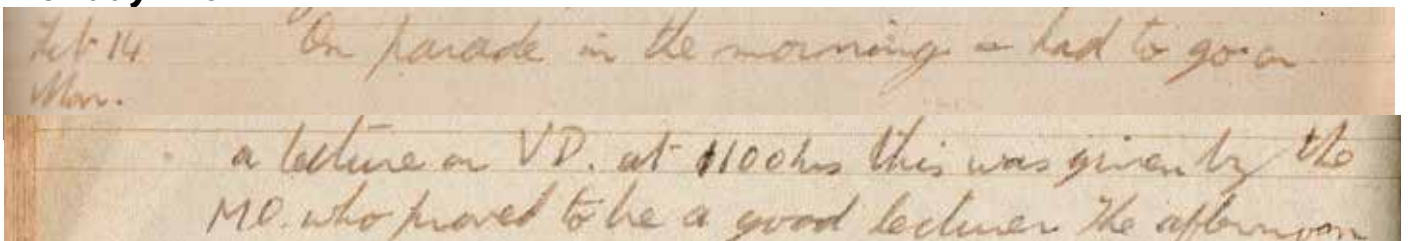
## Sunday 13th



Feb 13 Sun. Was on duty at 0800 - awoke to find about 4" of snow everywhere & was it cold. I did not shave. The morning was just busy enough to keep us going the whole time. In the afternoon wrote a letter to Betty & then went a walk around to get warm. In the evening was again on duty & little happened.

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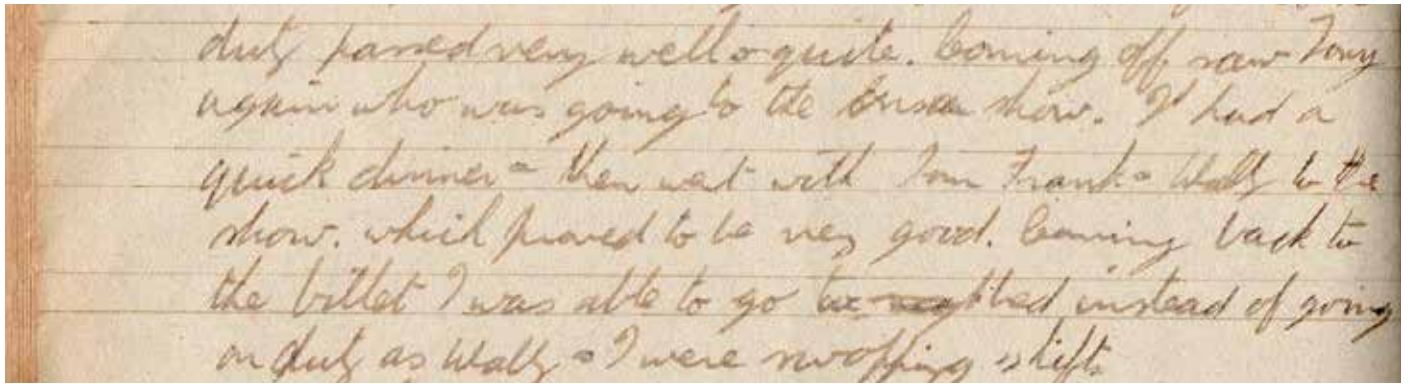
## Monday 14th



Feb 14 Mon. On parade in the morning & had to go on a lecture on V.D. at 1100hrs this was given by the M.O. who proved to be a good lecturer. The afternoon



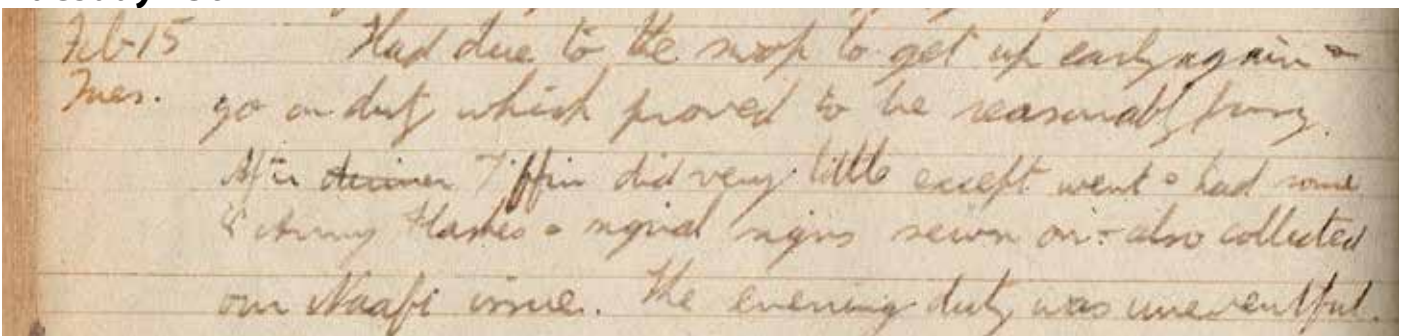
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



duty passed very well & quite. Coming off saw Tony again who was going to the buster show. I had a quick dinner & then went with Ian Frank & Wally to the show, which proved to be very good. Coming back to the billet I was able to go to bed instead of going on duty as Wally & I were swopping shifts.

On parade in the morning & had to go to a lecture on VD at 1100hrs this was given by the MD who proved to be a good lecturer the afternoon duty passed very well & quick. Coming off saw Tony again who was going to the buster show. I had a quick drink & then went with Ian Frank & Wally to the show which proved to be very good. Coming back to the billet I was able to go to bed instead of going on duty as Wally & I were swopping shifts

## Tuesday 15th

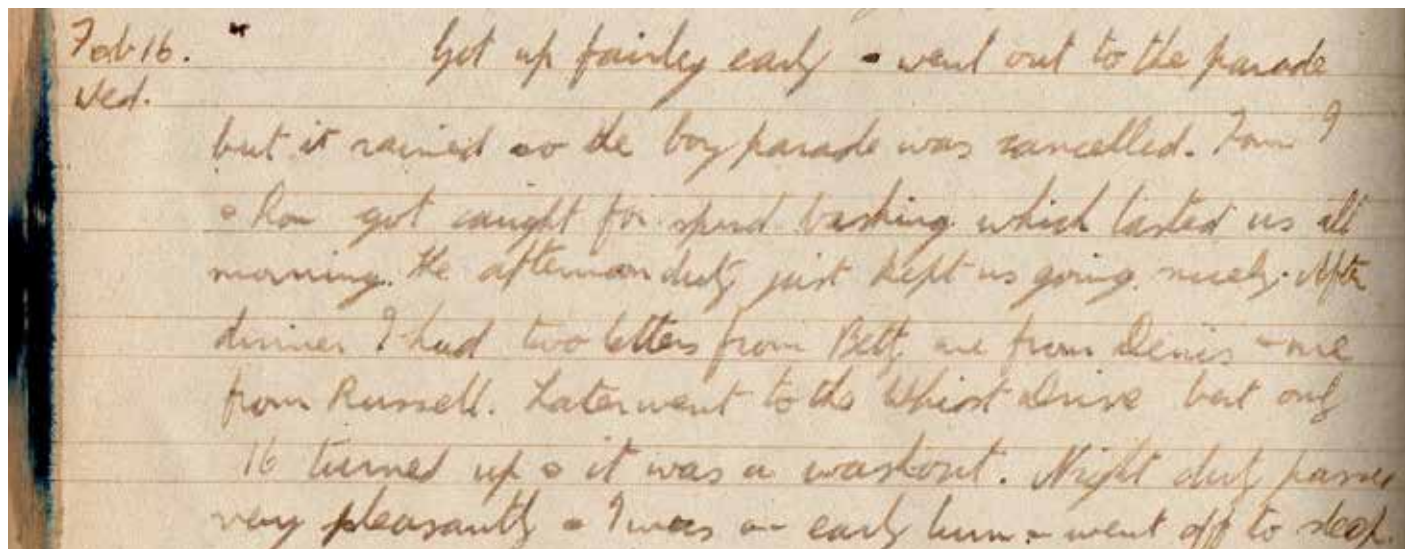


Feb 15  
Tues. Had due to the swop to get up early again & go on duty which proved to be reasonably busy. After dinner Tiffin did very little except went & had some 8 Army Marks & signal signs sewn on & also collected our Naafi issue. The evening duty was uneventful.

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## Wednesday 16th

Allied leaders today defended bombing the Benedictine monastery on Monte Cassino, the rock fortress on the road to Rome which cost the lives of so many Allied soldiers.

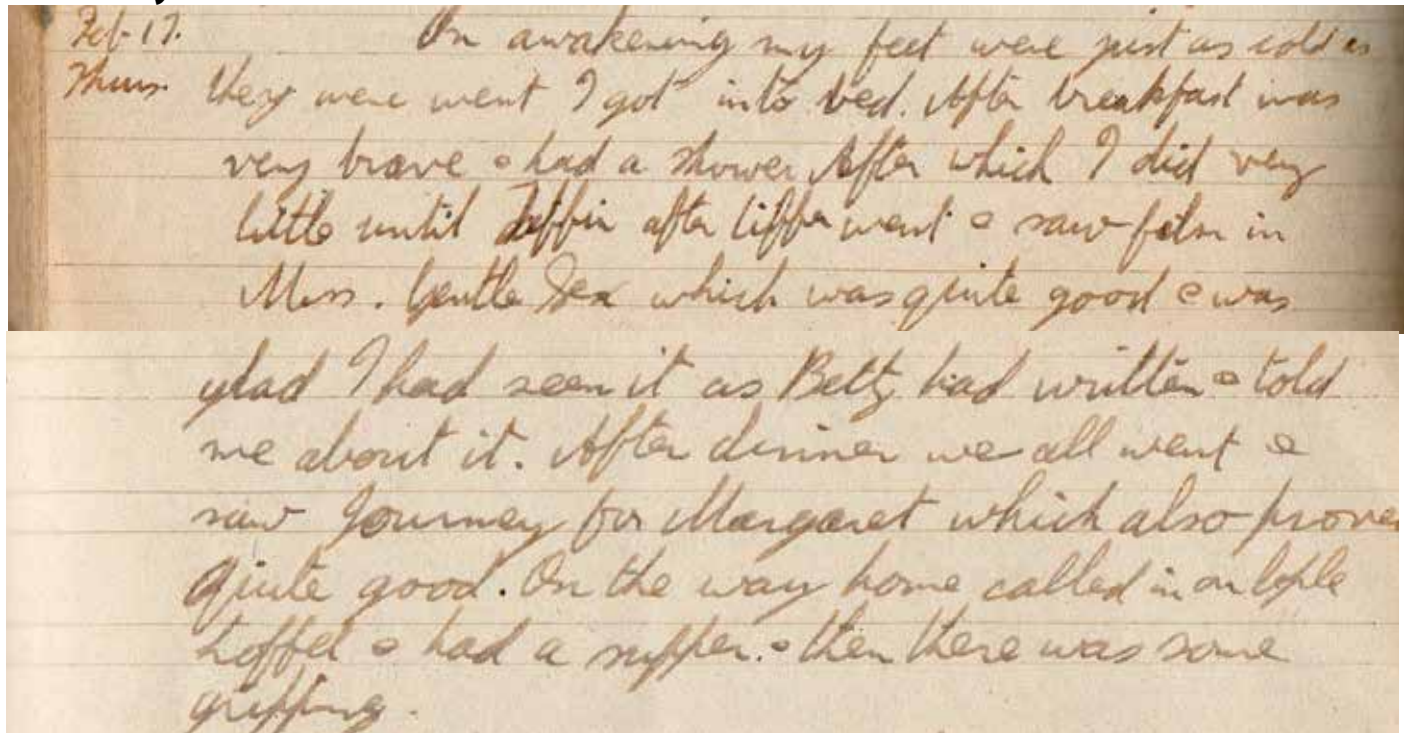


Feb 16.  
Wed. got up fairly early & went out to the parade but it rained so the boy parade was cancelled. Tom & I got caught for speed bashing which lasted us all morning. The afternoon duty just kept us going nicely. After dinner I had two letters from Betty, one from Denis & one from Russell. Later went to the Whist drive but only 16 turned up & it was a washout. Night duty passed very pleasantly & I was an early bird & went off to sleep.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Got up fairly early & went out to the parade but it rained so the Coy parade was cancelled. Ian I & Ron got caught for spud bashing which lasted us all morning. The afternoon duty just kept us going nicely. After dinner I had two letters from Betty one from Denis & one from Russell. Later went to the Whist Drive but only 16 turned up so it was a washout. Night duty passed very pleasantly & I was on early turn & went off to sleep.

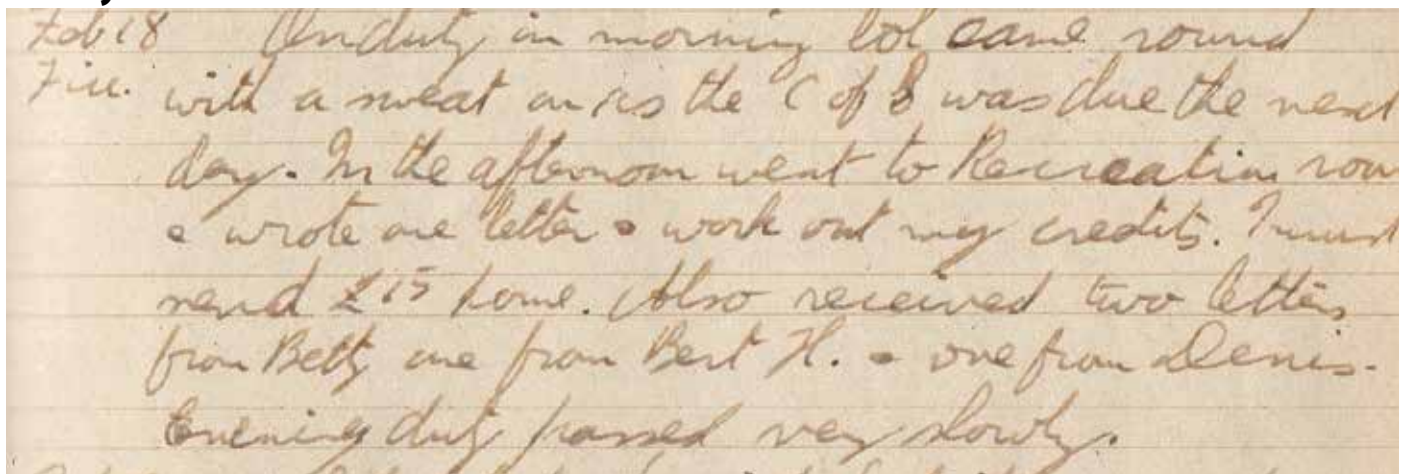
## Thursday 17th



Feb 17. On awakening my feet were just as cold as they were when I got into bed. After breakfast was very brave & had a shower. After which I did very little until Tiffin after tiffin went & saw film in Mess. Gentle Sex which was quite good & was glad I had seen it as Betty had written & told me about it. After dinner we all went & saw Journey for Margaret which also proved quite good. On the way home called in on cple Loffet & had a supper. Then there was some gripping.

On awakening my feet were just as cold as they were when I got into bed. After breakfast was very brave & had a shower. After which I did very little until Tiffin after tiffin went & saw film in Mess. Gentle Sex which was quite good & was glad I had seen it as Betty had written & told me about it. After dinner we all went & saw Journey for Margaret which also proved quite good. On the way home called in on cple Loffet & had a supper & then there was some gripping.

## Friday 18th



Feb 18 On duty in morning Col came round with a sweat on as the c of s was due the next day. In the afternoon went to recreation room & wrote one letter & work out my credits. I must send £15 home. Also received two letters from Betty one from Bert H. & one from Denis. Evening duty passed very slowly.

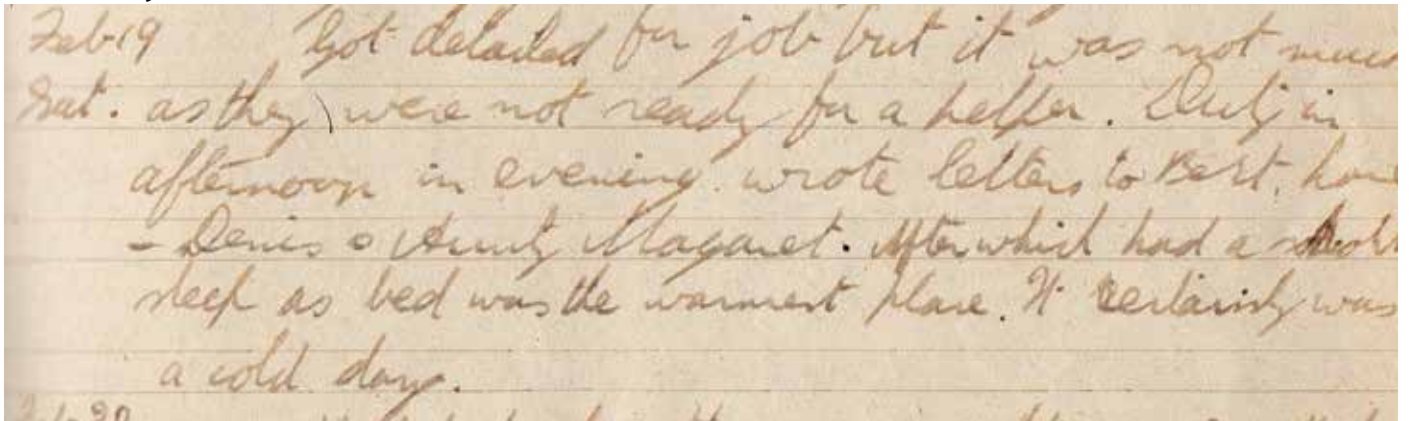
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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

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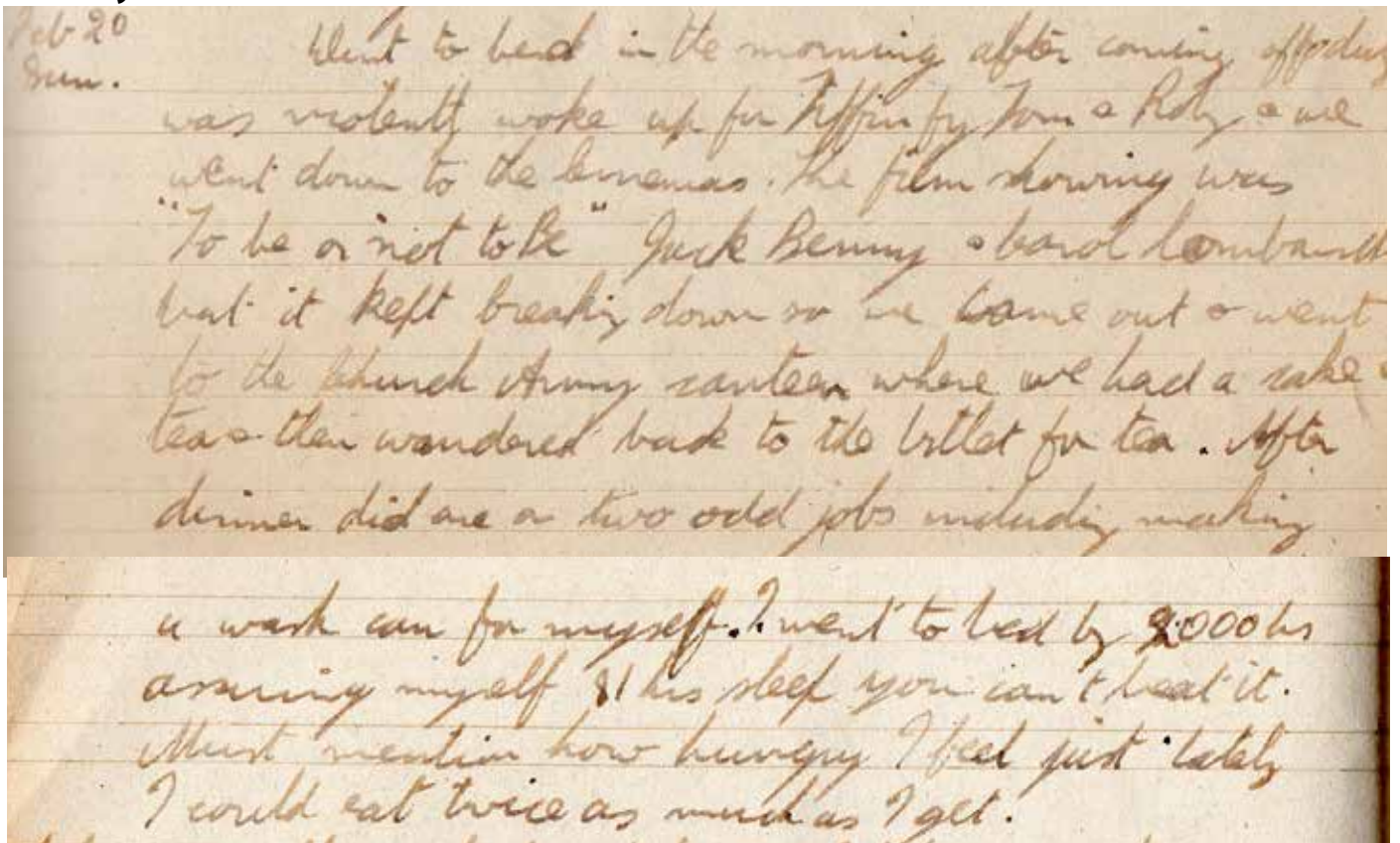
## Saturday 19th



Feb 19 Sat. Got detailed for job but it was not much as they were not ready for a helper. Duty in afternoon in evening wrote letters to Bert, home & Denis & Aunty Margaret. After which had a short sleep as bed was the warmest place. It certainly was a cold day.

Got detailed for job but it was not much as they were not ready for a helper. Duty in afternoon in evening wrote letter to Bert, home & Denis & Aunty Margaret. After which had a short sleep as bed was the warmest place. It certainly is a cold day.

## Sunday 20th



Feb 20 Sun. Went to bed in the morning after coming off duty was violently woke up for tiffin by Tom & Roby & we went down to the cinema. The film showing was "To be or not to be" Jack Benny & Carol Lombard but it kept breaking down so we came out & went to the Church Army canteen where we had a cake & tea & then wandered back to the billet for tea. After dinner did one or two odd jobs including making a wash can for myself. I went to bed by 2000 hrs amazing myself 11 hrs sleep you can't beat it. Must mention how hungry I feel just lately I could eat twice as much as I get.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Monday 21st

Feb 21 Up early for duty & whilst on we had a  
Mon. visit from some American Woman Journalist  
who thought everything was terrific & how  
polite operators were on the phone. Pity she did not  
hear us sometimes. In the afternoon went to Church  
Army canteen but they were not serving. also a  
mobile canteen which was about had nothing to  
eat decided to take a shower & found the water off.  
Not a very successful day so I wrote to the firm  
& Arnold. Evening duty went off quite uneventful.

Up early for duty & whilst on we had a visit from some American woman journalist who thought everything was terrific & how polite operators were on the phone. Pity she did not hear us sometimes. In the afternoon went to Church Army canteen but they were not serving. also a mobile canteen which was about had nothing to eat decided to take a shower & found the water off. Not a very successful day so I wrote to the firm & Arnold. Evening duty went off quite uneventful.

Tuesday 22nd

Feb 22 We were on straightening up the pathways  
Tues. & we also had a go at draining some of the water  
out of the yard. Later we went & collected our  
clean washing & I also took the long stockings  
Mam sent me. After this dash & had a shower  
then tea & I then strolled around a bit. Went  
on duty after 7.30. In the evening had a shot at  
getting a charcoal fire going in the end managed  
it after finishing half of someone else's. We then  
had a drink of beer we had left & I had a bed down  
th we also went on duty for Frank & Wally for  
1/2 hr.

We were on straightening up the pathways & we also had a go at draining some of the water out of the yard. Later we went & collected our clean washing & I also took the long stockings Mam sent me. After this dash & had a shower then tea & I then strolled around

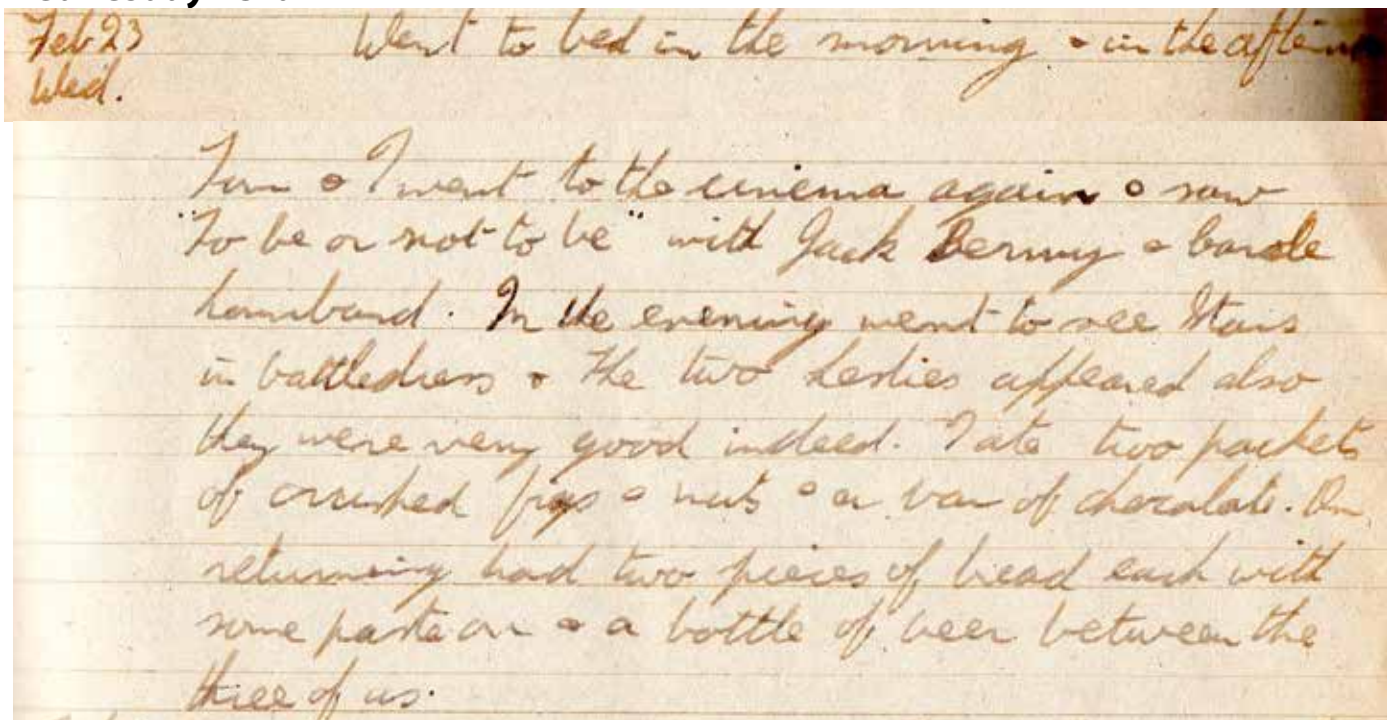
February 1944111



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

a bit. Went on duty after tiffin. In the evening had a shot at getting a charcoal fire going in the end managed it after pinching half of someone else's. We then had a drink of beer we had left & I had a lie down oh we also went on duty for Frank & Wally for 1/2 hr.

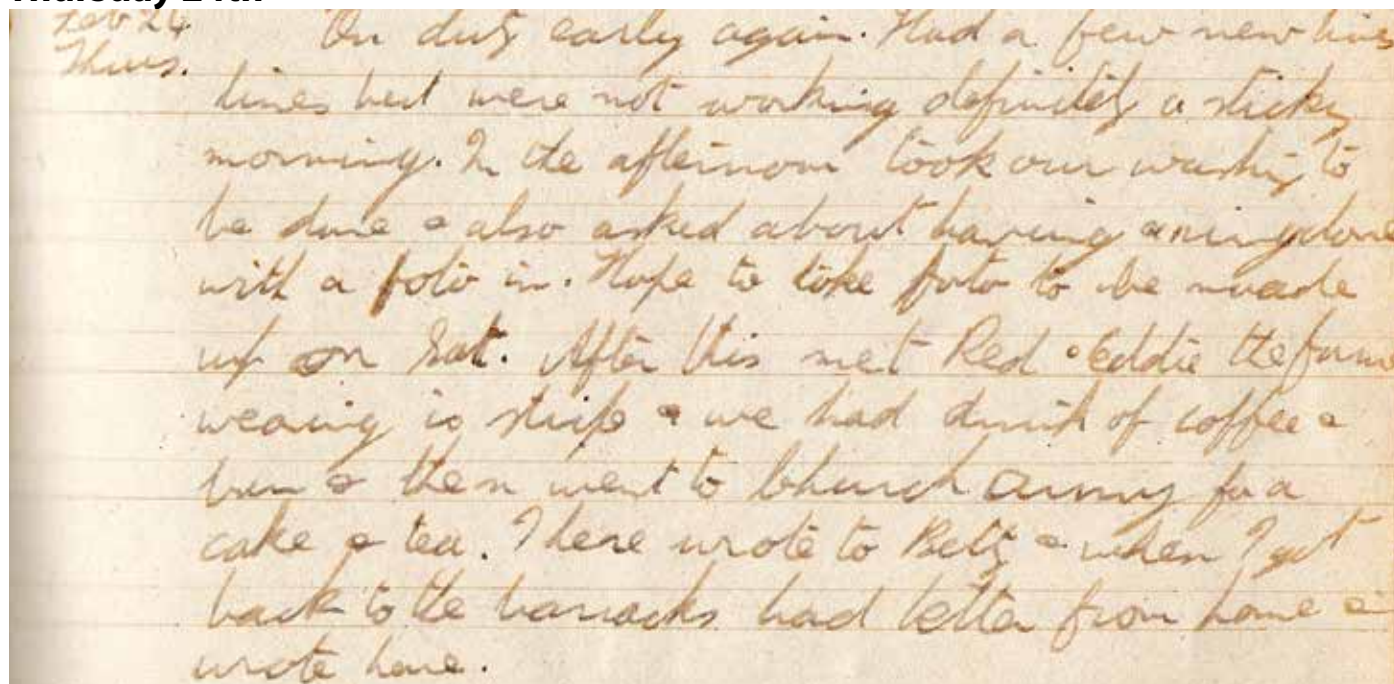
## Wednesday 23rd



Feb 23  
Wed. Went to bed in the morning & in the afternoon Tom & I went to the cinema again & saw "To be or not to be" with Jack Benny & Carole Lombard. In the evening went to see stars in battledress & the two Leslie's appeared also they were very good indeed. I ate two packets of crushed figs & nuts & a bar of chocolate. On returning had two pieces of bread each with some paste on & a bottle of beer between the three of us.

went to bed in the morning & in the afternoon Tom & I went to the cinema again & saw "To be or not to be" with Jack Benny & Carole Lombard. In the evening went to see stars in battledress & the two Leslie's<sup>3</sup> appeared also they were very good indeed. I ate two packets of crushed figs & nuts & a bar of chocolate. On returning had two pieces of bread with some paste on & a bottle of beer between three of us.

## Thursday 24th



Feb 24  
Thurs. On duty early again. Had a few new his lines but were not working definitely a sticky morning. In the afternoon took our washing to be done & also asked about having a mirror with a photo in. Hope to take photo to be made up on hat. After this met Red & Eddie the funny wearing in strip & we had drink of coffee & then went to church army for a cake & tea. There wrote to Betty & when I got back to the barracks had letter from home & wrote home.

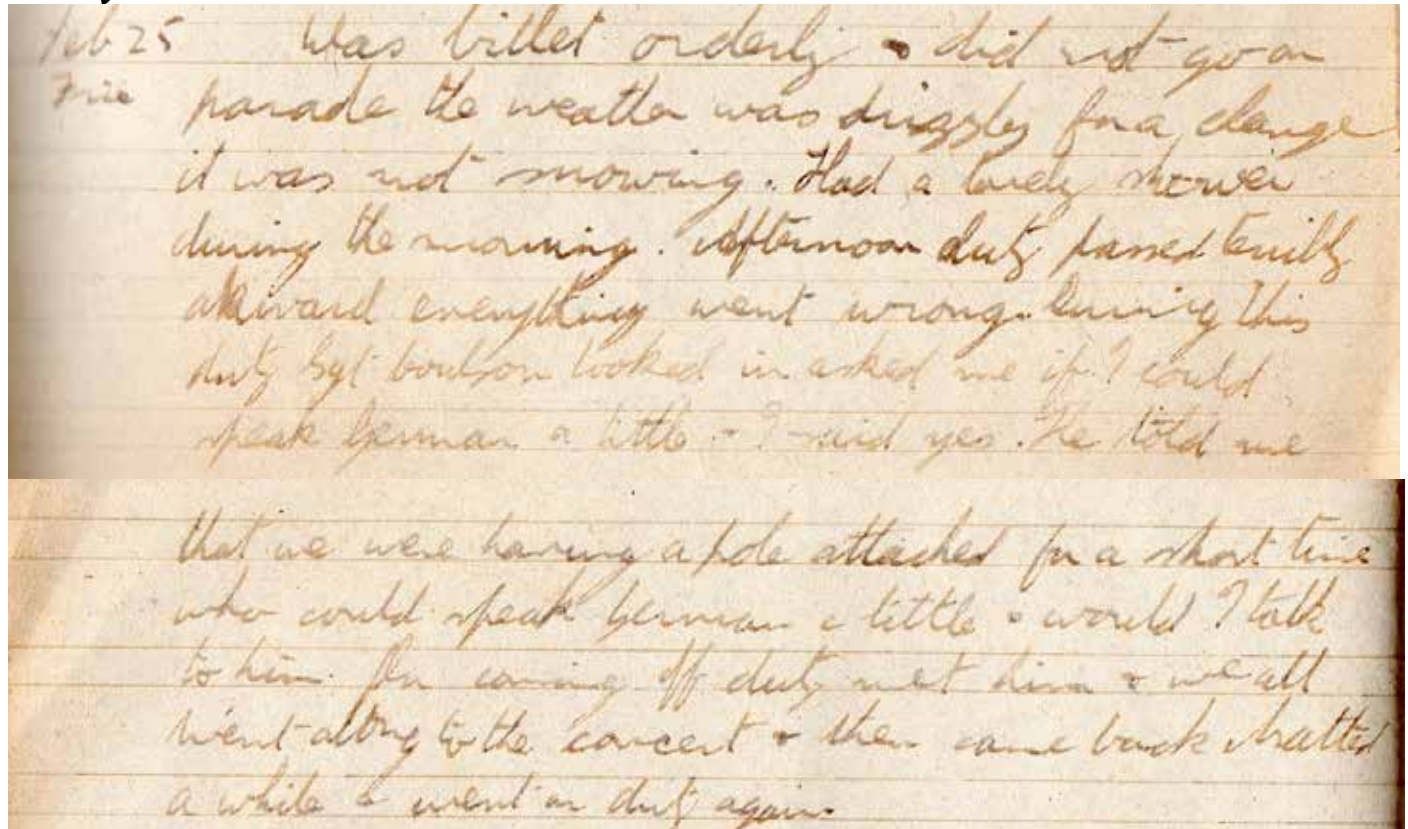
<sup>3</sup> The Two Leslie's were Leslie Sarony & Leslie Holmes they recorded Umpa Umpa, stick it up your jumper. Used by Jimmy Edwards as a catchphrase in the 50s and is also in The Beatles "I am the Walrus"



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

On duty early again. Had a few new testing lines but were not working definitely a sticky morning. In the afternoon took our washing to be done & also asked about having a ring with photo in hope to take photo to be made up on Sat. After this met with Red & Eddie the former wearing his stripe & we had a drink of coffee & beer & then went to Church Army for a cake & tea. There wrote to Betty & when I got back to barracks had letter from home & wrote home.

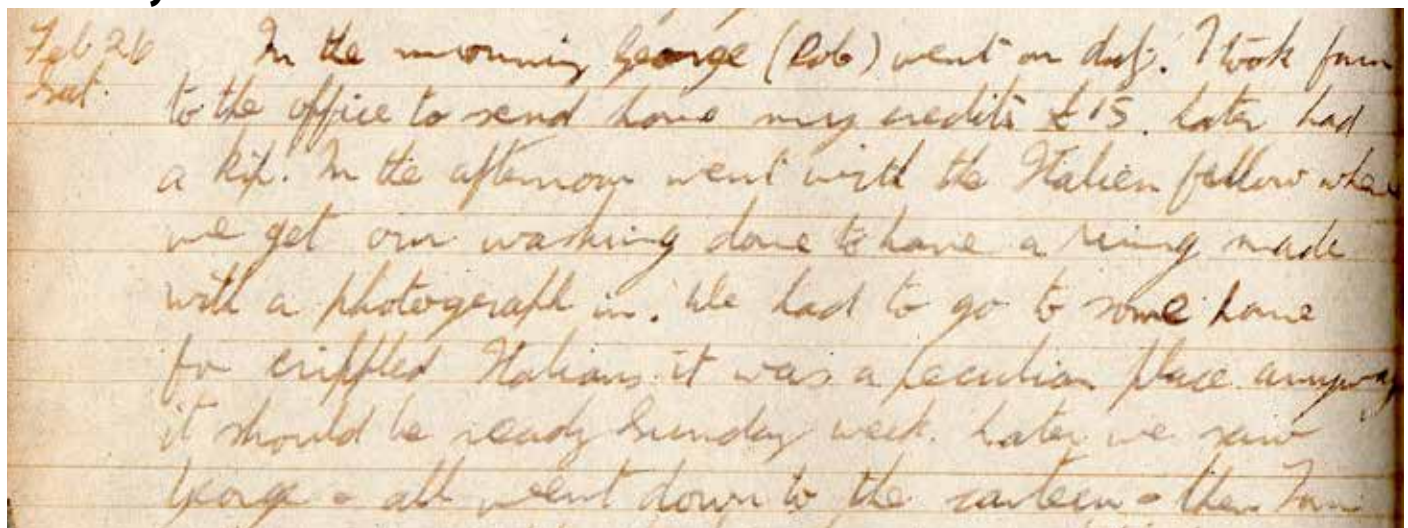
## Friday 25th



Feb 25  
Fri  
Was billet orderly & did not go on parade the weather was drizzly for a change it was not snowing. Had a lovely shower during the morning. Afternoon duty passed terribly awkward everything went wrong during this duty Sgt Coulson looked in asked me if I could speak German a little - I said yes. He told me that we were having a Pole attached for a short time who could speak German a little & would I talk to him. On coming off duty met him & we all went along to the concert & then came back & chatted a while & went on duty again.

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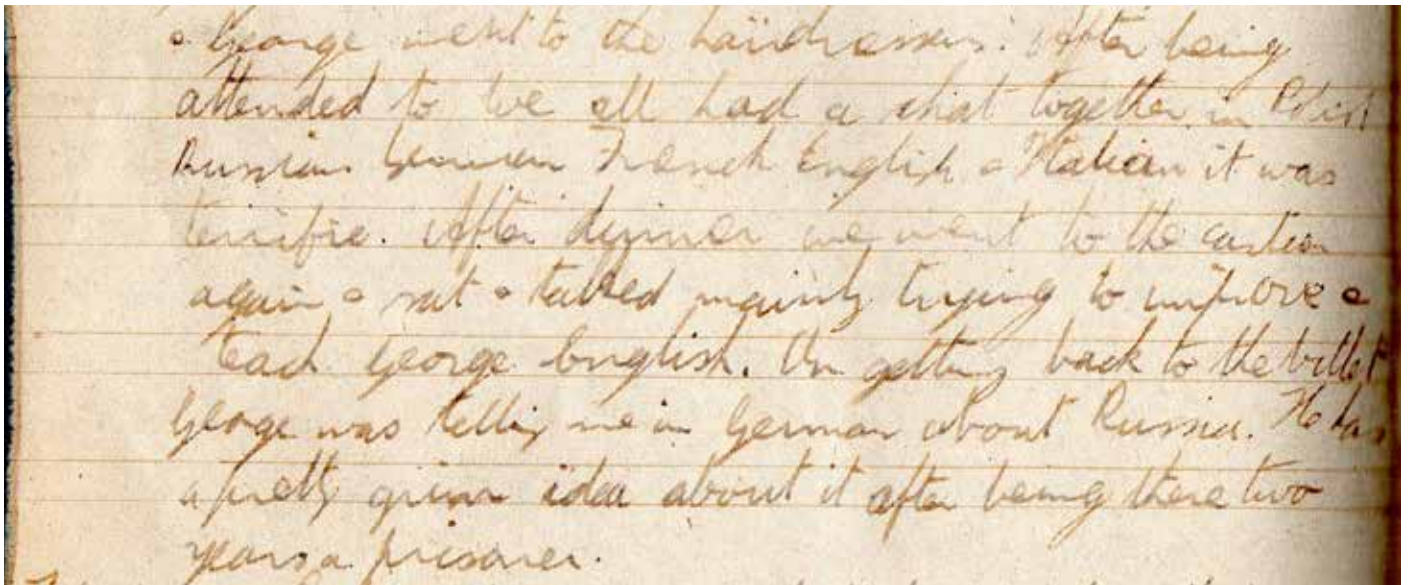
## Saturday 26th



Feb 26  
Sat.  
In the morning George (Rob) went on duty. I took form to the office to send home my credits £15. Later had a kip. In the afternoon went with the Italian fellows where we get our washing done to have a ring made with a photograph in. We had to go to some home for crippled Italians it was a peculiar place anyway it should be ready Sunday week. Later we saw George & all went down to the canteen & then home.



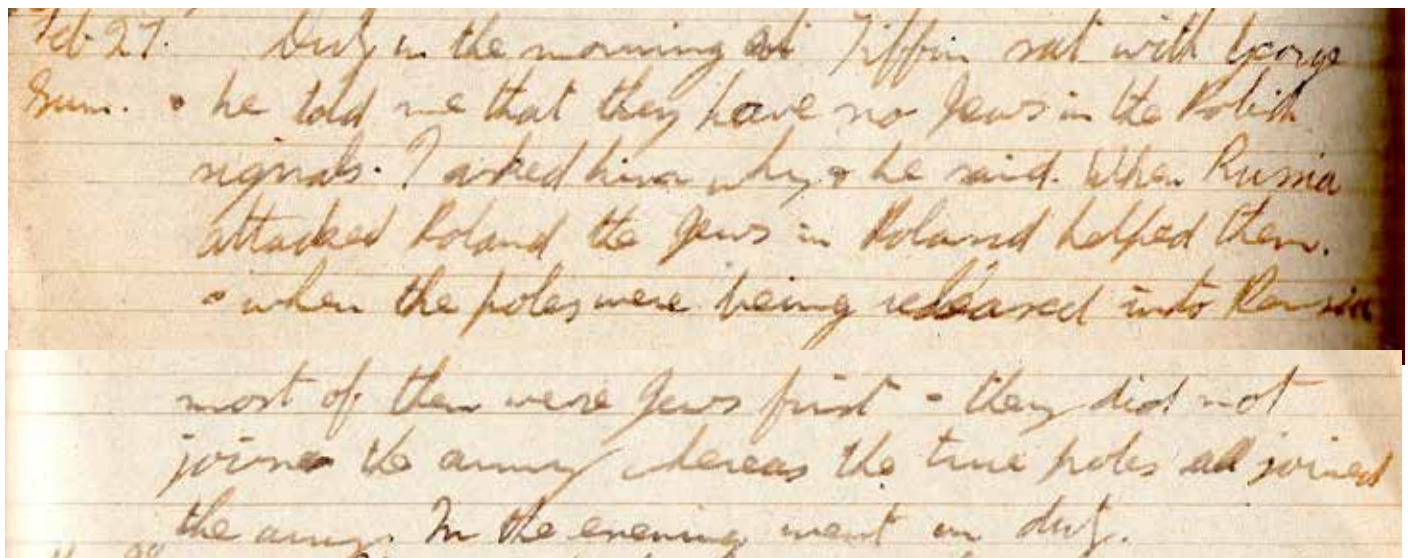
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



• George went to the hairdressers: After being attended to we all had a chat together in Polish Russian German French English & Italian it was terrific. After dinner we went to the canteen again & sat & talked mainly trying to improve & teach George English. On getting back to the billet George was telling me in German about Russia. He has a pretty grim idea about it after being there two years a prisoner.

In the morning George (Pole) went on duty. I took form to the office to send home my credits £15. Later had a kip. In the afternoon went with the Italian fellow where we get our washing done to have a ring made with a photograph in. We had to go to some home for crippled Italians it was a peculiar place anyway it should be ready Sunday week. Later we all saw George & all went down to the hairdressers. After being attended to we all had a chat together in Polish, Russian, German French, English & Italian. It was terrific. After dinner we went to the canteen again & sat & talked mainly trying to improve & teach George English. On getting back to the billet George was telling me in German about Russia. He has a pretty grim idea about it after being there two years a prisoner.

## Sunday 27th



Feb 27. Duty in the morning at tiffin sat with George & he told me that they have no Jews in the Polish signals. I asked him why & he said when Russia attacked Poland the Jews in Poland helped them. • when the poles were being released into Russia most of them were Jews first - they did not join the army whereas the true poles all joined the army. In the evening went on duty.

Duty in the morning at tiffin sat with George & he told me that they have no Jews in the Polish signals. I asked him why & he said when Russia attacked Poland the Jews in Poland helped them & when the poles were being cleared into Russia most of them were Jews first & they did not join the army whereas the true Poles all joined the army. In the evening went on duty.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Monday 28th

Mon 28  
Feb  
It was a lovely day & we had the yard to straighten up - then we went on duty in the afternoon. Got Frank & Wally to relieve us early & Robi, Tom, Geoff & I went to the show but unfortunately we did not get there early enough & had to sit on the balcony. It was quite a good show. Judy Shirley & the RAF command dance band. After the show went along to Loftys place & had a bottle of beer & collected our naafi stores later came back & chatted a little & then went on duty.

It was a lovely day & we had the yard to straighten up & then we went on duty in the afternoon. Got Frank & Wally to relieve us early & Robi, Tom, Geoff & I went to the show but unfortunately we did not get there early enough & had to sit on the balcony. It was quite a good show. Judy Shirley & the RAF command dance band. After the show went along to Loftys place & had a bottle of beer & collected our naafi stores later came back & chatted a little & then went on duty.

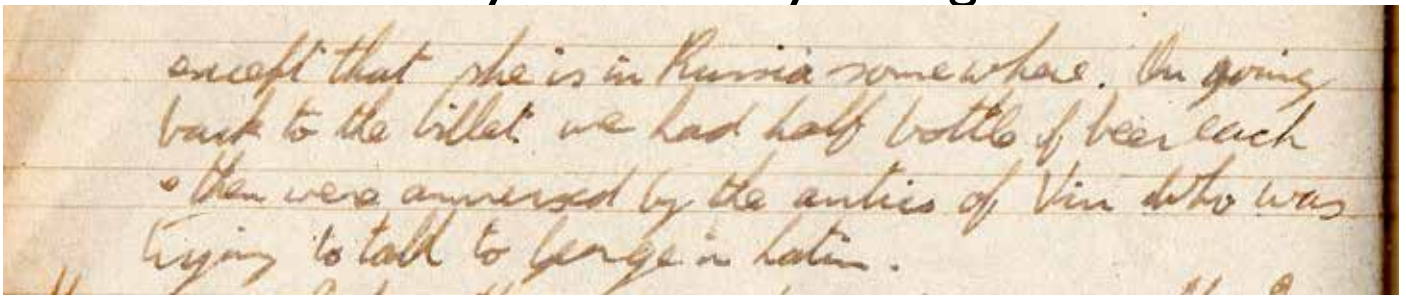
Tuesday 29th

Feb 29  
Tues. Went to bed for a while in the morning & then got up & had a shower before dinner. In the afternoon went for a stroll round & then on returning had a letter from Margorie. In the evening all went along to see the cinema show but we could not get in so strolled down to the canteen where there was a dance band playing from the RASC. We sat in one of the boxes & George told me in German some of his experiences in Russia. It is funny how we are some of us unaware of not hearing from our sweethearts' wives & he has not heard seen or known where his wife has been for two years.

February 1944115



## Diary of a D-Day Dodger

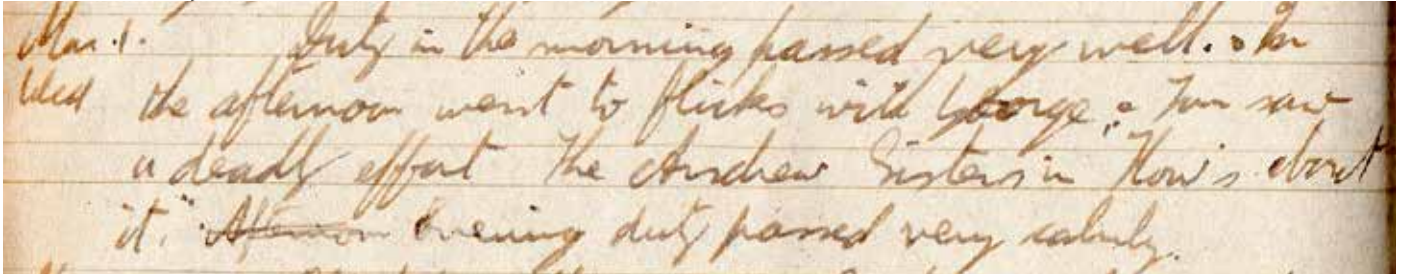


Went to bed for a while in the morning & then got up & had a shower before dinner. In the afternoon went for a stroll round & then on returning had a letter from Marjorie. In the evening all went along to see the cinema show but we could not get in so strolled down to the canteen where there was a dance band playing from the RASC. We sat in one of the boxes & George told me in German some of his experiences in Russia. It is funny here we are moaning about not hearing from our sweethearts & wives & he has not heard seen or known where his wife has been for two years except that she is in Russia somewhere. On going back to the billet we had half bottle of beer each & then we were amused by the antics of Vin who was trying to talk to George in Latin.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## MARCH 1944

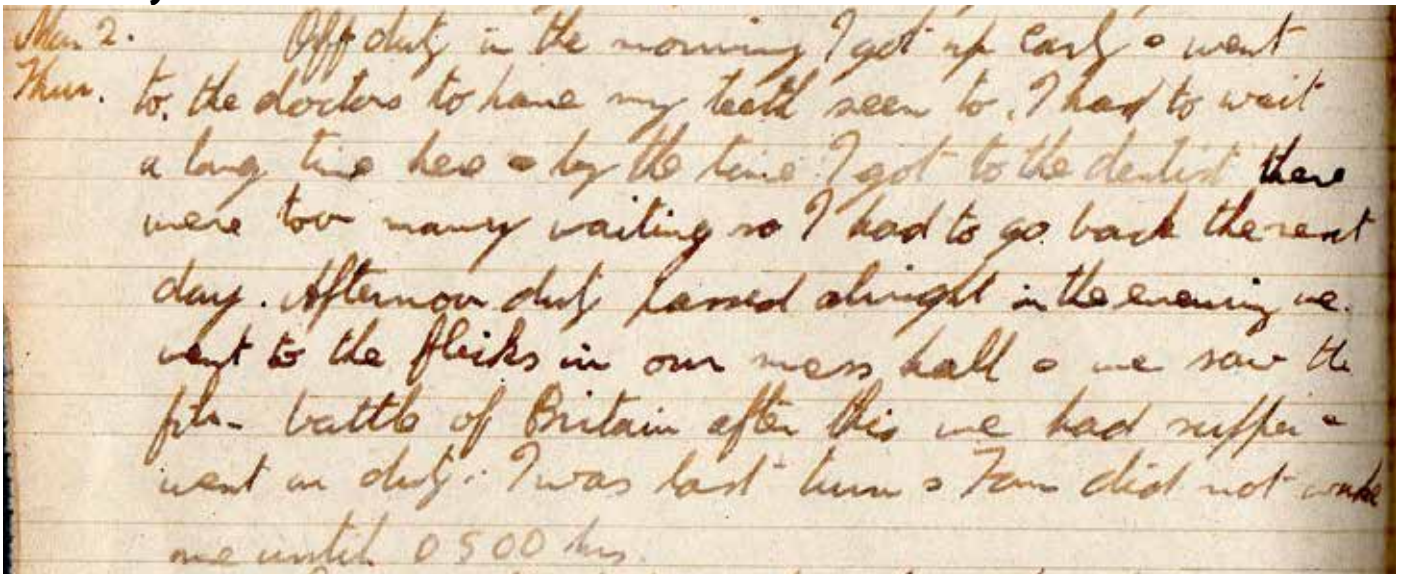
### Wednesday 1st



Mar. 1. Duty in the morning passed very well. In the afternoon went to flicks with George & Tom saw a deadly effort the Andrew Sisters in "How's about it". Evening duty passed very calmly.

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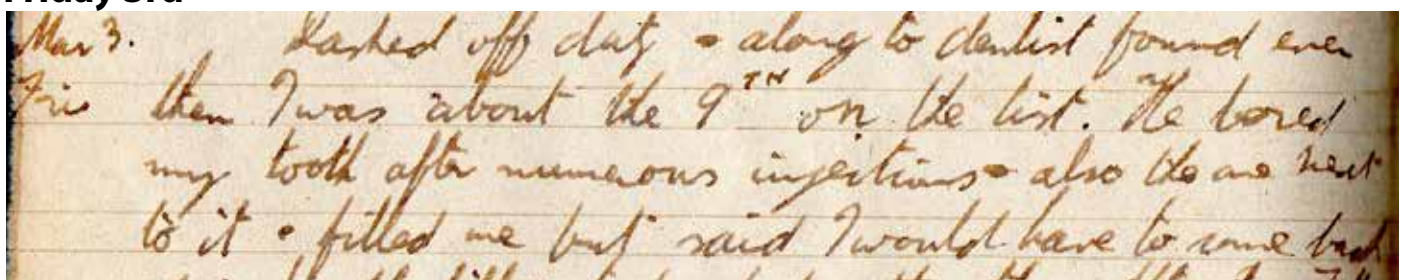
### Thursday 2nd



Mar. 2. Off duty in the morning I got up early & went to the doctors to have my teeth seen to. I had to wait a long time here & by the time I got to the dentist there were too many waiting so I had to go back the next day. Afternoon duty passed alright in the evening we went to the flicks in our mess hall & we saw the film Battle of Britain after this we had supper & went on duty. I was last turn & Tom did not wake me until 0500 hrs.

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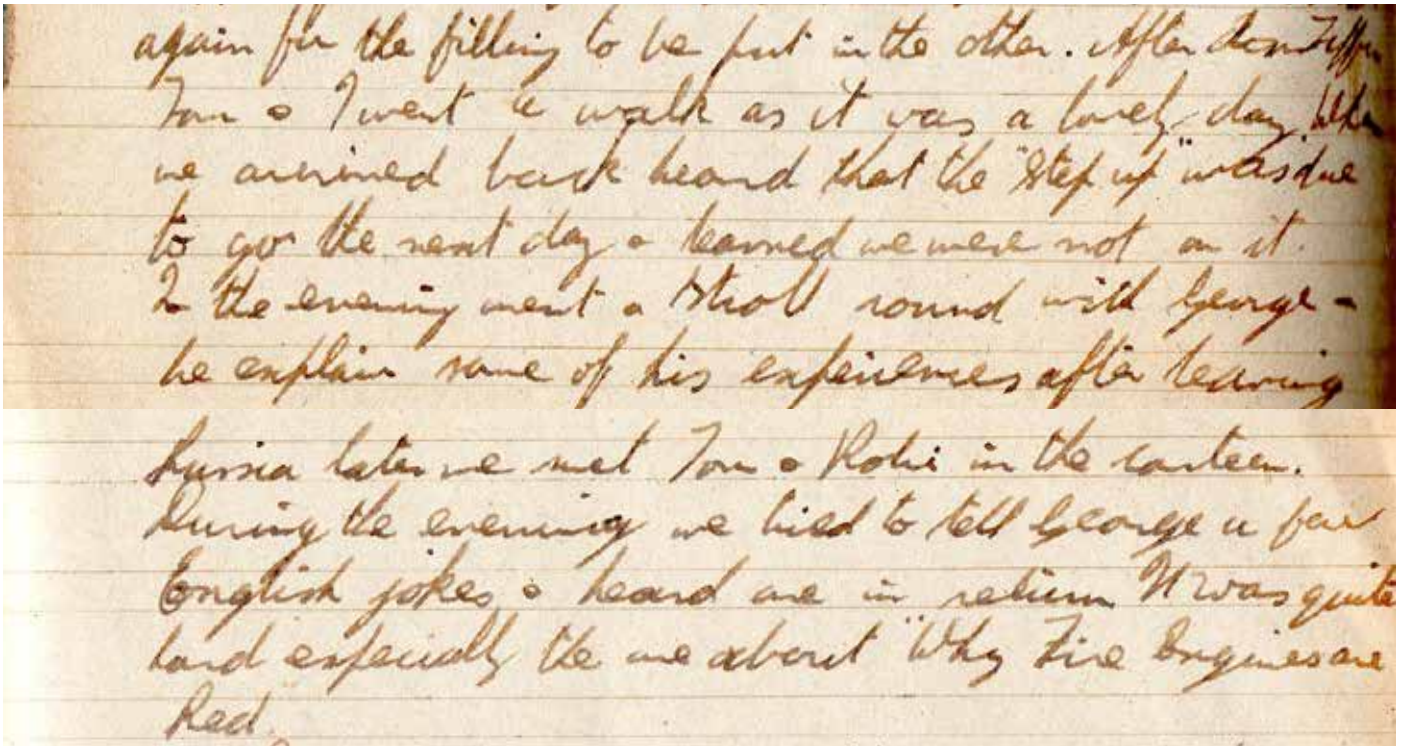
### Friday 3rd



Mar. 3. Washed off duty & along to dentist found even then I was about the 9<sup>th</sup> on the list. He bored my tooth after numerous injections & also the one next to it & filled me but said I would have to come back



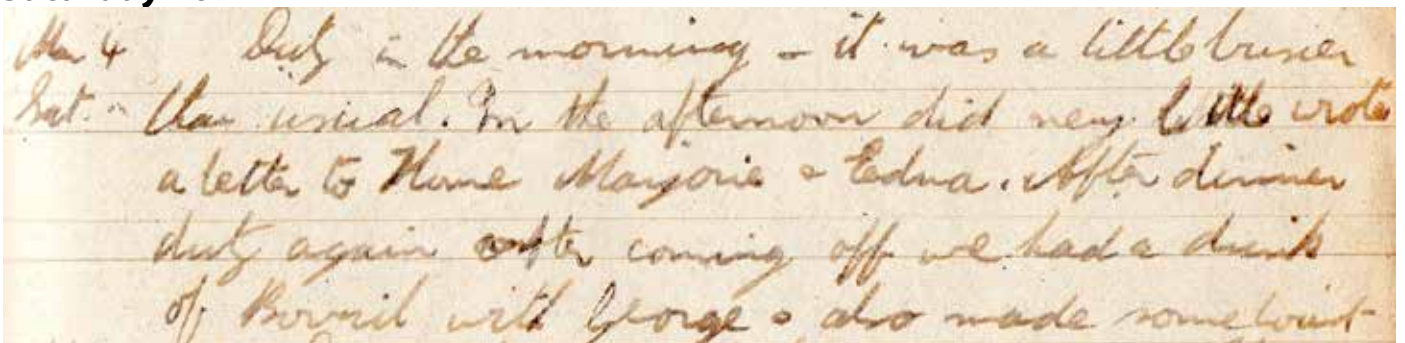
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



again for the filling to be put in the other. After dinner  
Tom & I went for a walk as it was a lovely day. When  
we arrived back heard that the "step up" was due  
to go the next day & learned we were not on it.  
In the evening went a stroll round with George -  
he explained some of his experiences after leaving  
Russia later we met Tom & Robi in the canteen.  
During the evening we tried to tell George a few  
English jokes & heard one in return. It was quite  
hard especially the one about "Why fire engines are  
red."

Dashed off duty & along to the dentist found even then I was about 9th on the list. He bored my tooth after numerous injections & also the one next to it & filled one but said I would have to back again for the filling to be put in the other. After tiffin Tom & I went for a walk as it was a lovely day. When we arrived back heard that the "step up" was due to go the next day & learned we were not on it. In the evening went a stroll round with George & he explain some of his experiences after leaving Russia later we met Tom & Robi in the canteen. During the evening we tried to tell George a few English jokes & heard one in return It was quite hard especially the one about "Why fire engines are Red!"

## Saturday 4th



Mar 4 Duty in the morning - it was a little busier  
but than usual. In the afternoon did very little wrote  
a letter to Home Marjorie & Edna. After dinner  
duty again after coming off we had a drink  
of Bovril with George & also made some toast

Duty in the morning & it was a little busier than usual. In the afternoon did very little wrote a letter to home, Marjorie & Edna. After dinner duty again after coming off had a cup of Bovril with George & also made some toast.

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1 Because they have eight wheels and four crew. 8 and 4 are 12. There are 12 inches in a foot and one foot is a ruler. Queen Elizabeth was a ruler. Queen Elizabeth is also a cruise ship (actually converted to a troop carrier then) and they sail the seas. Seas have fish and fish have fins. The Finns fought the Russians. Russians are red and fire engines are always "Russian" around. So that is why fire engines are red! You have to feel sorry for poor George.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Sunday 5th

Mar 5. Did not do much in morning. Had  
Sun. to pack a tent up & had a talk to Ron Harris.  
In the afternoon duty again. On coming off  
had a quick dinner & then went along to  
queue up for the Theatre & we got in near  
the front & had a good view of the RAF  
dance band. All night duty later which  
passed very quietly. Sent letters off to Syd  
& Andy & read one from Betty & Home.

Did not do much in the morning. Had to pack a tent up and talk to Ron Harris. In the afternoon duty again. On coming off had a quick dinner & then went along to queue up for the theatre & we got in near the front & had a good view of the RAF dance band. All night duty later which passed very quietly. Sent letters off to Syd & Andy & read some from Betty & home.

Monday 6th

Mar 6. Went to bed in the morning & in the afternoon  
Mon. went & saw the cinema we were greeted  
by the first picture being on VD - saw some  
terrible sights after which we saw a skating  
film with Kenny Baker singing not too bad  
at all. In the evening it was quite cold &  
we sat around listening to Robi & Tony playing  
a banjo & mouth organ respectively. Earlier  
George had been telling me about some of his  
experiences & also his meeting of an Estonian  
woman he knows in Palestine.

Went to bed in the morning & in the afternoon went & saw the cinema we were greeted on the first picture being on VD & saw some terrible sights after which we saw a skating film with Kenny Baker singing not too bad at all. In the evening it was quite cold & we sat around listening to Robi & Tony playing a banjo & mouth organ respectively. Earlier George had been telling me about some of his experiences & also his meeting of an Estonian woman he knows in Palestine.

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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Tuesday 7th

Mon 7. We were very busy indeed in the morning. In the afternoon I went & collected my ring which was having made which I thought was very good in any case I shall always like it because of Betty's photo it contains. We also collected our washing & also our canteen. I also went & had a hair cut. Read terrific letter from Betty 28 pages

We were very busy in the morning in the afternoon I went & collected my ring was having made which I thought was very good in any case I shall always like it because of Betty's photo it contains. We also collected our washing & also our canteen also went & had a haircut. Read terrific letter from Betty 28 pages.

Wednesday 8th

Mon 8. It was raining in the morning & there was no parade. Moved about somewhat & then went for a shower after this had lunch & then duty. In the evening we received a terrific letter from Betty & also newspaper from Auntie Mag. During the evening we drank our beer & chatted. Night duty came round & I was due to do middle turn. Ernie did not come in as he was going on the step up tomorrow but Ron came on in his place. Tom should have gone off early but did not feel like stopping awake so I said I would. I settled down to write but at 0155 had to wake Tom up & dash off to the lavatory it was a terrible night after this I went off!

It was raining in the morning & there was no parade. Moved about somewhat & then went for a shower after this had lunch & then duty. In the evening received a terrific airletter from Betty & also newspaper from Auntie Mag. During the evening we drank our beer & chatted. Night duty came round & I was due to do middle turn. Ernie did not come in as he was going on the step up tomorrow but Ron came on in his place. Tom should have

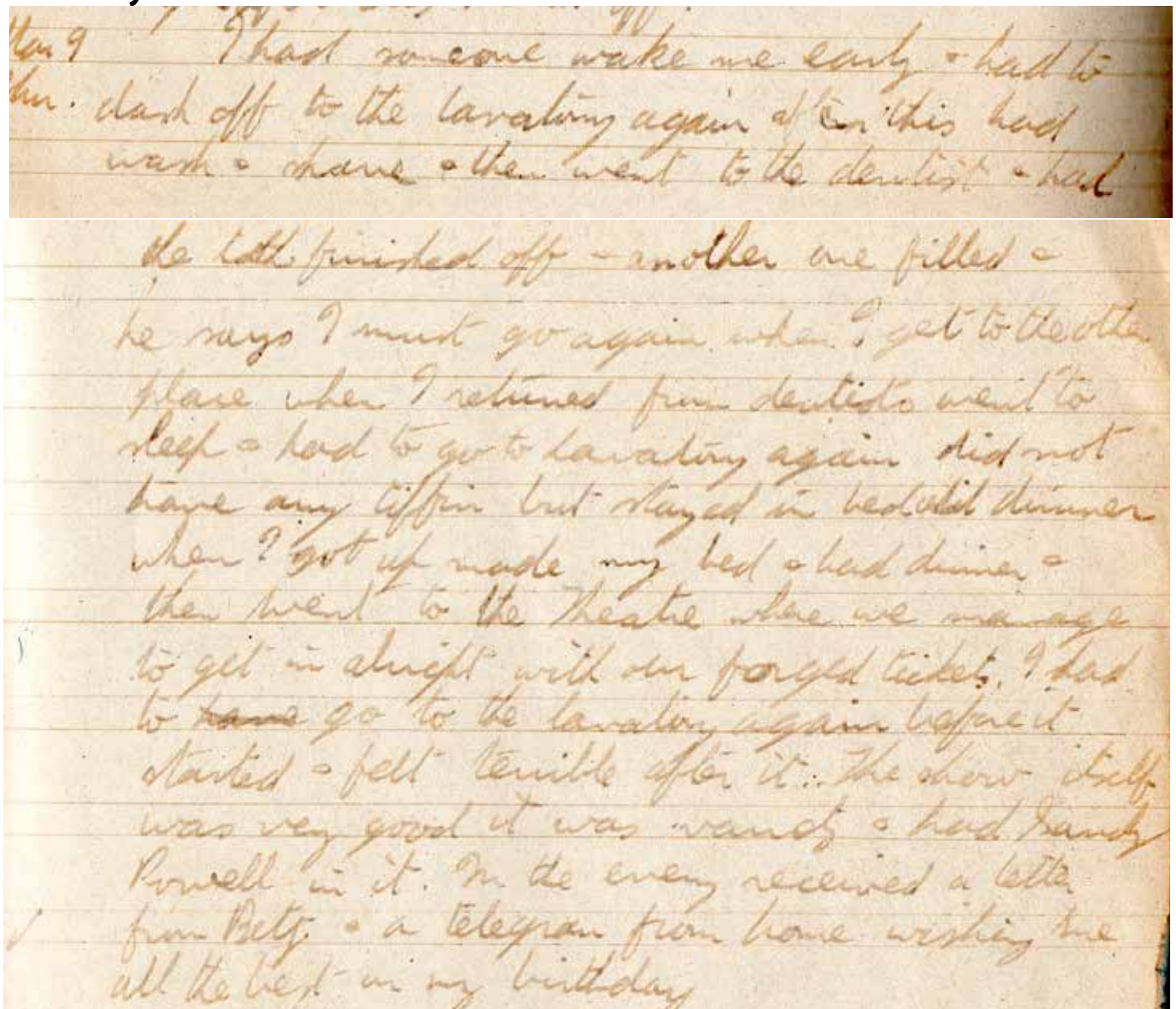
120 March 1944



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

gone off early but did not feel like stopping awake so I said I would. settled down to write but at 0155 had to wake Tom up & dash off to the lavatory it was a terrible night after this went off.

## Thursday 9th



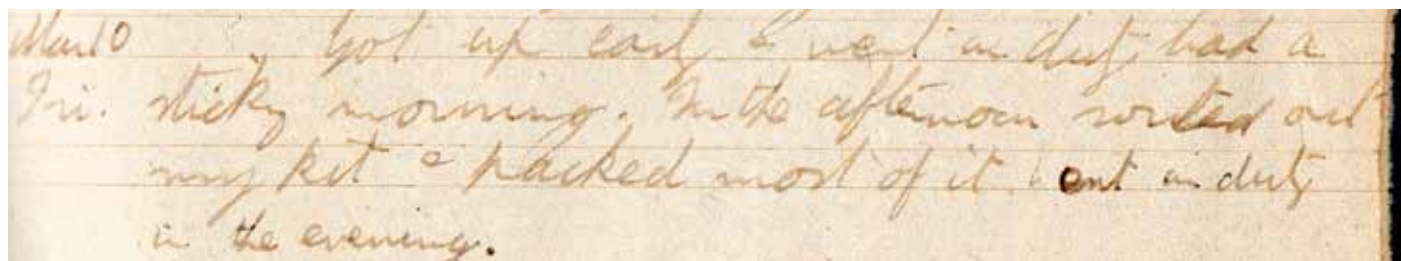
Mon 9 I had someone wake me early & had to dash off to the lavatory again after this had wash & shave & then went to the dentist & had the tooth finished off - another one filled & he says I must go again when I get to the other place when I returned from dentists went to sleep & had to go to lavatory again did not have any tiffin but stayed in bed a bit dinner when I got up made my bed & had dinner & then went to the theatre where we managed to get in alright with our forged tickets. I had to go to the lavatory again before it started & felt terrible after it. The show itself was very good it was variety & had Sandy Powell in it. In the evening received a letter from Betty & a telegram from home wishing me all the best on my birthday.

I had someone wake me early & had to dash off to the lavatory again. After this had wash & shave & then went to the dentist & had the tooth finished off & another one filled & he says I must go again when I get to the other place when I returned from dentists went to sleep & had to go to the lavatory again did not have any tiffin but stayed in bed a bit dinner when I got up made my bed & had dinner & then went to the theatre where we managed to get in with forged tickets. I had to go to the lavatory again before it started & felt terrible after it. The show itself was very good it was variety & had Sandy Powell in it. In the evening received a letter from Betty & a telegram from home wishing me all the best on my birthday.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

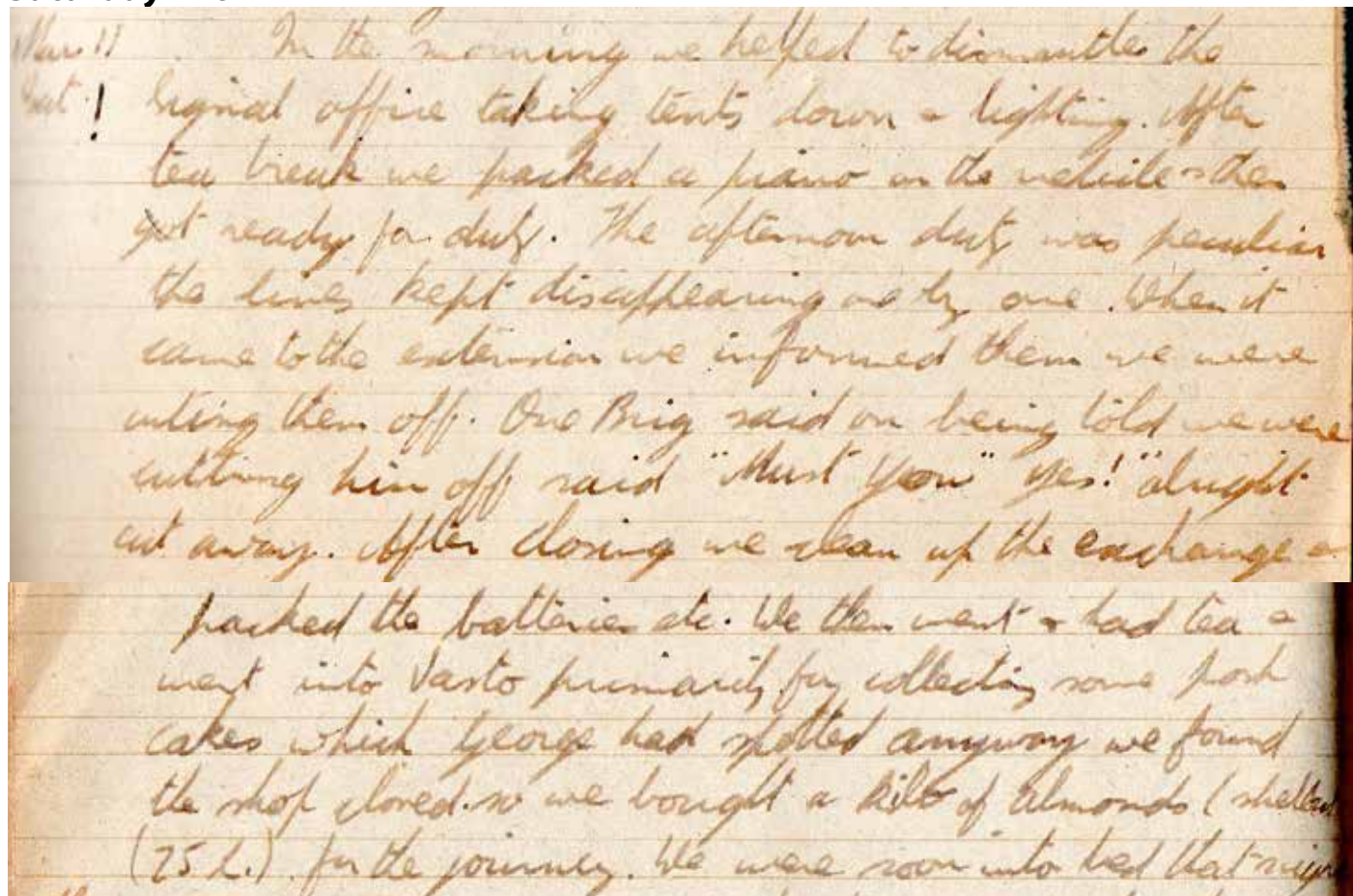
Friday 10th<sup>2</sup>



Mar 10 Got up early & went on duty had a Fri. sticky morning. In the afternoon sorted out my kit & packed most of it & went on duty in the evening.

Got up early & went on duty had a sticky morning. In the afternoon sorted out my kit & packed most of it. Went on duty in the evening.

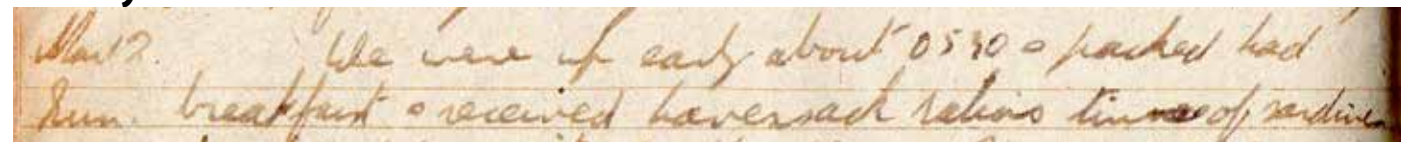
Saturday 11th



Mar 11 In the morning we helped to dismantle the signal office taking tents down & lighting. After tea break we packed a piano in the vehicle & then got ready for duty. The afternoon duty was peculiar the lines kept disappearing one by one. When it came to the extension we informed them we were cutting them off. One Brig said on being told we were cutting him off said "Must you" Yes! "Alright cut away. After closing we clean up the exchange & packed the batteries etc. We then went & had tea & went into Vasto primarily for collecting some posh cakes which George had spotted anyway we found the shop closed so we bought a kilo of almonds (shelled (25 L.) for the journey. We were soon into bed that night.

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Sunday 12th



Mar 12 We were up early about 0530 & packed had Sun. breakfast & received haversack rebus tin & of sundies



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

• packet of biscuits. We then (George & I) went to the TM Sect for our lorry. After much pondering we boarded the TM a huge lancia enclosed vehicle. We managed to strap the door open & started. It was a very wet journey & George said we would meet snow. I kept pulling his leg about it & he kept saying wait! We waited Vasto Termoli Larino & then the snow through Campobasso & then we halted at the side of the road in the evening & it was snowing & windy we were actually near Vinchiaturo had a dinner M&V & sardines & tea. We then went to the truck the driver & his mate got a couple of beds across the back from a locker to a bench & then George & I got down on the benches & we had a radio on & lights & it was a good night's sleep

We were up early about 0530 & packed had breakfast & received haversack rations tin of sardines & packet of biscuits. We then (George & I) went to the TM Sect for our lorry. After much pondering we boarded the TM a huge lancia enclosed vehicle. We managed to strap the door open & started. It was a very wet journey & George said we would meet snow. I kept pulling his leg about it & he kept saying wait: we waited Vasto, Termoli, Larino & then the snow through Campobasso & then we halted at the side of the road in the evening & it was snowing & windy we were actually near Vinchiaturo had a dinner M&V & sardines & tea. We then went to the truck the driver & his mate got a couple of beds across the back from a locker to a bench & then George & I got down on the benches & we had a radio on & lights & it was a good night's sleep

## Monday 13th

Mar 13  
Mon. - The day was lovely the sun was shining  
- we could see the scenery round about the town nestling in the valley. The lorry had a lot of starting & the lancia had to be towed & she would not go into third gear so we had to have gear box to

bits. While this was going on we were deciding to wash or have & had just got the water when we started



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

we finished our shave & held the can while the other wash the lorry was swaying something deadly. We soon left the snow & could not have the door open for dust. The evening was very good we stopped once for a brew up & arrived at the new sight at about 1600 hrs. Ian had a tent for George & I & we parked ourselves. I had to help put a tent up for Officers mess. After dinner made Robi's bed up for George & then we installed ourselves in the tent. Then went for water. Took us ages to find the well & when we did we got terribly muddy. On coming back had a wash & then a drink of beer & bed. Ian was on duty.

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## Tuesday 14th

Monday  
This next morning woke to find a lovely day & we shave etc but had not fatigues we went to the well & got water & then got ready for duty. The afternoon duty went down bad as we were on the old lanching & everything was queer. In the evening we managed to get some mail two from Betty & one from Olive. We had a quiet time as we were on duty later & would get little sleep due to the boards being swapped. This process took nearly all the night & we were very tired next morning

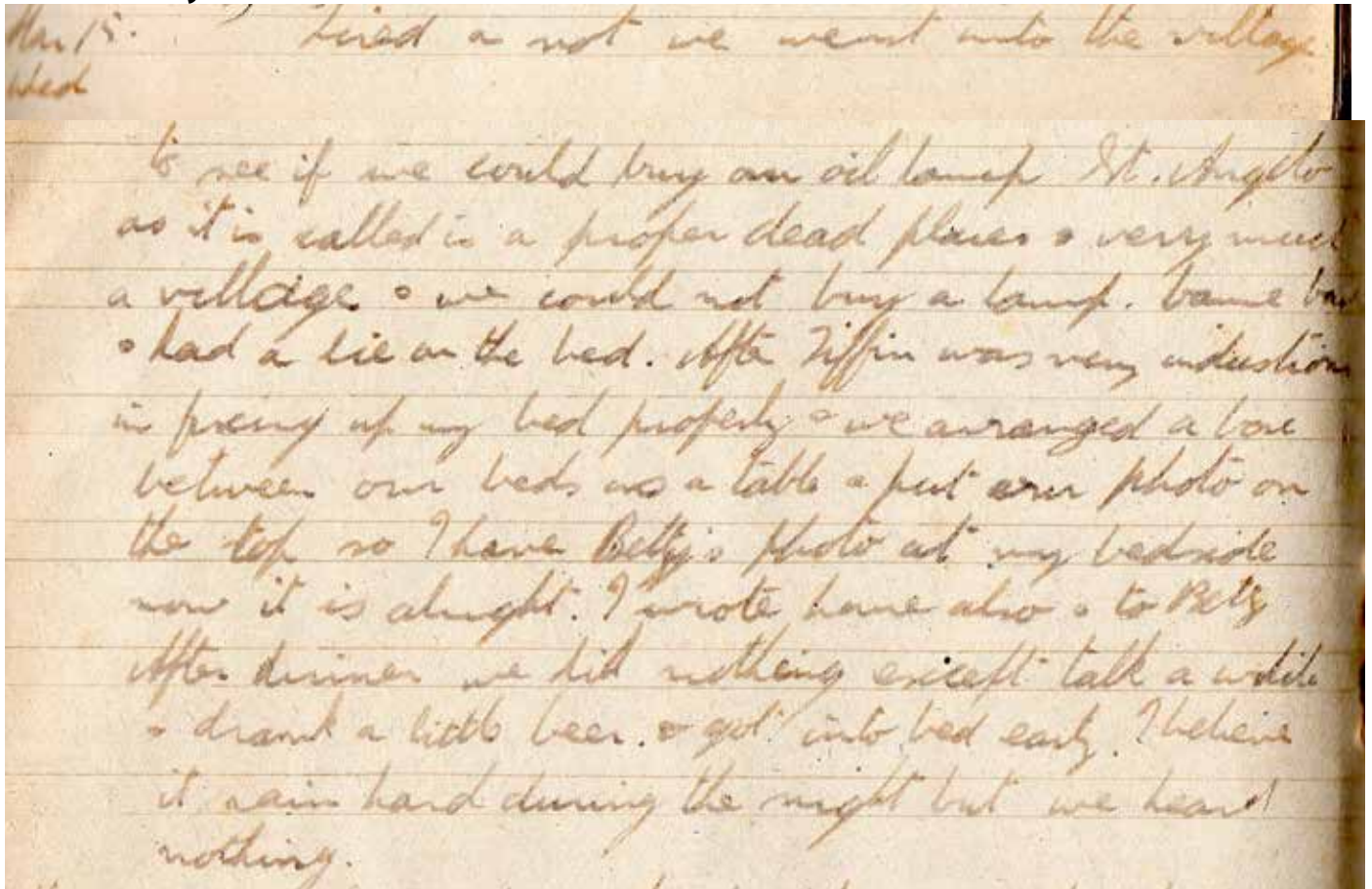
124 March 1944



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

This next morning woke to find a lovely day & we shave etc. but had not fatigues we went to the well & got water & then got ready for duty. The afternoon duty went down bad as we were on the old exchange & everything was queer. In the evening we managed to get some mail two from Betty & one from Olive<sup>3</sup>. We had a quiet time as we were on duty later & would get little sleep due to the boards being swopped. This process took nearly all night & we were very tired next morning.

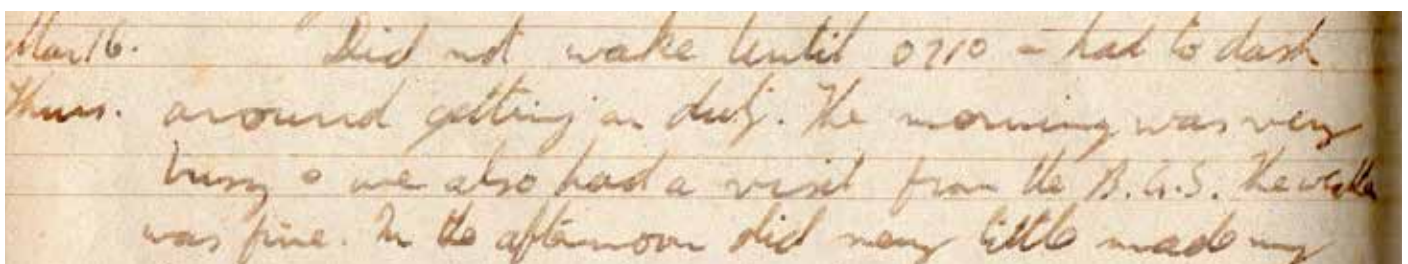
## Wednesday 15th



Wed. Tired or not we went into the village to see if we could buy an oil lamp. St. Angelo<sup>4</sup> as it is called is a proper dead place & very much a village & we could not buy a lamp. Came back & had a lie on the bed. After tiffin was very industrious in fixing up my bed properly & we arranged a box between our beds as a table & put our photo on the top so I have Betty's photo at my bedside now it is alright. I wrote home also & to Betty. After dinner we did nothing except talk a while & drank a little beer & got into bed early. I believe it rain hard during the night but we heard nothing.

Tired or not we went into the village to see if we could buy an oil lamp. St. Angelo<sup>4</sup> as it is called is a proper dead place & very much a village & we could not buy a lamp. Came back & had a lie on the bed. After tiffin was very industrious in fixing up my bed properly & we arranged a box between our beds as a table & put our photo on the top so I have Betty's photo at my bedside now it is alright. I wrote home also & to Betty. After dinner we did nothing except talk a while & drank a little beer & got into bed early. I believe it rain hard during the night but we heard nothing.

## Thursday 16th



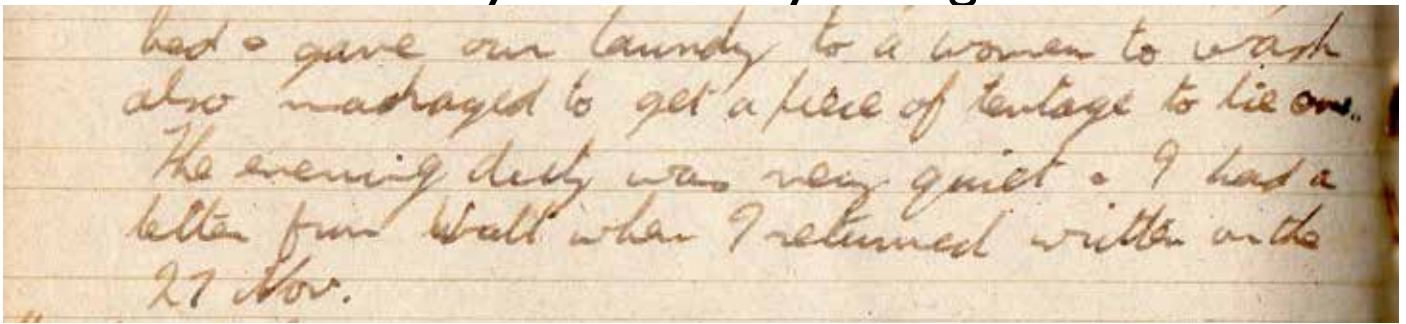
Thurs. Did not wake until 0710 - had to dash around getting on duty. The morning was very busy & we also had a visit from the B.G.S. The work was fine. In the afternoon did very little made my

3 My Mum's double cousin.

4 Sant'Angelo Limosano



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

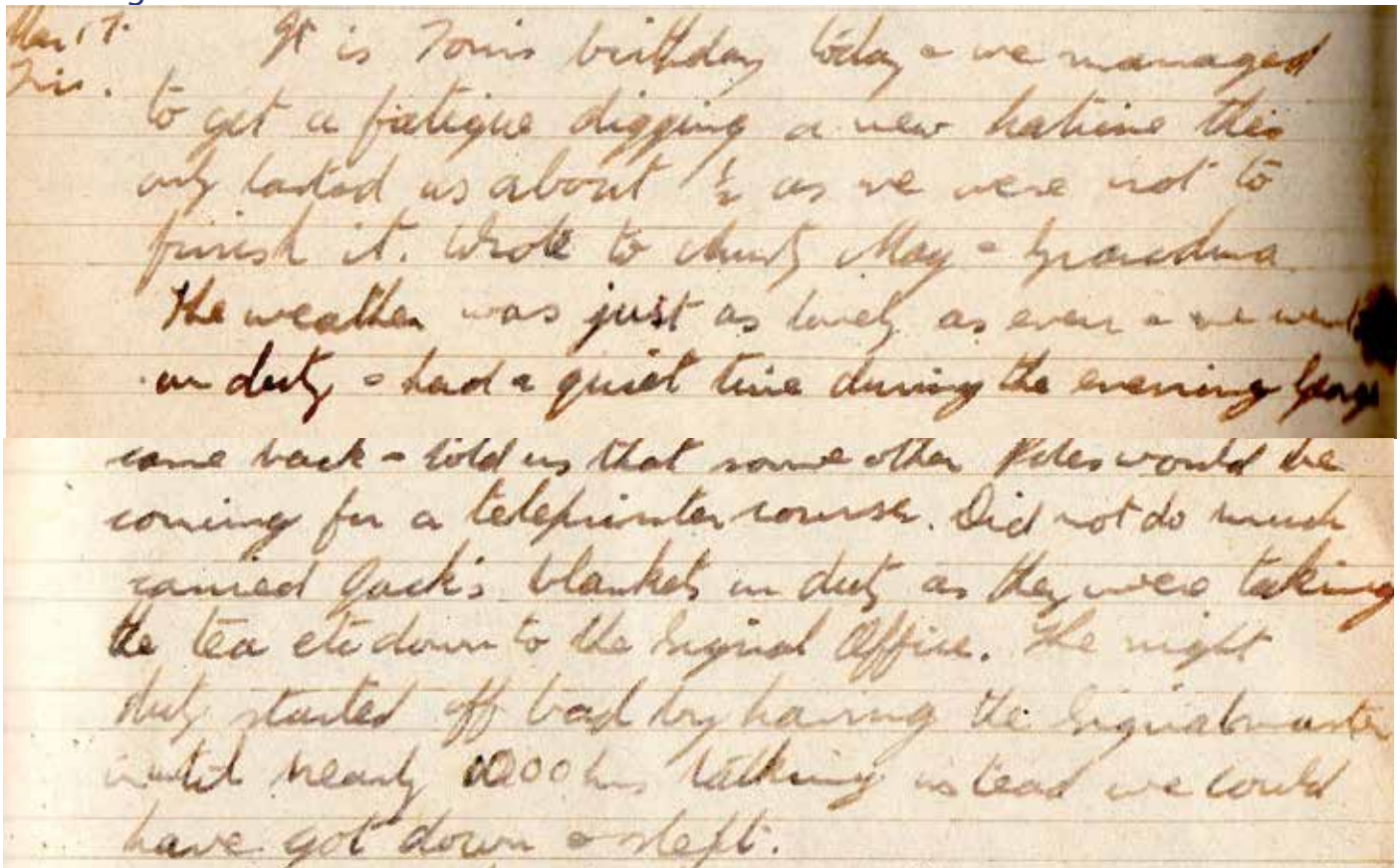


had - gave our laundry to a woman to wash  
also managed to get a piece of tentage to lie on.  
The evening duty was very quiet - I had a  
letter from Walt when I returned written on the  
27 Nov.

Did not wake until 0710 & had to dash around getting on duty. The morning was very busy & we also had a visit from the B.G.S. The weather was fine. In the afternoon did very little made my bed & gave our laundry to a woman to wash also managed to get a piece of tentage to lie on. The evening duty was very quiet & I had a letter from Walt when I returned written on the 27 Nov.

## Friday 17th<sup>5</sup>

The Allies launch a heavy assault on Monte Cassino, which has been nearly razed by allied bombing.



Nov 17.  
Fri. It is Tom's birthday today & we managed  
to get a fatigue digging a new latrine this  
only lasted us about 1/2 as we were not to  
finish it. Wrote to Aunt Mag & Grandma.  
The weather was just as lovely as ever & we were  
on duty - had a quiet time during the evening George  
came back - told us that some other Poles would be  
coming for a teleprinter course. Did not do much  
carried Jack's blankets on duty as they were taking  
the tea etc down to the Signal Office. The night  
duty started off bad by having the Signalmaster  
in until nearly 0000 hrs. Talking instead we could  
have got down & slept.

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5 This is the centre of the first diary and the day Vesuvius erupted.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Saturday 18th

Mar 18 Did nothing in the morning except have  
a doze & a bath in the old tin. In the afternoon  
Ian & I went a walk up a hill behind us on  
the top of which was the ruins of old St Angelo a  
Roman Relic. The Germans had made a stand  
up there. We continued down the other side &  
half way up a hill at the back. I thoroughly  
enjoyed it & the weather was grand. After dinner  
helped George along with his English he has great  
difficulty with "th" sounds.

Did nothing in the morning except have a doze & a bath in the old tin. In the afternoon, Ian & I went a walk up a hill behind us on the top of which was the ruins of old St. Angelo a Roman Relic. The Germans had made a stand up there. We continued down the other side & half way up a hill at the back. I thoroughly enjoyed it & the weather was grand. After dinner helped George along with his English he has great difficulty with "th" sounds.

Sunday 19th

Mar 19 Another lovely day duty in the morning I  
also received a letter from Betty which was rather  
shaking but realise it is all my fault. Wrote  
home & to Betty in the afternoon. We handed  
our rifles in the QM for overhaul today. Evening  
duty was very quiet. On coming back to the  
tent George was awake & had also managed  
a hurricane lamp from somewhere & we had  
a bottle of beer between the three of us.

Another lovely day duty in the morning I also received a letter from Betty which was rather shaking but realise it is all my fault. Wrote home & to Betty in the afternoon. We handed in our rifles in the QM for overhaul today. Evening duty was very quiet. On coming back to the tent George was awake & had also managed a hurricane lamp from somewhere & we had a bottle of beer between the three of us.

March 1944127



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Monday 20th

Mar 20 The usual parade this time no fatigues  
I tried my hand at making a drinking glass from a bottle & managed one. The weather was again marvelous. This site is great & I enjoy it much better here than at Vasto. The camp is on a little slope & at the back and all around are hills some of them in the background have still got snow on them & must be pretty high. We have all managed to rig up some sort of bed & Tom & I have a box between us on which we place our photo & inside stand our odds & ends. The afternoon duty passed very easily & at the end of it found that Tom was due to stand down for a week. He was not looking forward to it very much. While I was eating my dinner who should turn up but Andy who had move in with 4 R.F.S. for the Daf sign he came back to the tent & chatted for most of the evening. The others in the tent were making chips & we all had a few. Night duty passed as usual.

The normal parade this time no fatigues. I tried my hand at making a drinking glass from a bottle<sup>6</sup> & managed one. The weather was again marvelous. This site is great & I enjoy it much better here than at Vasto. The camp is on a little slope & at the back and all around are hills. Some of them in the background have still got snow on them & must be pretty high. We have all managed to rig up some sort of bed & Tom & I have a box between us on which we place our photo & inside store our odds & ends. The afternoon duty passed very easily & at the end of it found that Tom was due to stand down for a week. He was not looking forward to it very much. While I was eating my dinner who should turn up but Andy who had move in with 4 R.F.S. for the Daf sign he came back to the tent & chatted for most of the evening. The others in the tent were making chips & we all had a few. Night duty passed as usual.

6 Don't try this at home but my Dad explained how he did this. Take a glass bottle and piece of string soaked in parafin. Tie the string around the bottle at required height and light. Then plunge the bottle into cold water and it should get a clean break. Then use a pebble to grind off sharp edges.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Tuesday 21st

Mar 21  
Tues. Finish a book I was reading just had a couple of chapters & then had a sleep felt quite tired. After tiffin & went to see if I could get a bath but found that the alleged bathhouse was only for camp staff so I came back & got wet because it was raining slightly. On returning the Sgt. came & told George that two of his friends were coming & we could all go into a new tent which was ready to be put up so George & I started & had help from the Sgt. & Andy who

turned up. Later Tom turned up wondering what it was all about. We eventually all settled in just before tea. George Roman & another pole Tom & I. Just the job. After tea had a little white wine which they had brought with them the best I had had since coming to Italy. Loffty also issued the two with naafi including an extra bottle for George Tom & I. So in the evening Andy came & we had bread cheese & beer & a chat by the old hurricane lamp.

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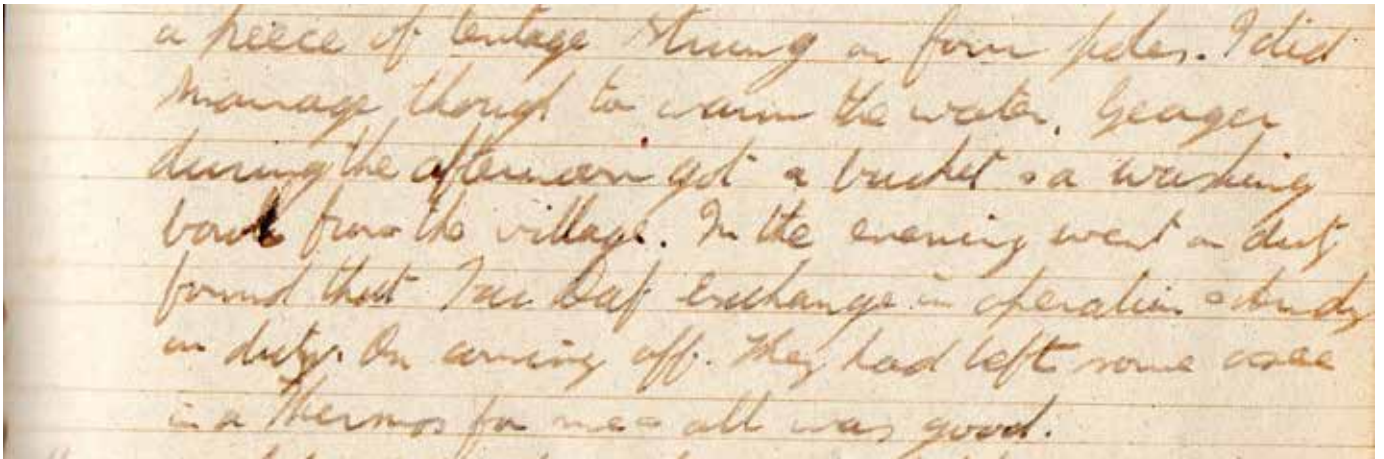
Wednesday 22nd

Mar 22  
Wed. On duty without Tom & were very busy. got it was terrific. In the afternoon we came off our tent & I had a bath in our bathhouse. which is

March 1944129



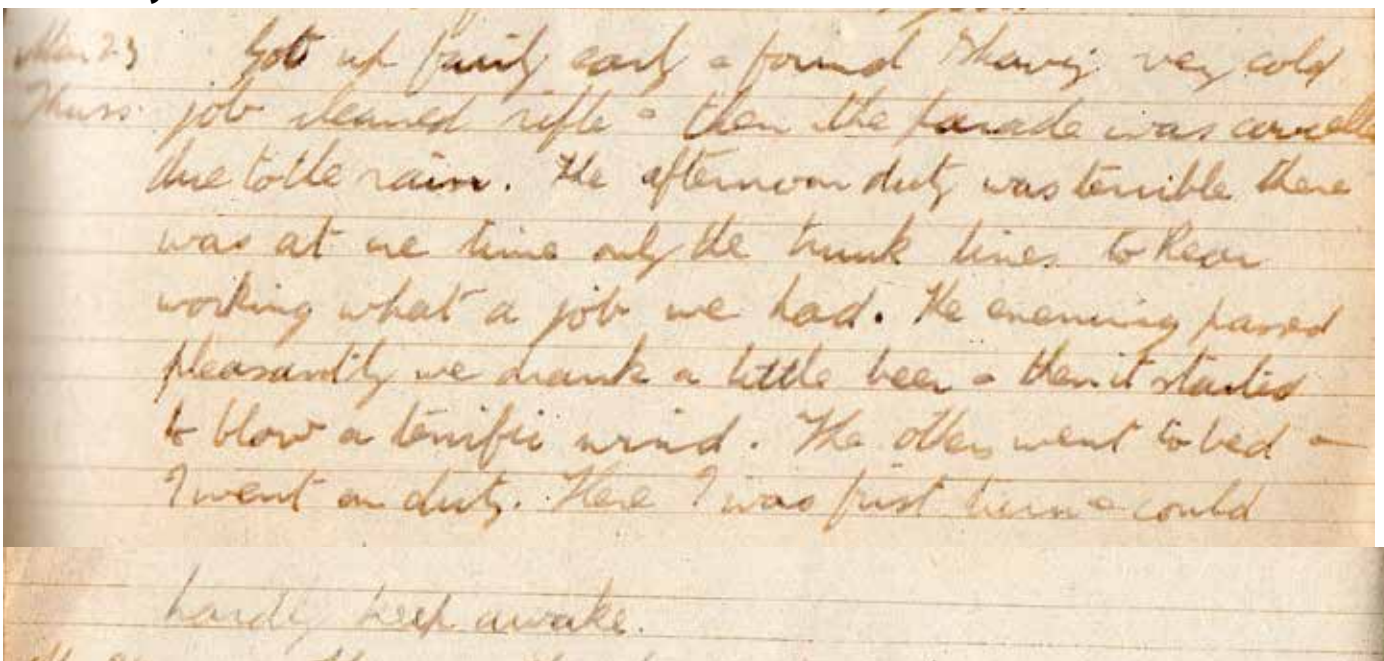
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



a piece of tentage strung on four poles. I did manage though to warm the water. George during the afternoon got a bucket & a washing bowl from the village. In the evening went on duty found that Tac Daf exchange in operation & Andy on duty. On coming off. They had left some oxo in a thermos for me - all was good.

On duty without Tom & were we busy gosh it was terrific. In the afternoon we camouflaged our tent & I had a bath in our bath house. which is a piece of tentage strung on some poles. I did manage though to warm the water. George during the afternoon got a bucket & a washing bowl from the village. In the evening went on duty found that Tac Daf exchange in operation & Andy on duty on coming off. They had left oxo in a thermos for me & all was good.

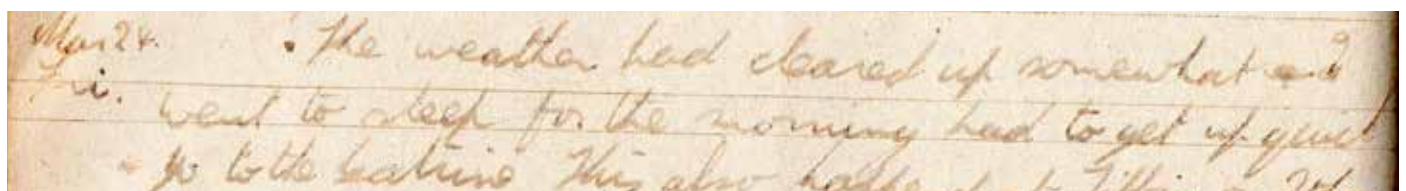
## Thursday 23rd



Mar 23 Got up fairly early & found shaving very cold job. Cleaned rifle & then the parade was cancelled due to the rain. The afternoon duty was terrible there was at one time only the trunk lines to rear working what a job we had. The evening passed pleasantly we drank a little beer & then it started to blow a terrific wind. The others went to bed & I went on duty. Here I was first turn & could hardly keep awake.

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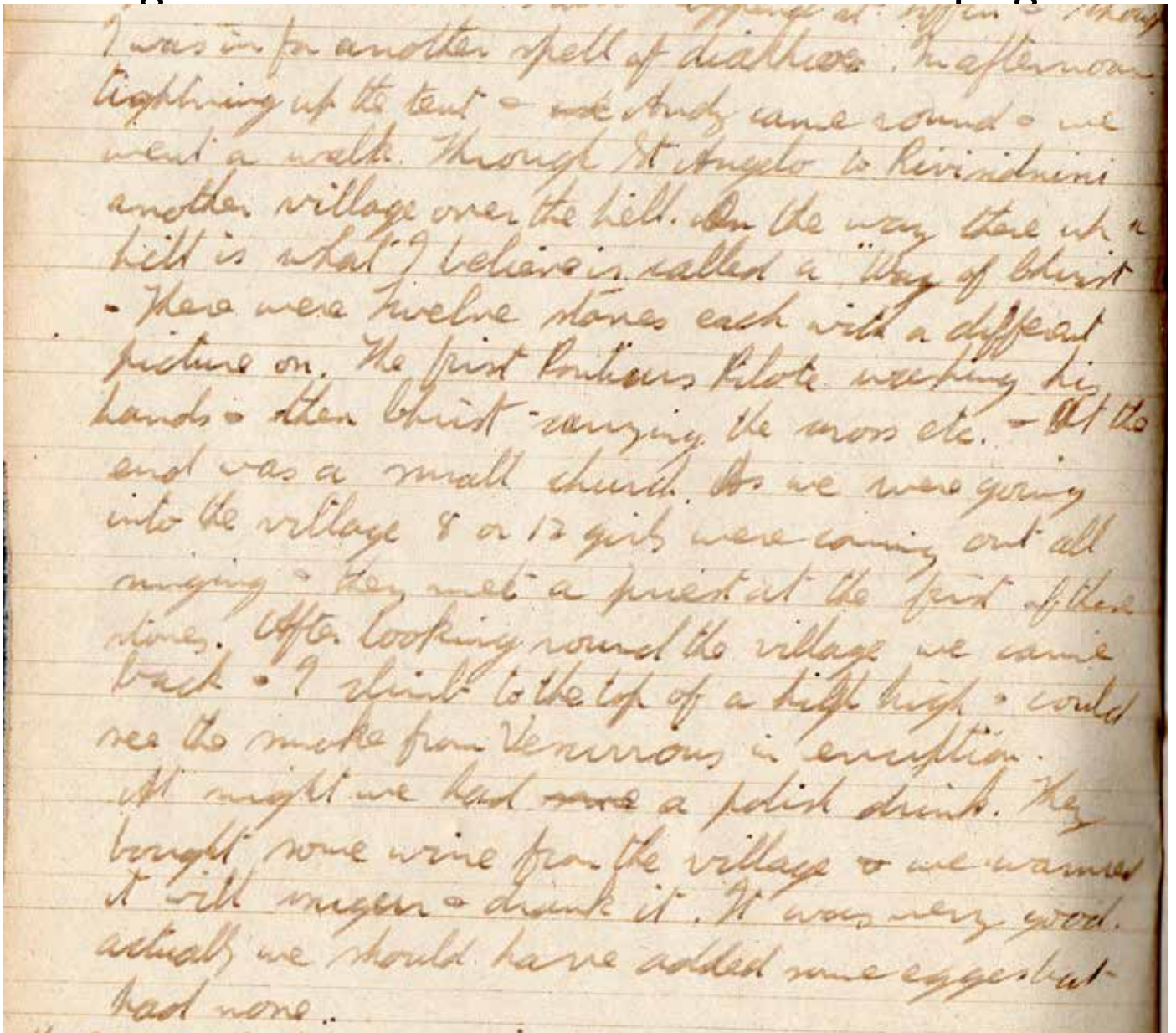
## Friday 24th



Mar 24 The weather had cleared up somewhat & I went to sleep for the morning had to get up quick & go to the latrine. This also happened at 11:00 & 11:30.



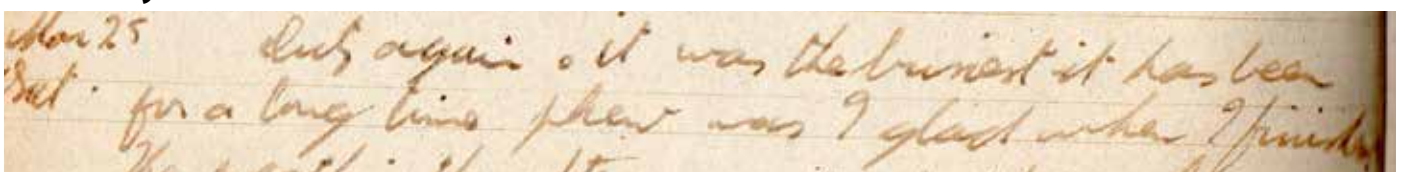
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



I was in for another spell of diarrhoea. In afternoon tightening up the tent & when Andy came round & we went a walk. Through St. Angelo to Raviscanina another village over the hill. On the way there up a hill is what I believe is called a "Way of Christ" - there were twelve stones each with a different picture on. The first Pontius Pilate washing his hands & then Christ carrying the cross etc. - At the end was a small church. As we were going into the village 8 or 12 girls were coming out all singing & they met a priest at the first of these stones. After looking round the village we came back & I climb to the top of a high hill & could see the smoke from Vesuvius in eruption. At night we had some a Polish drink. They brought some wine from the village & we warmed it with sugar & drank it. It was very good. actually we should have added some eggs but had none.

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## Saturday 25th



But again & it was the burniest it has been for a long time. I was glad when I finished.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

The weather in the afternoon was terrible cold & miserable looking. In the evening I also had

to come on as supervisor. It also blowed very hard during the evening.

Duty again & it was the busiest it has been for a long time. Phew was I glad when i Finished. The weather the afternoon was terrible cold & miserable looking. In the evening I also had to come on as supervisor. It also blowed very hard during the evening.

## Sunday 26th

Mar 26. I got up rather late this morning but there was no duty or parade & the weather was cold as usual. Duty as usual in afternoon in the evening we had a little drink of wine & went on duty. It was a terrible night as we did not stop until 23:50 & could not get down until then.

I got up rather later this morning but there was not duty or parade & the weather was cold as usual. Duty as usual in the afternoon in the evening we had a little drink of wine & went on duty. It was a terrible night as we did not stop until 23:50 & could not get down until then.

## Monday 27th

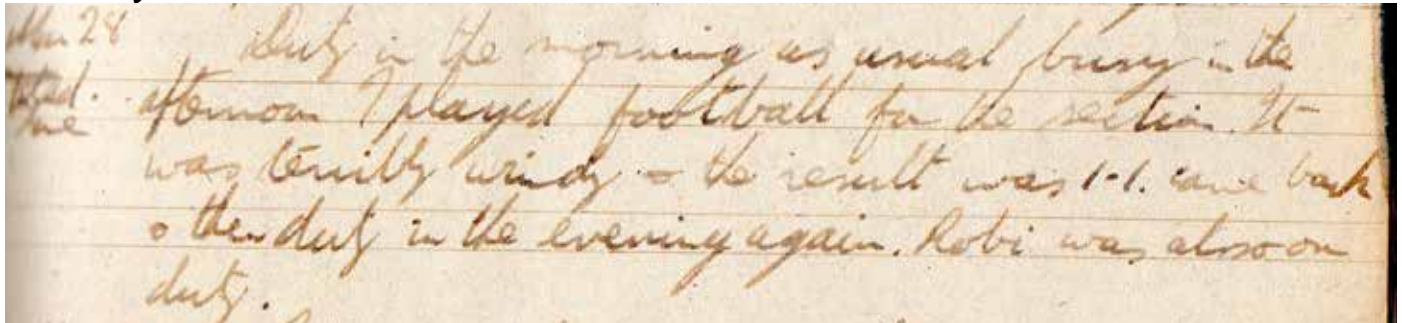
Mar 27. I came off duty & had a bath after warming up some hot water with the help of George after this I went to bed until dinner. In the afternoon played Roman at chess & got beat. Then Ron came along & we went up the mountain & climbed to the highest peak which is about 4000ft. we are 1000 ft up. We had a marvellous view from the top & could see old Vesuvius's smoke in the distance came back & had quite an early night for a change. Bob arrived from Vasto & he said the place was dead but had had a grand time.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

I came off duty & had a bath after warming up some water with the help of George after this I went to bed until dinner. In the afternoon played Roman at chess & got beat. Then Ron came along & we went up the mountain & climbed to the highest peak which is about 4000 ft. We are at 1000 ft up. We had a marvellous view from the top & could see old Vesuvius's smoke in the distance came back & had quite an early night for a change oh Robi arrived from Vasto & he said the place was dead but had had a grand time.

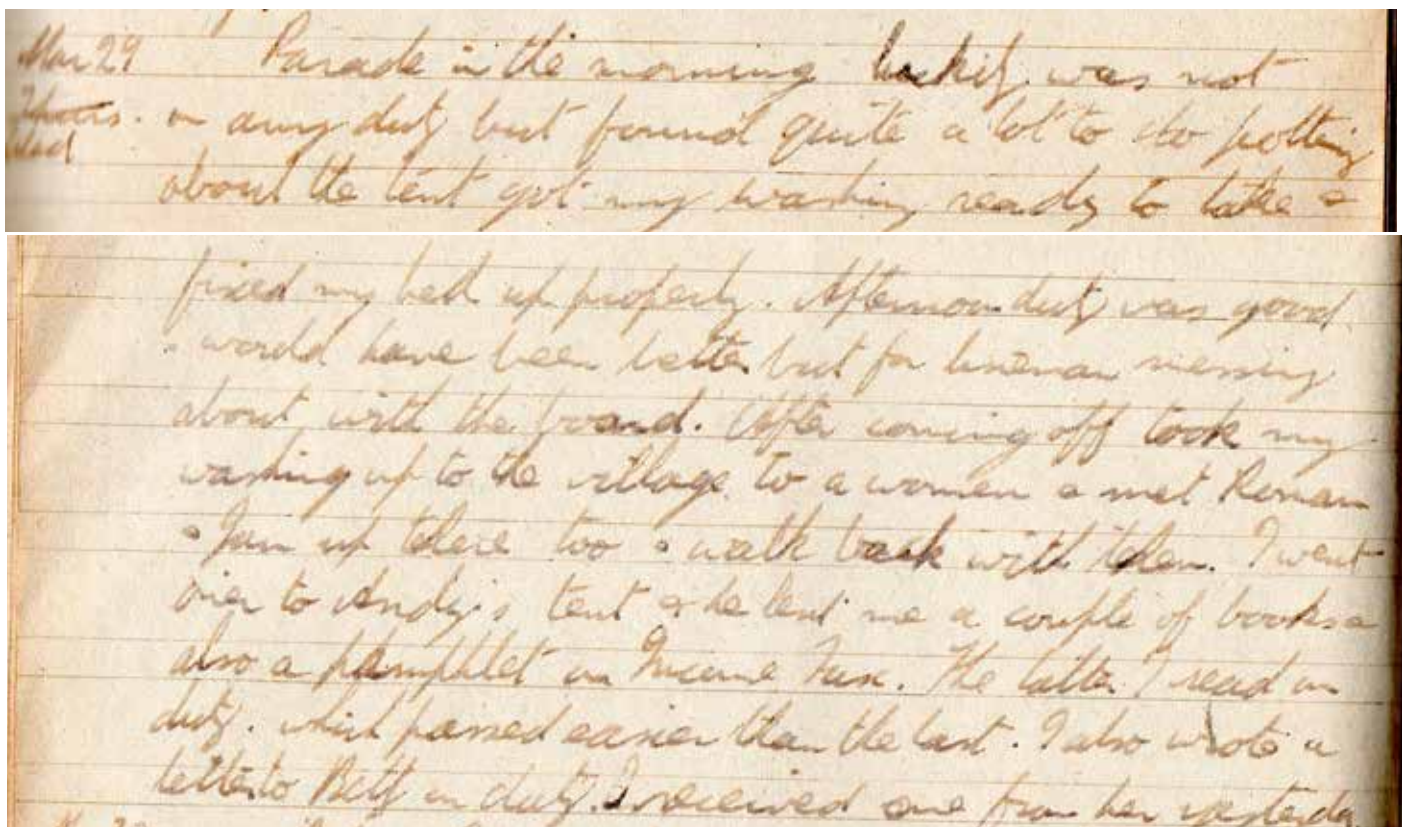
## Tuesday 28th



Mar 28  
Duty in the morning as usual busy in the afternoon I played football for the section. It was terribly windy & the result was 1-1. Came back & then duty in the evening again. Robi was also on duty.

Duty in the morning as usual busy in the afternoon I played football for the section. It was terribly windy so the result was 1-1. Came back & then duty in the evening again. Robi was also on duty.

## Wednesday 29th



Mar 29  
Parade in the morning luckily was not on any duty but found quite a lot to do pottering about the tent got my washing ready to take & fixed my bed up properly. Afternoon duty was good would have been better but for lineman messing about with the board. After coming off took my washing up to the village to a woman & met Roman & Ian up there too & walk back with them. I went over to Andy's tent & he lent me a couple of books & also a pamphlet on Income Tax. The latter I read on duty which passed easier than the last. I also wrote a letter to Betty on duty. I received one from her yesterday.

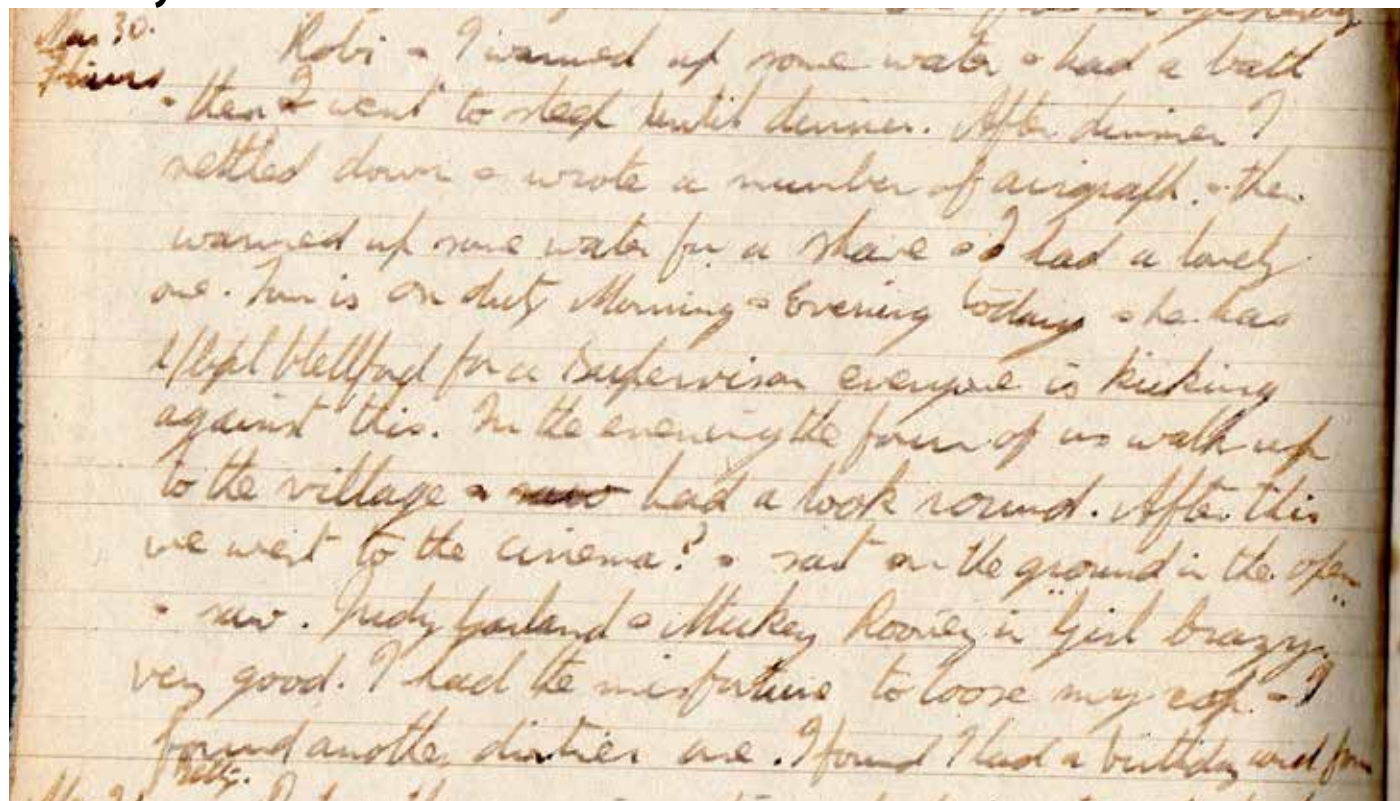
Parade in the morning luckily was not on any duty but found quite a lot to do pottering about the tent got my washing ready to take & fixed my bed up properly. Afternoon duty was good would have been better but for lineman messing about with the board. After coming off took my washing to the village to a woman & met Roman & Ian up there too & walk back with them. I went over to Andy's tent & he lent me a couple of books & also a pamphlet on Income Tax. The latter I read on duty which passed easier than the last. I also



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

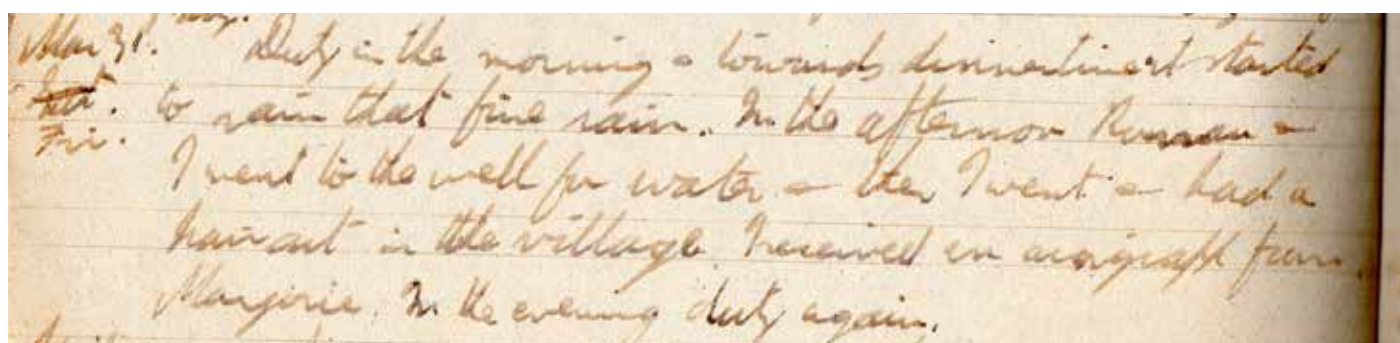
wrote a letter to Betty on duty & received one from her yesterday.

## Thursday 30th



Robi & I warmed up some water & then had a bath & then I went to sleep until dinner. After dinner I settled down & wrote a number of airgraph & then warmed up some water for a shave & I had a lovely one. Ian is on duty morning & evening today & he has l/cpl Blellford for a supervisor everyone is kicking against this. In the evening the four of us walk up to the village & had a look around. After this we went to the cinema? sat on the ground in the open & saw Judy Garland & Mickey Rooney in "Girl Crazy" very good. I had the misfortune to loose my top & found another dirtier one. I found I had a birthday card from Betty.

## Friday 31st



Duty in the morning & toward dinner time it started to rain that fine rain. In the afternoon Roman & I went to the well for water & then I went & had a hair cut in the village. I received an airgraph from Marjorie. In the evening duty again



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## APRIL 1944

### Saturday 1st

April 1st  
Had to go on parade in the morning with rifles etc. was detail to go & level off football pitch but had an attack of diarrhoea & the rest had gone when I got there. Duty in the afternoon. In the evening had an argument as to how bridge is played with Ian & Roman. Later duty & we had an hour less due to the clock being put on.

Had to go on parade in the morning with rifles etc. was detail to go & level off football pitch but had an attack of diarrhoea & the rest had gone when I got there. Duty in the afternoon. In the evening had an argument as to how bridge is played with Ian & Roman. Later duty & we had an hour less due to clock being put on.

### Sunday 2nd

April 2nd  
Came off duty rather late as the relief had to put their beds outside for an inspection. Robi & I heated some water & had a bath after that I went to bed. After tiffin we went up to the village for our laundry which we collected & Robi took back. Roman & I carried on & went a walk in the hills it was a grand day. Roman I find a very decent fellow as he told us quite a lot of his life in Poland. When I got back we were lucky in getting some paraffin for the lamp wood for the fire & a bottle of petrol so we brewed up some oxo & put some in a flask for Tom.

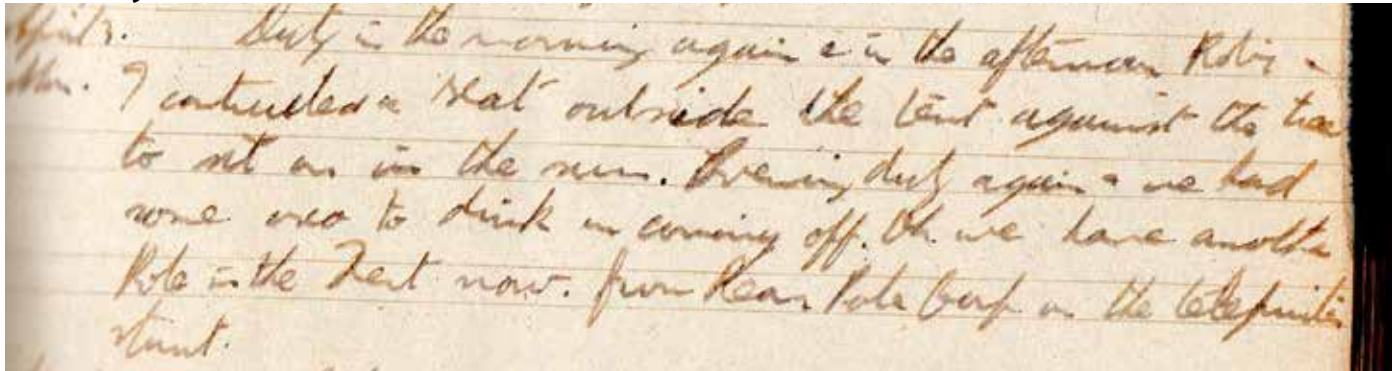
Came off duty rather late as the relief had to put their bed outside for an inspection. Robi & I heated some water & had a bath after that I went to bed. After tiffin we went up to the village for our laundry which we collected & Robi took back Roman. I carried on & went a walk in the hills it was a grand day. Roman I find a very decent fellow as he told us quite a lot about his life in Poland. When I got back we were lucky in getting some paraffin for the lamp, wood for the fire & a bottle of petrol so we brewed up some oxo & put some in a



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

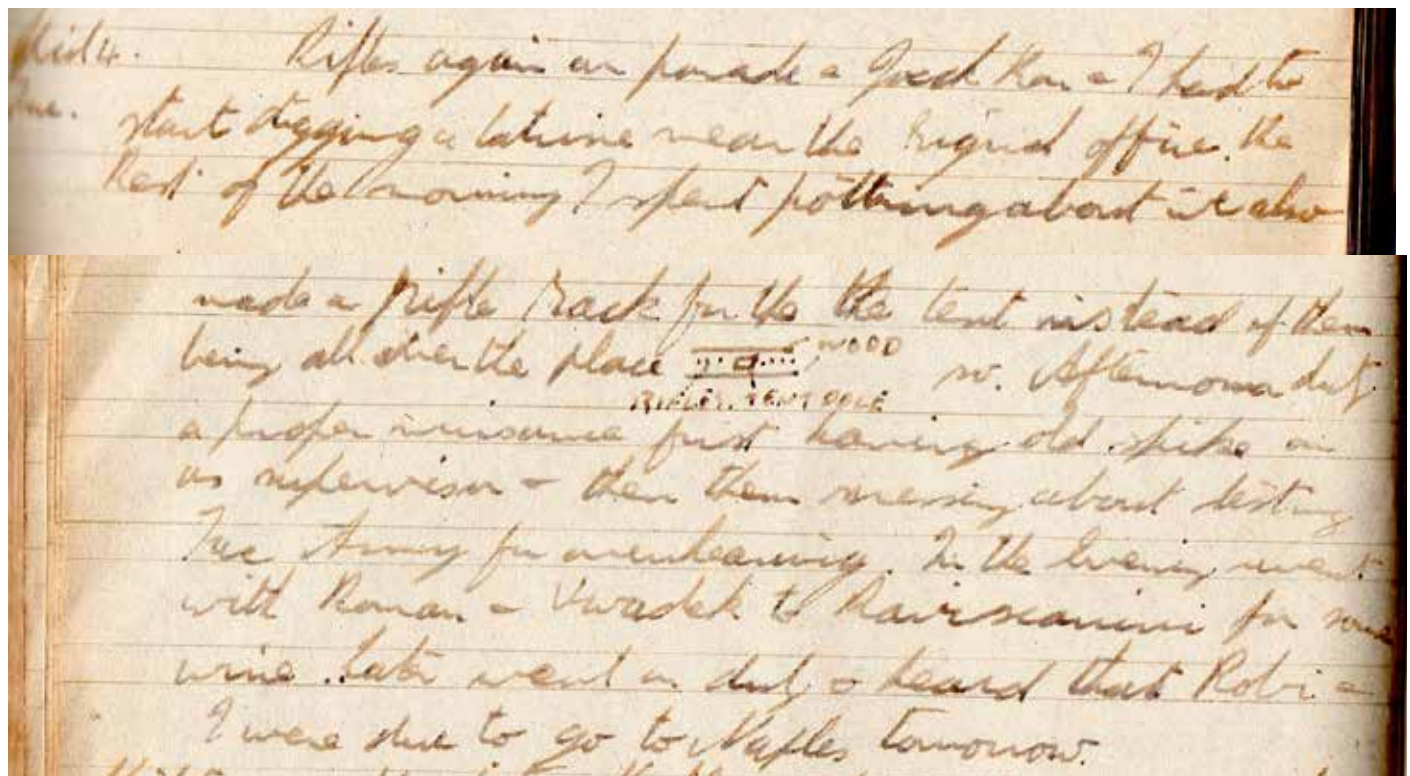
flask for Tom.

## Monday 3rd

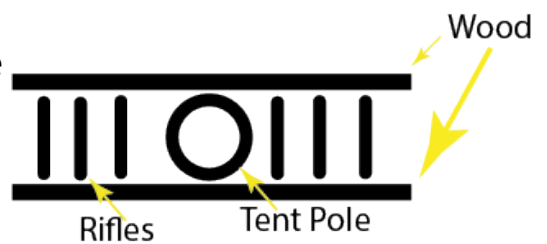


Duty in the morning again & in the afternoon Robi & I constructed a seat outside the tent against the tree to sit on in the sun. Evening duty again & we had some oxo to drink in the evening off. Oh we have another Pole in the tent now from rear pole group on the teleprinter stunt.

## Tuesday 4th



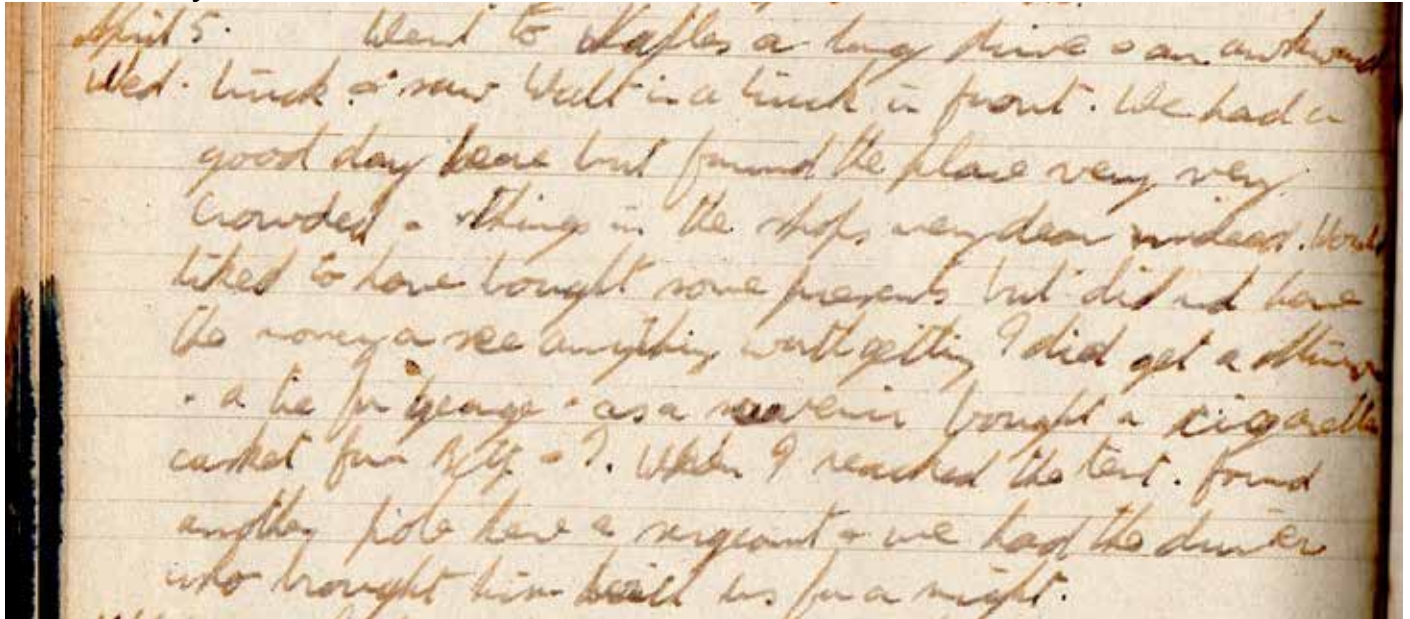
Rifles again on parade & Jock, Ron & I had to start digging a latrine near the signal office. The rest of the morning I spent pottering about we also made a rifle rack for the tent instead of them being all over the place (see right). Afternoon duty a proper nuisance just having old Spike on as supervisor & then them hearing about testing fac Army for overhearing. In the evening went with Roman & Vwadek to raviscanini for some wine. Later went on duty & heard that Robi & I were due to go to Naples tomorrow





# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

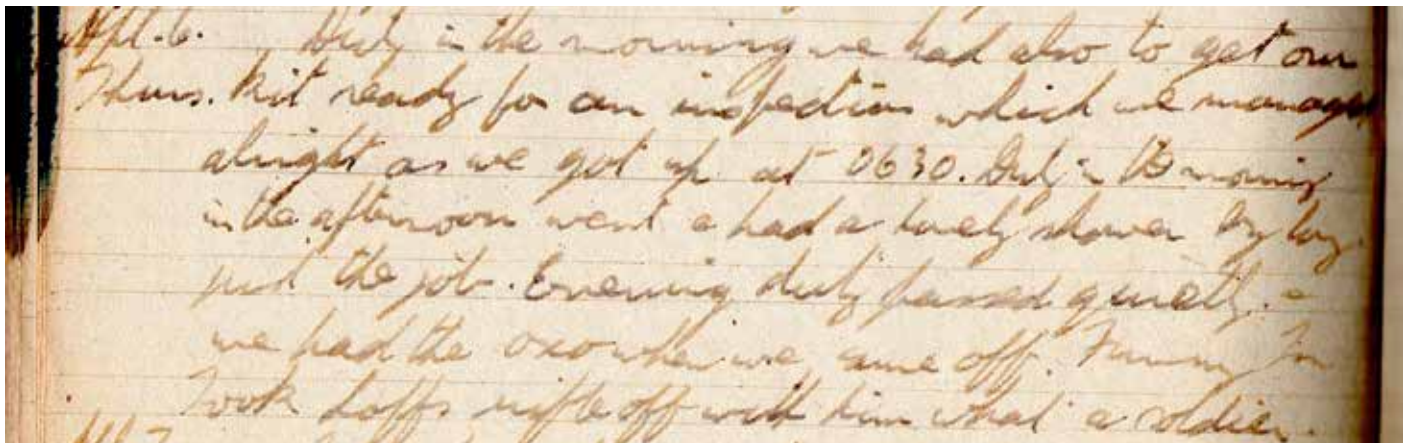
Wednesday 5th



April 5. Went to Naples a long drive & an awkward truck & saw Walt in a truck in front. We had a good day here but found the place very very crowded & things in the shops very dear indeed. Would like to have bought some presents but did not have the money or see anything worth getting. I did get a things & a tie for George as a souvenir bought a cigarette casket for Betty. When I reached the tent found another pole here a sergeant & we had the driver who brought him with us for a night.

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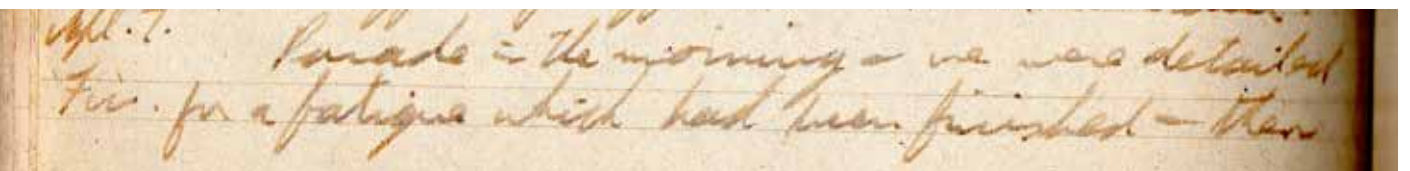
Thursday 6th



April 6. Duty in the morning we had also to get our kit ready for an inspection which we managed alright as we got up at 0630. Duty in the afternoon went & had a lovely shower by by just the job. Evening duty passed quietly & we had the oxo when we came off. Funny Tom took Loffs rifle off with him what a soldier.

Duty in the morning we had also to get our kit ready for an inspection which we managed alright as we got up at 0630. Duty in the morning in the afternoon went & had a lovely shower oh bioy just the job. Evening duty passed quietly & we had the oxo when we came off. Funny Tom took Loffs rifle off with him what a soldier.

Friday 7th



April 7. Parade in the morning & we were detailed for a fatigue which had been finished - then



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

we dragged out again to move a pile of earth what a job we did not do that for long though. Afternoon duty again - in the evening did very little went on duty - it proved to be very quiet George during the evening went up - prepared the way for buying eggs - some meat for tomorrow's do.

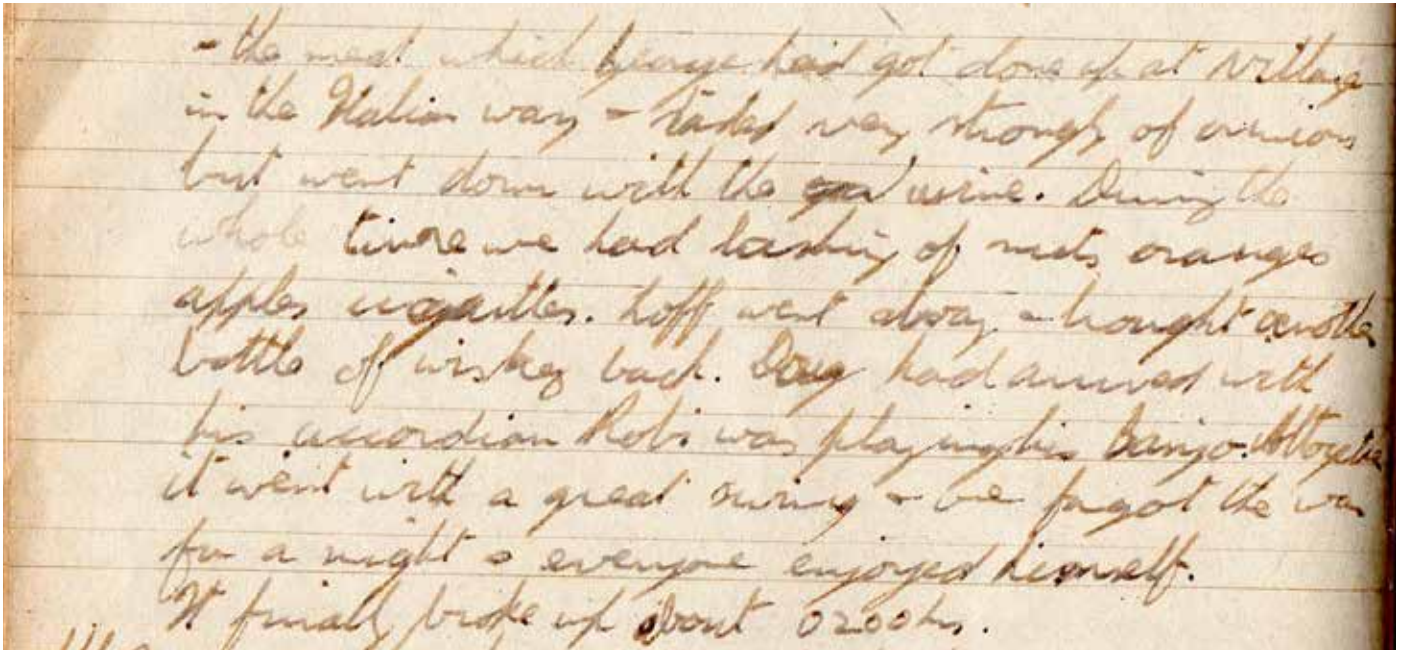
Parade in the morning & we were detailed for a fatigue & then were dragged out again to move a pile of earth what a job we did not do that for long though. Afternoon duty again & in the evening did very little went on duty & it proved to be very very quiet. George during the evening went up & prepared the way for buying eggs & some meat for tomorrow's do.

## Saturday 8th

Apr. 8 Sat. Easter Sat. - our do. In the morning I went to bed & had a morning's sleep. During the afternoon we prepared the way for the feast. First the eggs were made we boiled them with some onion leaves which made them a lovely brown colour - then we put transfers on from a book on Pinocchio they looked grand. From the bread we had sandwiches were made each containing bits of bully & cheese or sardines - these or eggs - sardines sprinkled with onions etc. We also had some concentrated tomato juice & made a sauce under the guidance of George who was in his element mixing this & the other. He marked four times of bully up for sandwiches & added boiled onion cheese & vinegar. We moved my bed board as a table - a fun to sit on. The do started at about 2000 hrs. We open by all having a drink from one glass of whiskey. This was followed by sandwiches of the above bully with sauce & a sprinkling of lemon. We then started on the wine & the frying of the chips - had chips



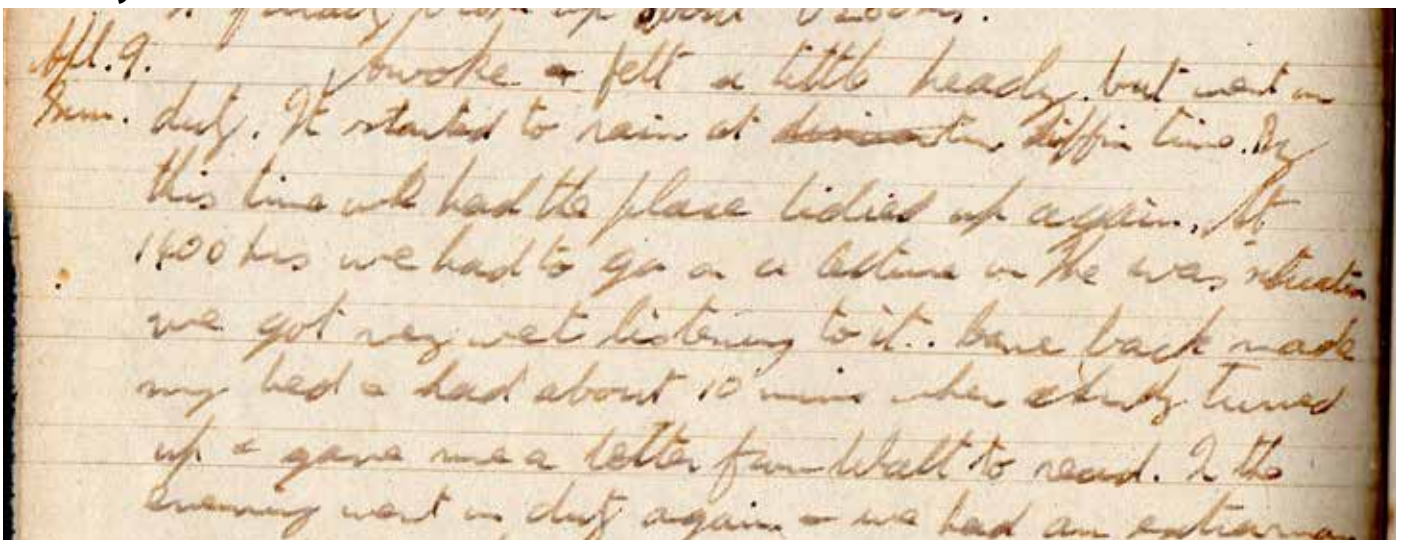
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



- the meat which George had got done up at Willays in the Italian way - tasted very strongly of onions but went down well with the good wine. During the whole time we had lashings of nuts, oranges, apples, cigarettes. Loff went away & brought another bottle of whisky back. Doug had arrived with his accordion Robi was playing his banjo. Altogether it went with a great swing & we forgot the war for a night & everyone enjoyed himself. It finally broke up about 0200 hrs.

Easter Sat & our do. In the morning I went to bed & had a morning's sleep. During the afternoon we prepared the way for the feast. First the eggs were made we boiled them with some onion leaves which made them a lovely brown colour & then we put transfers on from a book on Pinocchio they looked grand. From the bread we had sandwiches were made each containing bits of bully & cheese on sardines & cheese or egg & sardines sprinkled with onions etc. we also had some concentrated tomato juice & made a sauce under the guidance of George who was in his element mixing this & the other. He mashed these tins of bully up for sandwiches & added Bovril, onions, cheese & vinegar. We used my bed boards as a table & a form to sit on. The do started at about 2000 hrs. We open by all having a drink from one glass of whisky this was followed by sandwiches of the above bully with same & a sprinkling of tea on. We then started on the wine & the frying of the chips & had chips & the meal meat which George had got done up at the village in the Italian way & tasted very strongly of onions but went down well with the wine. During the whole time we had lashings of nuts orange apple cigarettes. Loff went away & brought a bottle of whisky back. Doug had arrived with his accordion Robi was playing his banjo. Altogether it went with a great swing & we forgot the war for a night & everyone enjoyed himself. It finally broke up about 0200 hrs.

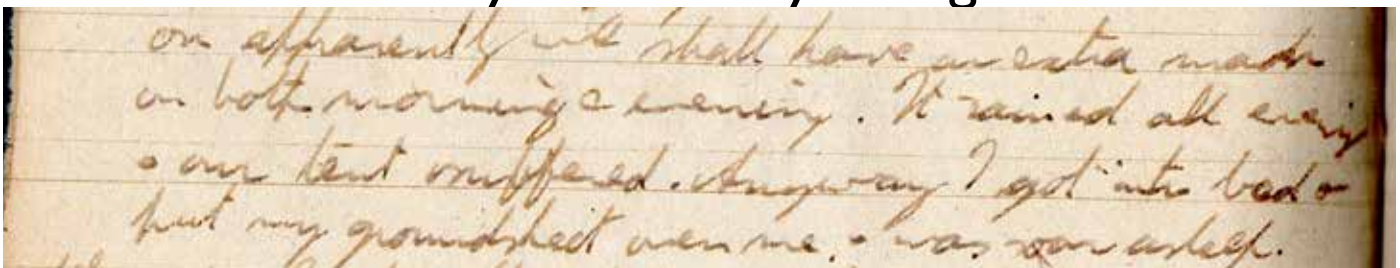
## Sunday 9th



Apr. 9. I woke & felt a little heady but went on Sun. duty. It started to rain at dawn. By this time we had the place tidied up again. At 1400 hrs we had to go on a lecture on the war situation we got very wet listening to it. Back made my bed & had about 10 mins when study turned up & gave me a letter from DeWalt to read. In the evening went on duty again & we had an extra man.



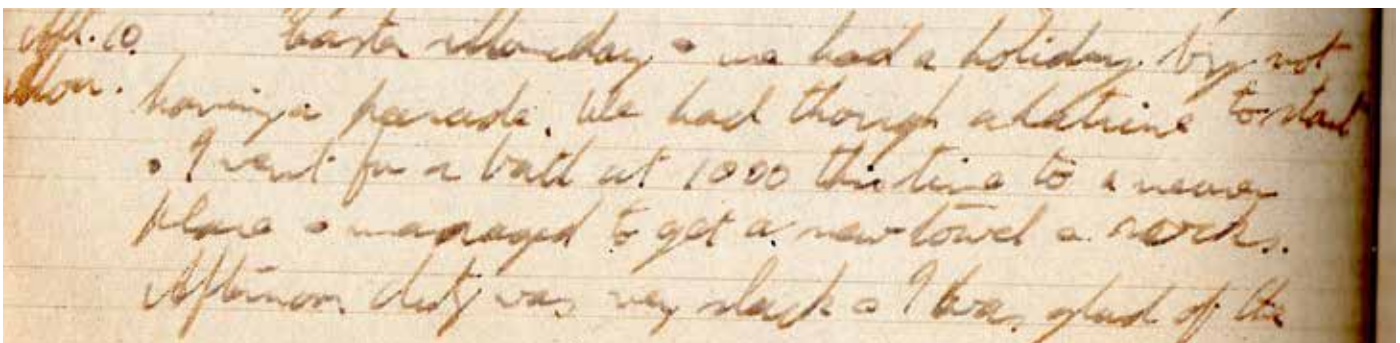
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



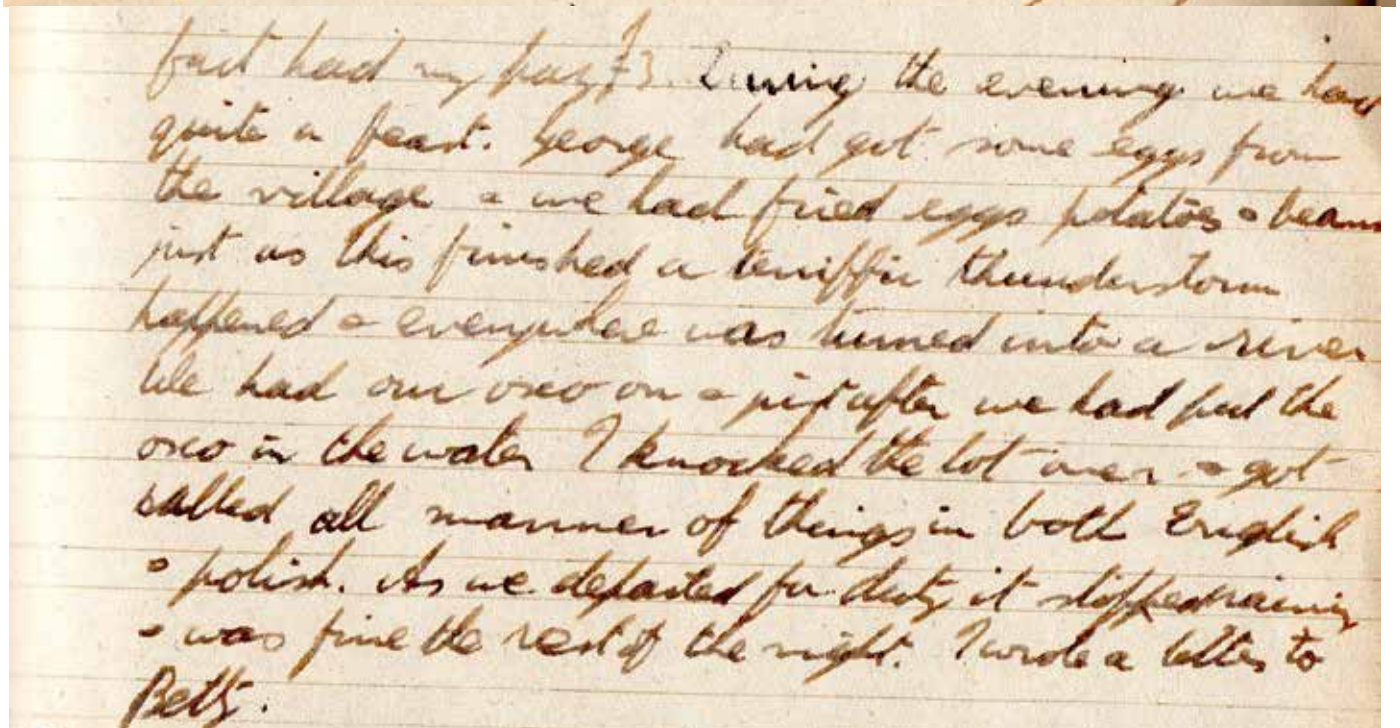
on apparently we shall have an extra man  
on both morning & evening. It rained all evening  
• our tent suffered. Anyway I got into bed &  
put my groundsheet over me. • was soon asleep.

Woke & felt a little heady but went on duty. It started to rain at tiffin time but this time we had the place tidied up again. At 1400 hrs we had to go to a lecture on the war situation we got very wet listening to it. Came back made my bed & had about 10 mins when Andy turned up & gave me a letter from Walt to read. In the evening went on duty again & we had an extra man on apparently we shall have an extra man on both morning & evening. It rained all evening & our tent suffered. Anyway I got into bed & put my groundsheet over me & was soon asleep.

## Monday 10th



Apr. 10. Easter Monday • we had a holiday. By not  
having a parade. We had though a latrine to start  
• I went for a bath at 1000 this time to a nearer  
place • managed to get a new towel & socks.  
Afternoon duty was very slack • I was glad of the



fact had my pay £3. During the evening we had  
quite a feast. George had got some eggs from  
the village • we had fried eggs potatoes • beans  
just as this finished a terrific thunderstorm  
happened • everywhere was turned into a river  
We had our oxo on a pit after we had put the  
oxo in the water I knocked the lot over • got  
called all manner of things in both English  
• Polish. As we departed for duty it stopped raining  
• was fine the rest of the night. I wrote a letter to  
Patsy.

Easter Monday & we had a holiday by not having a parade. We had though a latrine to start & I went for a bath at 1000 this time to a nearer place & managed to get a new towel & socks. Afternoon duty was very slack & I was glad of the fact had my pay £3. During the evening we had quite a feast. George had got some eggs from the village & we had fried eggs potatoes & beans just as we finished a terrific thunderstorm happened & everywhere was turned into a river. We had our oxo on a pit after we had put the oxo in the water.

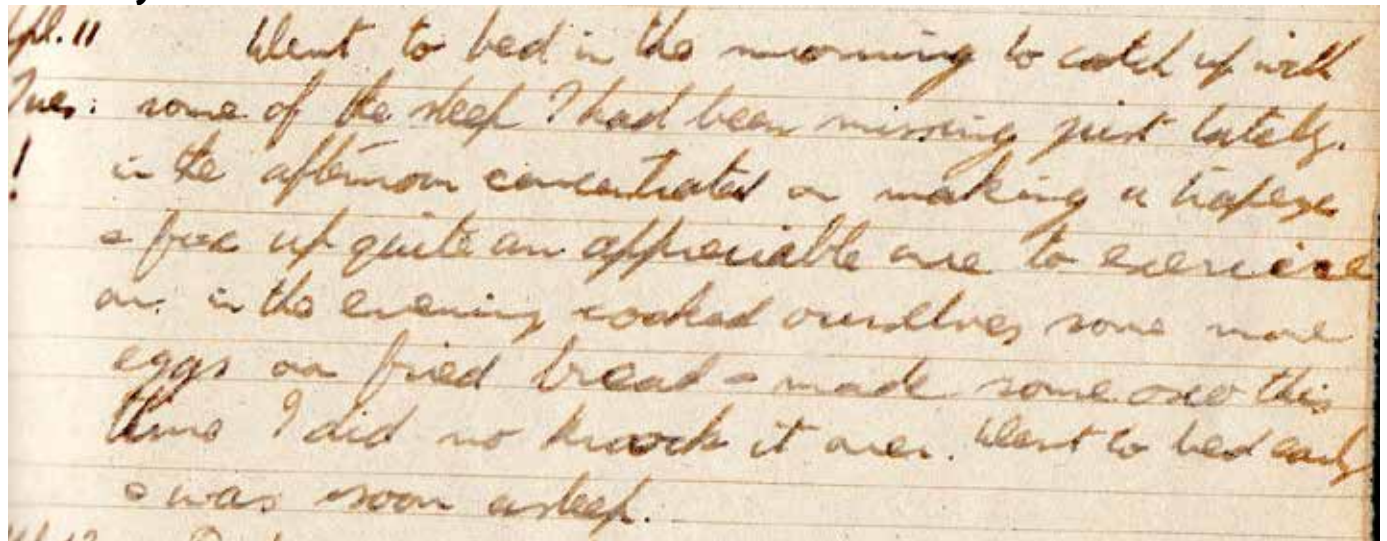
140 April 1944



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

I knocked the lot over & got called all manner of things in both English & Polish. As we departed for duty it stopped raining & was fine for the rest of the night. I wrote a letter to Betty.

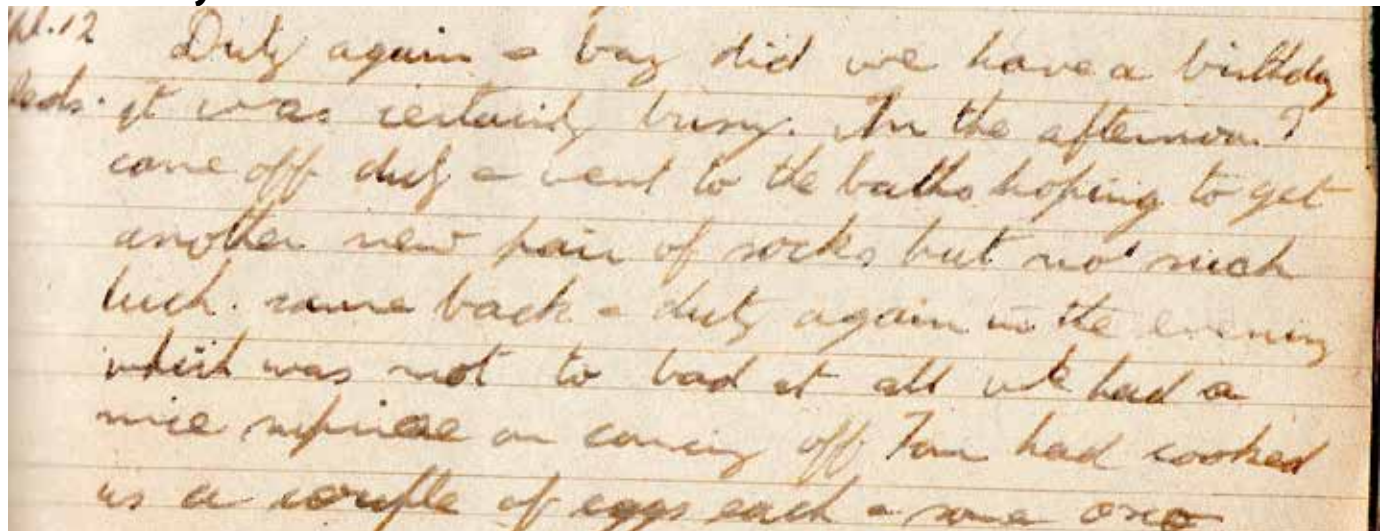
## Tuesday 11th!



Apr. 11 Went to bed in the morning to catch up with some of the sleep I had been missing just lately. In the afternoon concentrated on making a trapeze & fix up quite an appreciable one to exercise on. In the evening cooked ourselves some more eggs on fried bread - made some oxo this time I did not knock it over. Went to bed early & was soon asleep.

Went to bed in the morning to catch up with some of the sleep I had been missing just lately. In the afternoon concentrated on making a trapeze & fix up quite an appreciable one to exercise on. In the evening cooked ourselves some more eggs on fried bread & made some oxo this time I did not knock it over. Went to bed early & was soon asleep.

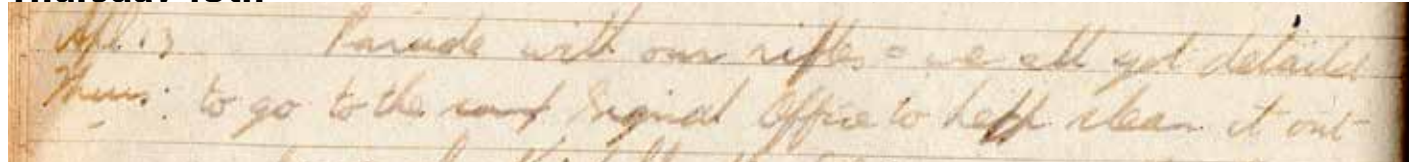
## Wednesday 12th



Apr. 12 Duty again & boy did we have a birthday it was certainly busy. In the afternoon I came off duty & went to the baths hoping to get another new pair of socks but no such luck. came back & duty again in the evening which was not to bad at all we had a nice surprise on coming off Tom had cooked us a couple of eggs each & some oxo.

Duty again & boy did we have a birthday it was certainly busy. In the afternoon came off duty & went to the baths hoping to get another new pair of socks but no such luck. came back & duty again in the evening which was not to bad at all we had a nice surprise on coming off Tom had cooked us a couple of eggs each & some oxo

## Thursday 13th



Apr. 13 Parade with our rifles - we all got detailed to go to the camp Signal Office to help clean it out



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

*as General Nicholls the SO in C was due to come*

Parade with our rifles & we all got detailed to go to the camp signal office to help clean it out as General Nicholls the SO in C was due to come round<sup>1</sup>. This only lasted until break though. Afternoon duty as usual & nothing exciting happened. On night duty wrote another letter to Betty.

## Friday 14th

*Apr 14. Was very busy on coming off as I did quite  
Fri. an amount of washing a few handkerchiefs etc.  
The afternoon I spent messing about. The evening  
went up to the village for a little while but soon  
came back. Later on we collected our Naafi  
rations & went to bed.*

Was very busy on coming off as I did quite an amount of washing a few handkerchiefs etc. The afternoon I spent morning messing about & the evening went up to the village for a little while but came back. Later on we collected our Naafi rations & went to bed.

## Saturday 15th

*Apr 15. Our duty was much easier today. In the  
Sat. afternoon lazed about help George in a spot of  
arithmetic changing 1.5 d to lire for his Naafi  
commitments. On our duty in the evening heard that  
Roman & the others were going to Rear army. They  
did not believe me when I told them at first.*

Our duty was much easier today. In the afternoon lazed about help George in a spot of arithmetic changing 1.5<sup>2</sup> to lire for his Naafi commitments. On our duty in the evening heard that Roman & the others were going to Rear army. They did not believe me when I told them at first.

## Sunday 16th

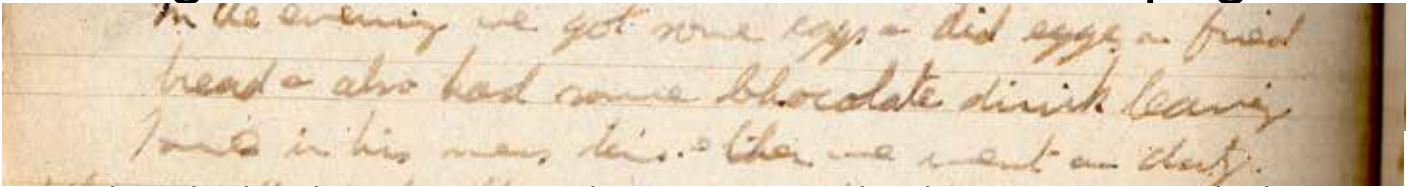
*Apr 16. It will be in bed as no parade got up.  
Sun. at 0750 lunch. Roman & co packed up & were  
due to leave at 0800 which they did. The afternoon  
was a glorious one & we did not have very much  
to do. The afternoon passed very slow indeed*

1 Ian went back in margin possibly

2 lsd pounds, shillings & pence (12 pennies = 1 shilling & 20 shillings = 1 pound)



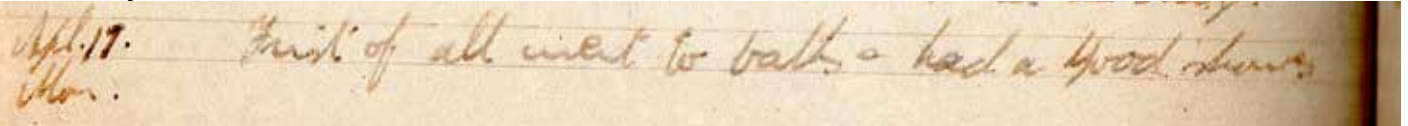
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



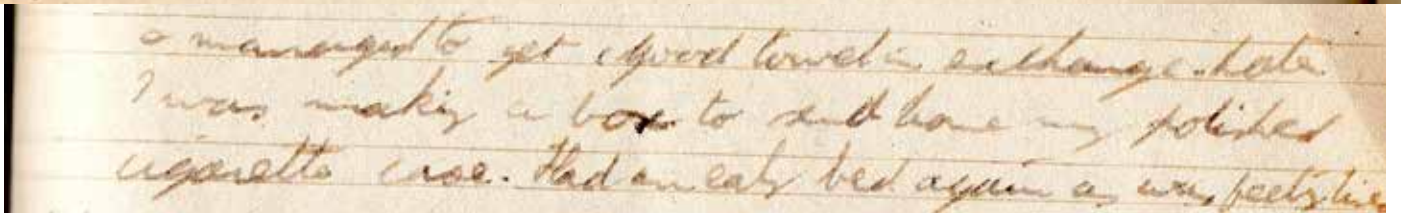
In the evening we got some eggs & did eggs on fried bread & also had some chocolate drink leaving some in his mess tins & then we went on duty.

A nice lie in bed as there was no parade got up at 0750 lovely. Roman & co packed up & were due to leave at 1400 which they did. The afternoon was a glorious one as we did not have very much to do & the afternoon passed very slow indeed. In the evening we got some eggs & did eggs on fried bread & also had some chocolate drink leaving into in his mess tins & then went on duty.

## Monday 17th



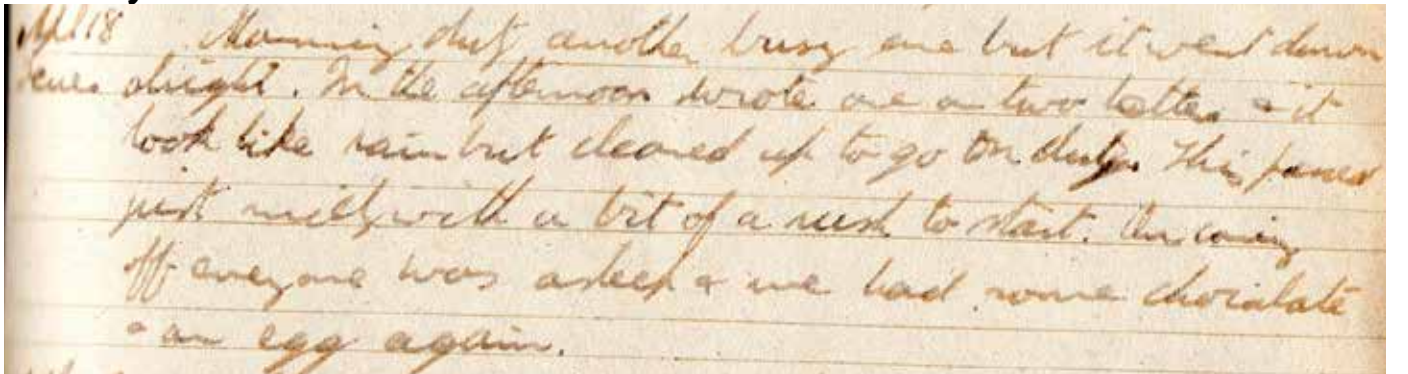
Apr 17. First of all went to bath & had a good shower.



& managed to get a good towel in exchange. Later I was making a box to send home my polished cigarette case. Had an early bed again as was really tired.

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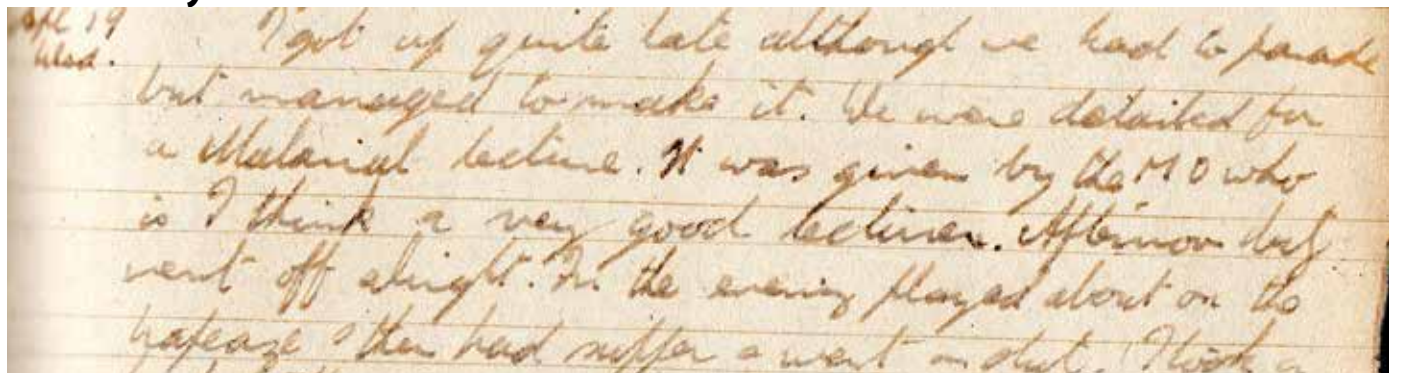
## Tuesday 18th



Apr 18 Morning duty another busy one but it went down quite alright. In the afternoon wrote one or two letters & it looked like rain but cleared up to go on duty. This passed just nicely with a bit of a rush to start. On coming off everyone was asleep & we had more chocolate & an egg again.

Morning duty a really busy one but it went down alright. In the afternoon wrote one or two letters & it looked like rain but cleared up to go on duty. This passed just nicely with a bit of of a rush to start. On coming off everyone was asleep & we had more chocolate & and egg again.

## Wednesday 19th



Apr 19 Wed. Got up quite late although we had to parade but managed to make it. We were detained for a Malayan lecture. It was given by the M.O who is I think a very good lecturer. Afternoon duty went off alright. In the evening played about on the bayonet & then had supper & went on duty. Had a



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

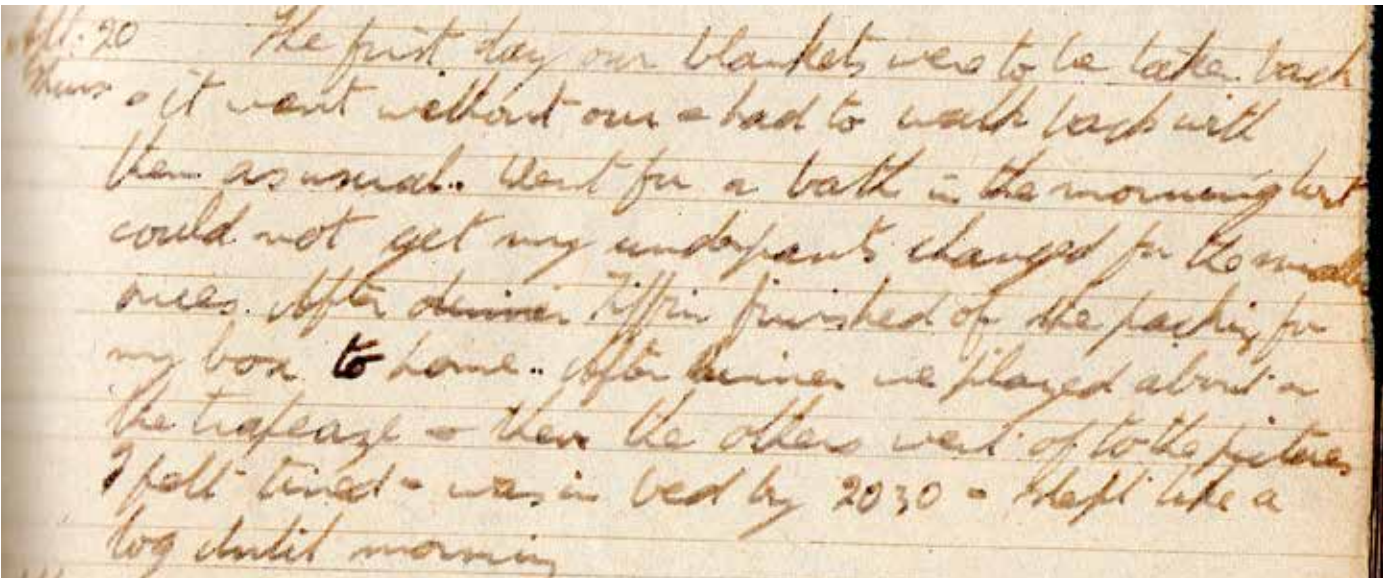


I got up quite late although we had to parade but managed to make it. We were detailed for a malarial<sup>3</sup> lecture. It was given by the MO who is I think a very good lecturer. Afternoon duty went off alright. In the evening played about on the trapeze & then had supper & went on duty. I took book with me to read.

## Thursday 20th

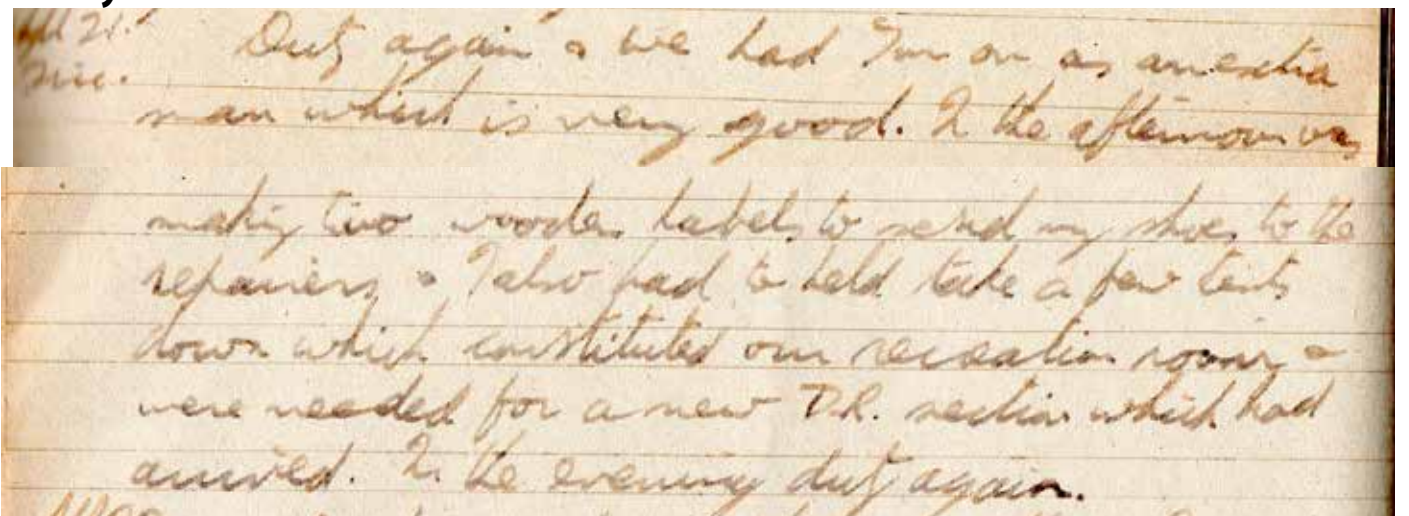
**Malaria.** The malaria season is from June to November. Unless protective measures are vigorously enforced, the disease may decimate our forces. Malaria is spread in one way only—by Anopheline mosquitoes. The malaria mosquito of Italy breeds principally in the pools and lagoons of streams and rivers and in swamps. It is also found in brackish water. It bites only after sundown, during the hours of darkness. The risk of contracting this crippling disease will be minimised if the soldier is acquainted with and strictly observes the simple methods of personal protection. Anti-malaria discipline involves:

- (a) Careful use of bed nets.
- (b) Regular taking of anti-malaria tablets.
- (c) Use of mosquito repellents.
- (d) Wearing of slacks and long-sleeved shirts in the evening.
- (e) Using head nets and gloves when on sentry duty.
- (f) Practising insect destruction: The free use inside tents of a good anti-mosquito spray every morning and evening destroys most of the infected mosquitoes and provides much protection against other insects. These measures must be understood and their need truly appreciated by the soldier, for anti-malaria discipline is of the first importance at the front line. Later it may be supplemented by site selection for encampments and larvae destruction to bring the mosquito under control.



The first day our blankets were to be take back & it went without ours & had to walk back with them as usual. Went for a bath in the morning but could not get my underpants changed for the smaller ones. After dinner Tiffin finished on the packing for my box to home. After dinner we played about on the trapeze & then the others went to the pictures I felt tired & was in bed by 2030 & slept like a log until morning.

## Friday 21st



Duty again & we had Tom as an extra man which is very good. In the afternoon making two wooden labels to send my shoes to the repairers & also had to help take a few tents

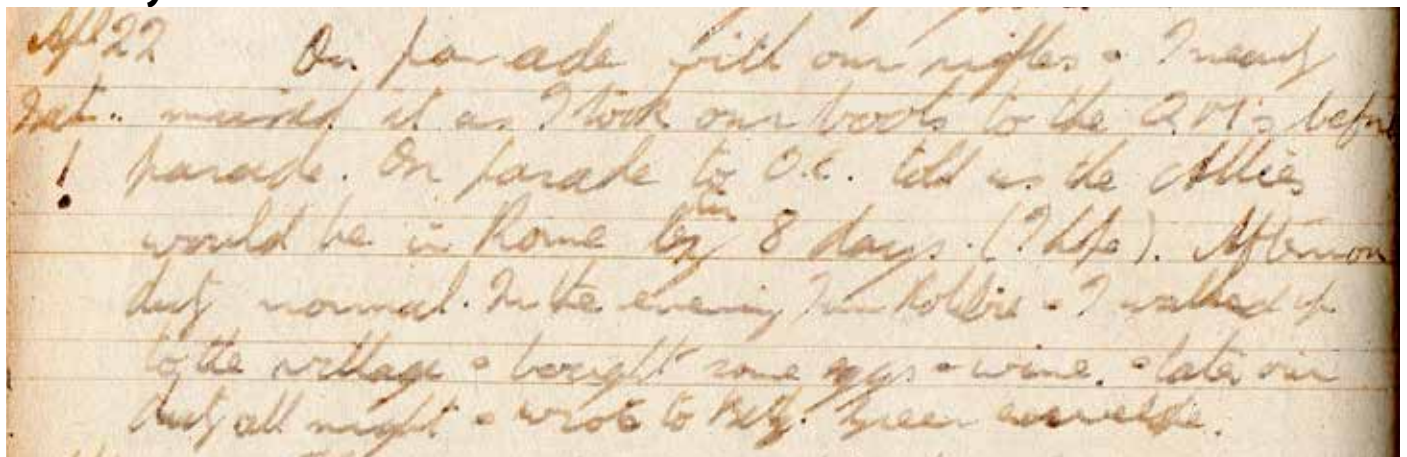
<sup>3</sup> An extract from "SOLDIER'S GUIDE TO ITALY" issued to all allied troops.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

down which constituted our recreation room & were needed for a new D.R. section which had arrived. In the evening duty again

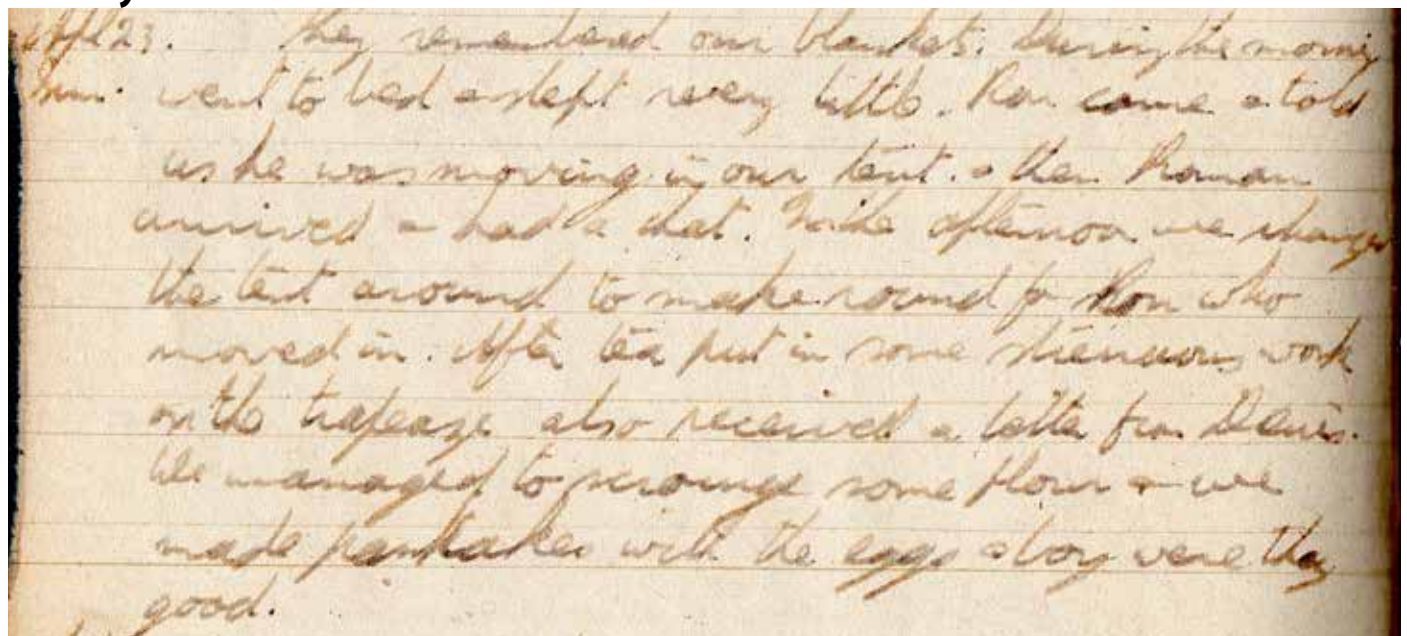
## Saturday 22nd



Apr 22 On parade with our rifles & I nearly missed it as I took our boots to the QMs before parade. On parade to O.C. told us the Allies would be in Rome by 8 days (I hope). Afternoon duty normal. In the evening Tom Robbie & I walked up to the village & bought some eggs & wine. Later on duty all night & wrote to Betty green envelope.

On parade with our rifles & I nearly missed it as I took our boots to the QMs before parade. On parade to O.C. told us the Allies would be in Rome in 8 days (I hope). Afternoon duty normal. In the evening Tom Robbie & I walked up to the village & bought some eggs & wine. Later on duty all night & wrote to Betty green envelope.<sup>4</sup>

## Sunday 23rd



Apr 23. They remembered our blankets. During the morning I went to bed & slept very little. Ron came & told us he was moving in our tent. Then Roman arrived & had a chat. In the afternoon we changed the tent around to make room for Ron who moved in. After tea put in some strenuous work on the trapeze also received a letter from Denis. We managed to scrounge some flour & we made pancakes with the eggs & boy were they good.

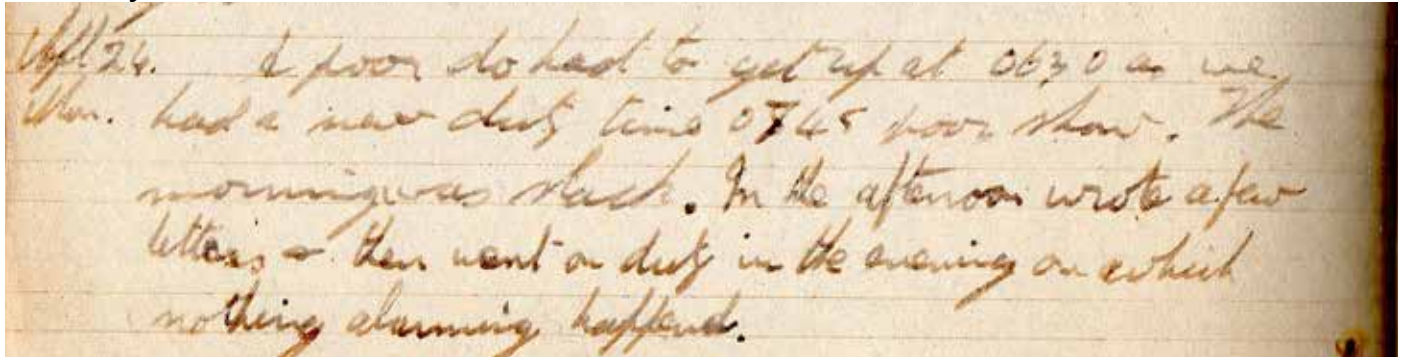
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<sup>4</sup> Letters from soldiers on active service were subjected to censorship by their junior officers to ensure details such as location and military objectives were not disclosed. As a privilege soldiers were given one green envelope a month to send uncensored personal & private letters to loved ones. As it was my mum's birthday on 29th April I take it this included personal birthday wishes.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

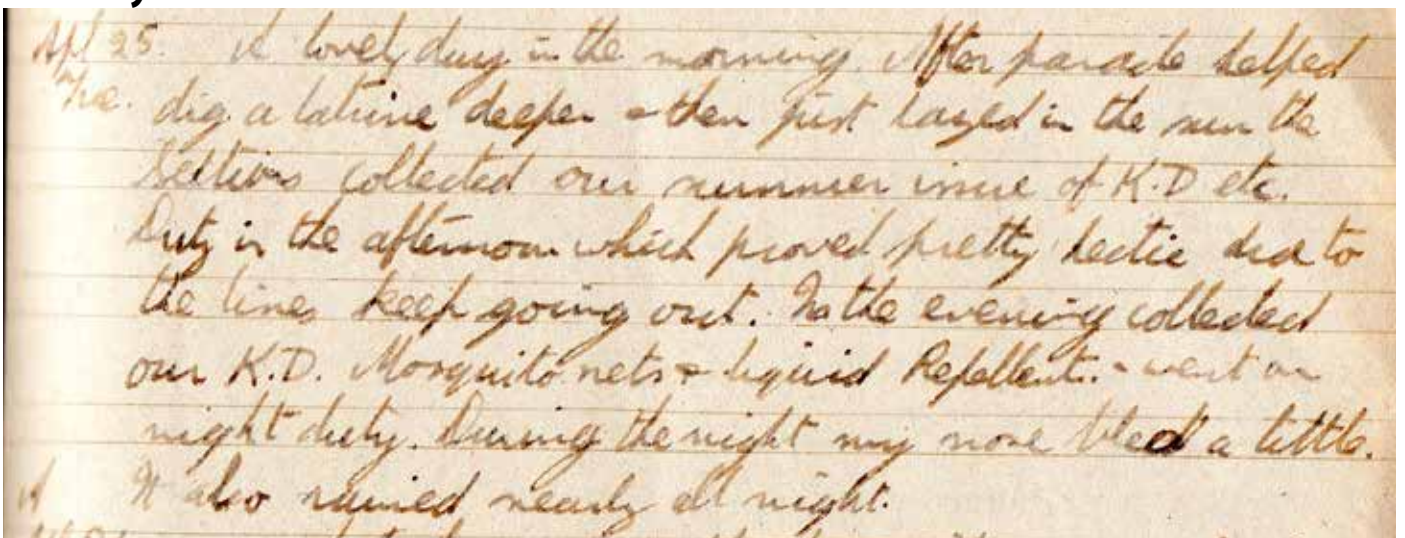
Monday 24th



Apr 24. A poor do had to get up at 0630 as we had a new duty time 0745 poor show. The morning was slack. In the afternoon wrote a few letters & then went on duty in the evening on which nothing alarming happened.

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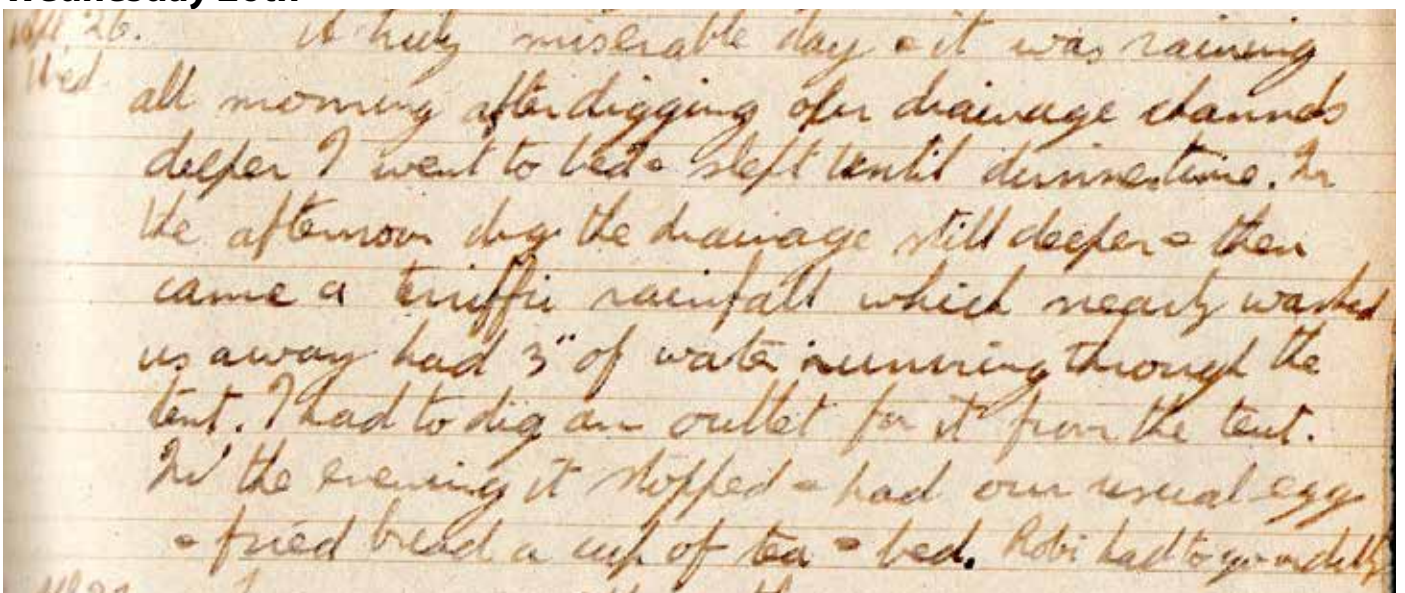
Tuesday 25th



Apr 25. A lovely day in the morning. After parade helped dig a latrine deeper & then just lazed in the sun the section collected our summer issue of K.D. etc. Duty in the afternoon which proved pretty hectic due to the lines keep going out. In the evening collected our K.D. Mosquito nets & liquid Repellent. & went on night duty. During the night my nose bled a little. It also rained nearly all night.

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Wednesday 26th



Apr 26. A truly miserable day & it was raining all morning after digging open drainage channels deeper I went to bed & slept tent at dinner time. In the afternoon dug the drainage still deeper & then came a terrific rainfall which nearly washed us away had 3" of water running through the tent. I had to dig an outlet for it from the tent. In the evening it stopped & had our usual egg & fried bread a cup of tea & bed. Robi had to go & collect

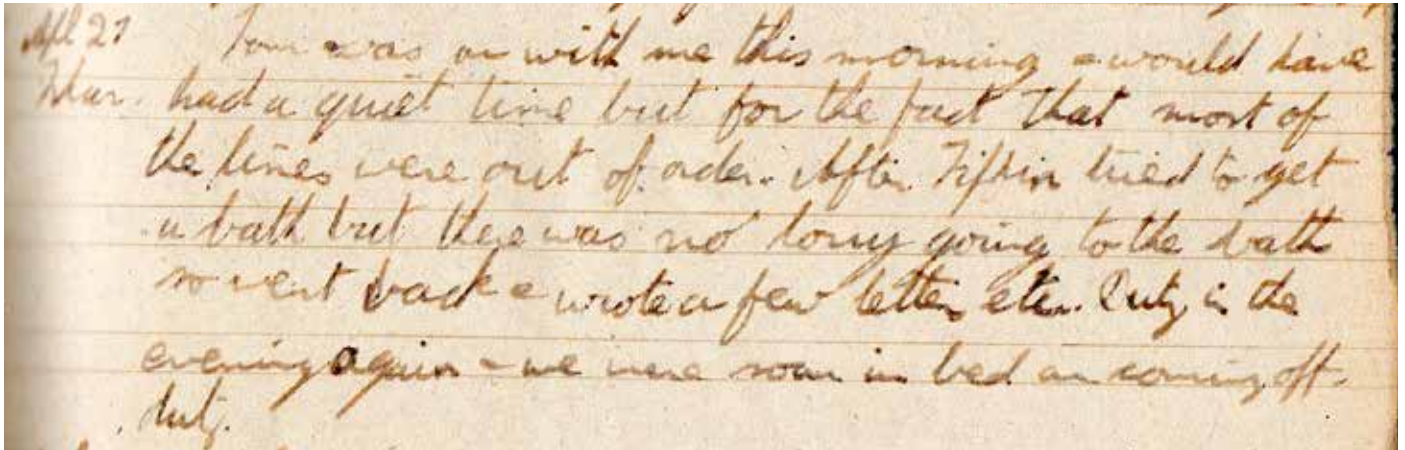
146 April 1944



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

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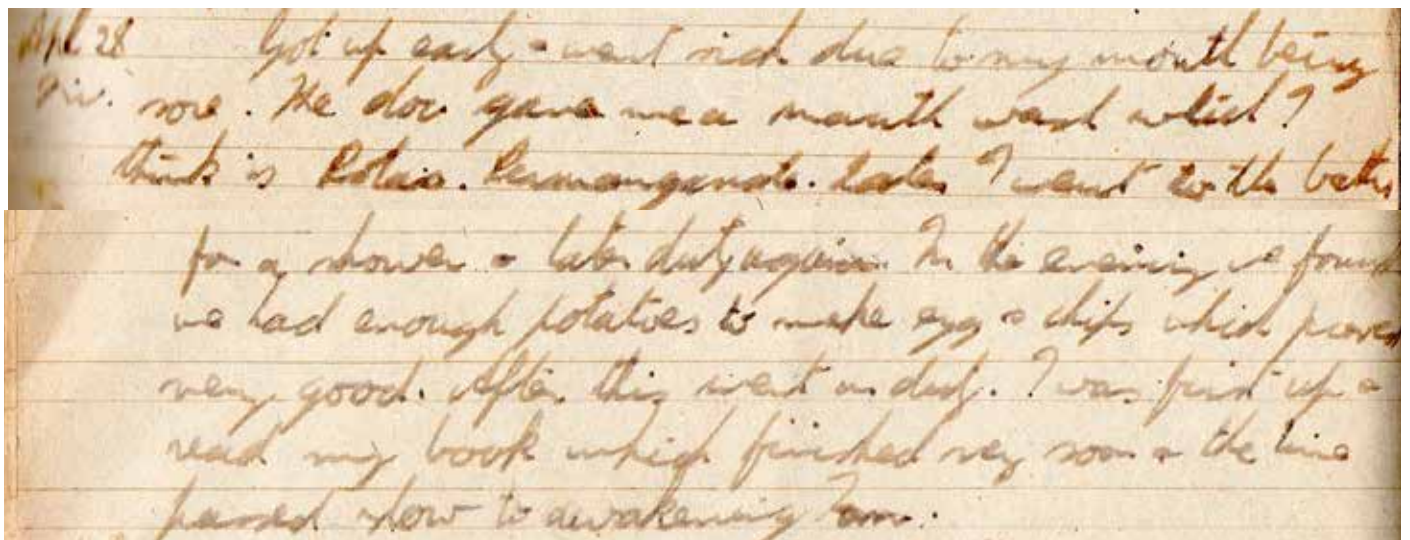
## Thursday 27th



Apr 27 Tom was on with me this morning & would have had a quiet time but for the fact that most of the lines were out of order. After Tiffin tried to get a bath but there was no lorry going to the bath so went back & wrote a few letters etc. Duty in the evening again & we were soon in bed on coming off duty.

Tom was on with me this morning & would have had a quiet time but for the fact that most of the lines were out of order. After tiffin tried to get a bath but there was no lorry going to the bath so went back & wrote a few letters etc. Duty in the evening again & we were soon in bed on coming off duty.

## Friday 28th



Apr 28 Got up early & went sick due to my mouth being sore. The doc gave me a mouth wash which I think is Potas. Permanganate. Later I went to the baths for a shower & later duty again. In the evening we found we had enough potatoes to make egg & chips which proved very good. After this went on duty. I was first up & read my book which finished very soon & the time passed slow to awakening Tom.

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## Saturday 29th



Apr 29 Tom & I went to Naples the journey was a



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

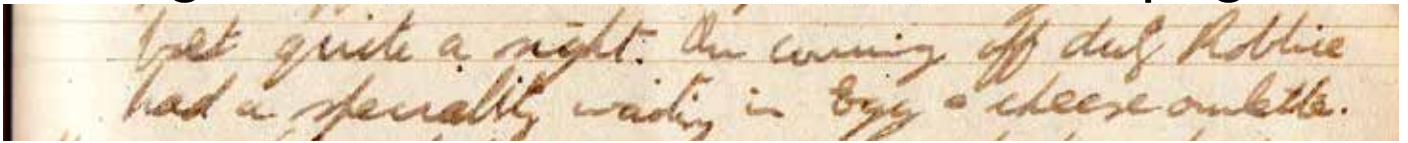
horribly dirty & long one. The lorry was parked in the day leave parking ground & then we went along the front to the day leave canteen which was very nice as the tables had cloths on them & a band was playing & a girl singing it was also down by the waters edge. We then walked up the famous Via Roma again & looked in the shops & finally went into the Ensa cinema & saw Judy Garland in "Lily Mars" which was quite good. We then walked back & sat in the canteen again & had a drink of tea. After that we started back & once more the journey was dirty long & bumpy. We are about 60 miles from Naples. Today if I had been home I would most certainly have seen Betty as it was her birthday as it was I was only able to send an airgraph. Still the good times will come again.

Tom & I went to Naples the going was a horribly dirty & long one. The lorry was parked in the day leave parking ground & then we went along the front to the day leave canteen which was very nice as the tables had cloths on them & a band was playing & a girl singing it was also down by the waters edge. We then walked up the famous Via Roma again & looked in the shops & finally went into the Ensa cinema & saw Judy Garland in "Lily Mars" which was quite good. We then walked back & sat in the canteen again & had a drink of tea. After that we started back & once more the journey was dirty long & bumpy. We are about 60 miles from Naples. Today if I had been home would most certainly have seen Betty as it was her birthday as it was I was only able to send an airgraph. Still the good times will come again.

## Sunday 30th

Apr 30. Up early again as we had to rest & have. Morning duty was quite slack. In the afternoon I washed my new underclothing ready for wearing it. I thought I do not fancy wearing H.D. at all yet as the weather was quite cold & windy today. Evening duty uneventful. Heard from Cliff all about Filpots exchange which must

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



*Up quite a night. On coming off duty Robbie  
had a speciality waiting in egg & cheese omelette.*

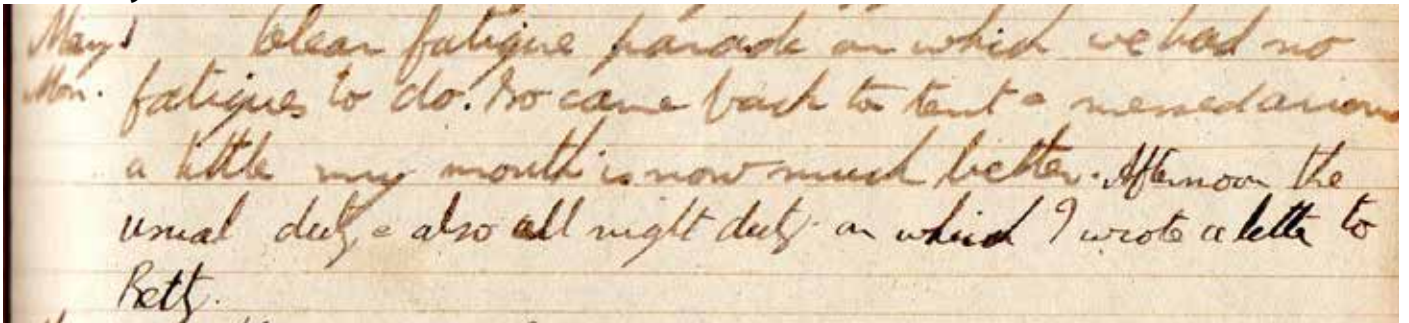
Up early again as we had to wash & shave. Morning duty was quite slack. In the afternoon I washed my new underclothing ready for wearing it although I do not fancy wearing KD at all yet as the weather was quite cold & windy today. Evening duty uneventful. Heard from Loff all about Filpots exchange which must be quite a sight. On coming off duty Robbie had a speciality waiting in egg & cheese omelette.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## MAY 1944


### Monday 1st



May 1st Clear fatigue parade on which we had no  
Mon. fatigue to do. So came back to tent & messed around  
a little my mouth is now much better. Afternoon the  
usual duty, & also all night duty on which I wrote a letter to  
Betty.

Clear fatigue parade on which we had no fatigues to do. So came back to tent & messed around a little my mouth is now much better. Afternoon the usual duty & also night duty on which I wrote a letter to Betty.

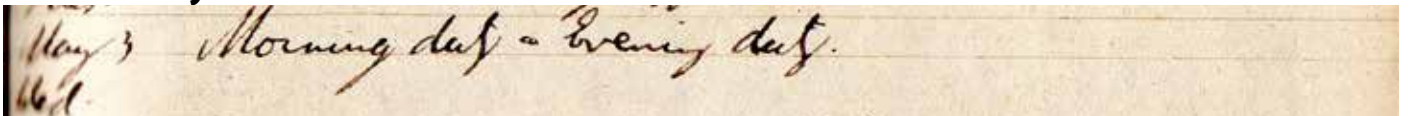
### Tuesday 2nd



May 2nd Had our usual day off.  
Wed. " " " " " "

Had our usual day off

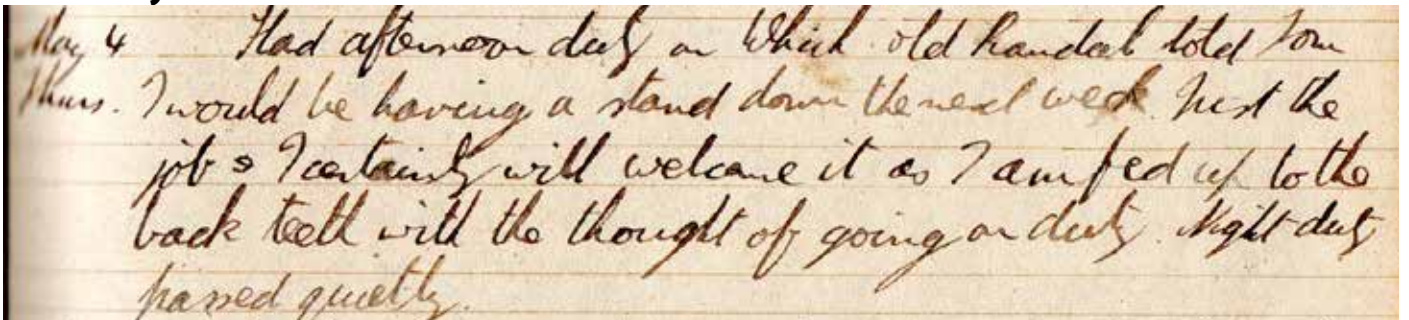
### Wednesday 3rd



May 3 Morning duty & evening duty.  
Wed. " " " " " "

Morning duty & evening duty.

### Thursday 4th



May 4 Had afternoon duty on which old Randal told Tom  
Thurs. I would be having a stand down the next week. Just the  
job & I certainly will welcome it as I am fed up to the  
back teeth with the thought of going on duty. Night duty  
passed quietly.

Had afternoon duty on which old Randal told Tom I would be having a stand down the next week just the job & I certainly will welcome it as I am fed up to the back teeth with the thought of going on duty. Night duty passed quietly.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Friday 5th

May 5 In the morning warmed up some water - had a bath  
Thi. only to learn that the truck to the showers had again  
started still it saved me a journey in the afternoon did  
nothing in particular. On reading orders at night  
found I was due to go on leave to Naples it was a great  
shock - I did not at first fancy it but got packed

In the morning warmed up some water & had a bath only to learn that the truck to the showers had again started still it saved me a journey in the afternoon did nothing in particular. On reading orders at night found I was due to go on leave to Naples it was a great shock & I did not at first fancy it but got packed.

Saturday 6th

May 6 I have now been in the army 4 years - it does really  
seem like a lifetime I was up fairly early - got packed  
& drew £5 of my pay - away I went to Napoli. We  
arrived just in time for dinner which was very good

we have been sort of att to 16 L of B - get a duty pass  
each day as actually there is no leave to Naples the first  
day we did very little except see a film - then got back  
to the billet before 21:30 when our pass finishes. we are  
right on the top floor with 126 steps to climb but feel  
quite happy. One thing though the atmosphere is very  
heavy - tiring here.

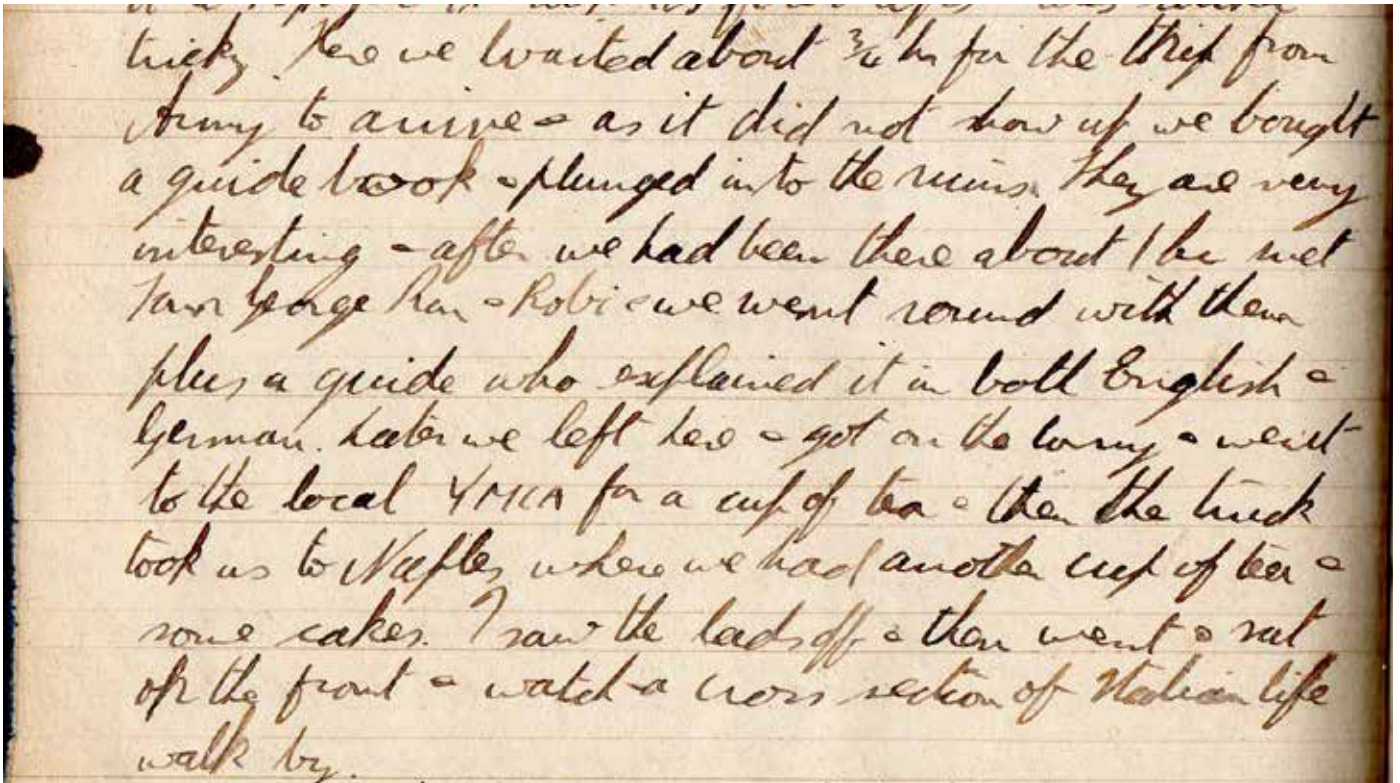
I have now been in the army 4 years & it does really seem like a lifetime. I was up fairly early & got packed & drew £5 of my pay & away I went to Napoli. We arrived just in time for dinner which was very good. We have been sort of att to 16 L of B & get a duty pass each day as actually there is no leave to Naples the first day we did very little except see a film & got back to the billet before 21:30 when our pass finishes. we are right on the top floor with 126 steps to climb but feel quite happy. One thing though the atmosphere is very heavy & tiring here.

Sunday 7th

May 7. Wally - I started out after breakfast - hitched  
Rum. it to Poppei it took us four lifts - was rather



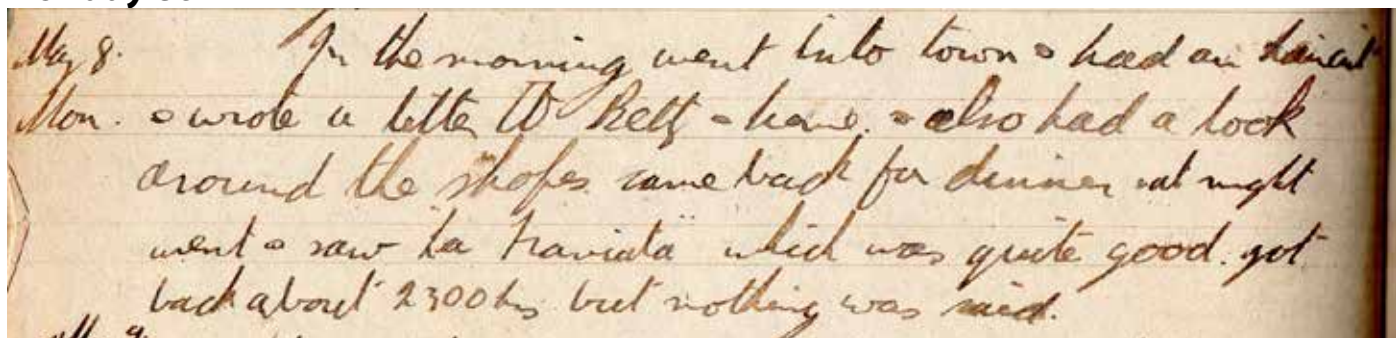
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



tricky. Here we waited about 3/4 hr for the trip from Army to arrive - as it did not show up we bought a guide book & plunged into the ruins. They are very interesting - after we had been there about 1 hr met Ian George Ron & Robi & we went round with them plus a guide who explained it in both English & German. Later we left here & got on the lorry & went to the local YMCA for a cup of tea & then the truck took us to Naples where we had another cup of tea & some cakes. I saw the lads off & then went & sat on the front & watch a cross section of Italian life walk by.

Wally & I started out after breakfast & hitched it to Pompeii<sup>1</sup> it took us four lifts & was rather lucky. Here we waited about 3/4 hr for the trip from Army to arrive & as it did not show up we bought a guide book & plunged into the ruins. They are very interesting & after as we had been there about 1 hr met Ian George Ron & Robi & we went round with them plus a guide who explained it in both English & German. Later we left here & got on a lorry & went to the local YMCA for a cup of tea & then the truck took us to Naples where we had another cup of tea & some cakes. I saw the lads off & then went & sat on the front & watched a cross section of Italian life walk by.

## Monday 8th



May 8. In the morning went into town & had a haircut & wrote a letter to Betty & have also had a look around the shops came back for dinner at night went & saw La Traviata which was quite good. got back about 2300 hrs but nothing was said.

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## Tuesday 9th

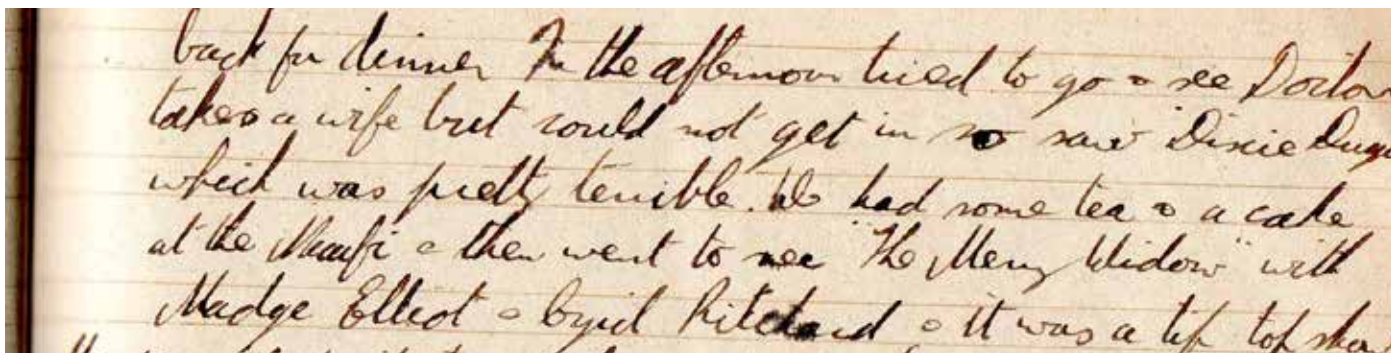


May 9. Went & did some shopping in town in the morning &

1 See Appendix C for more details & postcards



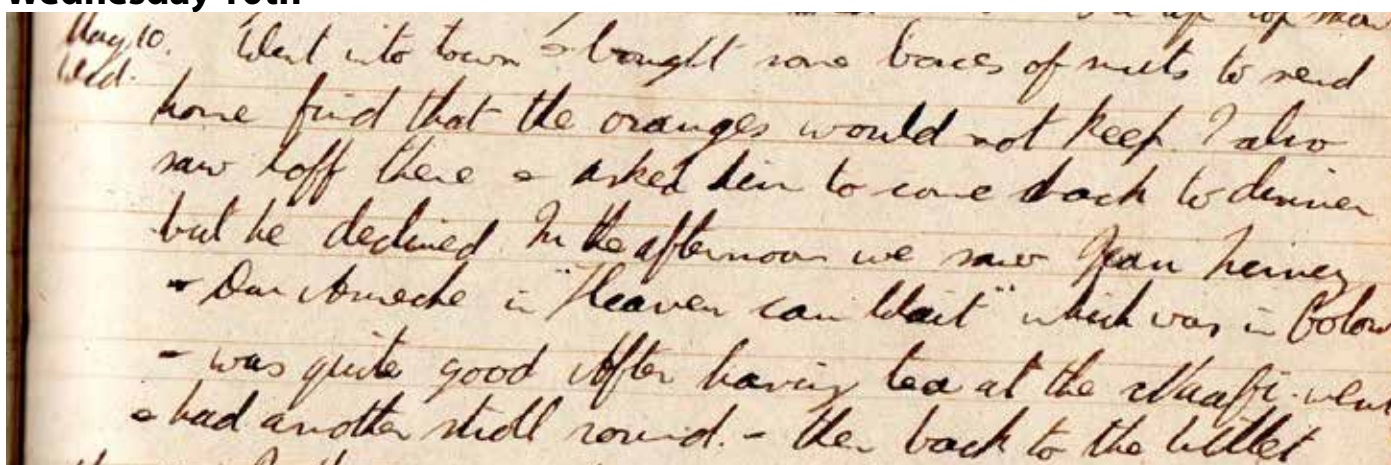
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



back for dinner In the afternoon tried to go & see Doctor takes a wife but could not get in so saw "Dixie Dugan" which was pretty terrible. We had some tea & a cake at the Naafi & then went to see "The Merry Widow" with Madge Elliot & Cyril Pritchard & it was a tip top show

Went & did some shopping in town in the morning & back for dinner. In the afternoon tried to go & see Doctor takes a Wife but could not get in so saw "Dixie Dugan" which was pretty terrible. We had some tea & a cake at the Naafi & then went to see "The Merry Widow" with Madge Elliot & Cyril Pritchard & it was a tip top show

## Wednesday 10th

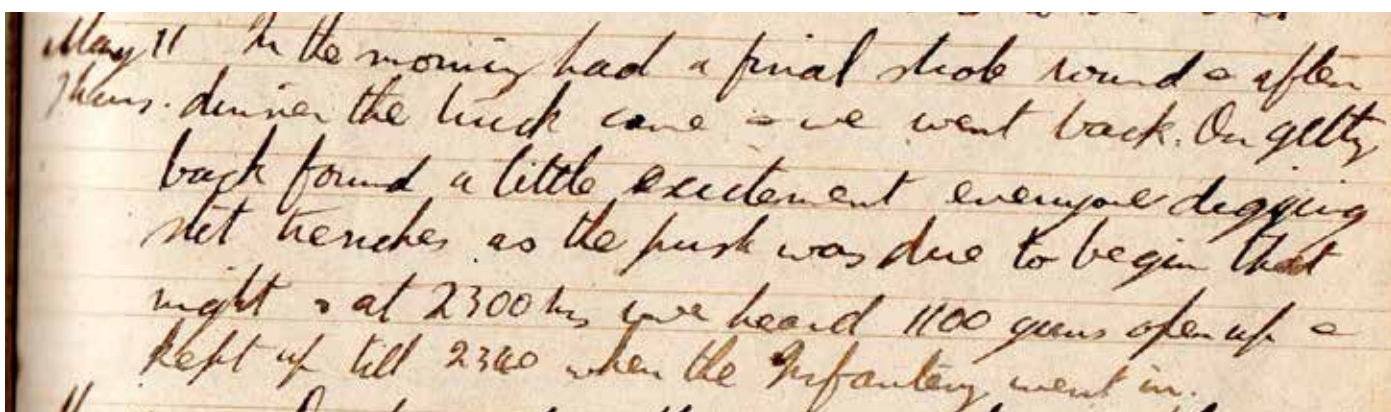


May 10. Went into town & bought some boxes of nuts to send home find that the oranges would not keep. I also saw Loff there & asked him to come back to dinner but he declined. In the afternoon we saw Jean Harvey & Don Ameche in "Heaven can Wait" which was in colour & was quite good. After having tea at the Naafi went & had another stroll round & then back to the billet

Went into town & bought some boxes of nuts to send home find that the oranges would not keep. I also saw Loff there & asked him to come back to dinner but he declined. In the afternoon we saw Jean Harvey & Don Ameche in "Heaven can Wait" which was in colour & was quite good. After having tea at the Naafi went & had another stroll round & then back to the billet.

## Thursday 11th

The Allies launch a new assault on Cassino



May 11 In the morning had a final stroll round & after dinner the truck came & we went back. On getting back found a little excitement everyone digging slit trenches as the push was due to begin that night & at 2300 hrs we heard 1100 guns open up & kept up till 2340 when the Infantry went in.

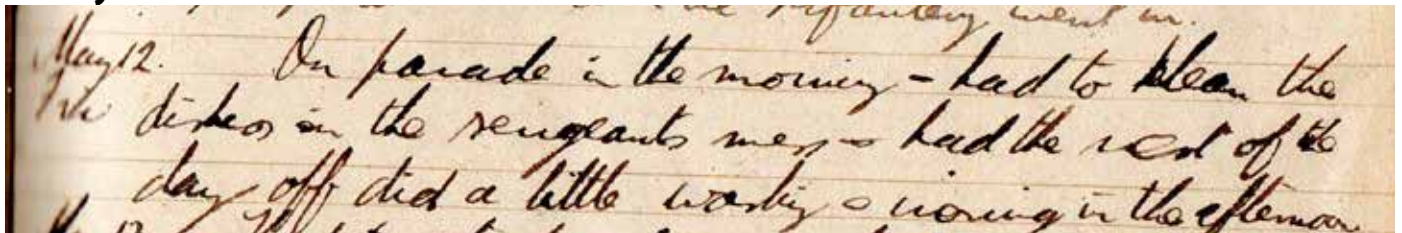
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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

getting back found a little excitement everyone digging slit trenches as the push<sup>2</sup> was due to begin that night & at 2300 hrs we heard 1100 guns open up & kept up till 2340 when the infantry went in.

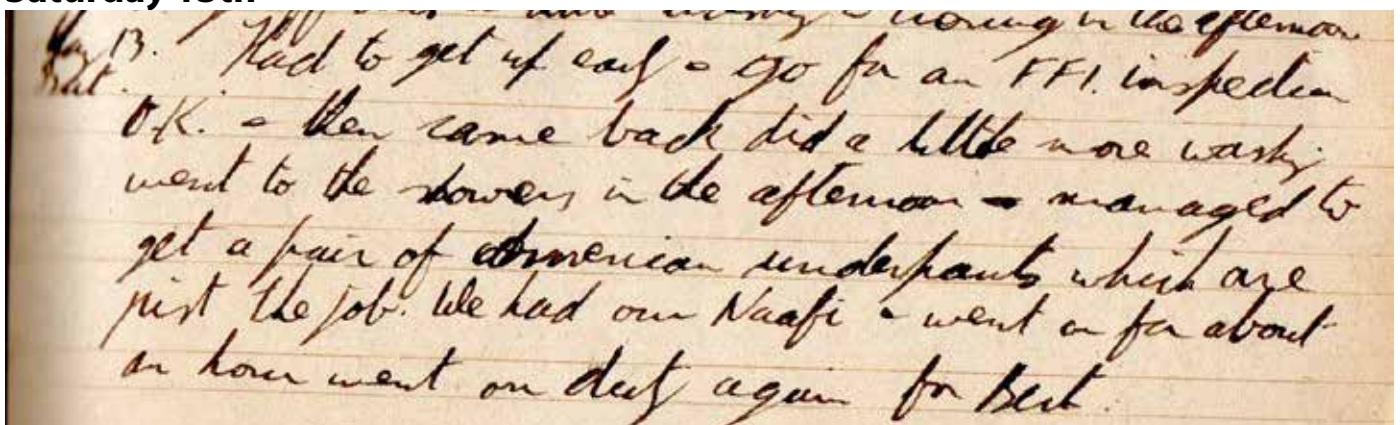
## Friday 12th



May 12. On parade in the morning - had to clean the dishes in the sergeants mess - had the rest of the day off did a little washing & ironing in the afternoon.

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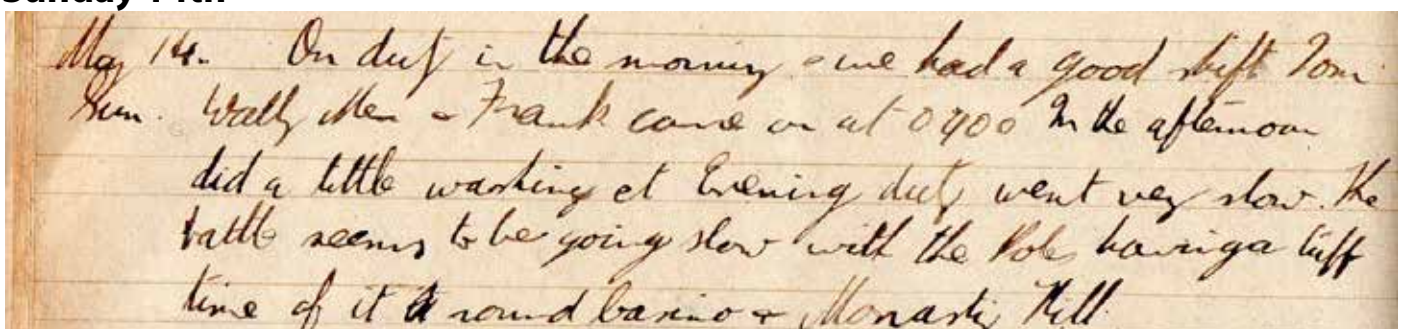
## Saturday 13th



May 13. Had to get up early - go for an FFI inspection O.K. - then came back did a little more washing went to the showers in the afternoon - managed to get a pair of American underpants which are just the job. We had our Naafi - went on for about an hour went on duty again for Bert.

Had to get up early and go for an FFI inspection O.K. & then came back did a little more washing went to the showers in the afternoon & managed to get a pair of American underpants which are just the job. We had our Naafi & went on for about an hour went on duty again for Bert.

## Sunday 14th



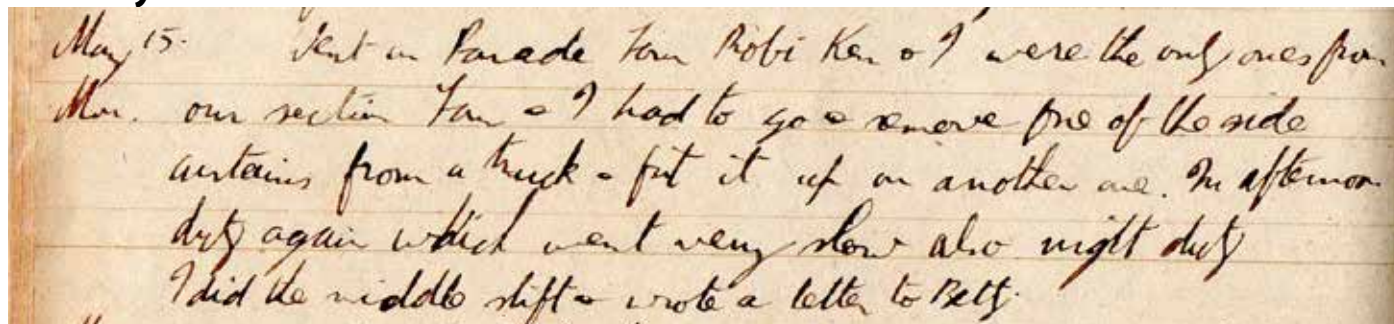
May 14. On duty in the morning - we had a good shift Tom Wally Len & Frank came on at 0900 In the afternoon did a little washing etc Evening duty went very slow the battle seems to be going slow with the poles having a stiff time of it around Casino & Monastery Hill.

On duty in the morning & we had a good shift. Tom Wally Len & Frank came on at 0900. In the afternoon did a little washing etc. Evening duty went very slow the battle seems to be going slow with the poles having a stiff time of it around Cassino & Monastery Hill.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

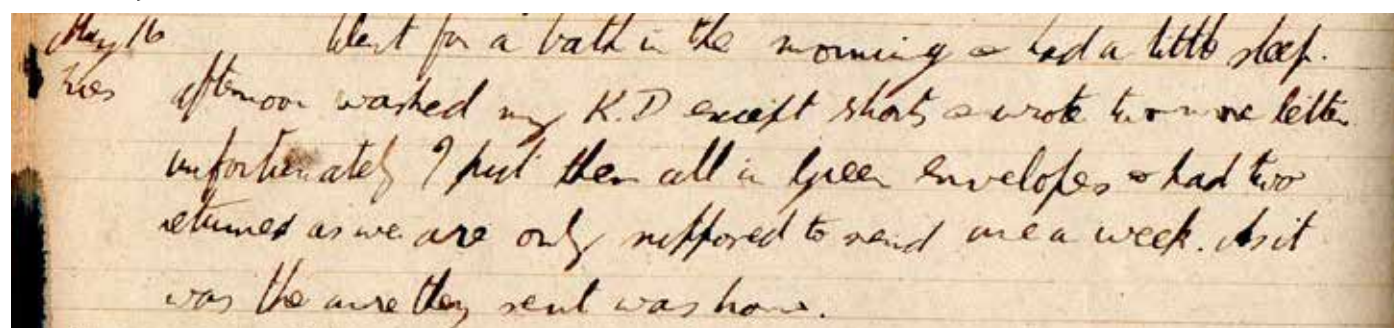
## Monday 15th



May 15. Went on Parade Tom Robi Ken & I were the only ones from our section Tom & I had to go & remove one of the side curtains from a truck & fit it up on another one. In afternoon duty again which went very slow also night duty I did the middle shift & wrote a letter to Betty.

Went on parade Tom Robi Ken & I were the only ones from our section Ian & I had to go & remove one of the side curtains from a truck & fit it on another one. In afternoon duty again which went very slow & also night duty I did the middle shift & wrote a letter to Betty.

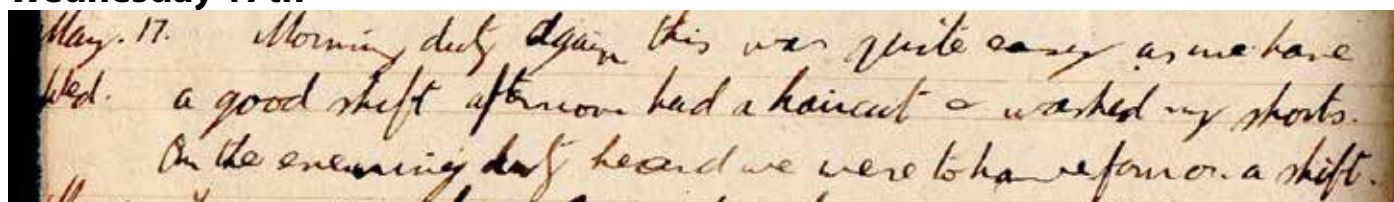
## Tuesday 16th



May 16. Went for a bath in the morning & had a little sleep. Afternoon washed my K.D except shorts & wrote two more letters unfortunately I put them all in green envelopes & had two returned as we are only supposed to send one a week. As it was the one they sent was home.

Went for a bath in the morning & had a little sleep afternoon washed my KD except shorts & wrote some more letters unfortunately I put them all in green envelopes & had two returned as we are only supposed to send one a week. As it was the one they sent was home.

## Wednesday 17th

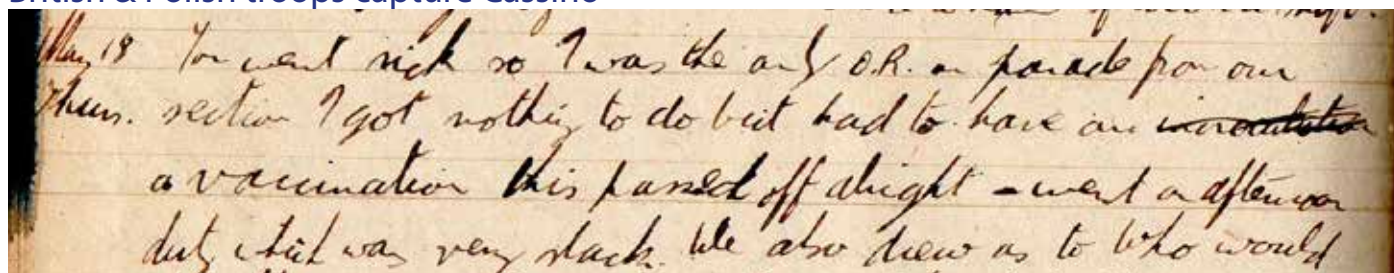


May 17. Morning duty again this was quite easy as we have a good shift afternoon had a haircut & washed my shorts. On the evening duty heard we were to have four on a shift.

Morning duty again this was quite easy as we have a good shift afternoon had a haircut & washed my shorts. On the evening duty heard we were to have four on a shift.

## Thursday 18th

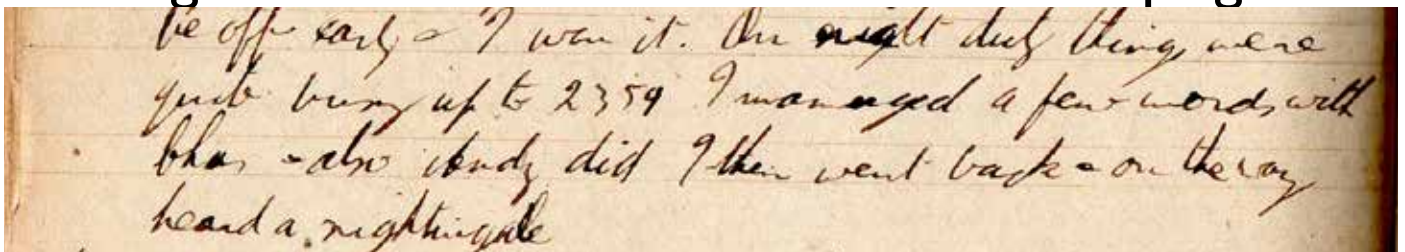
### British & Polish troops capture Cassino



May 18. You went sick so I was the only O.R. on parade for our section I got nothing to do but had to have an inoculation a vaccination this passed off alright & went on afternoon duty which was very slack. We also knew as to who would



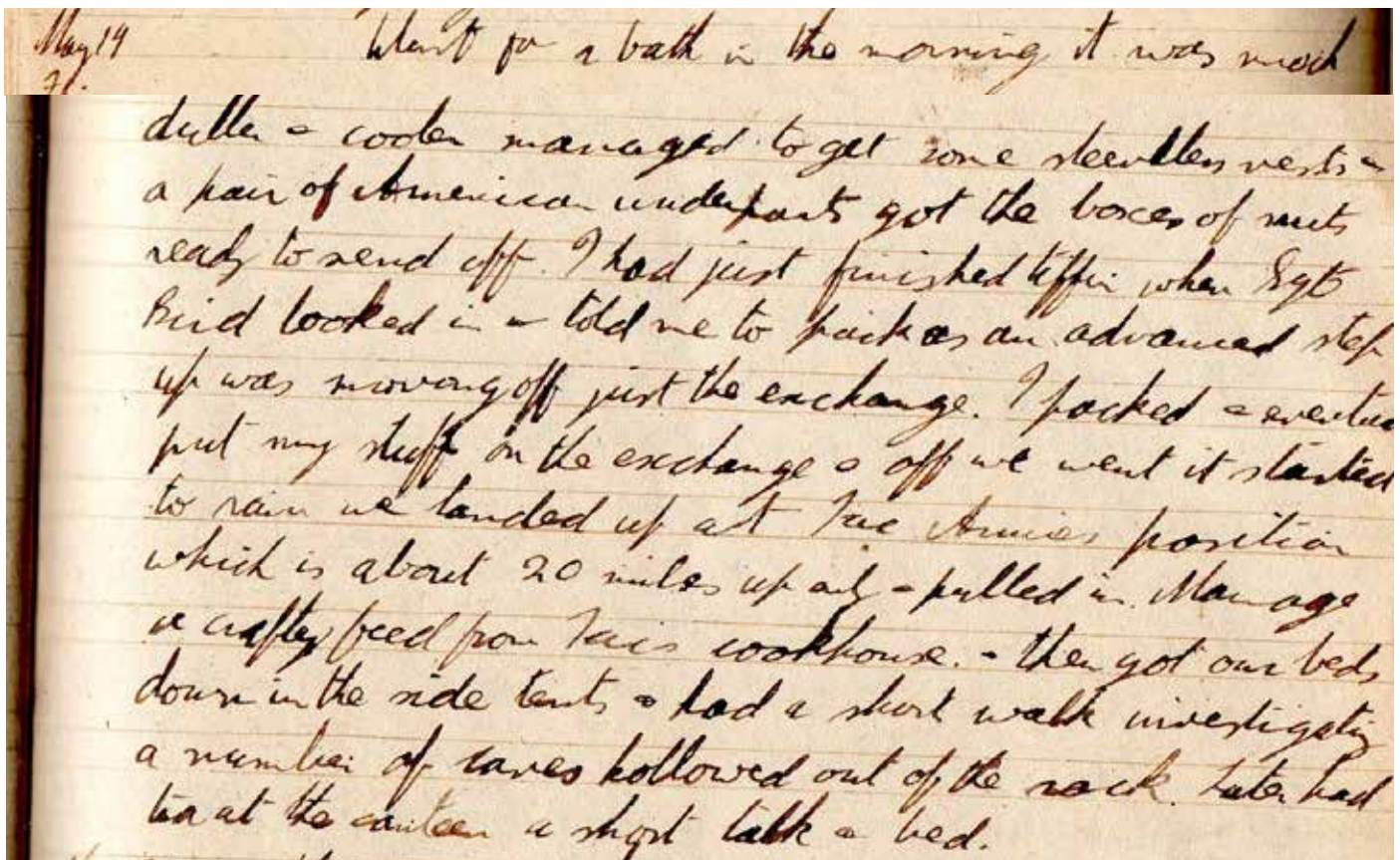
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



be off early - I won it. On night duty things were quite busy up to 2359 I managed a few words with Chas - also Andy did I then went back - on the way heard a nightingale

Tom went sick so I was the only O.R. on parade from our section. I got nothing to do but had to have a vaccination this passed off alright & went on afternoon duty which was very slack. We also drew as to who would be off early & I was it. On night duty things were quite busy up to 2359 I managed a few words with Chas & also Andy did. I then went back & on the way heard a nightingale.

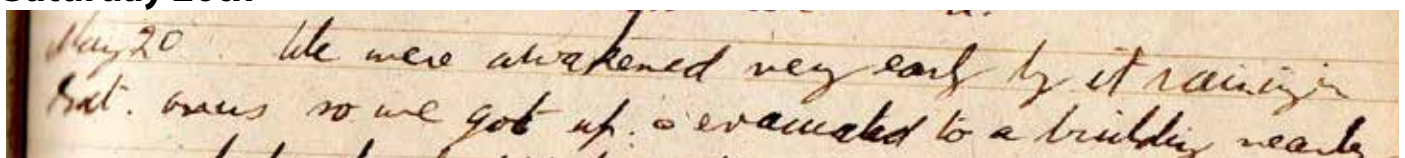
## Friday 19th



May 19  
21.  
Went for a bath in the morning it was much duller & cooler managed to get some sleeveless vests & a pair of American underpants got the boxes of nuts ready to send off. I had just finished tiffin when Sgt Bird looked in & told me to pack as an advanced step up was moving off just the exchange. I packed & eventually put my stuff in the exchange & off we went it started to rain we landed up at Tac's position which is about 20 miles up air - pulled in. Managed a crafty feed from Tac's cookhouse. - then got our beds down in the side tents & had a short walk investigating a number of caves hollowed out of the rock. Later had tea at the canteen a short talk & bed.

Went for a bath in the morning it was much duller & cooler managed to get some sleeveless vests & a pair of American underpants got the boxes of nuts ready to send off. I had just finished tiffin when Sgt Bird looked in & told me to pack as an advanced step up was moving off just the exchange. I packed eventually just put my stuff in the exchange & off we went it started to rain we landed up at Tac's position which is about 20 miles up out & pulled in. managed a crafty feed at Tac's cookhouse & then got our beds down in the side tents & had a short walk investigating a number of caves hollowed out of rock later had tea at the canteen a short talk & bed.

## Saturday 20th



May 20. We were awakened very early by it raining in Sat. brass so we got up. & evacuated to a building nearby



## Diary of a D-Day Dodger

which is fairly dirty but dry. We expected the exchange setting up, but so far no one from Tac has moved out so I don't suppose this will happen for long. We had a very good tiffin & by this time the men had come out & also we heard that the Army's Recce had gone out. In the afternoon went round with Hoff & help him choose tent sites I got my eye on quite a good one for ours. After dinner we messed about & then went along to the canteen & saw "Orchestra Wives" with Glen Miller very good after this bed & we slept in the smelly stable in which a rat had been killed by the cook in the morning.

We were awakened very early by it raining on us so we got up & evacuated to a building nearby which was dirty but dry. We expected the exchange setting up but so far no one from Tac has moved out so I don't suppose this will happen for long. We had a very good tiffin & by this time the men had come out & also we heard that Tac army's Recce had gone out. In the afternoon went round with Hoff & help him choose tent site. I got my eye on quite a good one for ours. After dinner we messed about & then went along to the canteen & saw "Orchestra Wives" with Glen Miller very good after this bed & we slept in the smelly stable in which a rat had been killed by the cook in the morning.

### Sunday 21st

May 21. I awoke after a good night's sleep & roll to breakfast - the Hoff turned up saying step up would

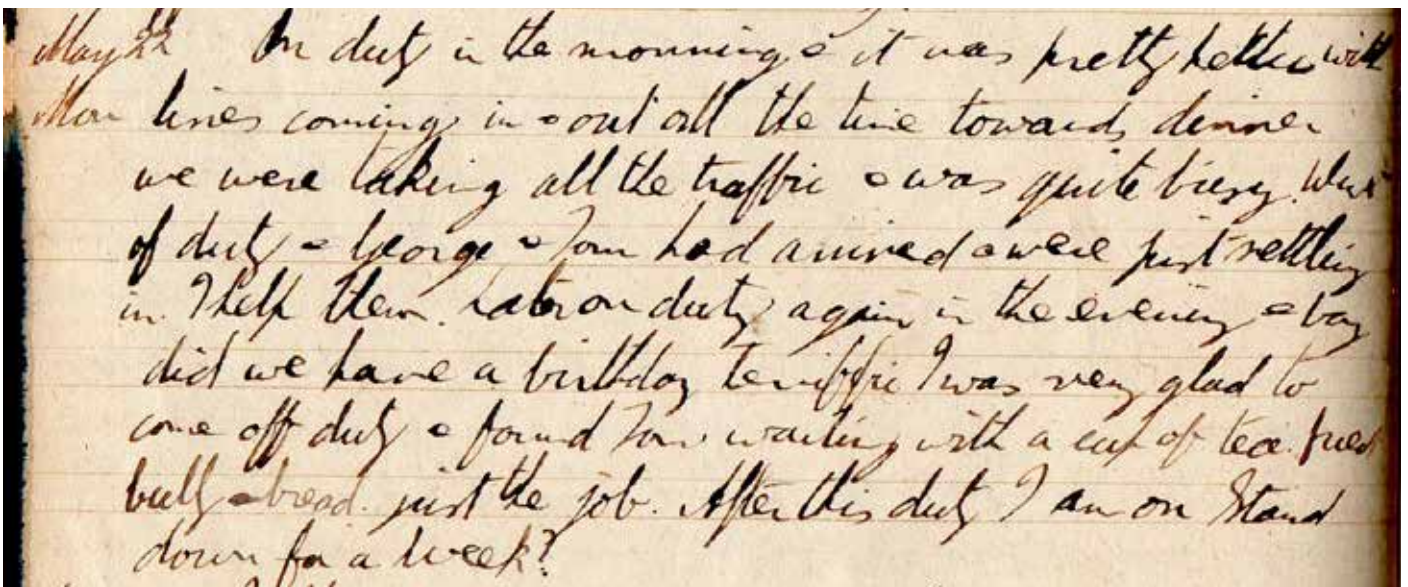
be here in the morning & the exchange was going into position now. Ken went off with the exchange. Messed about with Hoff in the morning & in the evening after tiffin part of the step up arrived & later the main step up including Robbie & Ron plus our tent. Which we immediately put up in the site selected & moved in. I then had dinner which was rather late. & Dick & I went in duty for the night. I had been there about an hour when two of the 10 Op Sgt. turned up for duty & soon after a phone call came in saying I was to go off as I was on the next morning.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

I awoke after a good nights sleep & stroll to breakfast & then Loff turned up saying step up would be here in the morning & the exchange was going into position now. Ken went off with the exchange. Messed about with Loff in the morning after tiffin part of the step up arrived & later the main step up including Robbie & Ron plus our tent which we immediately put up in the site selected & moved in. I then had dinner which was rather late & dire. I went on duty for the night. I had been there about an hour when two of the 10 Op Sect turned up for duty & soon after a phone call came in saying I was to go off as I was on the next morning.

## Monday 22nd

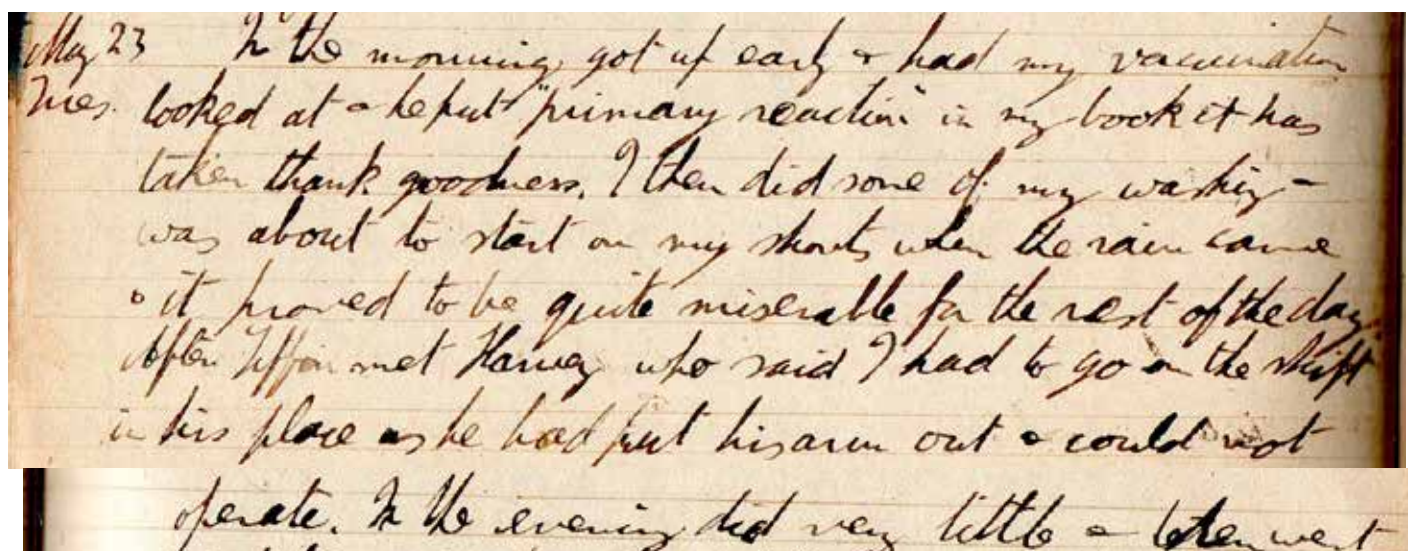


May 22 On duty in the morning & it was pretty hectic with lines coming in & out all the time towards dinner we were taking all the traffic & was quite busy. Went off duty & George & Tom had arrived & were just settling in. I help them later on duty again in the evening & boy did we have a birthday terrific I was very glad to come off duty & found Tom waiting with a cup of tea fried bully & bread just the job. After this duty I am on stand down for a week?

On duty in the morning & it was pretty hectic with lines coming in & out all the time toward dinner we were taking all the traffic & was quite busy. went off duty & George & Tom had arrived & were just settling in. I help them later on duty again in the evening & boy did we have a birthday terrific I was very glad to come off duty & found Tom waiting with a cup of tea fried bully & bread just the job. After this duty I am on stand down for a week?

## Tuesday 23rd

The Allies begin an offensive from Anzio



May 23 In the morning got up early & had my vaccination. Mrs. looked at & he put "primary reaction" in my book it has taken thank goodness. I then did some of my washing - was about to start on my shorts when the rain came & it proved to be quite miserable for the rest of the day. After tiffin met Harvey who said I had to go on the shift in his place as he had put his arm out & could not operate. In the evening had very little & then went



## Diary of a D-Day Dodger

on duty again for all night. It was not too bad but my stomach was upset & had been to the lavatory a number of times & had to dash off just after going on. They started to switch the lines over to the new exchange at midnight & I got down till 0200 hrs. Actually I was not awakened till 0315 & went on duty in the other exchange & finished the change over having to wake Bert up about 0430 in order to make another dash for it.

In the morning got up early & had my vaccination looked at & he put primary reaction in my book it has taken thank goodness. I then did some of my washing & was about to start on my shorts when the rain came & it proved to be quite miserable for the rest of the day. After tiffin met Harry who said I had to go on the shift in his pace as he had put his arm out & could not operate. In the evening did very little & later went on duty again for all night. It was not too bad but my stomach was upset & had been to the lavatory a number of times & had to dash off just after going on. They started to switch the lines over to the new exchange at midnight & I got down till 0200 hrs. Actually I was not awakened till 0315 & went on duty in the other exchange & finished the change over having to wake Bert up about 0430 in order to make another dash for it.

### Wednesday 24th

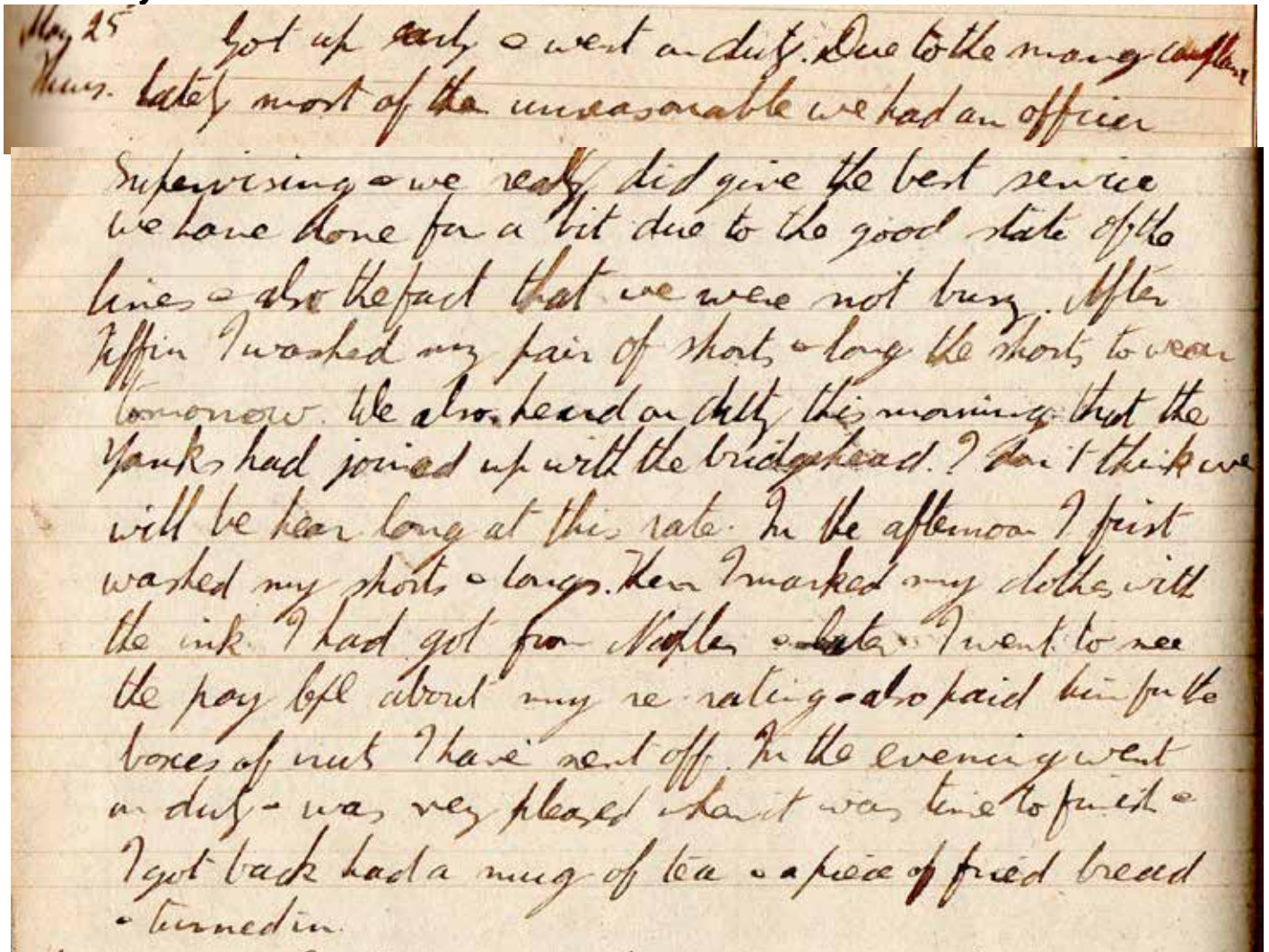
May 24  
Wed. Went when I came off duty found everybody in the tent asleep including Tom who was on duty & did not get there until 0850. only 50 mins late. I went to bed for the morning & do not remember anything until Robbie woke me for tiffin in the afternoon wrote an air letter to Betty & home. After dinner George came back & he said he was going back to Pol Corp for keeps we were all sorry to see him go we helped him pack & carry his stuff to the jeep - then he shook hands & said "dowidzenia" which is goodbye in Polish - he said "Thank you for all" & we saw him go I think he was in a way quite sorry to leave we all shall certainly miss him as he was a grand fellow. We then looked around for some nipper & managed to fry some tinned herrings & a small piece of bread. After this bed.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

When I came off duty found everybody in the tent asleep including Tom who was on duty. Did not get there until 0850 only 50 minutes late. I went to bed in the morning & do not remember anything until Robbie woke me for tiffin in the afternoon wrote an air letter to Betty & home. After dinner George came back & he said he was going back to Pol corp for keeps we were all sorry to see him go we helped him pack & carry his stuff to the jeep & then shook hands & said "dowidzenia" which is goodbye in Polish & he said "Thankyou for all" & we saw him go I think he was in a way quite sorry to leave we all shall certainly miss him as he was a grand fellow. We then looked around for some supper & managed to fry some tinned herrings & a small piece of bread. After this bed

## Thursday 25th



May 25<sup>th</sup> Got up early & went on duty. Due to the many gaffes lately most of the unreasonable we had an officer supervising & we really did give the best service we have done for a bit due to the good state of the lines & also the fact that we were not busy. After tiffin I washed my pair of shorts & hung the shorts to wear tomorrow. We also heard on duty this morning that the Yanks had joined up with the bridgehead. I don't think we will be here long at this rate. In the afternoon I first washed my shorts & longs. Then I marked my clothes with the ink I had got from Naples & later I went to see the pay Cpl. about my re-rating & also paid him for the boxes of nuts I have sent off. In the evening went on duty & was very pleased when it was time to finish & I got back had a mug of tea & a piece of fried bread & turned in.

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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Friday 26th

May 26. On parade in the morning with rifles & got detailed for our cookhouse. This was a matter of shelling peas only & a nice steady job. The afternoon shift dragged itself out & toward the end Bert heard we should probably be moving in a day or two to a place in the Hitler line which has not long since fallen. In the evening helped Ron make a new brew can & also Andy turned up & we had a pow wow. Heard from Tom a rather late message that Walt had started his journey home. We had some Irish stew for supper which we had got from the Naafi & tea & also we had managed to purchase two bottles of orange juice. Went on duty & actually did not feel so good suspect it is my inoculation. I was on last turn & intended writing a letter but did not get very much done as the board was busy.

On parade in the morning with rifles & got detailed for our cook house. This was a matter of shelling peas only & a nice steady job. The afternoon shift dragged itself out & toward the end Bert heard we should probably be moving in a day or two to a place in the Hitler Line which has not long since fallen. In the evening helped Ron make a new brew can & also Andy turned up & we had a pow wow. Heard from Tom a rather late message that Walt had started his journey home. We had some Irish stew for supper which we had got from the Naafi & tea & also we had managed to purchase two bottles of orange juice. Went on duty & actually did not feel so good suspect it is my inoculation. I was on last turn & intended writing a letter but did not get very much done as the board was busy.

Saturday 27th

May 27. Heard some really good news on coming off Sat. - that was that Stan was going to Venafra on detachment. He has been a nuisance ever since he came here as he lies on his bed all day & will not budge for anything. Had a sleep in the morning got up before ~~dinner~~ Tiffin & had a wash & shave. After Tiffin had a bath in a can of hot water & then we



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

went to the pictures & saw "I married a witch" which was highly amusing from a book by Thorne Smith the originator of "Topper". In the evening did very little & had an early night.

Heard some really good news on coming off & that was that Stan was going to Venapo on detachment. He has been a nuisance ever since he came here as he lies on his bed all day & will not budge for anything. Had a sleep in the morning got up before tiffin & had a wash & shave. After tiffin had a bath in a can of hot water & then we went to the pictures & saw "I married a witch" which was highly amusing from a book by Thorne Smith the originator of "Topper". In the evening did very little & had an early night.

## Sunday 28th

May 28<sup>th</sup> Had to get up early & go on duty this I did very early & woke the rest up at 0730 & then went on duty it was quite slack. On coming off I did my washing shirt shorts vest pants & a towel. I potted about a bit mainly packing as I had heard we were to move. In the evening on duty again - the time passed very slow. Before retiring Robbie Ron & I had a talk of various things.

Had to get up early & go on duty this I did very early & woke the rest up at 0730 & then went on duty it was quite slack. On coming off I did my washing shirt shorts vest pants & a towel. I potted about a bit mainly packing as I heard we were to move. In the evening Robbie, Ron & I had a talk of various things.

## Monday 29th

May 29<sup>th</sup> Had a lie in till 0730 & then got up for breakfast. Then went on parade & was detailed for nothing later the platoon round & we had to peel some onions. This did not last very long. After this I measured up some wood to make a box to just fit my pack & hold all my cleaning tackle. The afternoon duty was very quite & slow. On coming off found step up was due out the next day & Ron & Robbie were off plus

our tent oh also Stan who unfortunately has arrived back. I packed all my stuff as we shall have to find another abode for tomorrow night. Went on duty after



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

having a supper of egg on toast & tea. Was busy at first  
& then it settled down & I was on first turn.

Had a lie in till 0730 & then got up for breakfast went on parade & was detailed for nothing later the Sgt came round & we had to peel some onions. This did not last very long. After this I measured up some wood in order to make a box to just fit my pack & hold all my cleaning tackle the afternoon duty was very quiet & slow. On coming off found step up was out the next day & Ron & Robbie were off plus our tent oh also Stan who unfortunately has arrived back. I packed all my stuff as we shall have to find another abode for tomorrow night. Went on duty after having a supper of eggs on toast & tea. Was busy at first & then settled down & I was on first turn.

## Tuesday 30th

May 30 The morning found the step up about to leave & they had taken the tent & my bed board. I moved Tom & my stuff into another tent & then put my bed down under a tree & had a sleep with my mosquito net over me to ward off the flies. In the afternoon we moved all our kit out of that tent & under the tree as they were packing up the tent that day. In the afternoon felt lazy so I sat in the sun & read a book. In the evening Tom went on duty I loaded our kit up then finish off this book & went to sleep.

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## Wednesday 31st

May 31 Got up early & packed up had breakfast & received our rations two slices of bread a piece of cheese & an orange. Went on duty but this did not last long heard that they was going back poor old Dick was having to come back in his place. We had to leave an operator behind to man a 10 line VC but I did not loose the toss. The journey we had was quite good we passed through the



## Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

down on the heap of rubble that was ~~Cassino~~ ~~the~~  
the Monastery on top of the hill we went past here &  
ended up below a village called ~~Castelcisto~~ ~~Castelcisto~~. found  
our tent up & proceeded to get installed. Tom had to go on  
in the afternoon & I relieved him in the evening &  
we had a very funny system in operation. two  
boards going the bits on the old one & the trunks on  
the new. Ron & I were on the old one & the others on the  
new. I was very glad to get off duty. I got back to the  
hut & found we had risen to the ranks of having  
a battery & light in the tent. Just the job. Had also a  
cup of tea & piece of toast & then bed. Was awakened  
during the night by the Sgt coming in to call Roy who  
was wanted to mend a teleprinter.

Got up early & packed up had breakfast & received our tiffin rations. two slices of bread a piece of cheese & an orange. Went on duty but this did not last long heard that tilley was going back poor old Dicky was having to come back in his place. We had to leave an operator behind to man a 10 line uc but I did not loose the toss. The journey we had was quite good we passed through the town or the heap of rubble that was cassino & saw the Monastery on top of the hill we went past here & ended up below a village called castelcisto found our tent up & proceeded to get installed Tom had to go in the afternoon & I relieved him in the evening as we had a very funny system in operation two boards going the exts on the old one & the trunks on the new. Ron & I were on the old one & the other on the new. I was very glad to get off duty . I got back to the hut & found we had risen to the ranks of having a battery & light in the tent. Just the job. Had also a cup of tea & piece of toast & then bed. Was awakened during the night by the Sgt coming in to call Roy who was wanted to mend a teleprinter.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## JUNE 1944

Thursday 1st

June 1  
Thurs. Got up around 0730 had breakfast got washed & shaved & then six of us detailed for latrine digging & erecting. Found out that two of us had to go to the cookhouse & Bert & I lost the toss. Had to help build a mud & stone oven. We finished this at 1100 & got ready for duty the afternoon one was a nightmare as we were having great trouble with the lines in one minute out the next. In the evening did very little collected the water & helped get the supper ready - also I made up my bottle of ink. When we got on duty found the board in a hell of a state - the supervisor striking matches to see as the lights had failed. Anyway finally we were able to leave one on & I got down at 1200 hrs. I was on the middle turn & wrote an air letter to Betty.

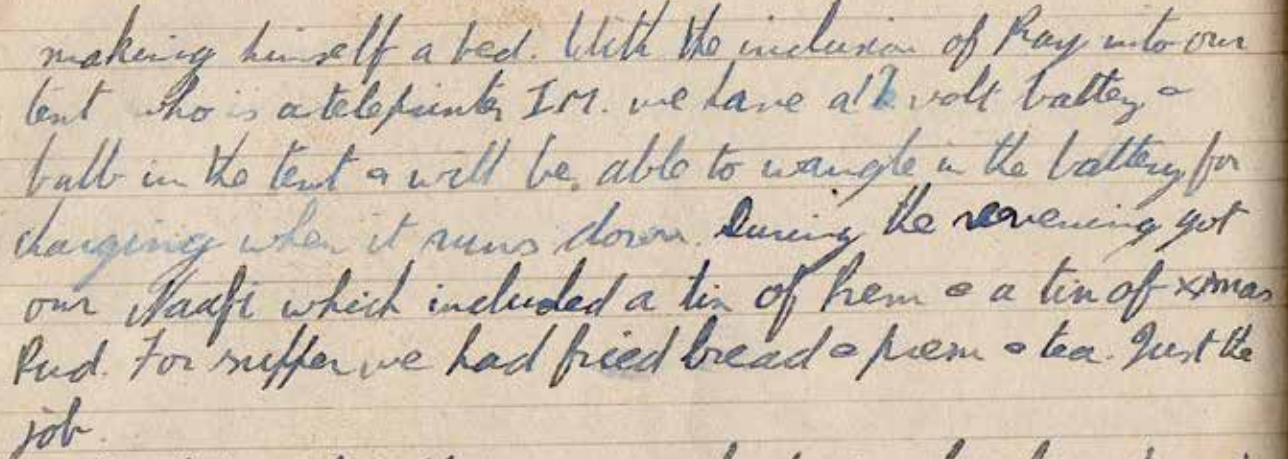
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Friday 2nd

June 2  
Fri. Came off duty had breakfast two helpings of porridge - then had a shave & a sleep until dinner time. Tiffin after tiffin had a bath in a tin after getting the water from the well. Afterward washed a few clothes. Tom was



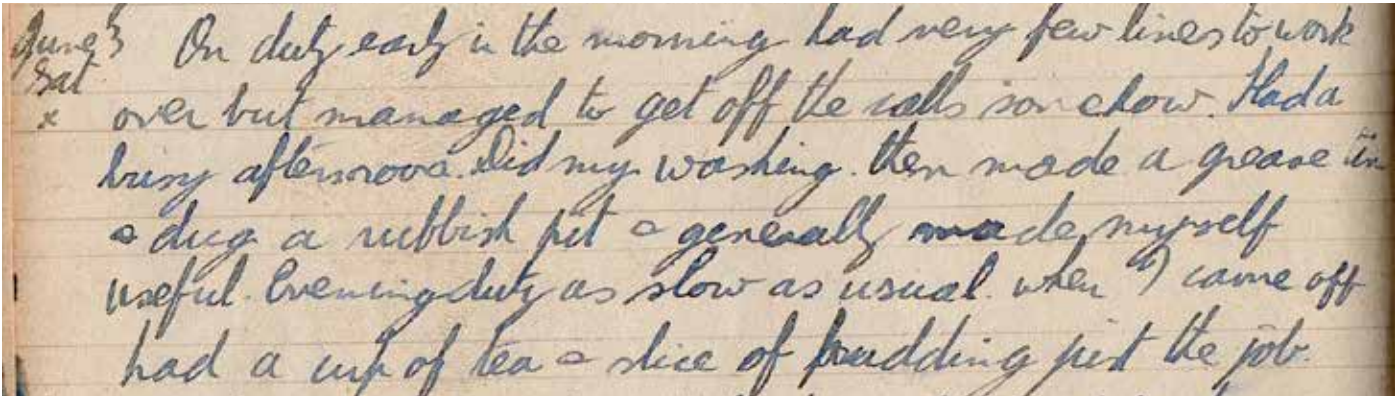
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



making himself a bed. With the inclusion of Ray into our tent who is a teleprinter I.M. we have a 12 volt battery & bulb in the tent & will be able to wangle in the battery for charging when it runs down. During the evening got our Naafi which included a tin of ham & a tin of xmas pud. For supper we had fried bread & ham & tea. Just the job.

Came off duty had breakfast two helpings of porridge & then pack a shave & a sleep until tiffin. After tiffin had a bath in a tin after getting the water from the well. Afterwards washed a few clothes Tom was making himself a bed. With the inclusion of Ray into our tent who is a teleprinter I.M. We have a 12 volt battery & bulb in the tent & will be able to wangle in the battery for charging when it runs down. During the evening got our Naafi which included a tin of ham & a tin of xmas pud. For supper we had fried bread & ham & tea. Just the job

## Saturday 3rd

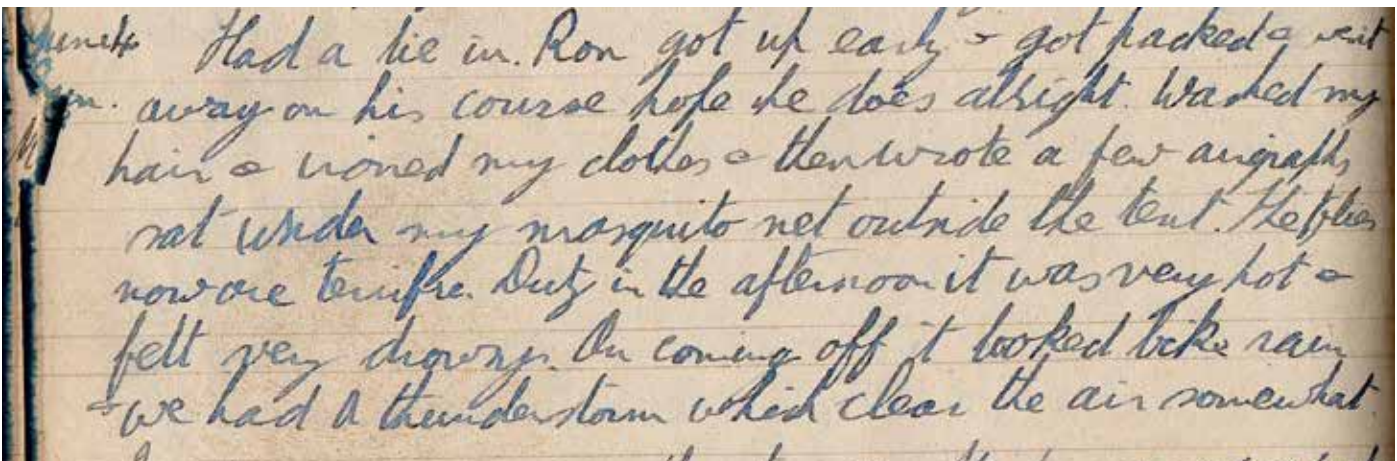


June 3<sup>rd</sup> On duty early in the morning had very few lines to work over but managed to get off the calls somehow. Had a busy afternoon. Did my washing then made a grease in & dug a rubbish pit & generally made myself useful. Evening duty as slow as usual when I came off had a cup of tea & slice of pudding just the job.

On duty early in the morning but very few lines to work over but managed to get off the calls somehow. Had a busy afternoon. Did my washing then made a grease in & dug a rubbish pit & generally made myself useful. Evening duty as slow as usual when I came off had a cup of tea & slice of pudding just the job

## Sunday 4th

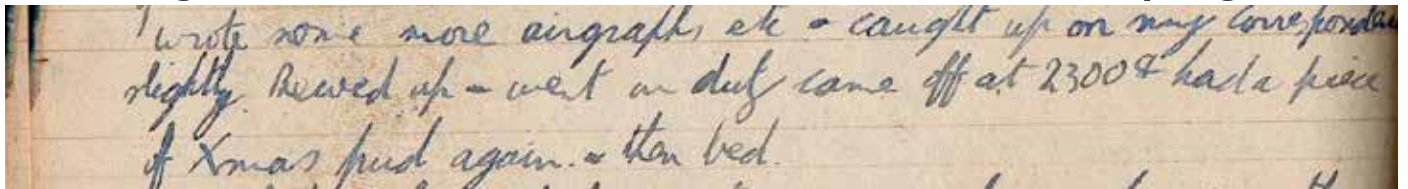
Rome fell to the Allies today.



June 4<sup>th</sup> Had a lie in. Ron got up early & got packed & set away on his course hope he does alright. Washed my hair & ironed my clothes & then wrote a few aigraphs, rat under my mosquito net outside the tent. Fleas now are terrible. Duty in the afternoon it was very hot & felt very downy. On coming off it looked like rain & we had a thunder storm which clear the air somewhat.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

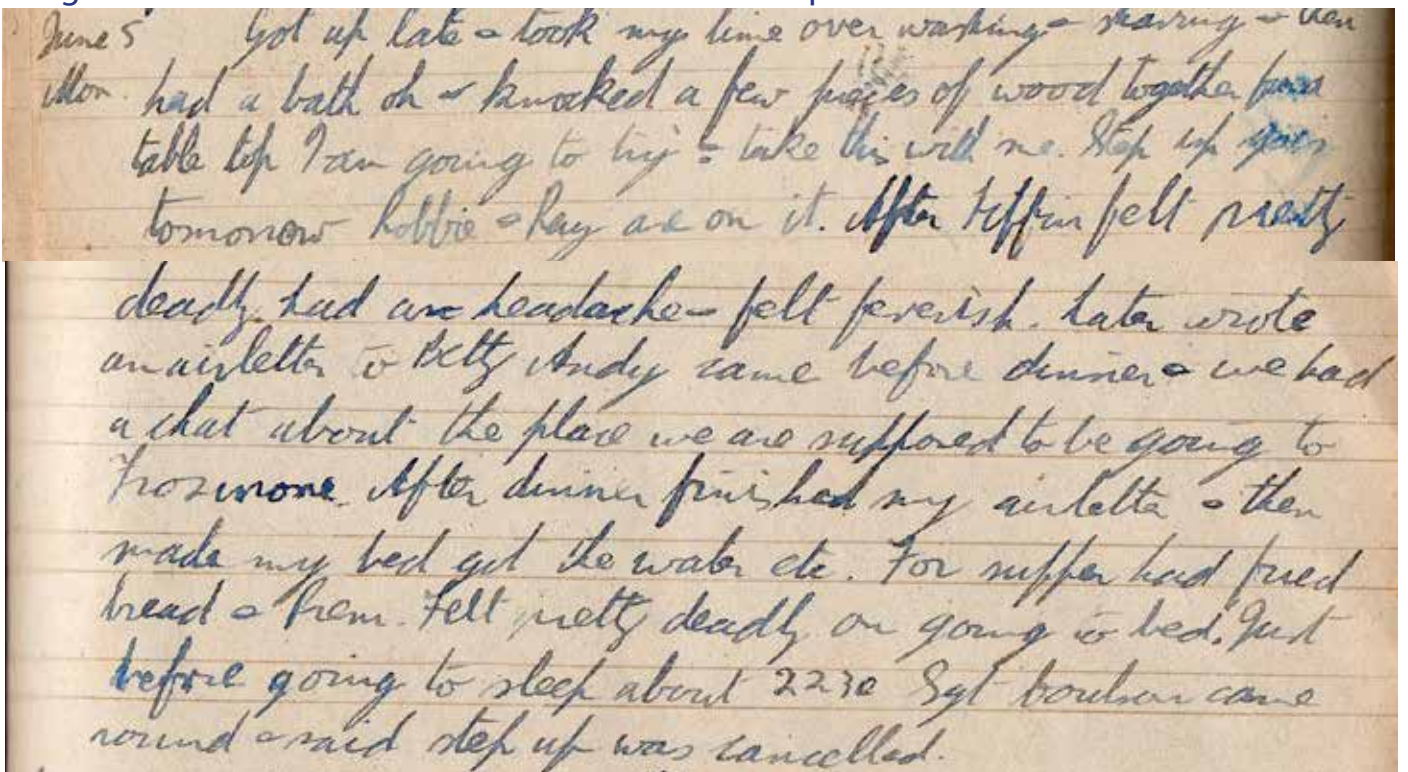


I wrote some more airgraphs etc & caught up on my correspondence slightly. Brewed up & went on duty came off at 2300 & had a piece of Xmas pud again & then bed.

Had a lie in Ron got up early & got packed & went away on his course hope he does alright. Washed my hair & ironed my clothes & the wrote a few airgraphs sat under my mosquito net outside the tent. The flies now are terrific. Duty in the afternoon it was very hot & felt drowsy. On coming off it looked like rain & we had a thunderstorm which clear the air somewhat. I wrote some more airgraphs etc. & caught up on my correspondence slightly. Brewed up & went on duty came off at 2300 & had a piece of Xmas pud again & then bed.

## Monday 5th

King Victor Emmanuel abdicates in favour of crown prince Umberto.



June 5<sup>th</sup> Got up late & took my time over washing & shaving & then had a bath oh & knocked a few pieces of wood together for a table top I am going to try & take this with me. Step up goes tomorrow Robbie & Ray are on it. After tiffin felt pretty dead. Had a headache & felt feverish. Later wrote an airletter to Betty. Andy came before dinner & we had a chat about the place we are supposed to be going to Frosinone. After dinner finished my airletter & then made my bed get the water etc. For supper had fried bread & ham. Felt pretty dead on going to bed. Just before going to sleep about 22:30 Sgt Coulson came round & said step up was cancelled.

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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Tuesday 6th

June 6. Got up early still had a head went on duty just after getting on duty heard the second front had started at 0600 hrs. There was landings from Le Havre to Cherbourg. There was 4000 ships & many thousand smaller ships & 1100 aircraft it must have been terrific. The morning duty was not too busy & had no break due to only three of us on duty. Today four years ago was Dunkerque. In the afternoon felt pretty rotten & had a short nap. Duty in the evening & we heard the King's speech & also the news the war appears to be going very well it is touch & go whether the Germans in Italy really are pulling out to make defensive positions on the Po valley. Did an extra hour for Tom who went to the concert. During the evening there were thousands of mosquitos about.

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Wednesday 7th

June 7. We did not wake up till quite late during the night. Morning had to clear a four foot space round the tent of all grass & dig a 2' channel outside that as a fire break & of course we are moving the tent afterwards.

The afternoon duty was very slow - at one period we did not know where the trucks terminated or not. After dinner felt pretty dicky so I made my bed & lay down. Went on duty at 2:30. I took my blankets & net on with me &



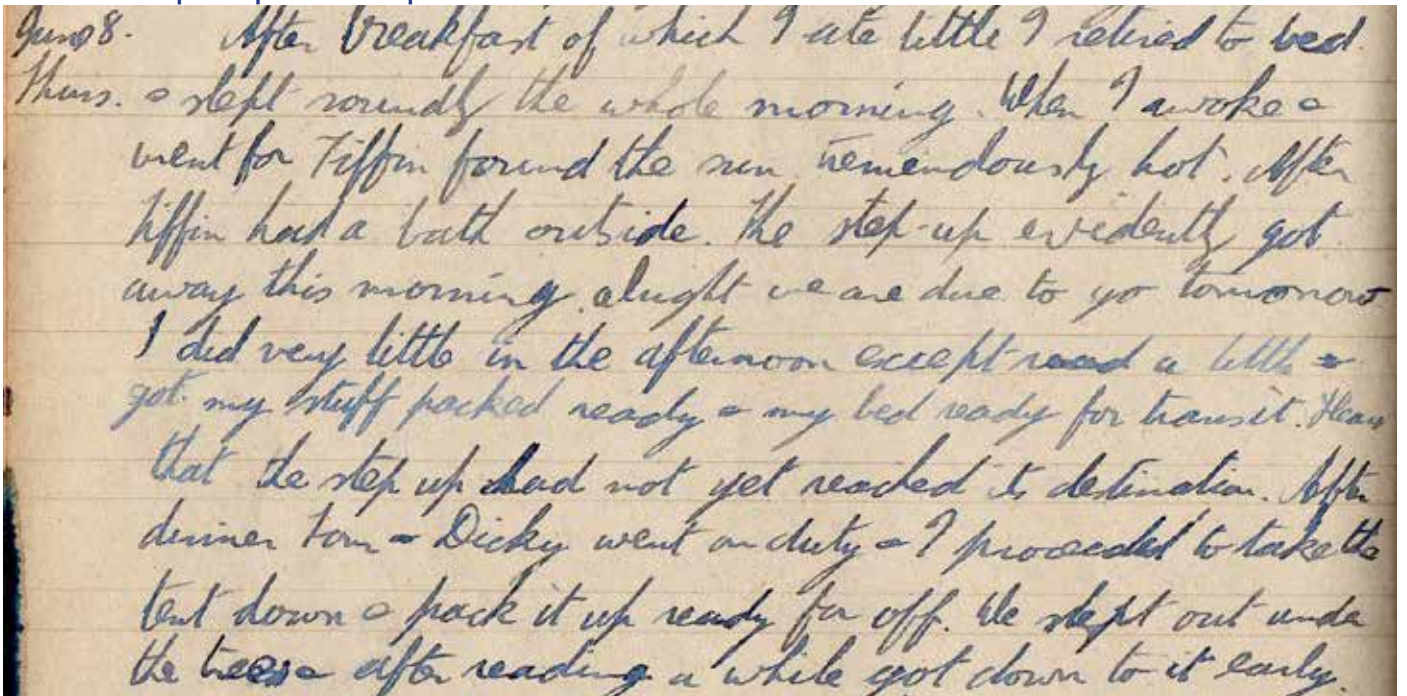
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



We did not wake up till quite late during the morning had to clean a four foot space round the tent of all grass & dig a 2' channel outside that as a fire break & of course we are moving the day after tomorrow. The afternoon duty was very slow & at one period we did not know where the trunks terminated or not. After dinner felt pretty dicky so I made my bed & lay down. Went on duty at 21:30. I took my blankets & net on with me & slept outside felt pretty dedly by morning.

## Thursday 8th

Allied troops capture the port of Civitavecchia.

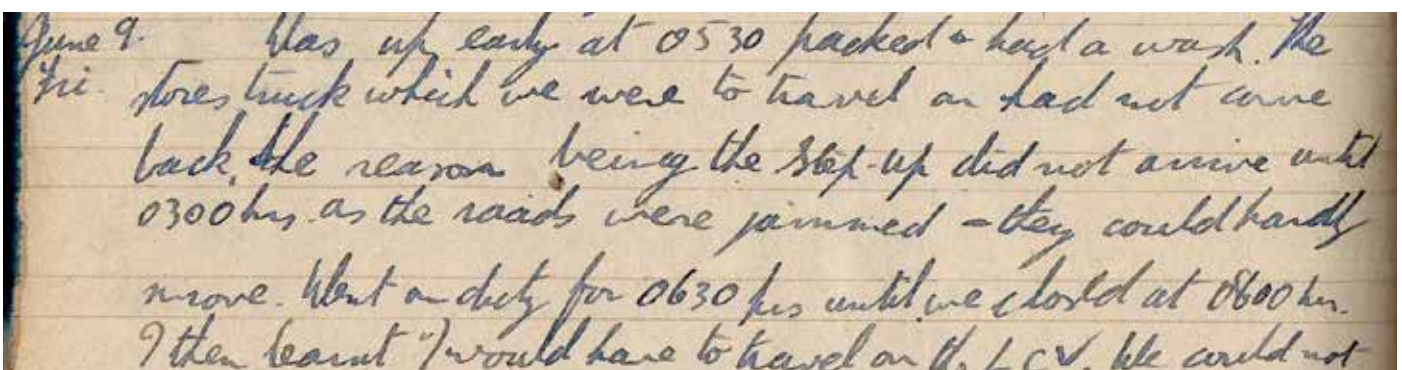


June 8. After breakfast of which I ate little I retired to bed. Thurs. I slept soundly the whole morning. When I awoke I went for Tiffin found the sun tremendously hot. After tiffin had a bath outside. The step-up evidently got away this morning alright we are due to go tomorrow I did very little in the afternoon except read a little & got my stuff packed ready & my bed ready for transit. Hear that the step up had not yet reached its destination. After dinner Tom & Dicky went on duty & I proceeded to take the tent down & pack it up ready for off. We slept out under the trees after reading a while got down to it early.

After breakfast of which I ate little I retired to bed & slept soundly the whole morning. When I woke & went for tiffin found the sun tremendously hot. After tiffin had a bath outside. The step up evidently got away this morning alright we are due to go tomorrow I did very little in the afternoon except read a little & got my stuff packed ready for transit. Hear that the step up had not yet reached its destination. After dinner Tom & dicky went on duty & I proceeded to take the tent down & pack it up ready for off. We slept out under the trees & after reading a while got down to it early

## Friday 9th

Ex-premier Ivanoe Bonomi is chosen to head a provisional government.



June 9. Was up early at 0530 packed & had a wash. The Fri. stores truck which we were to travel on had not come back. The reason being the step-up did not arrive until 0300 hrs. as the roads were jammed - they could hardly move. Went on duty for 0630 hrs until we closed at 0800 hrs. I then learnt I would have to travel on the LCV. We could not



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

got all the stuff on - left the tents & our beds behind oh & also the battery. We were due to leave immediately but after messing about it was 0930 before we started. The journey up was quite good & the traffic was not too bad. We went through Frosinone (shambles) & then later Valmontone

which really was bad the Yanks had taken it street by street. Later we passed a much smaller place Labico & then hit our leagues & then we wonder what had hit us. There was not a tree in sight & the dust was terrific clouds of it. Our actual tent site was on the side of a hill which had small nut trees in it & the whole lot was planted with corn which grew as high as me. As our tent had not arrived threw my bed together under this tree & then prepared to go on duty in the evening. This duty passed off easily. Got back had half my bottle of beer & then bed. Woke up feeling chilly at 0230 & put my great coat over me & slept on.

Was up early at 0530 packed & had a wash. The stores truck which we were to travel on had not come back the reason being the step-up did not arrive until 0300 hrs as the roads were jammed & they could hardly move. Went on duty for 0630 hrs until we closed at 0600 hrs. I then learnt I would have to travel on the LCV. We could not get all the stuff on & left the tents & our beds behind oh & also the battery. We were due to leave immediately but after messing about it was 0930 before we started. The journey up was quite good & the traffic was not too bad. we went through Frosinone (shambles) & then later valmontone which really was bad the yanks had taken it street by street. Later we passed a much smaller place Labico & then hit our leagues & then we wonder what had hit us. There was not a tree in sight & the dust was terrific clouds of it our actual tent site was on the side of a hill which had small nut trees in it & the whole lot was planted with corn which grew as high as me. As our tent had not arrived threw my bed together under this tree & then prepared to go on duty in the evening. This duty passed off easily got back had half my bottle of beer & then bed. Woke up feeling chilly at 0230 & put my great coat over me & slept on.

## Saturday 10th

June 10 Woke up & found there had been a very heavy  
dew & my blankets were quite wet but felt alright



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got up & had breakfast which was salmon. came back & washed & shaved in a mess tin of water. After this Tom Dicky - I went for water we had about 20 minutes walk along a very dusty track for it & back. The rest of the morning just lay around. till Sgt Coulson came round & told us we all had to dump our beds. This is a blow the reason for it is to make more space as we are not mobile enough. Went on duty after tiffin which consisted of two half slices of bread a piece of cheese & a few biscuits & not tea but cocoa. The duty was very easy & had half hour breaks working two about. In the evening had a bath on the old tin & then away for water again. By the time Dicky & I got back Tom had put a xmas pudding on & also managed some dried eggs. So we had scrambled egg on xmas pudding for supper. & a cup of tea after which duty.

Woke up & found there had been a very heavy dew & my blankets were quite wet but felt alright got up & had breakfast which was salmon. Came back & washed & shaved in a mess tin of water. After this Tom Dicky & I went for water we had about 20 minutes walk along a very dusty track for it & back. The rest of the morning just lay around till Sgt Coulson came round & told us we all had to dump our beds. This is a blow the reason for it is to make more space as we are not mobile enough. Went on duty after tiffin which consisted of two half slices of bread a piece of cheese & a few biscuits & not tea but cocoa. The duty was very easy & had half hour breaks working two about. In the evening had a bath on the old tin & then away for water again. By the time Dicky & I got back Tom had put a xmas pudding on & also managed some dried eggs. So we had scrambled egg on xmas pudding for supper & cup of tea after which duty.

## Sunday 11th

June 11  
Sun. Woke up during my sleeping period of duty at 0715 to the accompaniment of rain. Got off duty had breakfast & the Ray Robbie - I put up the tent in the rain it was a hell of a job. we then moved our kit in on the floor of the tent after digging out shelves. I then had a check looked in my pack for hours watch - found it gone looked all over the place for it



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Then went down on duty to see if Tom had it. I found that Dicky had taken it to wake up in the morning. - was I relieved. Instead of having a cup of tea from the cookhouse we brewed up in the tent. The rest of the day I spent in reading etc. as the weather was too bad to do anything else.

Woke up during my sleeping period of duty at 0715 to the accompaniment of rain. Got off duty had breakfast & then Ray Robbie & I put up the tent in the rain it was a hell of a job. We then moved our kit in on the floor of the tent after digging out shelves. I then had a shock looked in my pack for Rons watch & found it gone looked all over the place for it & then went down on duty to see if Tom had it. I found that Dicky taken it to wake up in the morning & was I relieved. Instead of having a cup of tea from the cookhouse we brewed up in the tent. The rest of the day I spent in reading etc. as the weather was too bad to do anything else.

## Monday 12th

June 12. Went on duty in the morning. Had quite a slack time. In the afternoon it looked like being fine so I did my washing in the little water we had & then walked down to the well & rinsed it all out. After this I had a bath & then went on duty. Just before I came off I felt a bit queer. When I got back to the tent I felt distinctly off & after getting into bed felt all hot & had a splitting headache. I was awake all night as I could not stop thinking & let my mind rest & was awake the whole night tossing & turning. The next morning when I got up I had a terrific headache.

Went on duty in the morning & had quite a slack time. In the afternoon it looked like being fine so I did my washing in the little water we had & then walked down to the well & rinsed it all out. After this I had a bath & then went on duty. Just before I came off I felt a bit queer. When I got back to the tent I felt distinctly off & after getting into bed felt all hot & had a splitting headache. I was awake all night as I could not stop thinking & let my mind rest & was awake the whole night tossing & turning. The next morning when I got up I had a terrific headache.

## Tuesday 13th

June 13. Luckily did not have any fatigues in the morning. Was so I slept till 11pm. Went on duty in the afternoon it was terribly hot - felt lousy. In the evening finally enough



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felt a little better but had a lie down went on night duty & did first turn so I was able to get down to it from about 0230. Slept very well.

Luckily did not have any fatigues in the morning so I slept till tiffin went on duty in the afternoon it was terribly hot & felt lousy. In the evening funnily enough felt a little better but had a lie down went on night duty & did first turn so I was able to get down to it from about 0230. Slept very well.

## Wednesday 14th

June 14  
Wed. Step-up went out in the morning - I went to bed for the morning. Felt much better on awakening. In the afternoon went down to the well & washed my towel & the cloths I use on my bed. At night got packed up & then Ray & I filled all water bottles. - then boiled the potatoes & cut up the pork etc after which we retired.

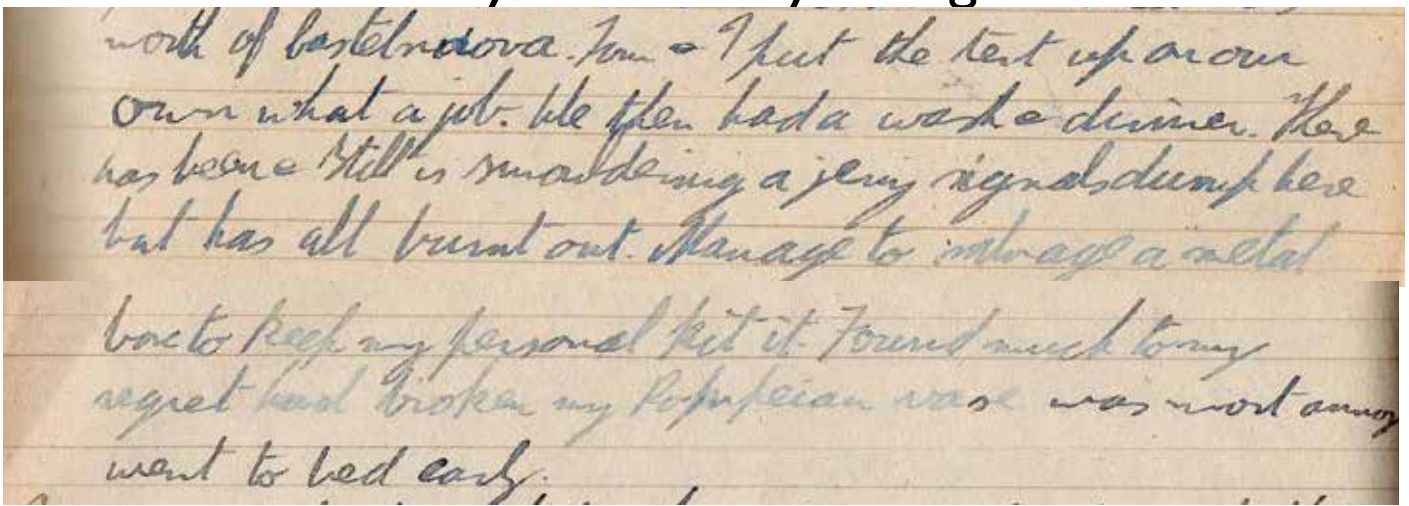
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## Thursday 15th

June 15  
Thurs. woke up dead on 0530. so got up got packed had breakfast & down on duty by 0645. Nothing much doing I had to stay behind after the exchange had moved - man a 12 line Yankee effort with just one line to hear & one line to the G of S had no calls - eventually packed in & Capt Fisher came down & took me to the convoy. We had a very pleasant trip just Fern & I in the back of the exchange & each surveyed the country side from the roof windows which we had open. On going through Rome we sat on the roof. I actually saw little of Rome just touch the outskirts but it looks a fine place. So anyway the files arrived at the new position about 0230. & it is near Sabia which lies



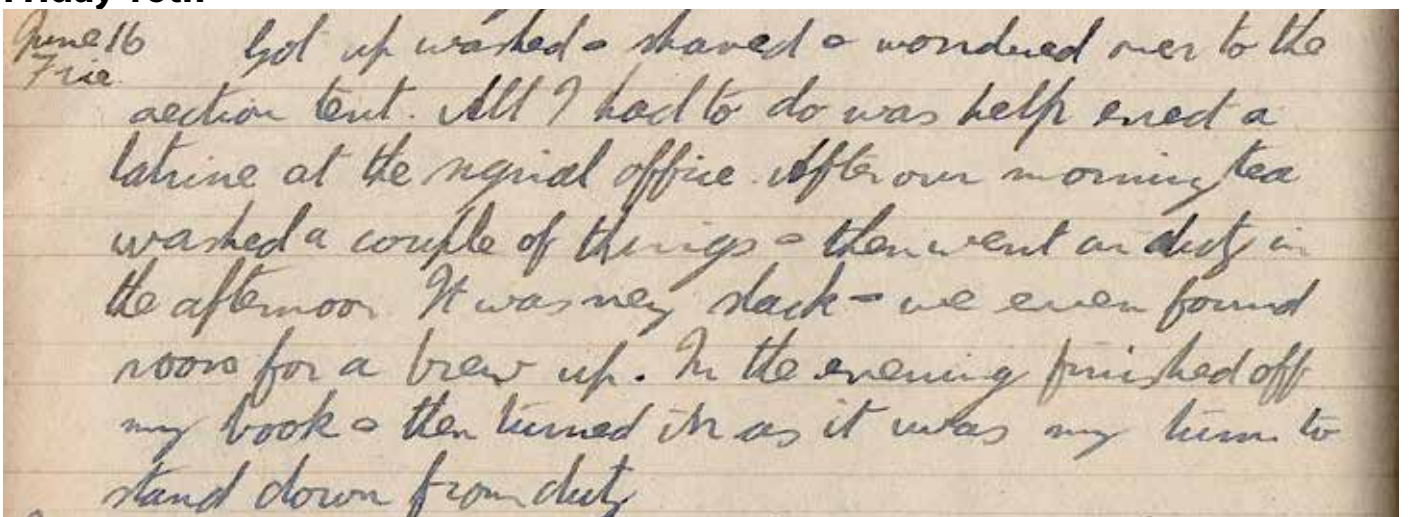
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



North of Castelnuova. Tom & I put the tent up on our own what a job. We then had a wash & dinner. There has been & still is smouldering a jerry signals dump here but has all burnt out. Manage to salvage a metal box to keep my personal kit in. Found much to my regret had broken my Pompeian vase was most annoyed went to bed early.

Woke up dead on 0530 so got up got packed had breakfast & down on duty by 0645. Nothing much doing I had to stay behind after the exchange had moved & man a 12 line yankee effort with just one line to rear & one line to the C of S had no calls & eventually packed in & Capt. Fisher came down & took me to the convoy. We had a very pleasant trip just Tom & I in the back of the exchange & each surveyed the countryside from the roof windows which we had open. On going through Rome we sat on the roof. Actually saw little of Rome just touch the outskirts but it looks a fine place. So anyway the Tiber. Arrived at the new position about 0230 & it is near Sabia which lies north of Castelnuova. Tom & I put the tent up on our own what a job. We then had a wash & dinner. There has been & still is smouldering a jerry signals dump here but has all burnt out. Manage to salvage a metal box to keep my personal kit in found much to my regret had broken my Pompeian vase was most annoyed went to bed early.

## Friday 16th



June 16  
Fri. Got up washed & shaved & wandered over to the section tent. All I had to do was help erect a latrine at the signal office. After our morning tea washed a couple of things & then went on duty in the afternoon. It was very slack & we even found room for a brew up. In the evening finished off my book & then turned in as it was my turn to stand down from duty.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Saturday 17th

June 17  
Got up & slowly washed & shaved then went down to the washing place & wash my shirt & shorts & towel. Later made a box to hold my washing tackle etc. In the afternoon wrote a few letters - heard the result of the Derby also in the news it reported we had landed on the island of Elba. Oh the name of the place we are near now is Civita Castellana four miles away. In the evening we had a coy parade with skeleton order<sup>1</sup> & rifles & did a little drill because we may get a visit from some General commandant of the corp.

Got up & slowly washed & shaved then went down to the washing place & wash my shirt & shorts & towel. Later made a box to hold my washing tackle etc. In the afternoon wrote a few letters & heard the result of the Derby also in the news it reported we had landed on the island of Elba. Oh the name of the place we are near now is Civita Castellana four miles away. In the evening we had a coy parade with skeleton order<sup>1</sup> & rifles & did a little drill because we may get a visit from some General commandant of the corp.

Sunday 18th

June 18  
Woke up & found I had a rash at the top of my leg went sick but the MO said it was nothing to worry about - gave me some dusting powder. After this went down on duty. In the afternoon which was quite dull. I just read a little & then had a sleep later went on duty. We had very little to do & I came off to collect the mail I had four letters

one of them containing the books Betty sent me. When I came off duty found I had no tea as we could not wa any milk so I had a piece of toast & was just getting to bed when Ron rolled up back from his course & he had some rations including a tin of milk so we got the finances out & brewed up just the job.

Woke up & found I had a rash at the top of my leg went sick but the MO said it was nothing to worry about & gave me some dusting powder. After this went down on duty. In the

1 Carrying only basic kit no haversacks or great coats as opposed to in FSMO

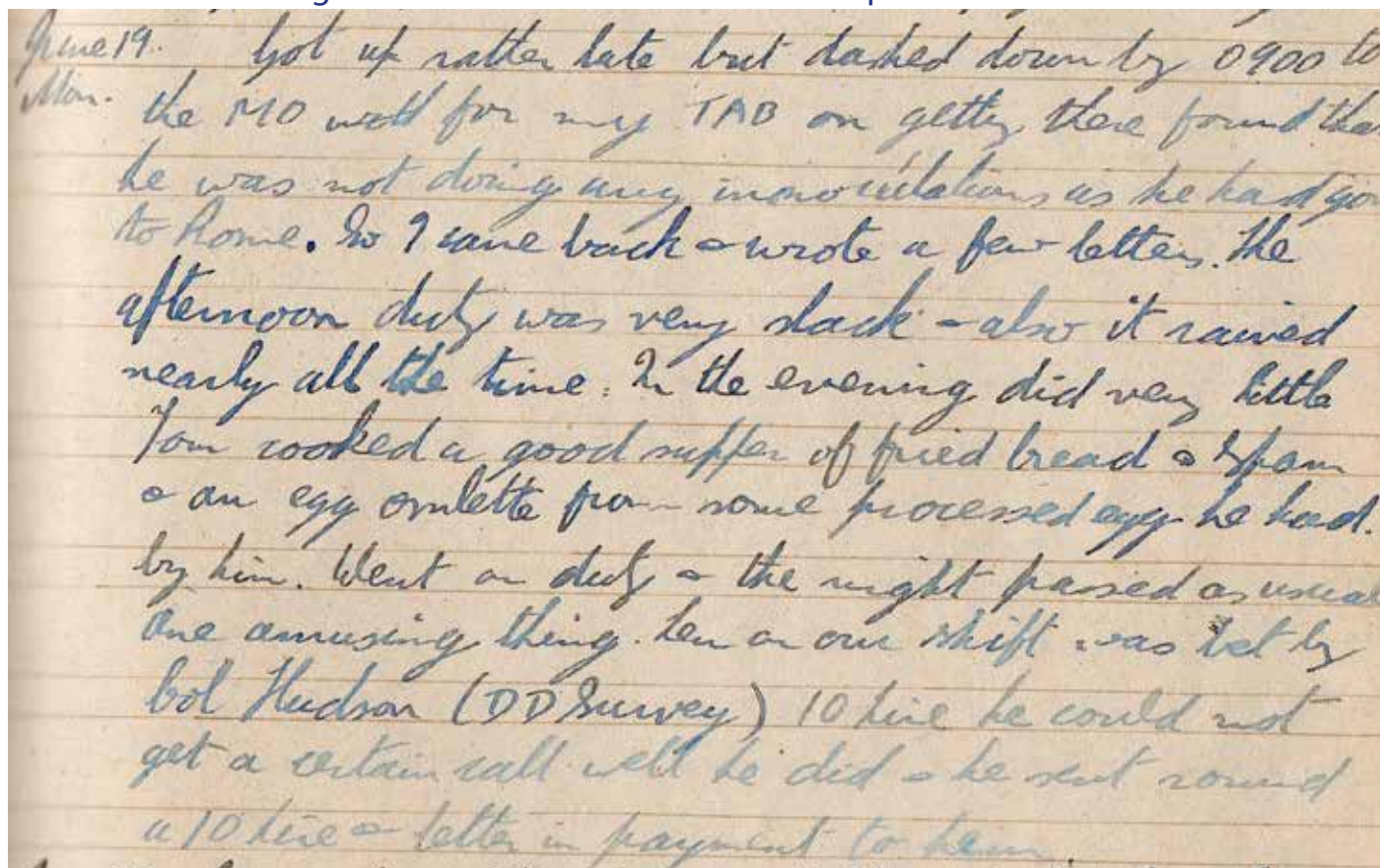


# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

afternoon which was quite dull I just read a little & then had a sleep later went on duty. We had very little to do & I came off to collect the mail I had four letters one of them containing the books Betty sent me. When I came off duty found I had no tea as we we could not wangle any milk so I had a piece of toast & was just getting to bed when Ron rolled up back from his course & he had some rations including a tin of milk so we got the primus out & brewed up just the job.

## Monday 19th

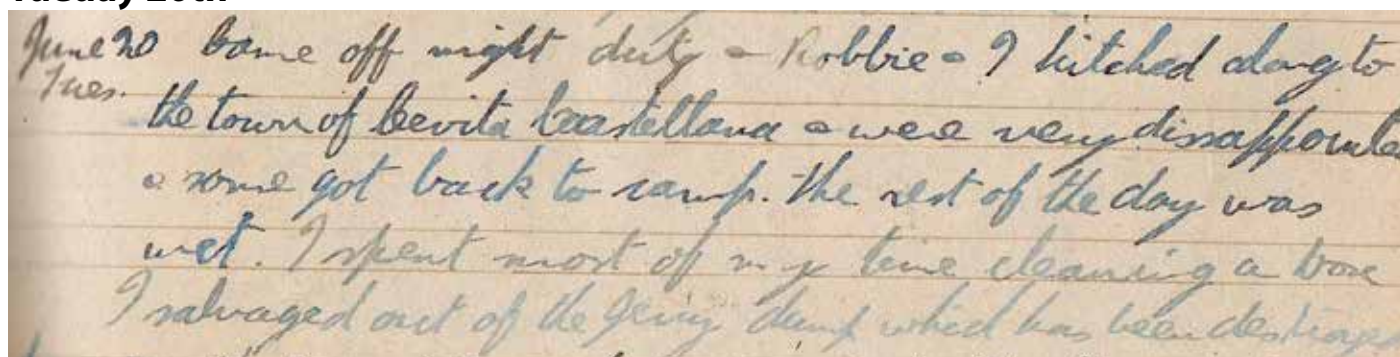
The Allies take Perugia as Elba surrenders to French troops.



June 19. Got up rather late but dashed down by 0900 to the MO booth for my TAB on getting there found he was not doing any inoculations as he had gone to Rome. So I came back & wrote a few letters. The afternoon duty was very slack - also it rained nearly all the time. In the evening did very little Tom cooked a good supper of fried bread & spam & an egg omelette from some processed egg he had by him. Went on duty & the night passed as usual one amusing thing Len on our shift was bet by Col Hudson (DD Survey) 10 lire he could not get a certain call well he did & he sent round a 10 lire & letter in payment to him.

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## Tuesday 20th



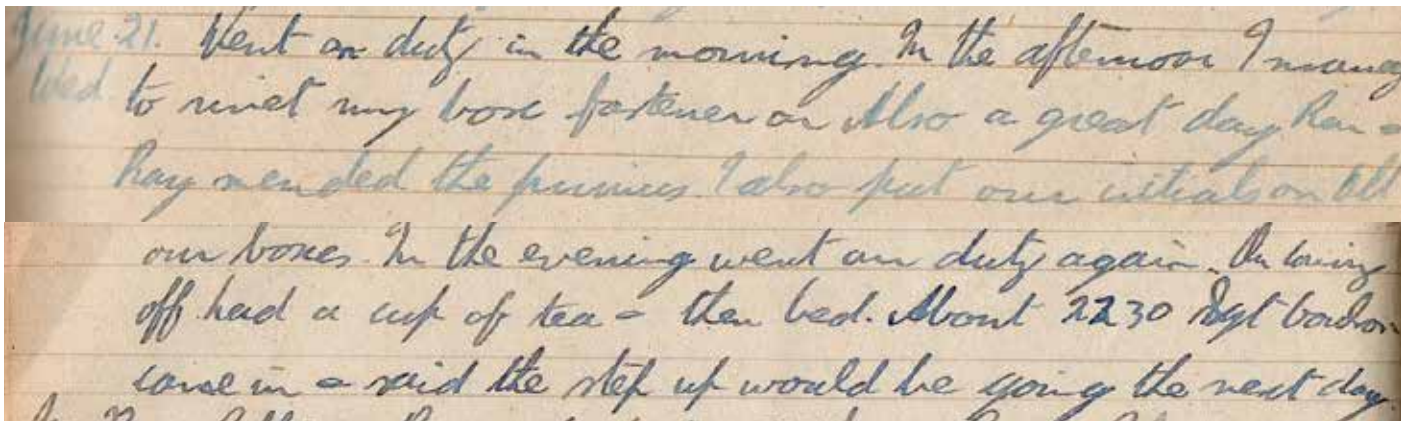
June 20. Came off night duty - Robbie - I hitched along to the town of Bevita Castellana & we were very disappointed & some got back to camp. The rest of the day was wet. I spent most of my time cleaning a box I salvaged out of the Jerry dump which has been destroyed.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Came off night duty & Robbie & I hitched along to the town of Civita Castellana & were very disappointed & some got back to camp the rest of the day was wet. I spent most of my time cleaning a box I salvaged out of the Jerry dump which has been destroyed.

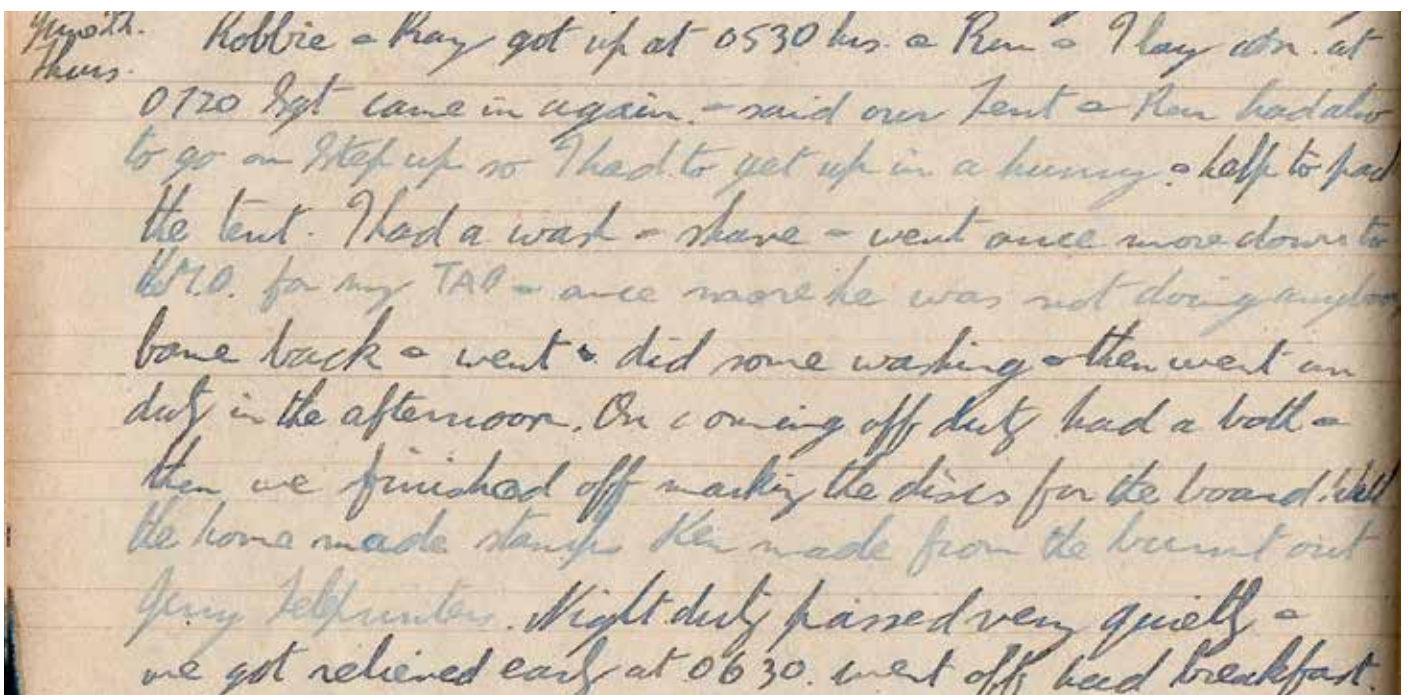
## Wednesday 21st



June 21. Went on duty in the morning. In the afternoon I managed to rivet my box fastener on. Also a great day Ron & Ray mended the primus. I also put our initials on all our boxes. In the evening went on duty again. On coming off had a cup of tea & then bed. About 2230 Sgt Coulson came in & said the step up would be going the next day.

Went on duty in the morning. In the afternoon I managed to rivet my box fastener on. Also a great day Ron & Ray mended the primus. I also put our initials on all our boxes. In the evening went on duty again. On coming off had a cup of tea & then bed. About 2230 Sgt Coulson came in & said the step-up would be going the next day.

## Thursday 22nd



Thursday. Robbie & Ray got up at 0530 hrs & Ron & I lay in at 0720 Sgt came in again & said our tent & Ron had also to go on step up so I had to get up in a hurry & left to find the tent. I had a wash & shave & went once more down to the MO for my TAB & once more he was not doing anybody. Came back & went & did some washing & then went on duty in the afternoon. On coming off duty had a bath & then we finished marking the discs for the board with the home made stamps Ken made from the burnt out Jerry teleprinters. Night duty passed very quietly & we got relieved early at 0630. Went off had breakfast.

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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Friday 23rd

June 23. I then got packed up & loaded Tom's & my kit  
on to the new exchange which is in a huge 10 ton lorry  
with a terrific tank transporter engine. Later when the  
exchange closed Tom came along & at about 0930 we  
started the signals convoy going on first. It was just  
the job in the back of this lorry & we made fine time  
on passing a lake we saw behind us a lot of black  
smoke rising - later learned that it was a burnt out  
lorry one of our signal office lorries. After doing about  
50 mile the engine just petered out on a bend & we  
could not get it started or towed at all. What made  
it worse 60 tanks came by going up & did they plough  
the road up getting ground our lorry. We managed  
eventually to get towed to the side of the road & we stuck  
there. Manage to obtain some sour apples & ripe cherries  
for our an oachard nearby. When the TMO's convoy  
came we stopped the big Lancia & after trying to  
get the engine going it finally towed us back  
into the camp after breaking about 2 tow chains.  
we arrived about 2.000 hrs had a meal got our  
kit sorted out had a bath in the dark - then went to  
bed. Our journey had been. Civita Castellana -  
Nepi - Roniglione - Viterbo - Bagnoregio & our destination  
just below Orvieto which town is right in a hill as  
are most Italian towns. our distance was 70 miles.

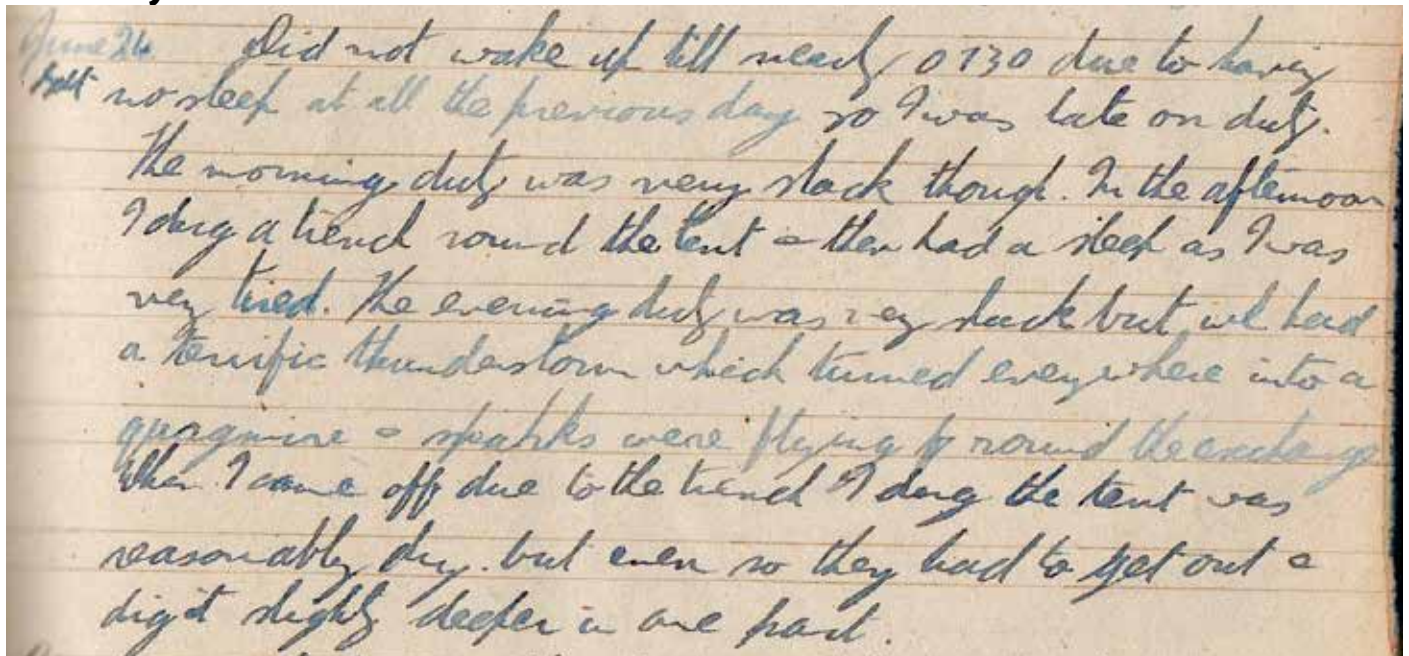
I then got packed up & loaded Tom's & my kit on to the new exchange which is in a huge 10 ton lorry with a terrific tank transporter engine. Later when the exchange closed Tom came along & at about 0930 we started the signals convoy going on first. It was just the job in the back of this lorry & we made fine time on passing a lake we saw behind us a lot of black smoke rising & later learned that it was a burnt out lorry one of our signal office lorries. After doing about 50 mile the engine just petered out on a bend & we could not get it started or towed at all what made it worse 60 tanks came by going up & did they



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

plough the road up getting round our lorry. We managed eventually to get towed to the side of the road & we stuck there. Manage to obtain some sour apples & ripe cherries from an orchard nearby. When the TMO's convoy came we stopped the big lancia & after trying got the engine going it finally towed us back into the camp after breaking about 2 tow chains we arrived about 2000 hrs had a meal got our kit sorted out had a bath in the dark & then went to bed. Our journey had been Civita Castellana - Nepi - Ronciglione - viterbo - Bagnorecco & our destination just below Orvieto which town is right in a hill as are most Italian towns our distance was 70 miles

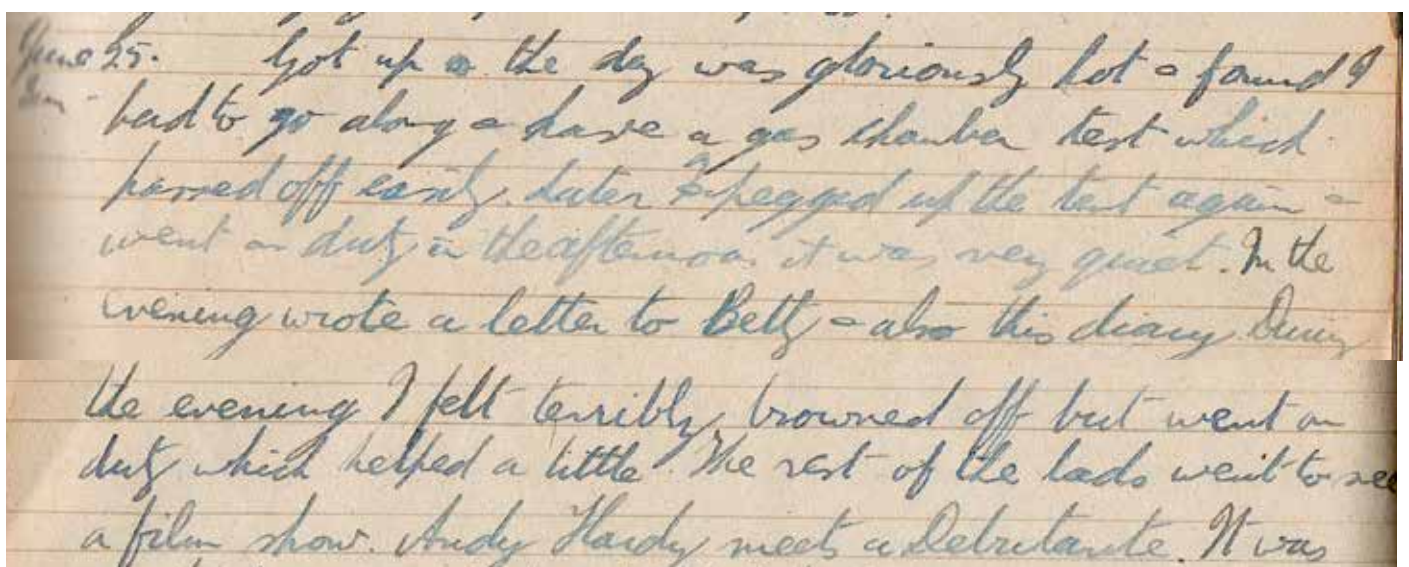
## Saturday 24th



June 24. Did not wake up till nearly 0730 due to having  
but no sleep at all the previous day so I was late on duty.  
The morning duty was very slack though. In the afternoon  
I dug a trench round the tent & then had a sleep as I was  
very tired. The evening duty was very slack but we had  
a terrific thunderstorm which turned everywhere into a  
quagmire & sparks were flying by round the exchange  
When I came off due to the trench I dug the tent was  
reasonably dry. but even so they had to get out a  
dug it slightly deeper in one part.

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## Sunday 25th



June 25. Got up in the day was gloriously hot & found I  
had to go along & have a gas chamber test which  
passed off easily. Later I pegged up the tent again &  
went on duty in the afternoon. it was very quiet. In the  
evening wrote a letter to Betty & also this diary. During  
the evening I felt terribly browned off but went on  
duty which helped a little. The rest of the lads went to see  
a film show. Andy Hardy meets a debutante. It was



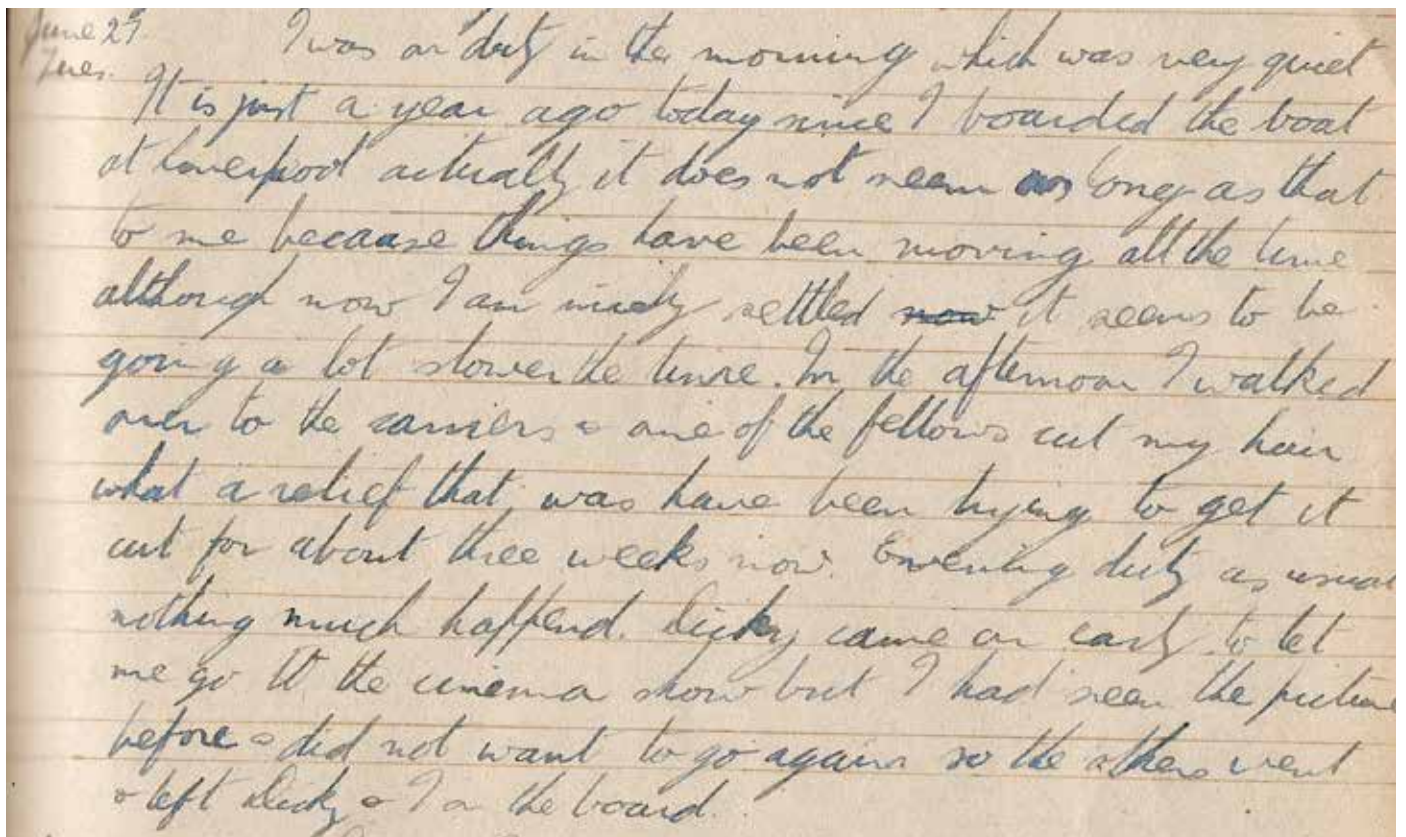




# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

towns is perched precariously on the top of a hill & it was quite a climb up to it. On entering the gate of the town I was immediately struck by the cleanliness of the place it is the cleanest Italian town I have seen so far. We had a good look round & found it to contain some quite posh shops which of course had nothing to sell. I bought some views of the place & went & saw the cathedral which is a really good piece of work part of it being painted in the 15th Century & the rest in the 20 Century the two blend admirably though & there is really no modernisation of the place. After viewing this we had a further look round the town to try & find a shop where we could buy some Vino but were unlucky as they were all shut so we hiked back for our tiffin. After tiffin did my washing & had a bath. In the evening went to Alf the tailors & he shortened my second pair of shorts & fixed the fasteners on them. I came back & pressed them & they are just the job being nice & short now.

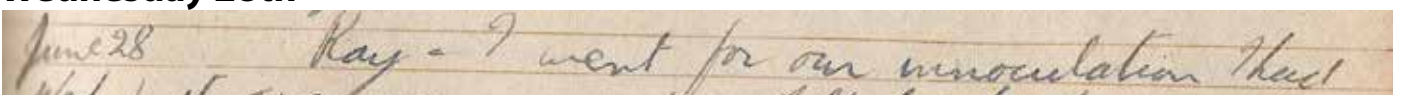
## Tuesday 27th



June 27  
Tues. I was on duty in the morning which was very quiet. It is just a year ago today since I boarded the boat at Liverpool actually it does not seem as long as that to me because things have been moving all the time although now I am nicely settled now. It seems to be going a lot slower the time. In the afternoon I walked over to the carriers & one of the fellows cut my hair what a relief that was have been trying to get it cut for about three weeks now. Evening duty as usual nothing much happened. Dicky came on early to let me go to the cinema show but I had seen the picture before & did not want to go again so the others went & left Dicky & I on the board.

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## Wednesday 28th



June 28  
Wed. Ray - I went for our inoculation that



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Wed both TAB & TT in one dose. Felt alright during the morning & helped Harry a little in getting the new exchange labelled up alright. In the afternoon on duty the TAB started to creep up on me & by the time I came off I felt terribly feverish so made my bed & got into it felt pretty dead up to 2300 but it passed off slightly. Luckily enough it was my turn to stand down on duty for the night so I did alright really.

Ray & I went for our inoculation I had both TAB & TT in one dose. Felt alright during the morning & helped Harry a little in getting the new exchange labelled up alright. In the afternoon on duty the TAB started to creep up on me & by the time I came off I felt terribly fevered so made my bed & got into it felt pretty deadly up to 2300 but it passed off slightly luckily enough it was my turn to stand down on duty for the night so I did alright really.

## Thursday 29th

June 29  
Thurs Woke up & felt better although still have a headache & feel rather weak. I did very little all day except lay around & wrote a few letters. Oh had a little discussion in the evening on E & M & also Pythagoras Theorem.

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## Friday 30th

June 30  
Fri. I woke up at 0625 & decided to get up at 0640 but to my astonishment I did not awake again until 0710. I was a little late on duty. We had rather a busy morning well more so than usual anyway. In the afternoon I really hit my botzging hard & washed nearly everything I had. Also collected the Waafi. The day is a terrifically hot one but as I am feeling alright now I don't mind the heat. Went on duty in the evening heard that Step-up was going the next day.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## JULY 1944

### Saturday 1st

July 1<sup>st</sup> The step up had to move off at 0500 hrs & they got  
Sat. up at 0330. Ron & Robbie ~~was~~ had to go from our tent  
In the morning had to take the mail to be censored & then  
hitched to Orvieta with Dicky had a look round there  
are some smashing looking wenches there. Later met Tom  
& went & had a look at the old well which is quite a  
relic being very deep & you go down to it with two  
spiral staircases built underneath one another.  
On duty in the afternoon which was early. In the evening  
got packed up - then took down the tent & stowed in on the  
lorry. After wash it was time for duty & went on & were  
very busy till nearly midnight.

The step up had to move off at 0500 hrs & they got up about 0330. Ron & Robbie had to go from our tent. In the morning had to take the mail to be censored & then hitched to Orvieta with Dicky had a look round there are some smashing looking wenches there. Later met Tom & went & had a look at the old well which is quite a relic being very deep & you go down to it with two spiral staircases built underneath one another. On duty in the afternoon which was early. In the evening got packed up & then took down the tent & stowed in on the lorry. After wash it was time for duty & went on & were very busy till nearly midnight.

### Sunday 2nd

July 2. Were relieved early just after 0630 went & had  
Sun. breakfast finished packing - had a wash - shower & exchanged  
after stowing down. came up to the lorry & we  
loaded our kit on. The convoy went in two parts  
ours was the second - we left at 1045 - the journey  
was terribly dull - also very slow as there was quite  
a bit of traffic on the go. The roads also were pretty  
bad - thought I had lost my inside once or twice  
the journey was quite good though on the whole the only  
wonderful bit



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

what we had was when a jeep hitched itself up on us apart from that everything was alright we arrived about four got our kit off saw Robbie who showed us where our tent should go. Went & got tent & then had tea after which we put it up & everybody went on duty & I moved in had a bath & made my bed. The ground is terrible here being covered with small shrubs or bracken & they have terrific roots which take some moving. Robbie told us that the previous night there had been a lot of strafing & dropping of A.P. bombs round about none in the camp though. When they all came off duty we made some Bovril & had just finished when the AA started & a plane came over but this is all I heard as I went to bed & was soon asleep.

Were relieved early just after 0630 went & had breakfast finished packing & had a wash & shave. The exchange after closing down came up to the lines as we loaded our kit on. The convoy went in two parts ours was the second & we left at 1045 & the going was terribly dust & also very slow so there was quite a bit of traffic on the go. The roads also were pretty bad & thought I had lost my inside once or twice. The journey was quite good though on the whole the only incident we had was when a jeep hitched itself up on us as apart from that everything was alright we arrived about four got our kit off saw Robbie who showed us where our tent should go. Went & got tent & then had tea after which we put it up & everybody went on duty & I moved in had a bath & made up my bed the ground is terrible here being covered with small shrubs or bracken & they have terrific roots which take you some moving. Robbie told us that the previous night there had been a lot of strafing & dropping of AP bombs round about none in the camp though. When they all came off duty we made some Bovril & had just finished when the AA started & a plane came over but this is all I heard as I went to bed & was soon asleep.

## Monday 3rd

July 3  
Mon. Woke up at 0645 just the job & went on duty & found it quite busy with the usual lines going in & out. In the afternoon & evening I wrote one or two letters & in general got organised.

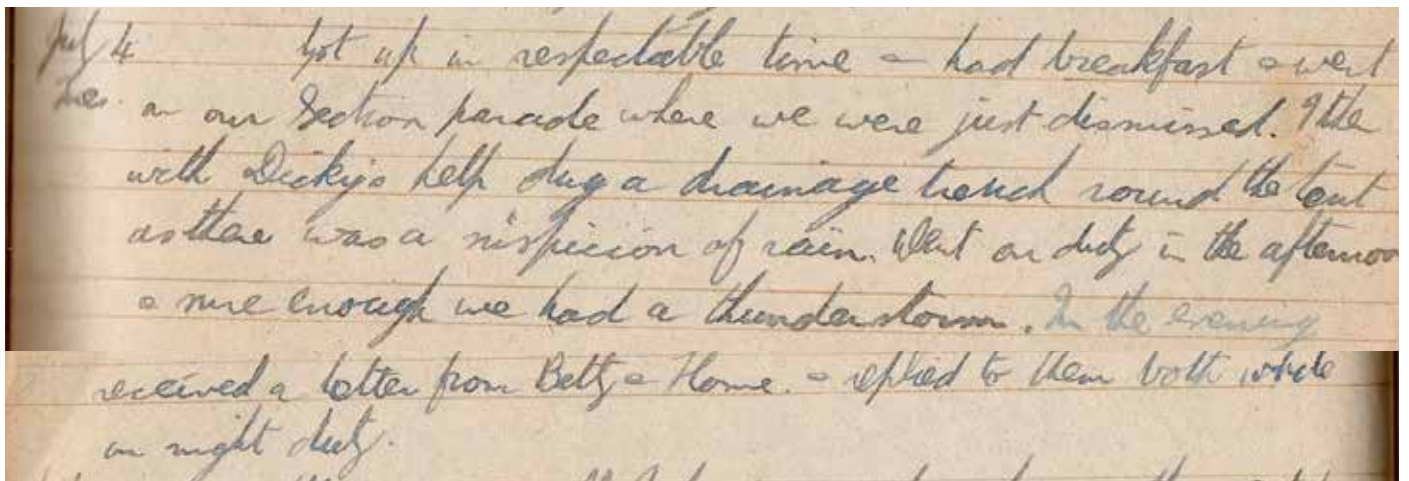
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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

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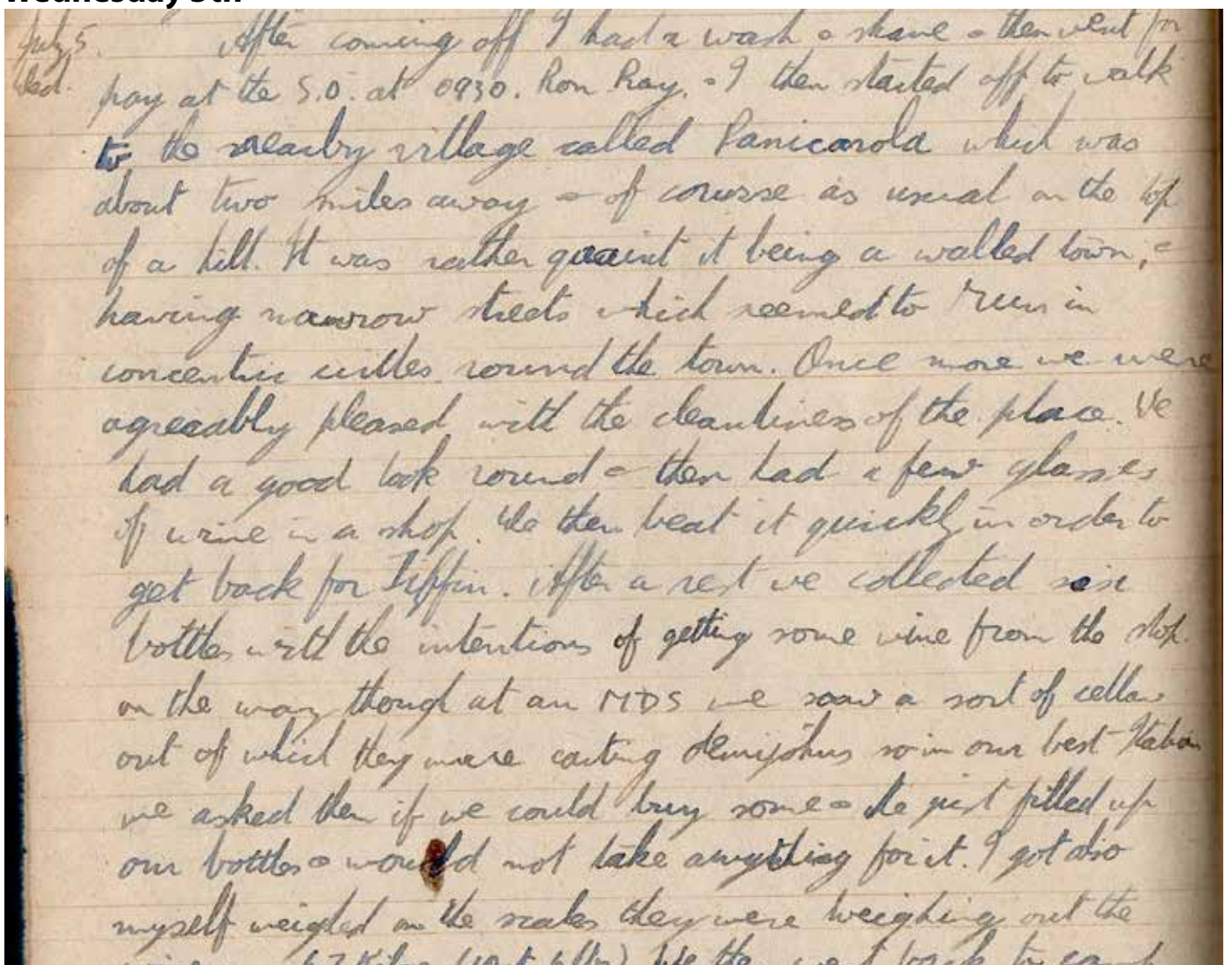
## Tuesday 4th



July 4. Got up in respectable time - had breakfast - went on our section parade where we were just dismissed. I then with Dicky's help dug a drainage trench round the tent as there was a suspicion of rain. Went on duty in the afternoon & sure enough we had a thunderstorm. In the evening received a letter from Betty & Home. - replied to them both while on night duty.

Got up a respectable time & had breakfast & went on our section parade where we were just dismissed. I then with Dicky's help dug a drainage trench round the tent as there was a suspicion of rain. Went on duty in the afternoon & sure enough we had a thunderstorm. In the evening received letters from Betty & Home & replied to them both while on night duty.

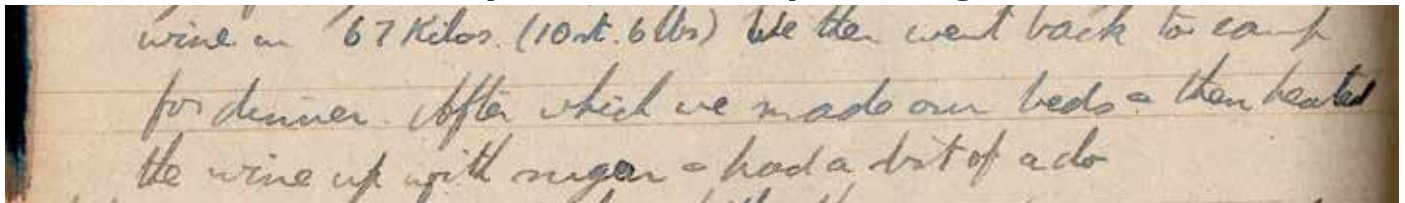
## Wednesday 5th



July 5. After coming off I had a wash & shave - then went for pay at the S.O. at 0930. Ron Ray. - I then started off to walk to the nearby village called Panicarda which was about two miles away - of course as usual on the top of a hill. It was rather quaint it being a walled town, & having narrow streets which seemed to turn in concentric circles round the town. Once more we were agreeably pleased with the cleanliness of the place. We had a good look round - then had a few glasses of wine in a shop. We then beat it quickly in order to get back for tiffin. After a rest we collected some bottles with the intention of getting some wine from the shop. On the way though at an MDS we saw a sort of cellar out of which they were casting demijohns so in our best Italian we asked them if we could buy some - he just filled up our bottles & would not take anything for it. I got also myself weighed on the scales they were weighing out the wine. 67 kilos (147 lb) We then went back to camp



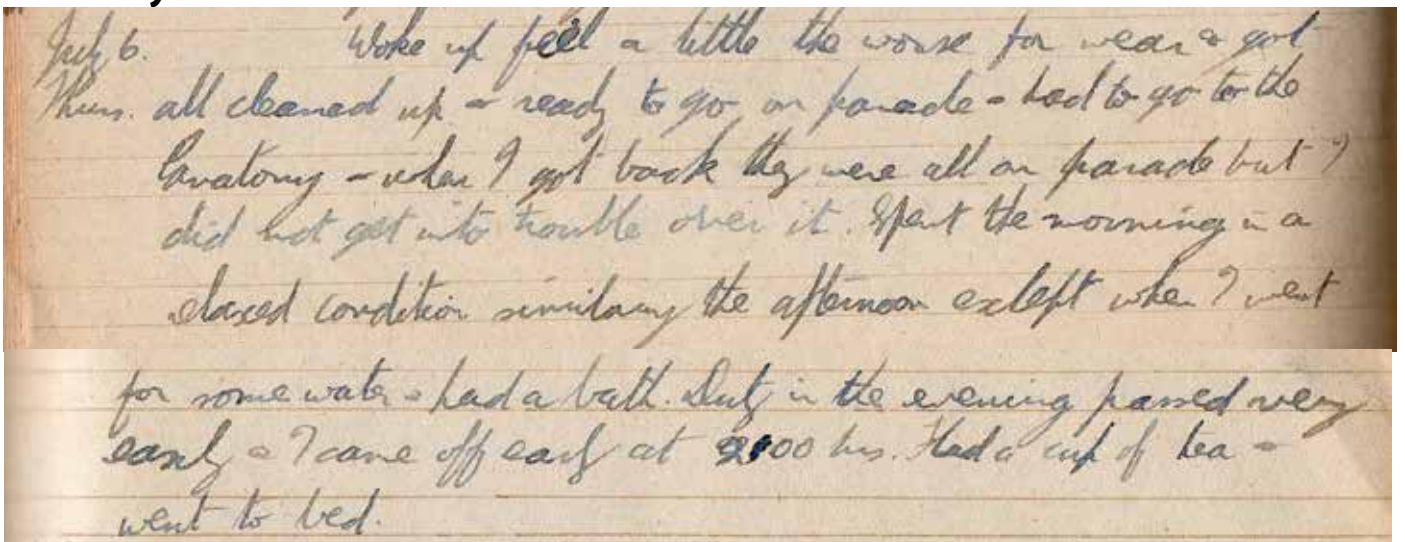
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



wine on 67 Kilos (10st. 6lbs) We then went back to camp for dinner. After which we made our beds & then heated the wine up with sugar & had a bit of a do.

After coming off I had a wash & shave & then went for pay at the S.O. at 0930 Ron, Ray & I then started off to walk to the nearby village called Panicarola which was about two miles away & of course as usual on the top of a hill. It was rather quaint it being a walled town & having narrow streets which seemed to run in concentric circles round the town. Once more we were agreeably pleased with the cleanliness of the place. We had a good look round & then had a few glasses of wine in a shop. We then beat it quickly in order to get back for tiffin. After a rest we collected some bottles with the intention of getting some wine from the shop on the way through at an MDS we saw a sort of cellar out of which they were carting demijohns so in our best Italian we asked them if we could buy some & he just filled up our bottles & would not take anything for it. I got myself weighed on the scales they were weighing out the wine on 67 kilos (10st. 6 lbs). We then went back to camp for dinner. After which we made our beds & then heated the wine up with sugar & had a bit of a do.

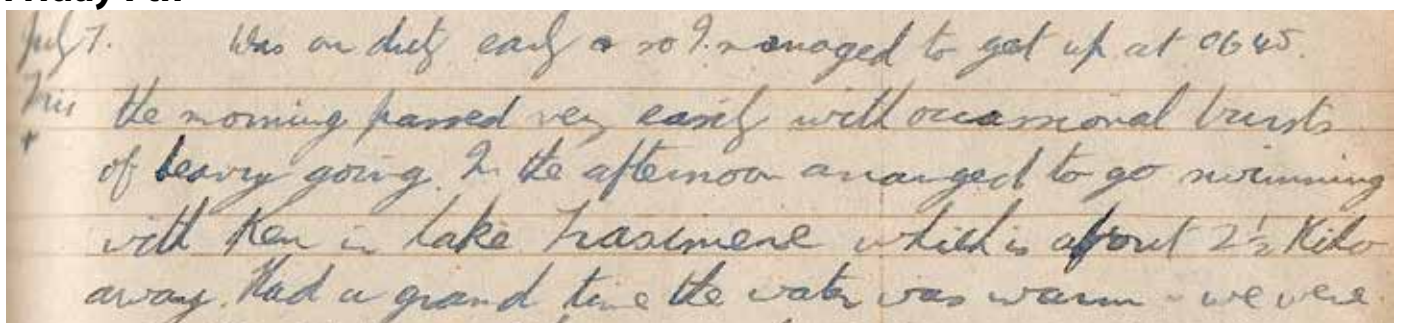
## Thursday 6th



July 6. Woke up felt a little the worse for wear & got them all cleaned up & ready to go on parade & had to go to the lavatory & when I got back they were all on parade but I did not get into trouble over it. Spent the morning in a relaxed condition similarly the afternoon except when I went for some water & had a bath. Duty in the evening passed very easily & I came off early at 2100 hrs. Had a cup of tea & went to bed.

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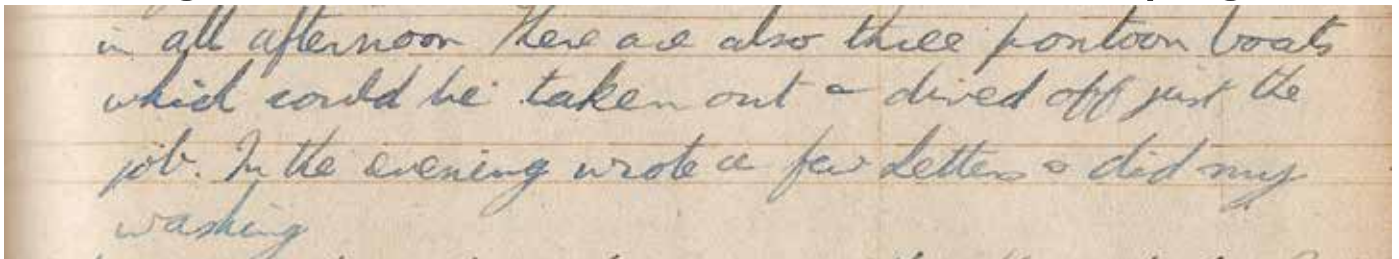
## Friday 7th



July 7. Was on duty early & so I managed to get up at 0645. This morning passed very easily with occasional bursts of heavy going. In the afternoon arranged to go swimming with Ken in Lake Trasimene which is about 2 1/2 Kilos away. Had a grand time the water was warm & we were



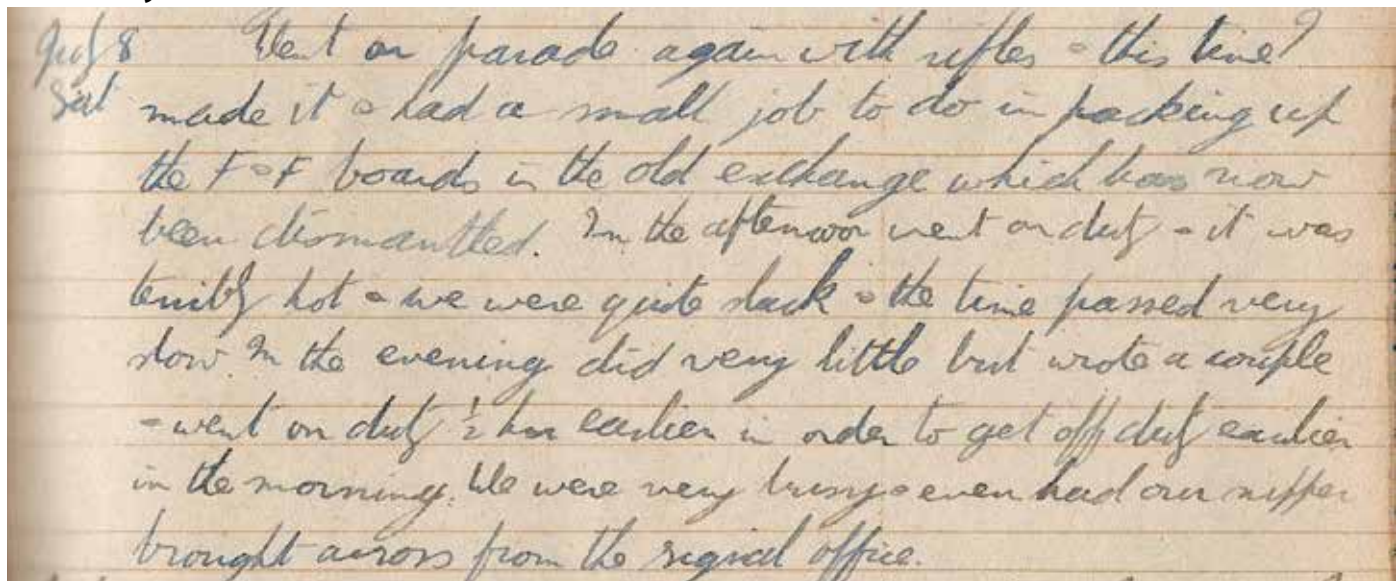
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



in all afternoon there are also three pontoon boats which could be taken out & dived off just the job. In the evening wrote a few letters & did my washing.

Was on duty early & so I managed to get up at 0645 the morning passed very easily with occasional bursts of heavy going. In the afternoon managed to go swimming with Ken in Lake Trasimeno which is about 2 1/2 kilo away. Had a grand time & the water was warm. We were in all afternoon. There are also three pontoon boats which could be taken out & dived off just the job. In the evening wrote a few letters & did my washing.

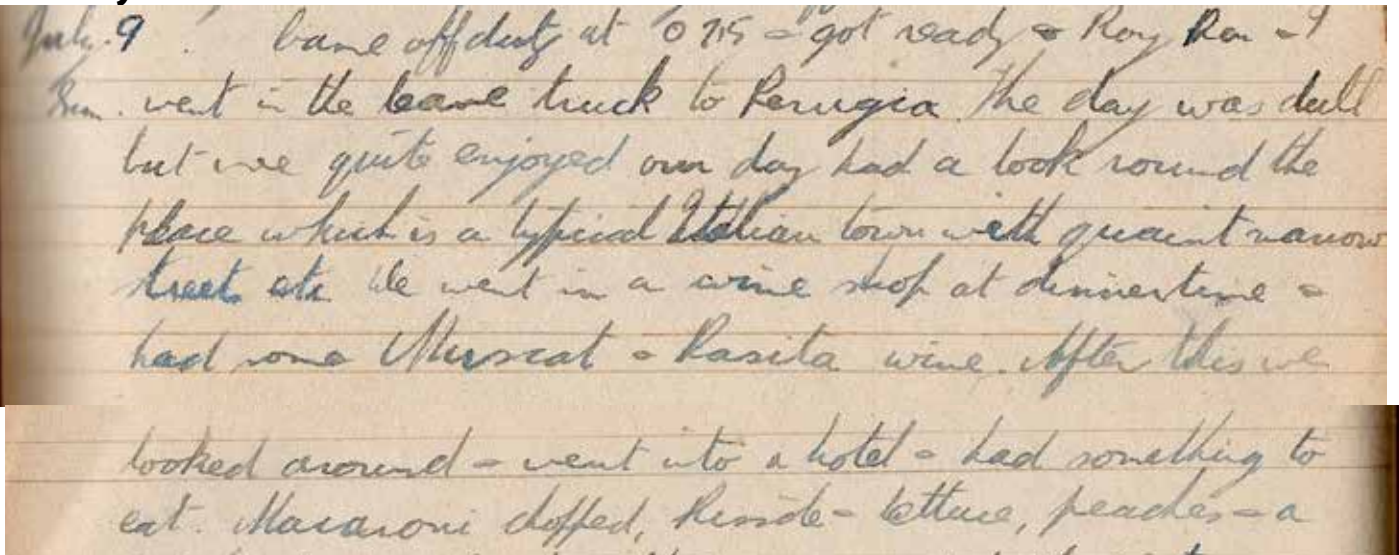
## Saturday 8th



July 8th Went on parade again with rifles - this time I made it & had a small job to do in packing up the F&F boards in the old exchange which has now been dismantled. In the afternoon went on duty - it was terribly hot & we were quite slack & the time passed very slow. In the evening did very little but wrote a couple - went on duty 1/2 hr earlier in order to get off duty earlier in the morning. We were very busy & even had our supper brought across from the signal office.

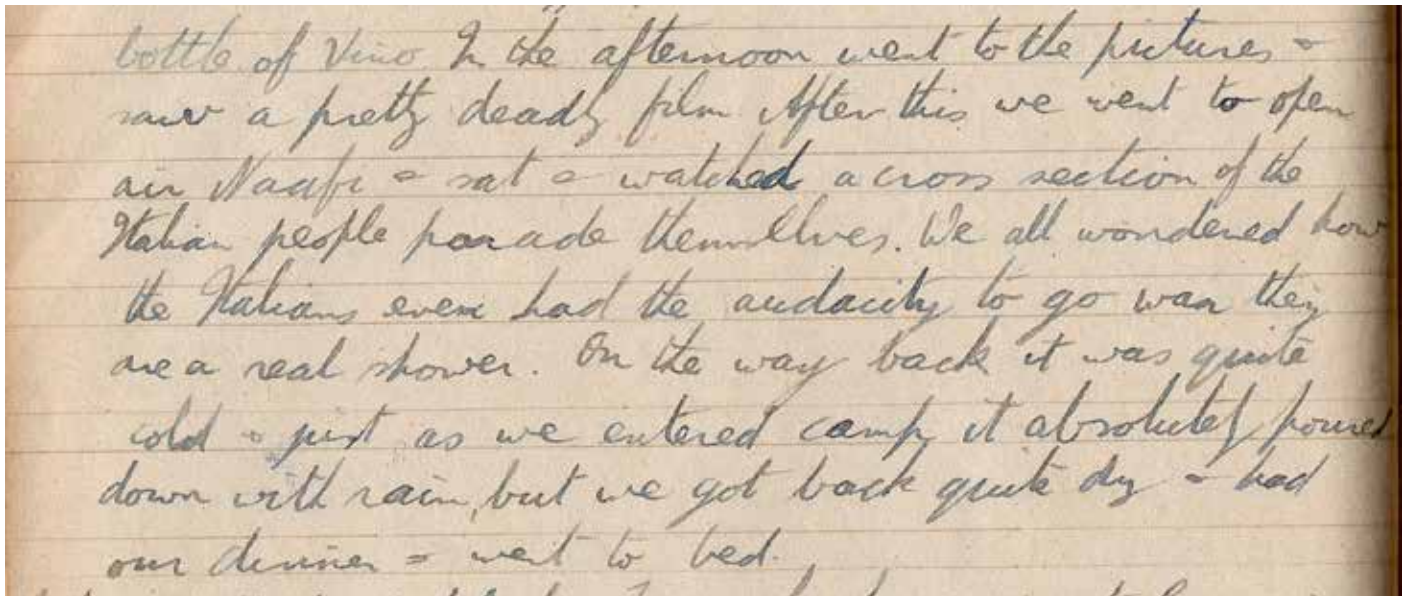
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## Sunday 9th



July 9th Came off duty at 0715 - got ready & Roy & Ken went in the leave truck to Perugia. The day was dull but we quite enjoyed our day had a look round the place which is a typical Italian town with quaint narrow streets etc. We went in a wine shop at dinner time & had some Messico - Rasita wine. After this we looked around - went into a hotel - had something to eat. Macaroni topped, Remolade - lettuce, peaches - a

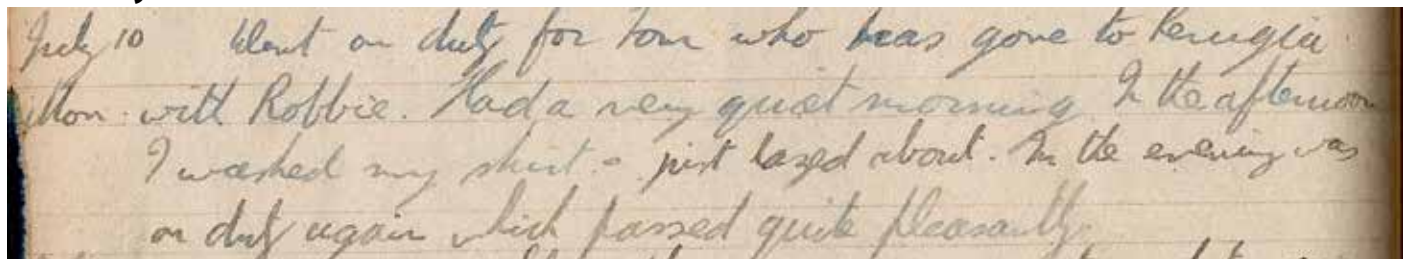
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



bottle of vino In the afternoon went to the pictures & saw a pretty deadly film After this we went to open our Naafi & sat & watched a cross section of the Italian people parade themselves. We all wondered how the Italians even had the audacity to go war they are a real shower. On the way back it was quite cold & just as we entered camp it absolutely poured down with rain but we got back quite dry & had our dinner & went to bed.

Came off duty at 0915 & got ready & Ray, Ron & I went in the leave truck to Perugia. The day was dull but we quite enjoyed our day had a look round the place which is a typical Italian town with quaint narrow streets etc. We went in a wine shop at dinner time & had some Muscat & Rosita wine. After this we looked around & went into a hotel & had something to eat. Macaroni chopped rissoto & lettuce, peaches & a bottle of vino. In the afternoon went to the pictures & saw a pretty deadly film After this we went to open our Naafi & sat & watched a cross section of the Italian people parade themselves. We all wondered how the Italians ever had the audacity to go war they are a real shower. On the way back it was quite cold & just as we entered camp it absolutely poured down with rain but we got back quite dry & had our dinner & went to bed.

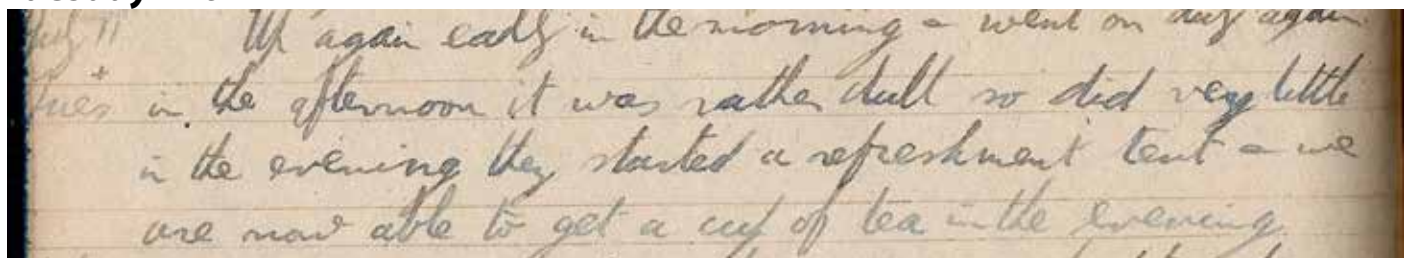
## Monday 10th



July 10 Went on duty for Tom who has gone to Perugia with Robbie. Had a very quiet morning. In the afternoon I washed my shirt & just lazed about. In the evening was on duty again which passed quite pleasantly.

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## Tuesday 11th



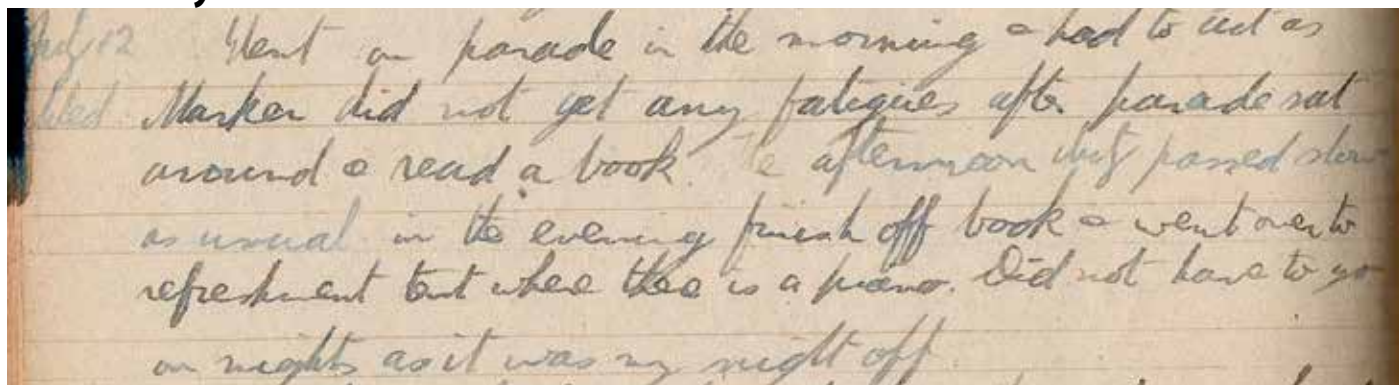
July 11 Up again early in the morning & went on duty again. In the afternoon it was rather dull so did very little. In the evening they started a refreshment tent & we are now able to get a cup of tea in the evening.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

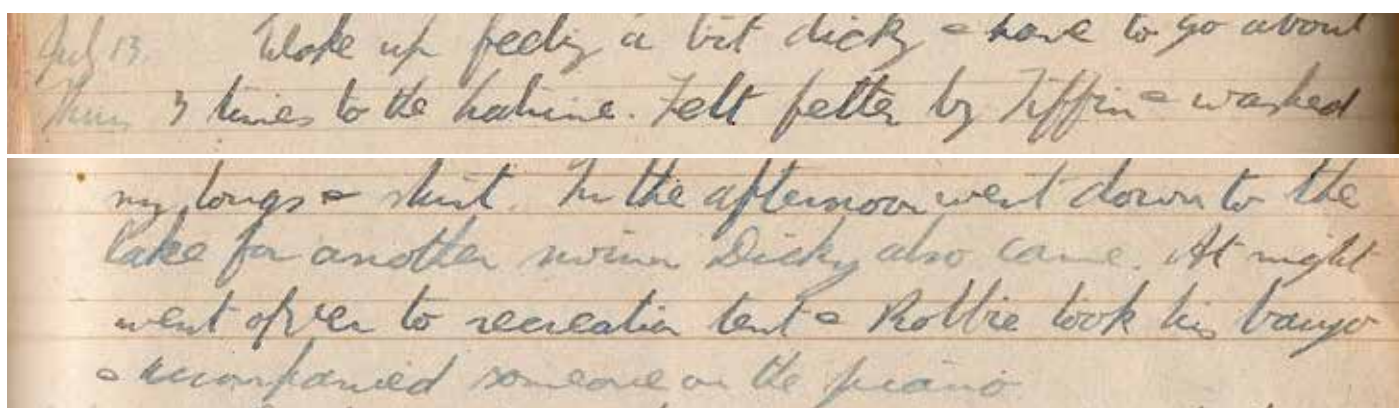
Wednesday 12th



July 12. Went on parade in the morning & had to act as Marker did not get any fatigues aft. parade sat around & read a book. The afternoon duty passed slow as usual in the evening finish off book & went over to refreshment tent where there is a piano. Did not have to go on nights as it was my night off.

Went on parade in the morning & had to act as Marker did not get any fatigues after parade sat around & read a book. The afternoon duty passed slow as usual in the evening finish off book & went over to refreshment tent where there is a piano. Did not have to go on nights as it was my night off.

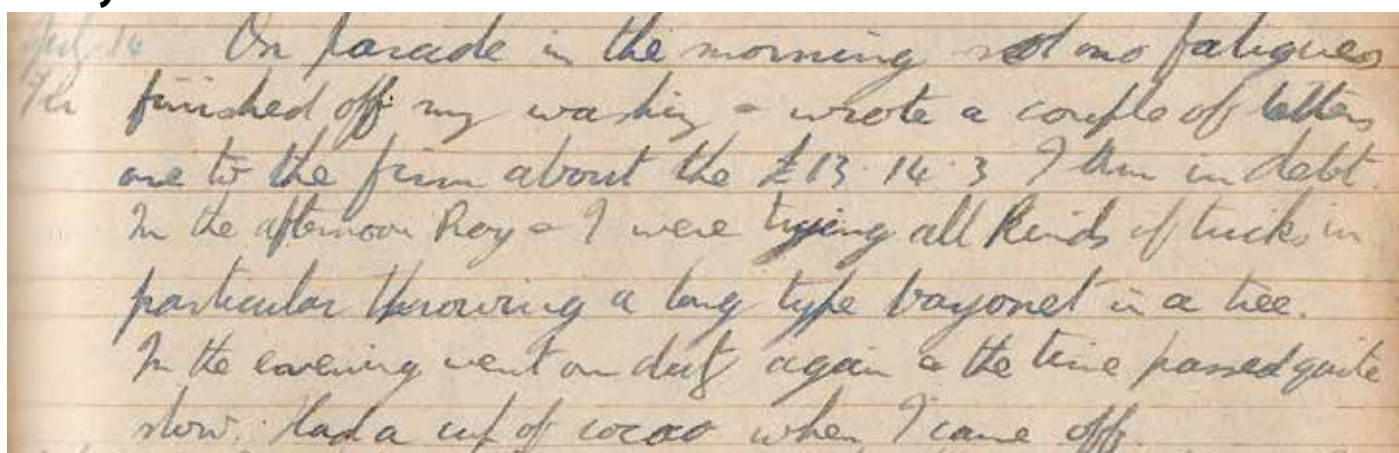
Thursday 13th



July 13. Woke up feeling a bit dicky & have to go about 3 times to the latrine. Felt better by tiffin & washed my long & shirt. In the afternoon went down to the lake for another swim Dicky also came. At night went over to recreation tent & Robbie took his banjo & accompanied someone on the piano.

Woke up feeling a bit dicky & have to go about 3 times to the latrine. Felt better by tiffin & washed my long & shirt. In the afternoon went down to the lake for another swim Dicky also came. At night went over to recreation tent & Robbie took his banjo & accompanied someone on the piano.

Friday 14th



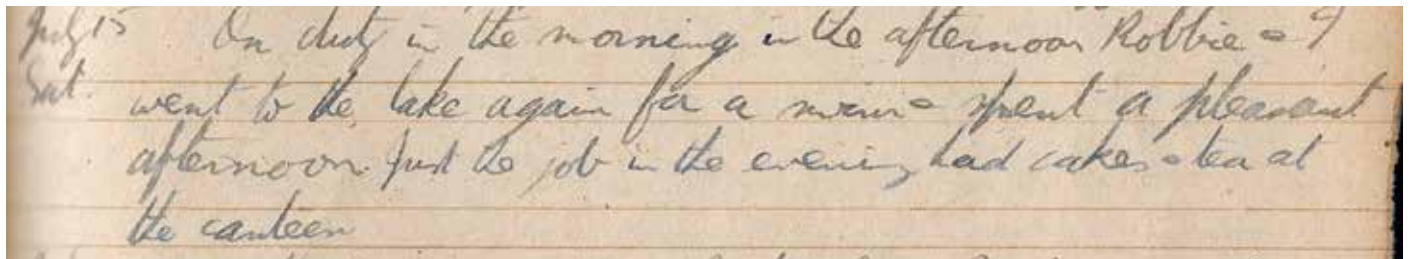
July 14. On parade in the morning got no fatigues finished off my washing & wrote a couple of letters one to the firm about the £13.14.3 I am in debt. In the afternoon Roy & I were trying all kinds of tricks in particular throwing a long type bayonet in a tree. In the evening went on duty again & the time passed quite slow. Had a cup of cocoa when I came off.

On parade in the morning got no fatigues finished off my washing & wrote a couple of letters one to the firm about the £13-14-3 I am in debt. In the afternoon Roy & I were trying all kinds of tricks in particular throwing a long type bayonet in a tree. In the evening

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

went on duty again & the time passed quite slow had a cup of cocoa when I came off.

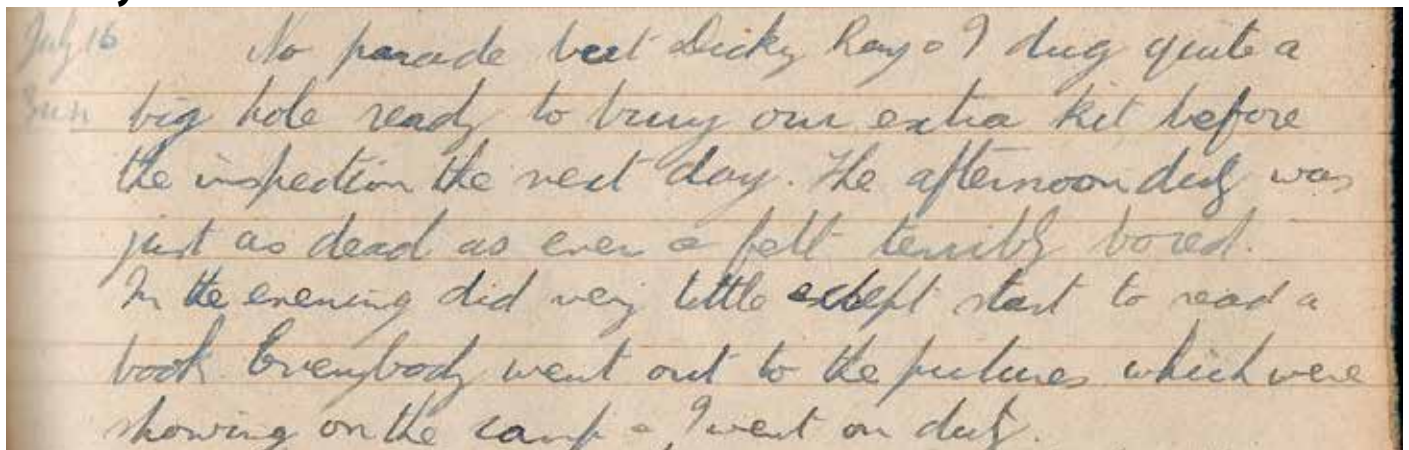
## Saturday 15th



July 15  
Sat. On duty in the morning in the afternoon Robbie & I went to the lake again for a swim & spent a pleasant afternoon just the job in the evening had cakes & tea at the canteen

On duty in the morning in the afternoon Robbie & I went to the lake again for a swim & spent a pleasant afternoon just the job in the evening had cakes & tea at the canteen.

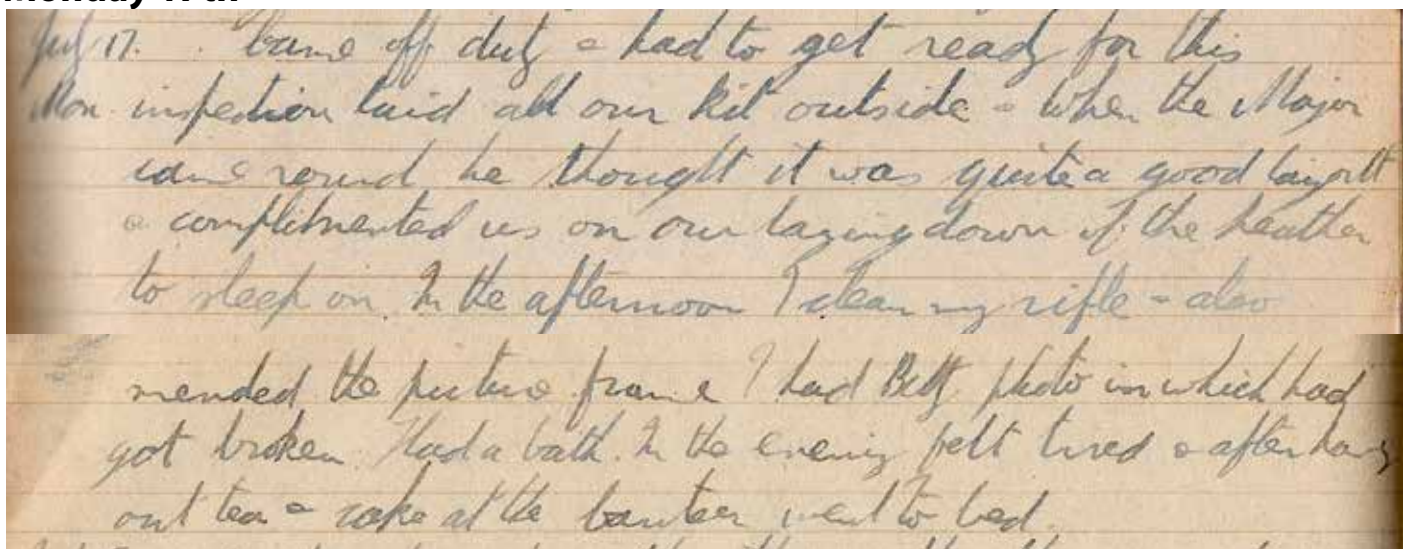
## Sunday 16th



July 16  
Sun No parade but Dicky Ray & I dug quite a big hole ready to bury our extra kit before the inspection the next day. The afternoon duty was just as dead as ever & felt terribly bored. In the evening did very little except start to read a book. Everybody went out to the pictures which were showing on the camp & I went on duty.

No parade but Dicky Ray & I dug quite a big hole ready to bury our extra kit before the inspection the next day. The afternoon duty was just as dead as ever & felt terribly bored. In the evening did very little except start to read a book. Everybody went out to the pictures which were showing on the camp & I went on duty

## Monday 17th



July 17. Came off duty & had to get ready for this Mon inspection laid all our kit outside & when the Major came round he thought it was quite a good layout & complimented us on our laying down of the heather to sleep on. In the afternoon I clean my rifle & also mended the picture frame I had Betty's photo in which had got broken. Had a bath. In the evening felt tired & after having out tea & cake at the canteen went to bed.

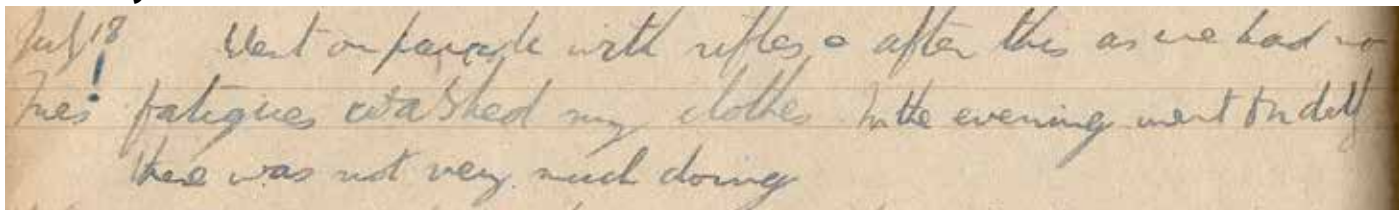
Came off duty & had to get ready for the inspection laid all our kit outside & when the Major came round he thought it was quite a good layout & complimented us on our laying down of the heather to sleep on. In the afternoon I clean my rifle & also mended the picture frame I had Betty's photo in which had got broken. Had a bath. In the evening felt



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

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## Tuesday 18th!

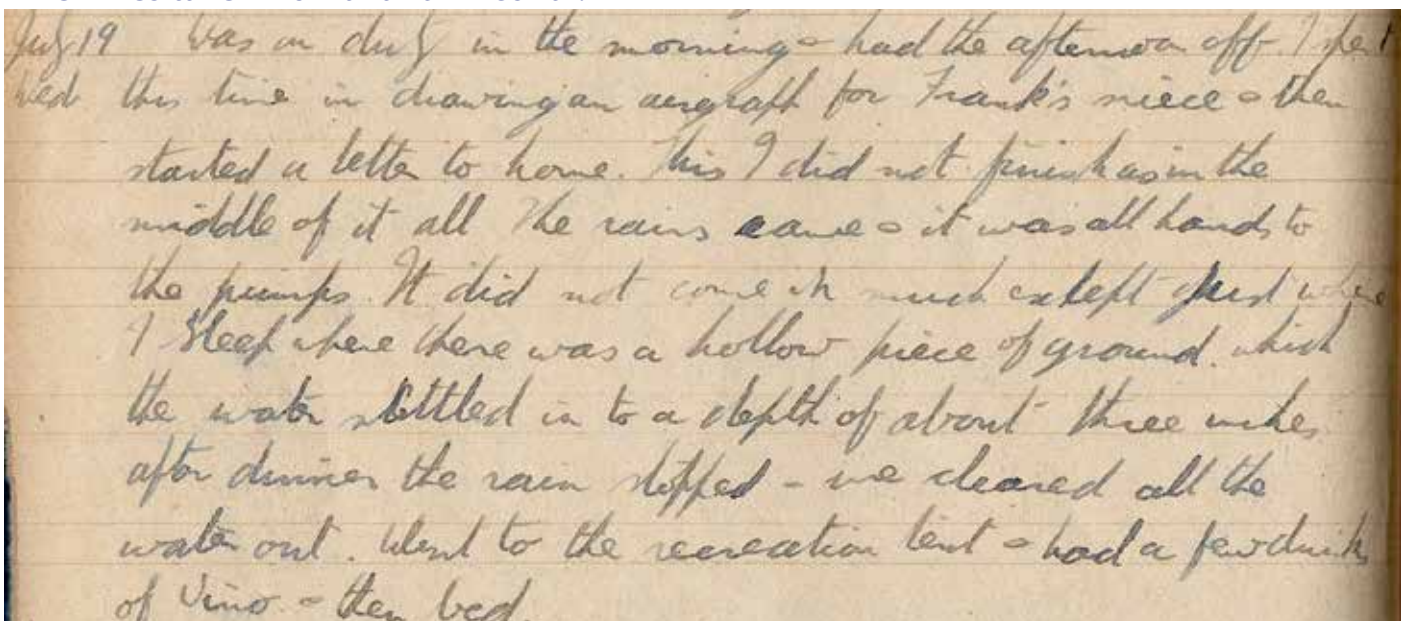


July 18<sup>th</sup> Went on parade with rifles - after this as we had no  
fatigues washed my clothes. In the evening went on duty  
there was not very much doing.

Went on parade with rifles after this as we had no fatigues washed my clothes. In the evening went on duty there was not very much doing.

## Wednesday 19th

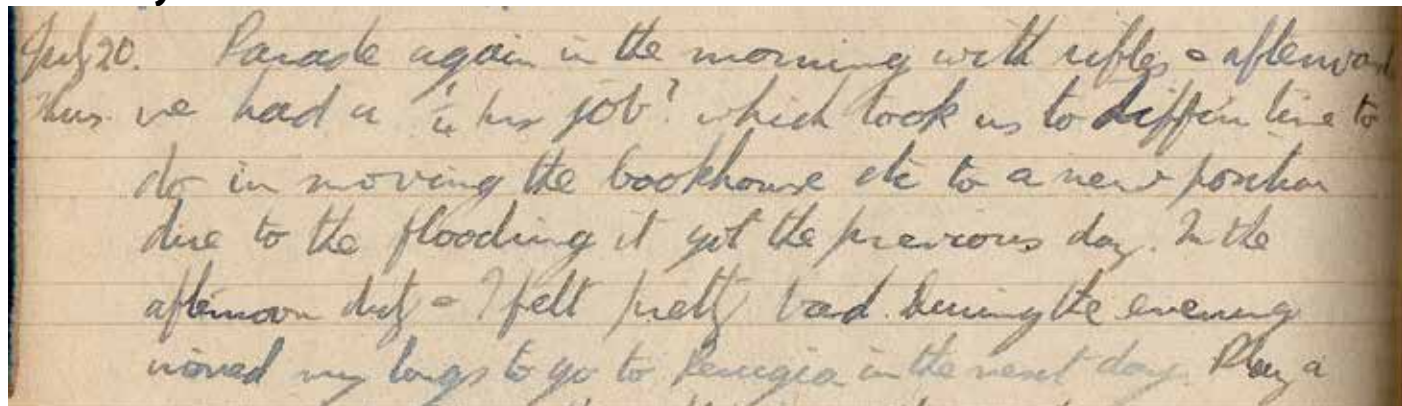
The Allies take Livorna<sup>1</sup> and Ancona<sup>2</sup>.



July 19<sup>th</sup> Was on duty in the morning - had the afternoon off. I spent  
this time in drawing an airgraph for Frank's niece - then  
started a letter to home. This I did not finish as in the  
middle of it all the rains came - it was all hands to  
the pumps. It did not come on much except flood where  
I sleep where there was a hollow piece of ground which  
the water settled in to a depth of about three inches.  
After dinner the rain stopped - we cleared all the  
water out. Went to the recreation tent - had a few drinks  
of vino - then bed.

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## Thursday 20th



July 20<sup>th</sup> Parade again in the morning with rifles - afternoon  
then we had a 'in his job' which took us to different time to  
do in moving the bookhouse etc to a new position  
due to the flooding it got the previous day. In the  
afternoon duty - I felt pretty bad. During the evening  
wondered my lungs to go to Perugia in the next day. Play a

1 Livorna is about 200 km NW of Dad's position on the west coast.

2 Ancona is about 160 km East of Dad's position on the east coast.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

game of bridge - then after tea in the canteen went on duty. I felt lousy & during the first period I had a sleep I was perspiring all the time terrific.

Parade again in the morning with rifles & afternoon we had a 1/4 hr job! which took us to tiffin time to do in moving the cookhouse etc. to a new position due to the flooding it got the previous day. In the afternoon duty I felt pretty bad during the evening moved my bags to go to Perugia in the next day. Play a game of bridge & then after tea in the canteen went on duty. I felt lousy & during the first period I had a sleep I was perspiring all the time terrific.

## Friday 21st

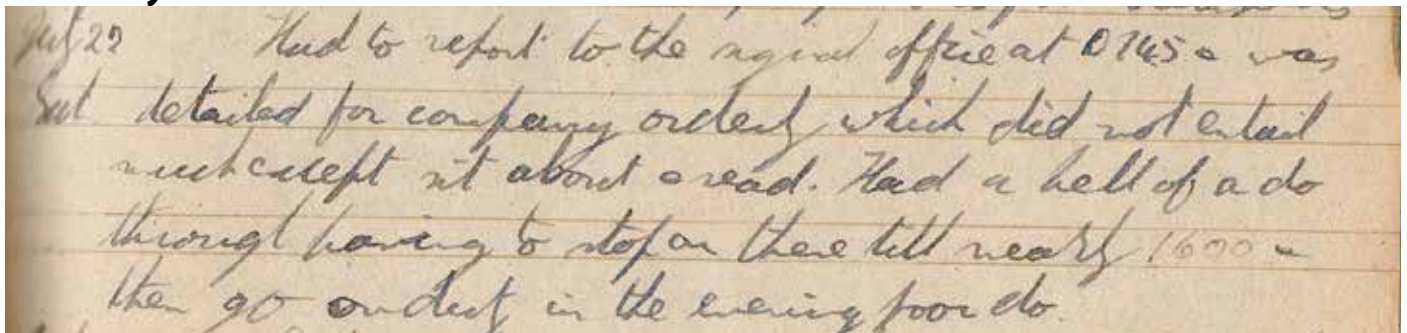
July 21st  
Fri. Ken & I went to Perugia duty unfortunately prevented  
Fin. Ray who should also have come. Ken & I had a look around  
the shops in the morning but could see nothing interesting  
except a haircut which we both had & needed. We then  
went into the wine shop & had a few glasses of wine  
Parsita, Muscat - ordinary brands. Actually they were  
poor quality & we could not taste much difference in  
them. We then went along to the "idberg's" & had something  
to eat. Macaroni, cucumber - two small pieces of meat  
cooked in garlic, & some pears. Oh & a bottle of vino  
Rosso between us. After this we went to the cinema &  
saw Ann Sheridan & Jack Benny in "George Washington"  
Slept here which was very good. It was a typical  
modern cinema in Italy having wooden polished  
seats & a roof which opened up between performances  
leaving the air very fresh during the performance.  
Later we nipped in a bar again as it started  
raining & then had another pivot round & found  
a place to buy one or two oddments. I bought some  
handkerchiefs to send home. We then met Kitch & went  
& had a tour round the art gallery seeing some of  
the famous Italian painter's work later sat in Eric's  
shop & watched the Italian people desport themselves



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Ron & I went on Perugia duty unfortunately prevented Ray who should also have come. Ron & I had a look round the shops in the morning but could see nothing interested by except a haircut which we both had & needed we then went into the wine shop & had a few glasses of wine Pascita Muscat & ordinary blanco. Actually they were poor quality & we could not taste much difference in them. We then went along to the "Albergs" & had something to eat. Macaroni, cucumber & two small pieces of meat cooked in garlic & some peas oh & a bottle of vino Rosso between us. After this we went to the cinema & saw Ann Sheridan & Jack Benny in "George Washington Slept Here" which was very good. It was a typical modern cinema in Italy having wooden polished seats & a roof which opened up between performances leaving the air very fresh during the performance later we nipped in a bar again as it started raining & then had another prowl round & found a place to buy one or two oddments & I bought some handkerchiefs to send home we then met Kitch & went & had a tour round the art gallery seeing some of the famous Italian painters work later sat in Eric's nook & watch the Italian people disport themselves.

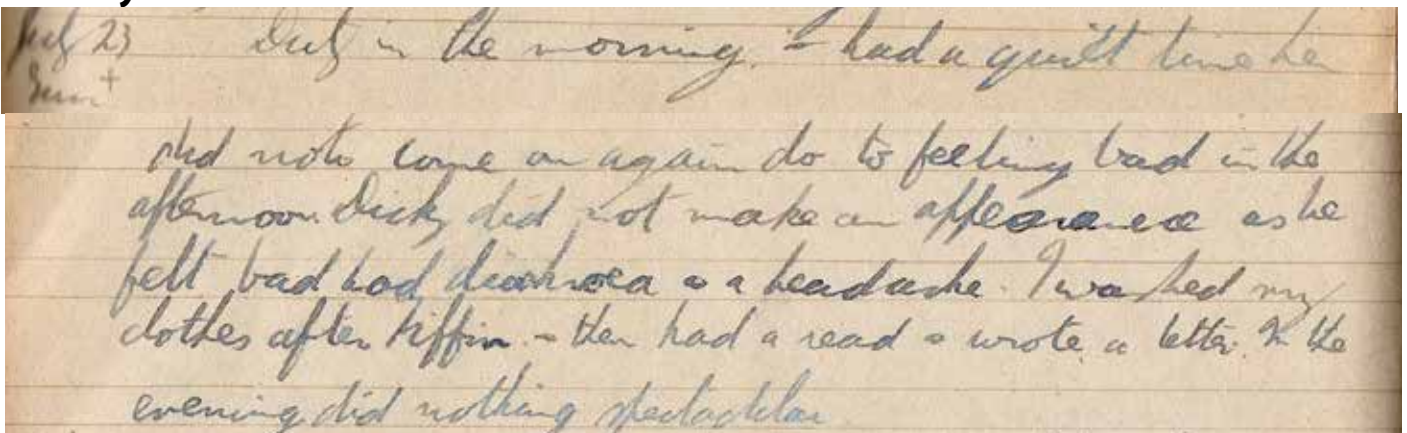
## Saturday 22nd



July 22  
Had to report to the signal office at 0145 & was detailed for company orderly which did not entail much except sit about & read. Had a hell of a do though having to stop on there till nearly 1600 & then go on duty in the evening poor do.

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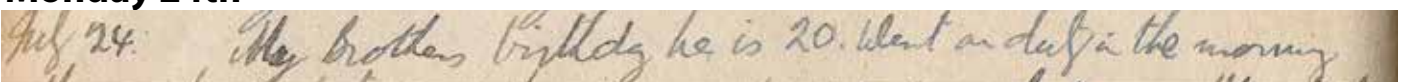
## Sunday 23rd



July 23  
Duty in the morning. I had a quiet time he did not come on again due to feeling bad in the afternoon. Dicky did not make an appearance as he felt bad had diarrhoea & a headache. I washed my clothes after tiffin & then had a read & wrote a letter. In the evening did nothing spectacular.

Duty in the morning & had a quiet time Len did not come on again due to feeling bad in the afternoon Dicky did not make an appearance as he felt bad had diarrhoea & a headache. I washed my clothes after tiffin & then had a read & wrote a letter. In the evening did nothing spectacular.

## Monday 24th



July 24  
My brother's birthday he is 20. Went on duty in the morning

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Mon. - had a fatigue in the morning had to dig a latrine. After which there was a flap on about the Col. coming round inspecting. He didn't but we had a parade at 1200 - a talk on stagnation & a general trying to boost up moral. Did not get on duty until 1330 hrs. Had a quiet afternoon. In the evening had a bath & read my book. Night duty as usual.

My brother's birthday he is 20. Went on duty in the morning & had a fatigue in the morning had to dig a latrine. After which there was a flap on about the Col. coming round inspecting. He didn't but we had a parade at 1200 & a talk on stagnation & a general trying to boost up moral. Did not get on duty until 1330 hrs. Had a quiet afternoon. In the evening had a bath & read my book. Night duty as usual.

## Tuesday 25th

July 25 In the morning read my book "The Sun is my Undoing" by Marguerite Steen. About slave trade in 1760 & thereabouts. In the afternoon I felt very tired - went to sleep. During the evening had a stroll over to the sick bay to see how Dicky was getting on. He was much better & was expecting coming out any time.

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## Wednesday 26th

July 26. Parade in the morning the King is expected here today - those in the morning shifts are to line the route glad I'm not one. Had a fatigue in moving & erecting a new latrine. In the afternoon did little except sit out in the sun & read. Evening on duty.

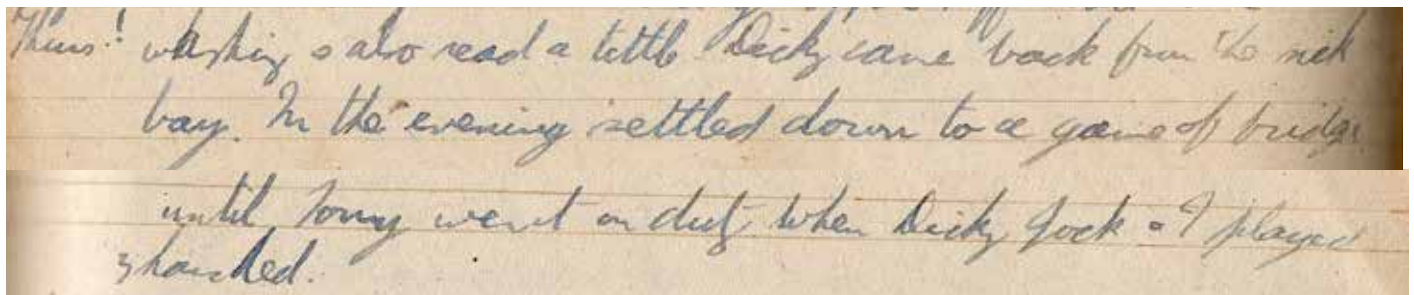
Parade in the morning the King is expected here today & those in the morning shifts are to line the route glad I'm not one. Had a fatigue in moving & erecting a new latrine. In the afternoon did little except sit out in the sun & read. Evening duty.

## Thursday 27th!

July 27. On duty in the morning. After Kiffin did some



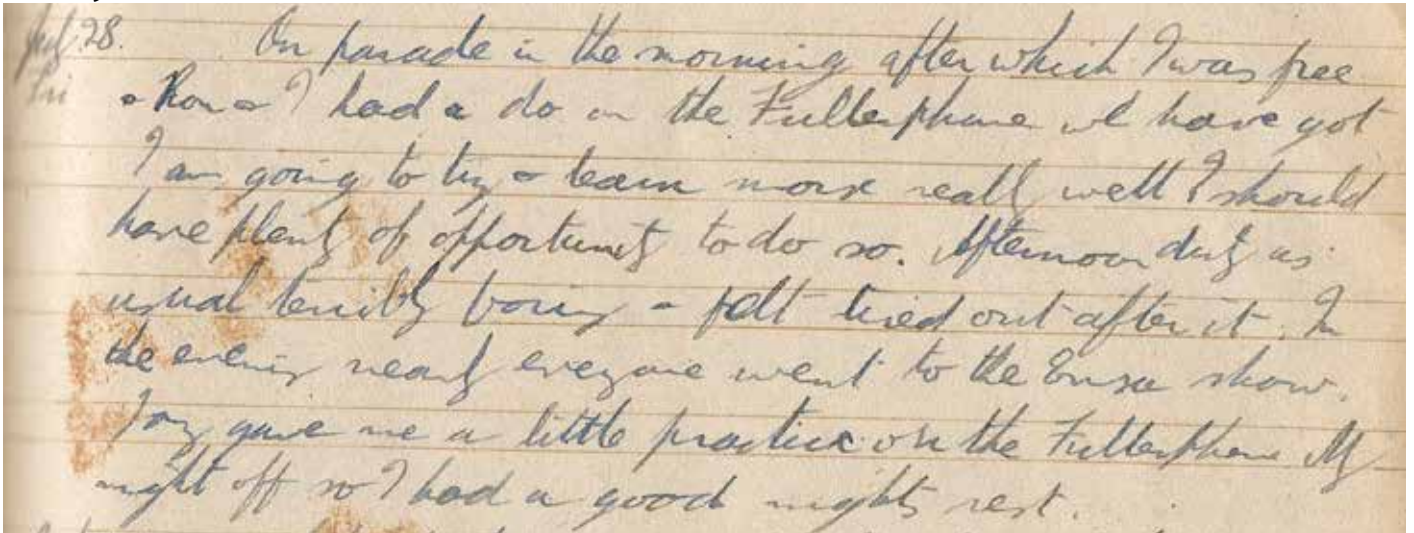
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



Thurs: washing & also read a little Dicky came back from the sick bay. In the evening settled down to a game of bridge until Tony went on duty when Dicky, Jock & I played 3 handed.

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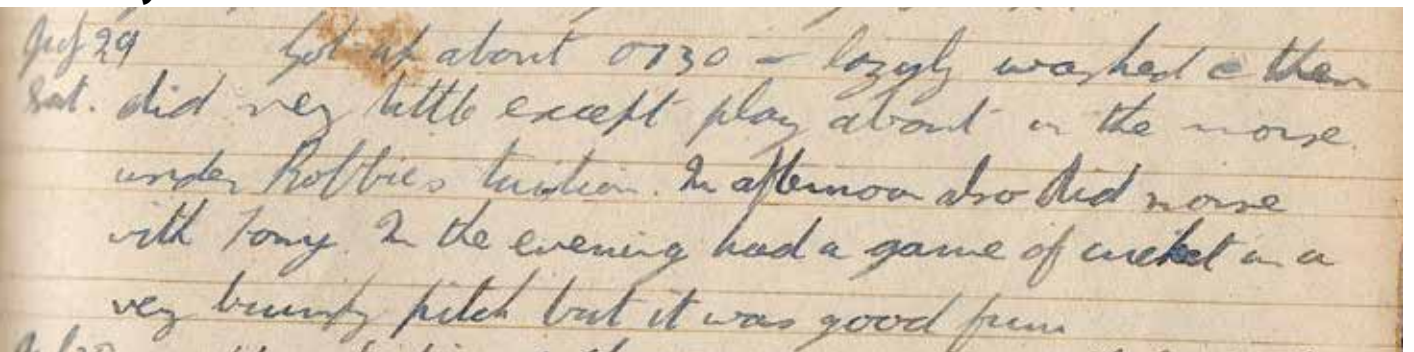
## Friday 28th



Jul 28. On parade in the morning after which I was free & Ron & I had a do on the Fuller phone we have got I am going to try & learn morse really well I should have plenty of opportunity to do so. Afternoon duty as usual terribly boring & felt tired out after it. In the evening nearly everyone went to the Ensa show. Tony gave me a little practice on the Fullerphone My night off so I had a good nights rest.

On parade in the morning after which I was free & Ron & I had a do on the Fuller phone<sup>3</sup> we have got. I am going to try & learn morse really well I should have plenty of opportunity to do so. Afternoon duty as usual terribly boring & felt tired out after it. In the evening nearly everyone went to the Ensa show. Tony gave me a little practice on the Fullerphone My night off so I had a good nights rest.

## Saturday 29th



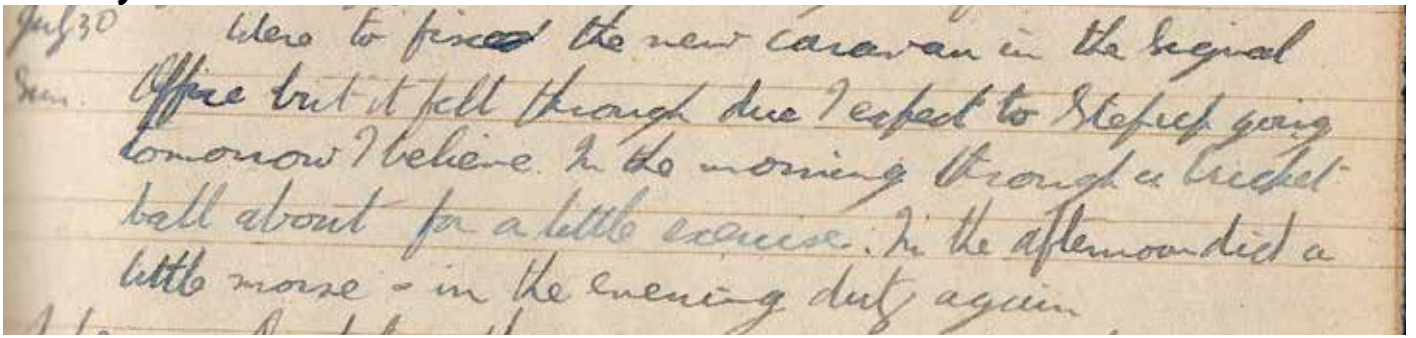
Jul 29 Sat. Got up about 0730 & lazily washed & then did very little except play about on the morse under Robbie's tuition. In afternoon also did morse with Tony. In the evening had a game of cricket on a very bumpy pitch but it was good fun.

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3 A D.C. morse telegraph. I think we had the headphones from this which Dad connected to a battery and morse tapper so I could try sending morse messages

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

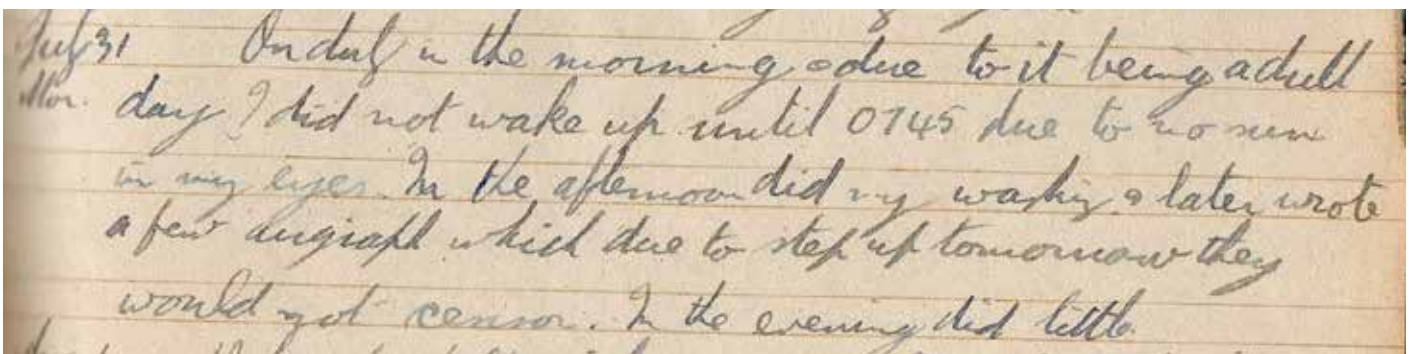
## Sunday 30th



July 30  
Sun. Were to fix the new caravan in the signal office but it fell through due I expect to step-up going tomorrow I believe. In the morning through a cricket ball about for a little exercise. In the afternoon did a little morse - in the evening duty again.

Were to fix the new caravan in the signal office but it fell through due I expect to step-up going tomorrow I believe. In the morning through a cricket ball about for a little exercise. In the afternoon did a little morse & in the evening duty again.

## Monday 31st



July 31  
Mon. On duty in the morning & due to it being a dull day I did not wake up until 0745 due to no sun in my eyes. In the afternoon did my washing & later wrote a few airgraph which due to step up tomorrow they would not censor. In the evening did little.

On duty in the morning & due to it being a dull day I did not wake up until 0745 due to no sun in my eyes. In the afternoon did my washing & later wrote a few airgraph which due to step up tomorrow they would not censor. In the evening did little.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## AUGUST 1944

Tuesday 1st

Aug 1. Woke up & felt sick went on parade with rifles  
which was a farce as there were very few there due to  
the step-up & we had to clear up round the cookhouse & then  
take a piano which was at the recreation tent back to the  
padres & was it a job. I'll say we put it on a 15wt &  
bounced over ditches with it. In the afternoon went on  
duty & I felt really ill my stomach felt as though it was  
going to be sick & wouldn't leave off duty & just lay down  
with just a drink of tea for dinner. I had though a bit  
of good cheer a letter from Betty & home. Went on duty at night  
the line to the step-up was it - of course everyone wanted  
it.

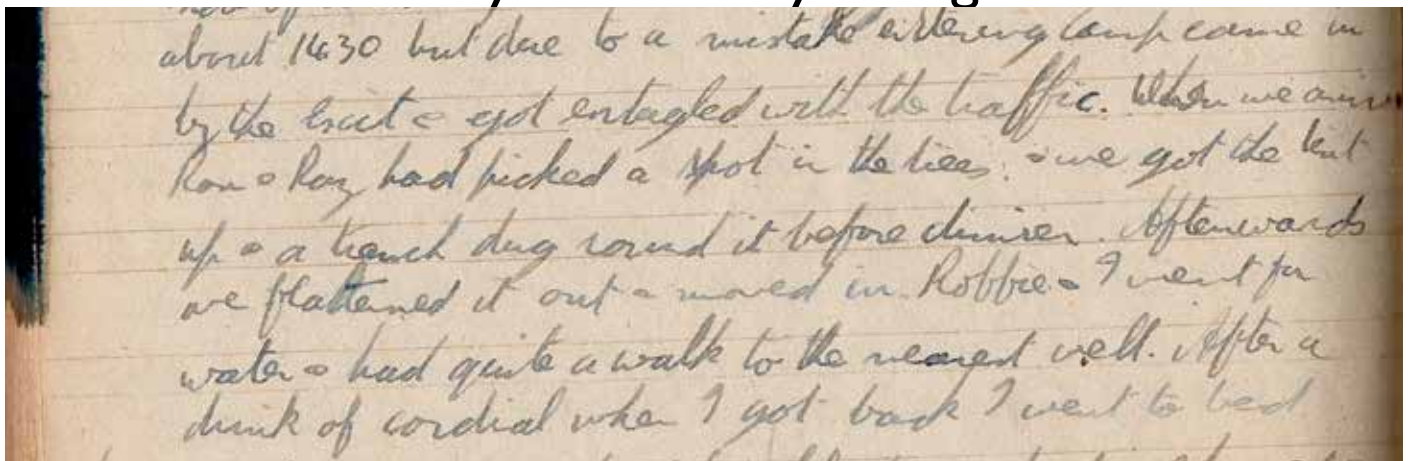
Woke up & felt sick went on parade with rifles which was a farce as there were very few there due to the step up & we had to clear up round the cookhouse & then take a piano which was at the recreation tent back to the padres & was it a job. I'll say. We put it on a 15cwt<sup>1</sup> & bounced over ditches with it. In the afternoon went on duty & I felt really ill my stomach felt as though it was going to be sick & wouldn't. Came off duty & just lay down with just a drink of tea for dinner. I had though a bit of good cheer a letter from Betty & home. Went on duty at night the line to the step up was it & of course everyone wanted it.

Wednesday 2nd

Aug 2. Were relieved early at 0630 I felt much better, went  
off duty had breakfast packed up & washed & shaved & then  
got on our truck which went to the assembly grounds  
we started about 0830 the journey went quite well very  
dusty at first but better later. The biggest town we went  
through was Inena & we are about 8 miles the other  
side of it <sup>near</sup> a place called Proggabonni we arrived

1 15 Hundredweight (about 762 Kg) or 3/4 Tons

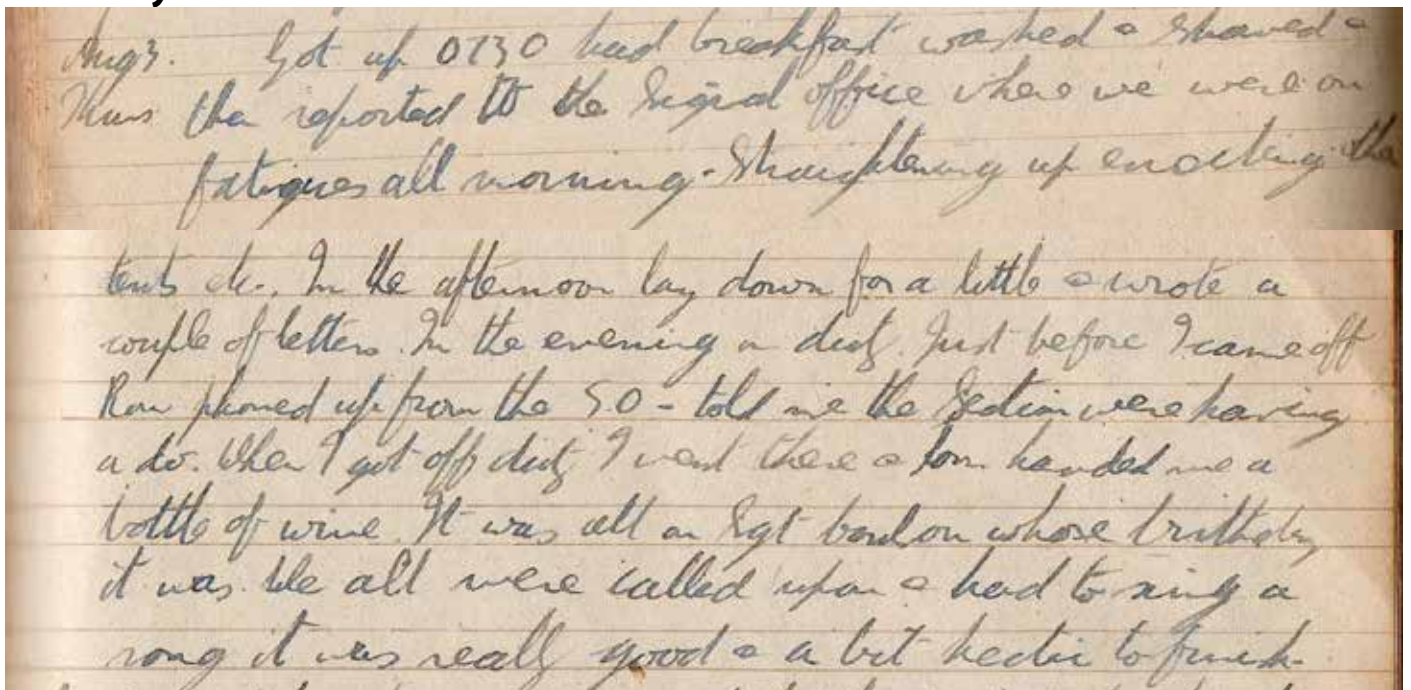
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



about 11:30 but due to a mistake entering camp came in by the exit & got entangled with the traffic. When we arrived Ron & Roy had picked a spot in the trees & we got the tent up & a trench dug round it before dinner. Afterwards we flattened it out & moved in Robbie & I went for water & had quite a walk to the nearest well. After a drink of cordial when I got back I went to bed.

Were relieved early at 0630 I felt much better went off duty had breakfast packed up & washed & shaved & then got on our truck which went to the assembly ground & we started about 0830. The journey went quite well very dusty at first but better later. The biggest town we went through was Siena & we are about 8<sup>2</sup> miles the other side of it near a place called Poggibonsi we arrived about 14:30 but due to a mistake entering camp came in through the exit & got entangled with the traffic. When we arrived Ron & Roy had picked a spot in the trees & we got the tent up & a trench dug round it before dinner. Afterwards we flattened it out & moved in Robbie & I went for water & had quite a walk to the nearest well. After a drink of cordial when I got back I went to bed.

## Thursday 3rd



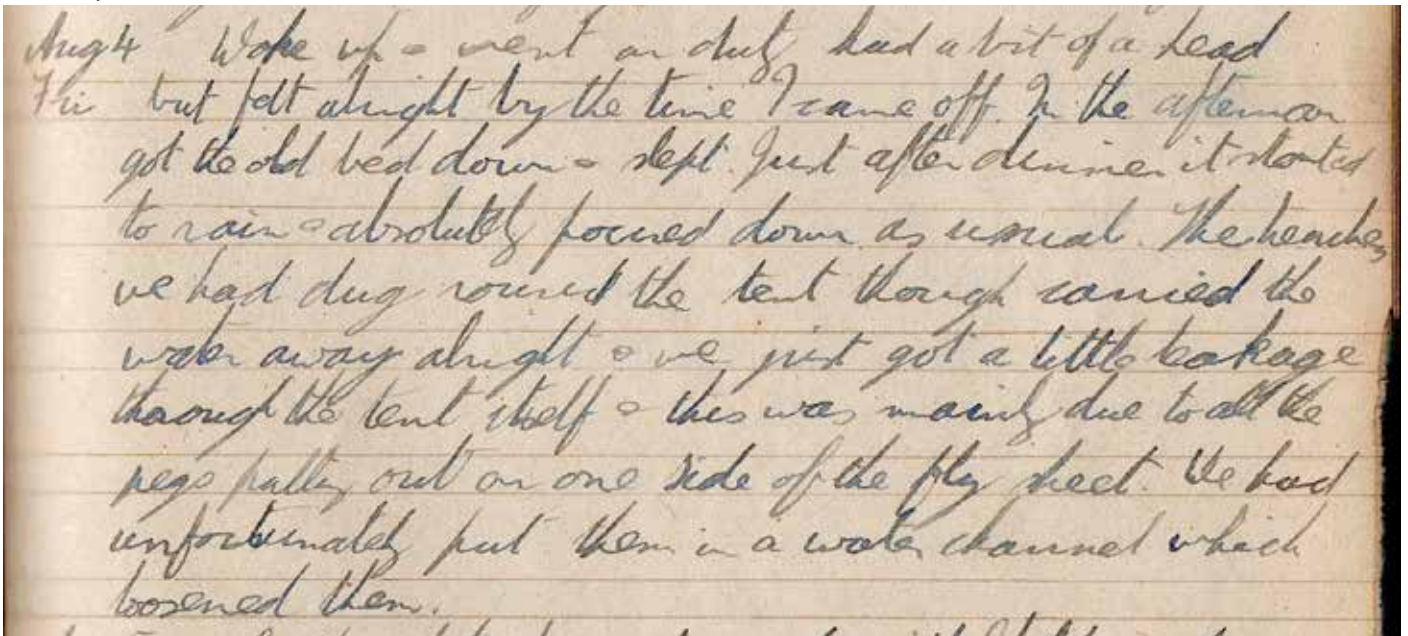
Aug 3. Got up 0730 had breakfast washed & shaved & then reported to the Signal Office where we were on fatigues all morning. Straightening up exchanging the tents etc. In the afternoon lay down for a little & wrote a couple of letters. In the evening on duty just before I came off Ron phoned up from the S.O. - told me the Section were having a do. When I got off duty I went there & Ron handed me a bottle of wine. It was all on Sgt Gordon whose birthday it was. We all were called upon & had to sing a song it was really good & a bit hectic to finish.

Got up 0730 had breakfast washed & shaved & then reported to the Signal Office where we were on fatigues all morning. Straightening up exchange then tents etc. In the afternoon lay down for a little & wrote a couple of letters. In the evening on duty just before I came off Ron phoned up from the S.O. & told the section were having a do. When I got off duty I went there & Ron handed me a bottle of wine. It was all on Sgt. Gordon whose birthday it was we all were called upon & had to sing a song it was really good & a bit hectic to finish.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

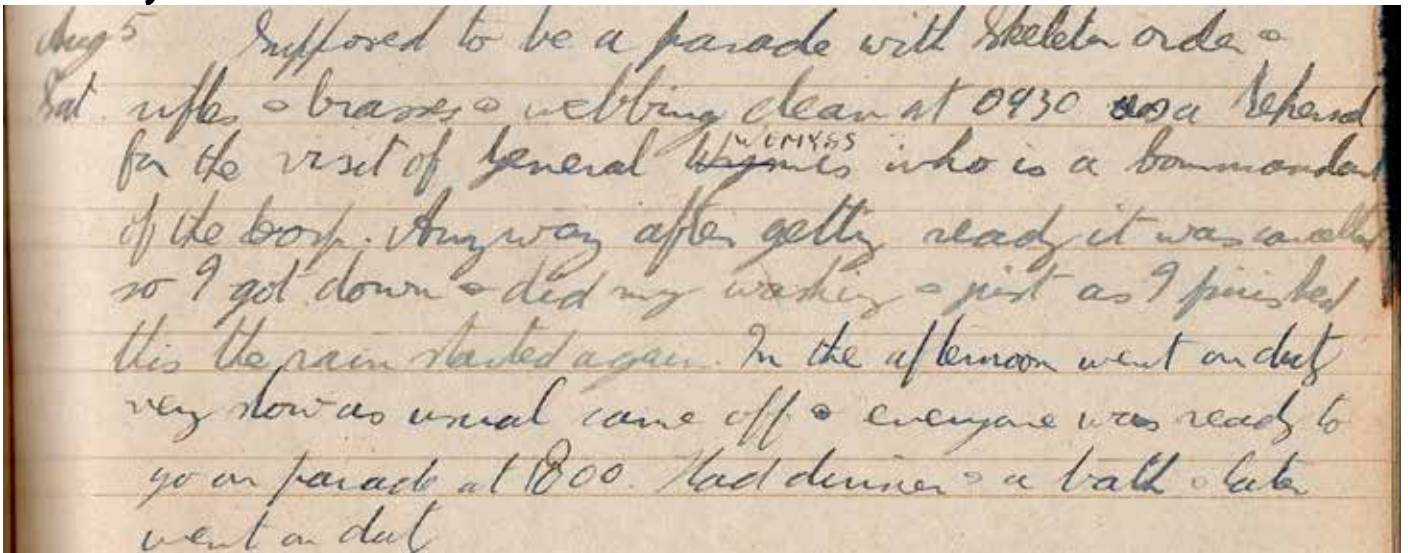
Friday 4th



Aug 4 Woke up & went on duty had a bit of a head but felt alright by the time I came off. In the afternoon got the old bed down & slept. Just after dinner it started to rain & absolutely poured down as usual. The trenches we had dug round the tent though carried the water away alright & we just got a little leakage through the tent itself & this was mainly due to all the pegs pulling out on one side of the fly sheet. We had unfortunately put them in a water channel which loosened them.

Woke up & went on duty had a bit of a head but felt alright by the time I came off. In the afternoon got the old bed down & slept. Just after dinner it started to rain & absolutely poured down as usual. The trenches we had dug round the tent though carried the water away alright & we just got a little leakage through the tent itself & this was mainly due to all the pegs pulling out on one side of the fly sheet we had unfortunately put them in a water channel which loosened them.

Saturday 5th



Aug 5 Supposed to be a parade with skeleton order & rifles & brasses & webbing clean at 0930 as a rehearsal for the visit of General <sup>WEMIES</sup> Wemies who is a commander of the corp. Anyway after getting ready it was cancelled so I got down & did my washing & just as I finished this the rain started again. In the afternoon went on duty very slow as usual came off & everyone was ready to go on parade at 1800. Had dinner & a bath & later went on duty.

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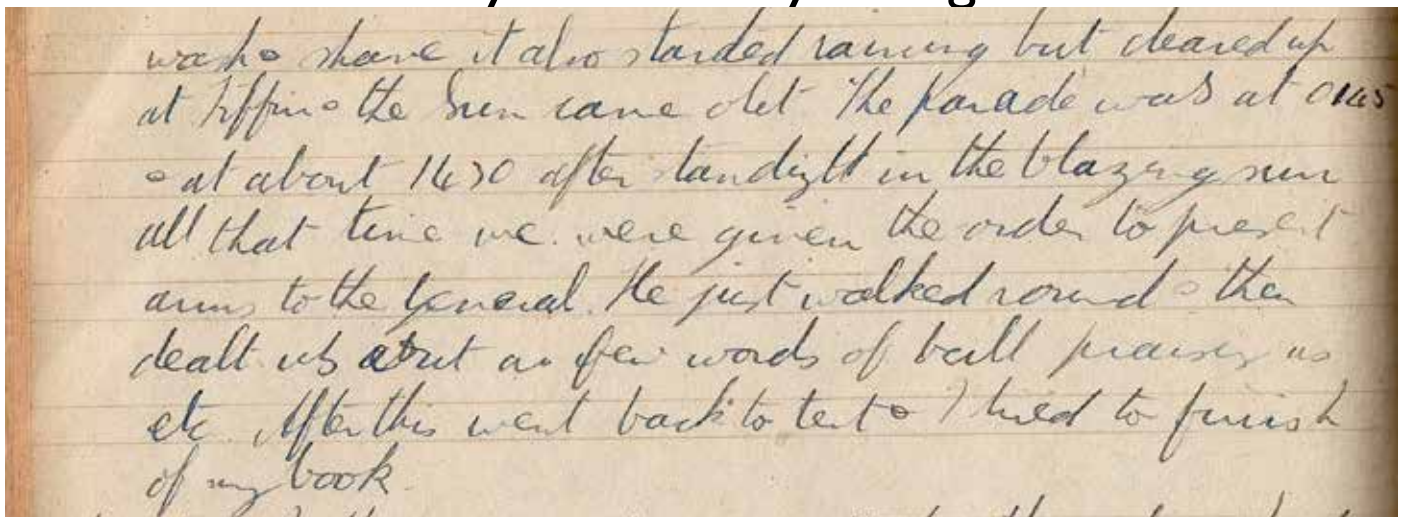
Sunday 6th



Aug 6 Came off duty felt tired but better after a



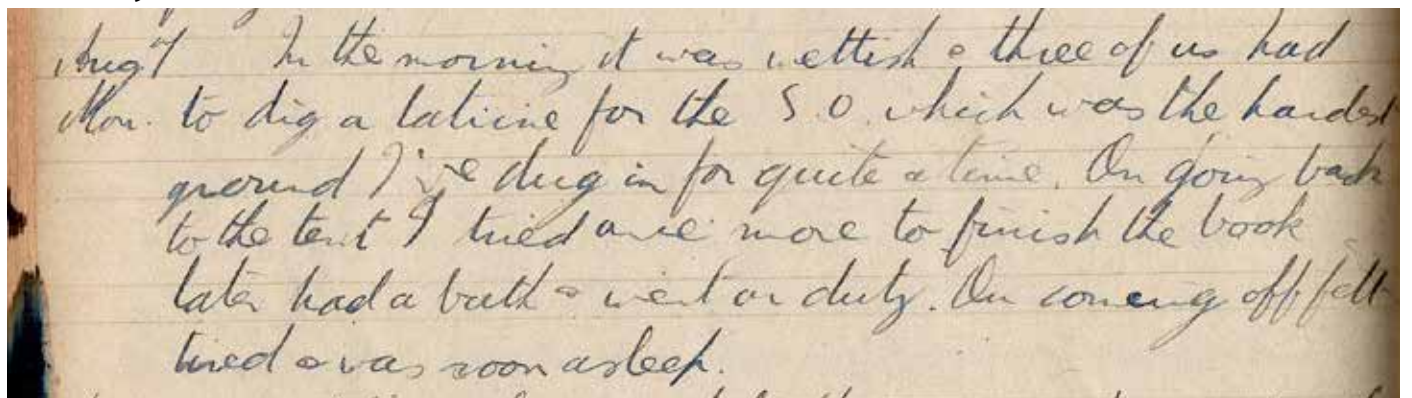
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



wash & shave it also started raining but cleared up at tiffin & the sun came out. The parade was at 0145 & at about 1430 after standing in the blazing sun all that time we were given the order to present arms to the General. He just walked round & then dealt us about as few words of full praises as etc. After this went back to tent & I tried to finish of my book.

Came off duty felt tired but better after a wash & shave it also started to rain but cleared up at tiffin & the sun came out. The parade was at 0145 & at about 1430 after standing in the blazing sun all that time we were given the order to present arms to the General. He just walked round & then dealt us about as few words of full praises as etc. After this went back to tent & I tried to finish of my book.

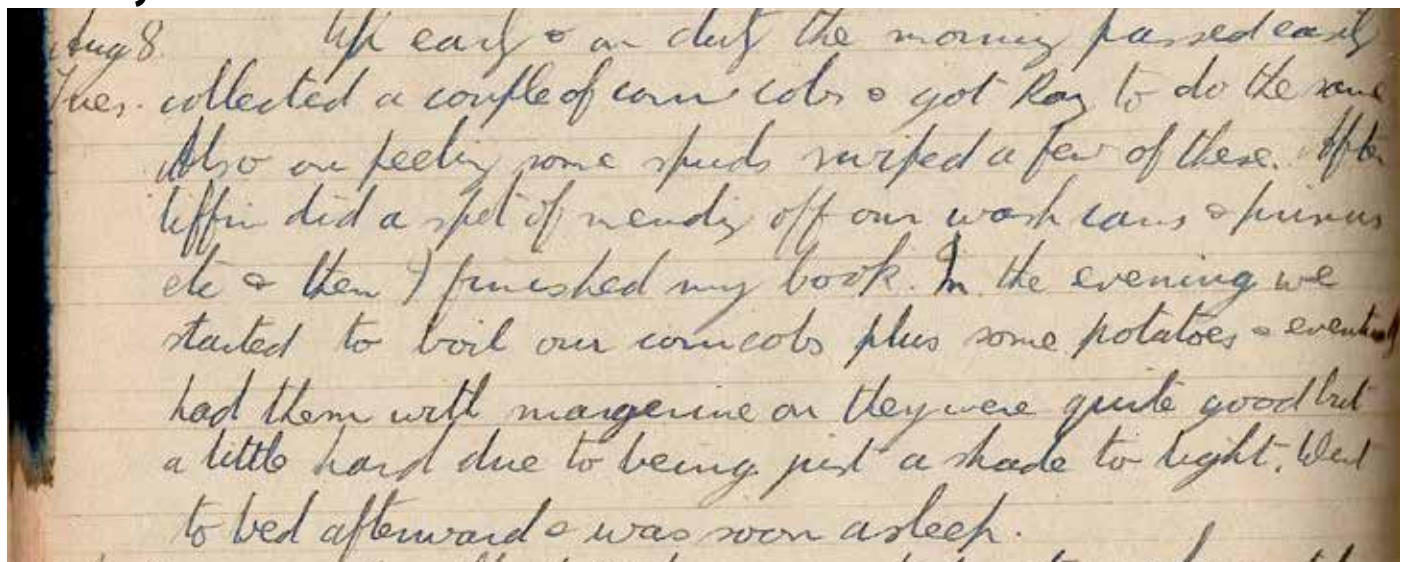
## Monday 7th



Aug 7<sup>th</sup> In the morning it was wettish & three of us had to dig a latrine for the S.O. which was the hardest ground I've dug in for quite a time. On going back to the tent I tried once more to finish the book later had a bath & went on duty. On coming off felt tired & was soon asleep.

In the morning it was wettish & three of us had to dig a latrine for the S.O. which was the hardest ground I've dug in for quite a time. On going back to the tent I tried once more to finish the book later had a bath & went on duty. On coming off felt tired & was soon asleep.

## Tuesday 8th



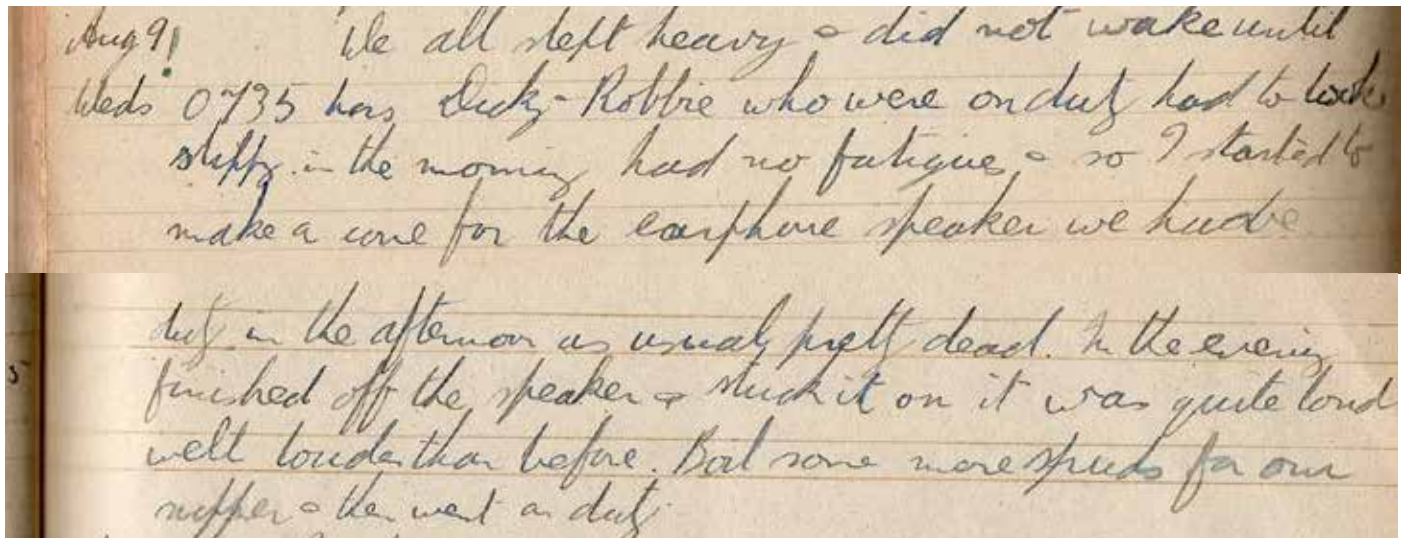
Aug 8<sup>th</sup> Up early & on duty the morning passed early. Then collected a couple of corn cobs & got Ray to do the same. Also on feeling some spuds, wiped a few of these. After tiffin did a spot of mending of our wash cans & pins etc & then I finished my book. In the evening we started to boil our corn cobs plus some potatoes & eventually had them with margarine as they were quite good but a little hard due to being just a shade to light. Went to bed afterward & was soon asleep.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Up early & on duty the morning passed easily collected a couple of corn cobs & got Roy to do the same. Also peeling some spuds swiped a few of these. After tiffin did a spot of mending off our wash cans & primuses etc. & then I finished my book. In the evening we started to boil our corn cobs plus some potatoes & eventually had them with margarine on they were quite good but a little hard due to being a shade to light. Went to bed afterwards & was soon asleep.

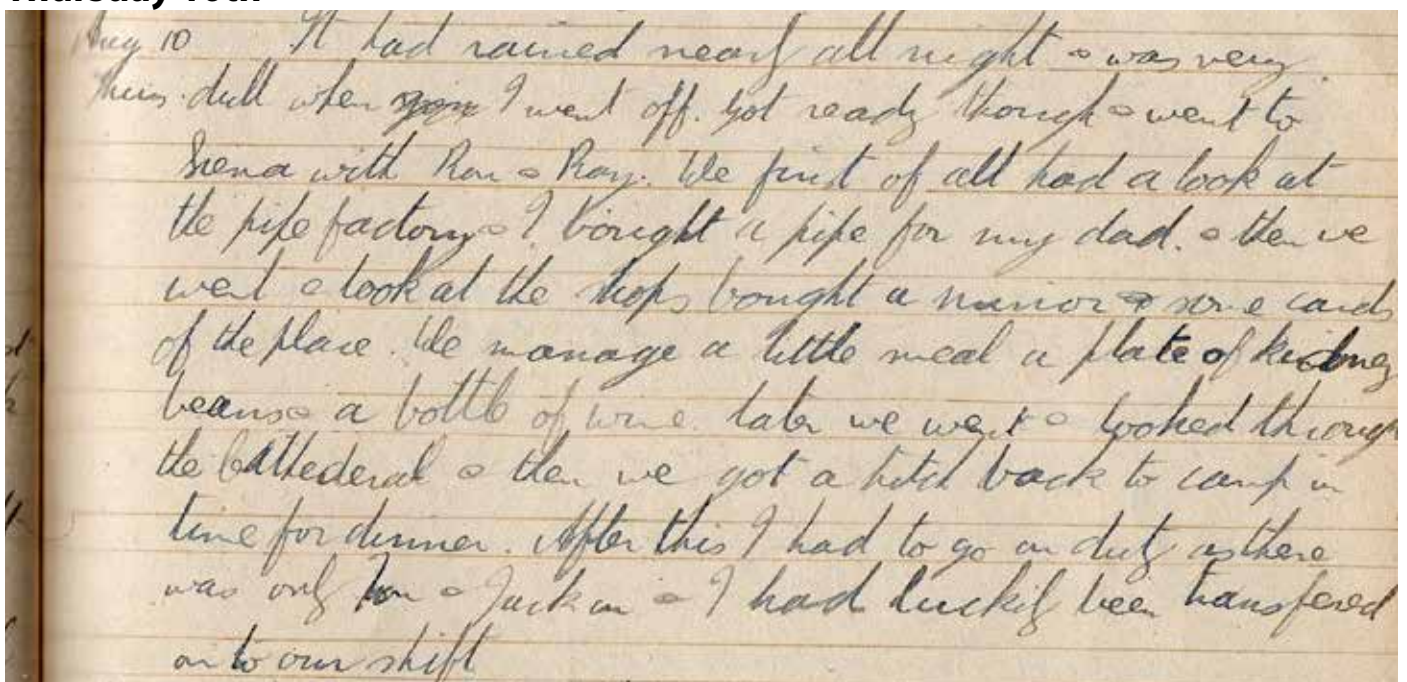
## Wednesday 9th



Aug 9! We all slept heavy & did not wake until Weds 0735 hrs Dicky - Robbie who were on duty had to look slippy in the morning had no fatigues & so I started to make a cone for the earphone speaker we had on duty in the afternoon as usual pretty dead. In the evening finished off the speaker & stuck it on it was quite loud well louder than before. Boil some more spuds for our supper & then went on duty.

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## Thursday 10th



Aug 10 It had rained nearly all night & was very thin dull when I went off. Got ready though & went to Siena with Ron & Roy. We first of all had a look at the pipe factory & I bought a pipe for my dad. & then we went & look at the shops bought a navigator & some cards of the place. We manage a little meal a plate of kidney beans & a bottle of wine. Later we went & looked through the Cathedral & then we got a hotel back to camp in time for dinner. After this I had to go on duty as there was only Tom & Jack on & I had luckily been transferred on to our shift.

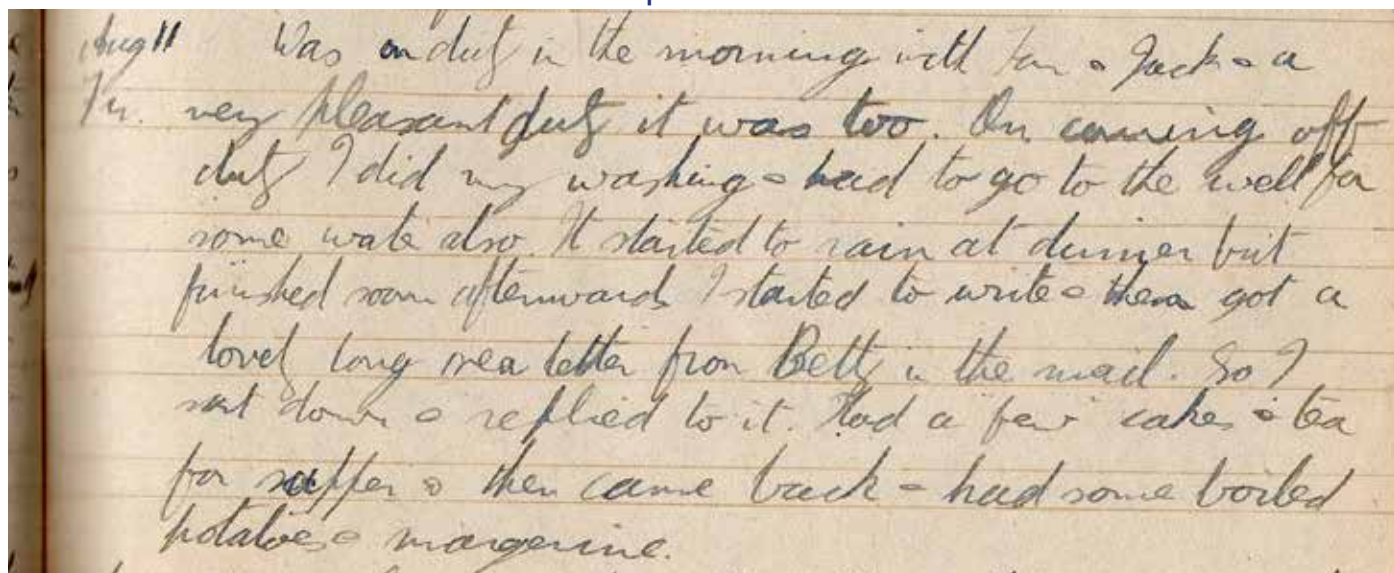
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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

dad & then we went to look at the shops bought a mirror & some cards of the place. We manage a little meal a plate of kidney beans & a bottle of wine. later we went & looked through the Cathedral & then we got a hitch back to camp in time for dinner. After this I had to go on duty as there was only Ian & Jack on & I had been luckily transferred onto our shift.

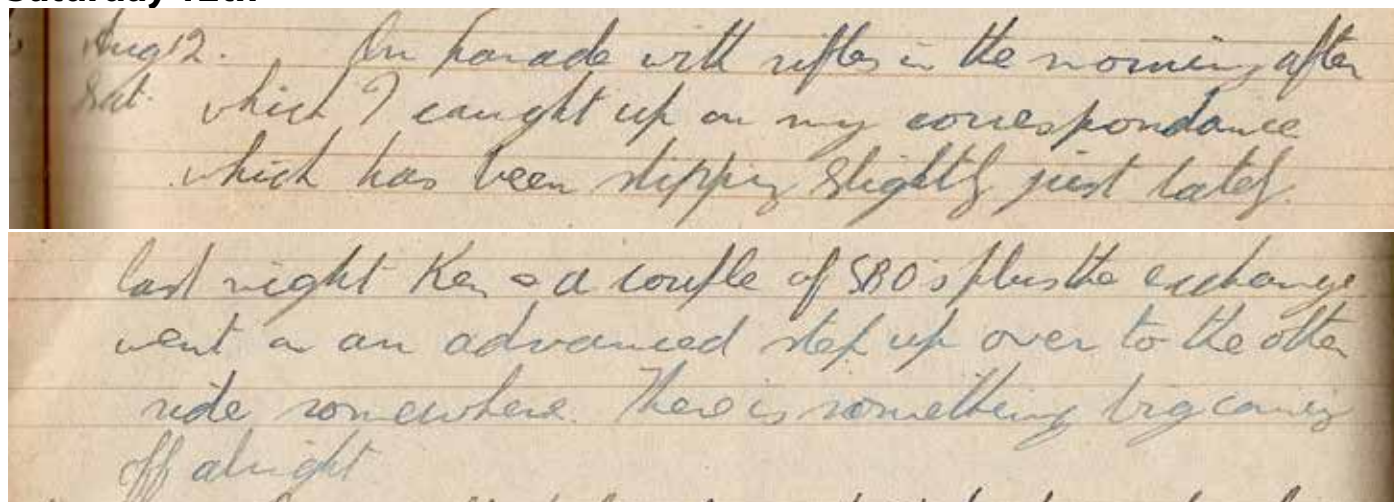
## Friday 11th

Churchill arrives on a visit to Allied headquarters.



Was on duty in the morning with Ian & Jack & a very pleasant duty it was too. On coming off duty I did my washing & had to go to the well for some water also it started to rain at dinner but finished soon afterwards. I started to write & then got a lovely long sea letter from Betty in the mail. So I sat down & replied to it. Had a few cakes & tea for supper & then came back & had some boiled potatoes & margarine.

## Saturday 12th



On parade with rifles in the morning after which I caught up on my correspondance which has been slipping slightly just lately last night Ken & a couple of SBO's plus the exchange went on an advanced step up over to the other side somewhere. There is something big coming off alright



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Sunday 13th

Aug 13  
Sun. Came off duty & found it to be a lovely day - we did a few exercises in the morning - then I wrote & did a little German. In the afternoon made some tent pegs & had a bath. After dinner lay down a while & was soon in bed after eating a few boiled spuds. Oh in the morning whilst filling in a hole I busted open the end of my finger.

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Monday 14th

Aug 14  
Mon. Got up at 0630 & did a spot of P.T. & we went on duty we had a very busy time & a terrific delay booking. Have not seen the like of it since San Angelo. Roy & Ron were due to go for three days rest tomorrow but this has been cancelled due I expect to the intended move which is very hush hush & there is wild speculation as to what is coming off.

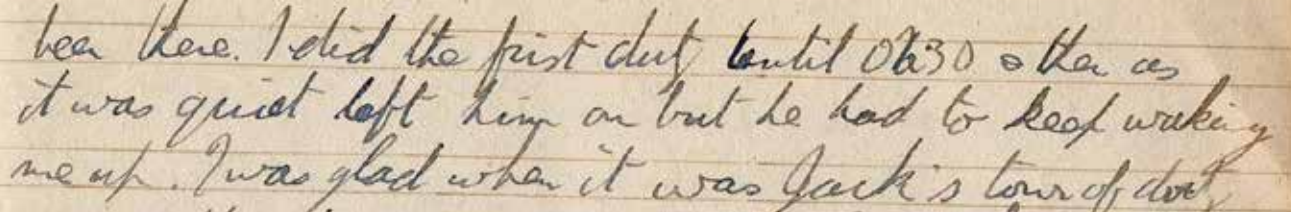
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Tuesday 15th

Aug 15  
Tues. Went on parade & then had to go to the signal office to take down a beam. There were only four of us & we could not complete the job properly. In the afternoon the duty was as long & tiring as usual. Oh I managed to get my parcel censored by Capt Randall. In the evening I went off & also help Henry to prepare the beans etc for the canteen. Went on duty & we had a hell of a time Jack & I - the trainee who might not have



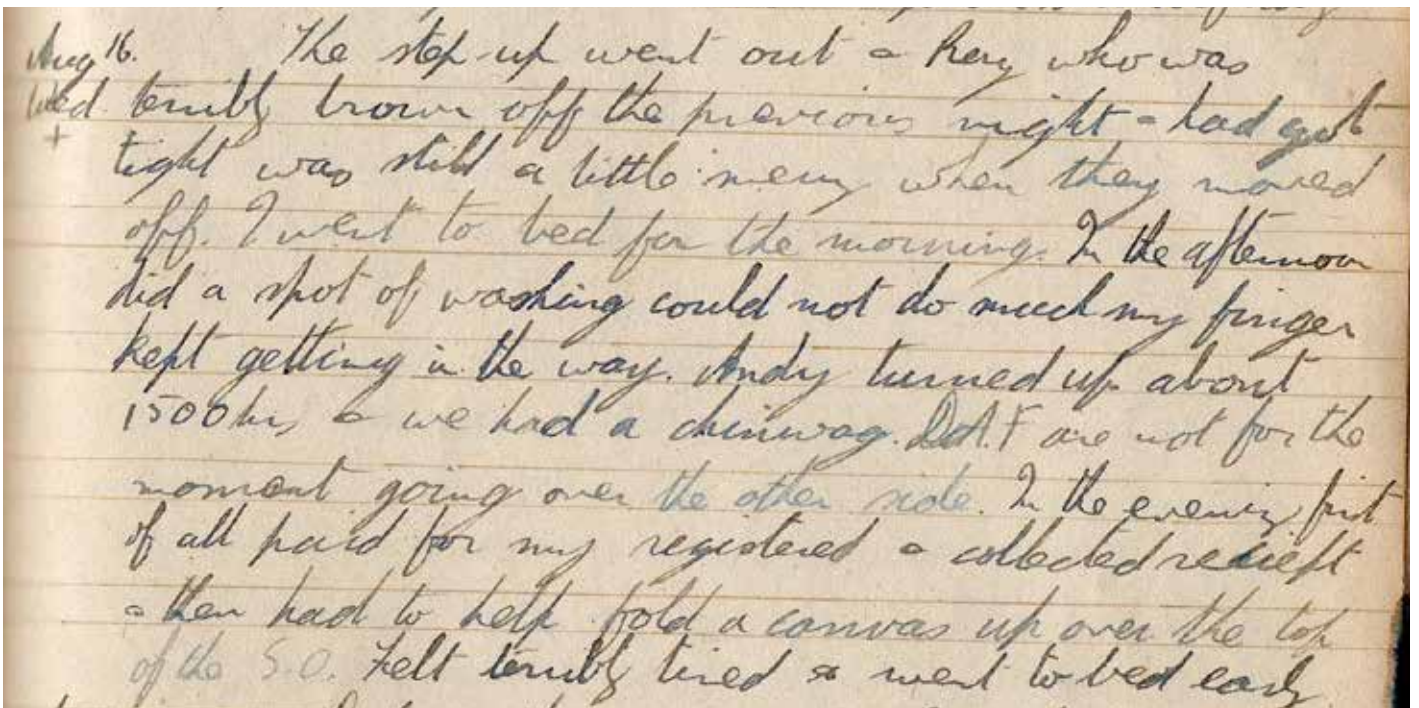
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



been there. I did the first duty until 0630 & then as it was quiet left him on but he had to keep waking me up. I was glad when it was Jack's tour of duty.

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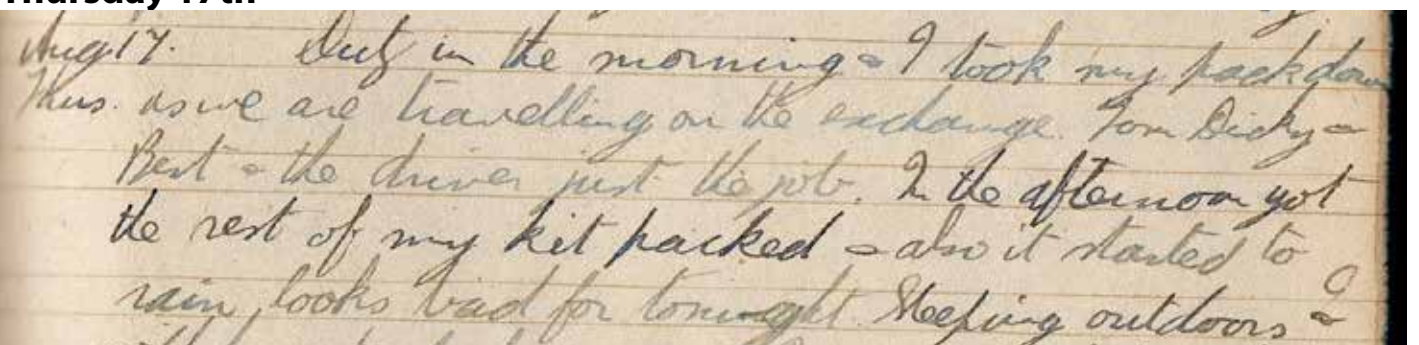
## Wednesday 16th



Aug 16. The step up went out & Roy who was terribly brown off the previous night - had got tight was still a little merry when they moved off. I went to bed for the morning. In the afternoon did a spot of washing could not do much my finger kept getting in the way. Andy turned up about 1500 hrs & we had a chinwag. DAF are not for the moment going over the other side. In the evening first of all paid for my registered & collected receipt & then had to help fold a canvas up over the top of the S.O. Felt terribly tired & went to bed early.

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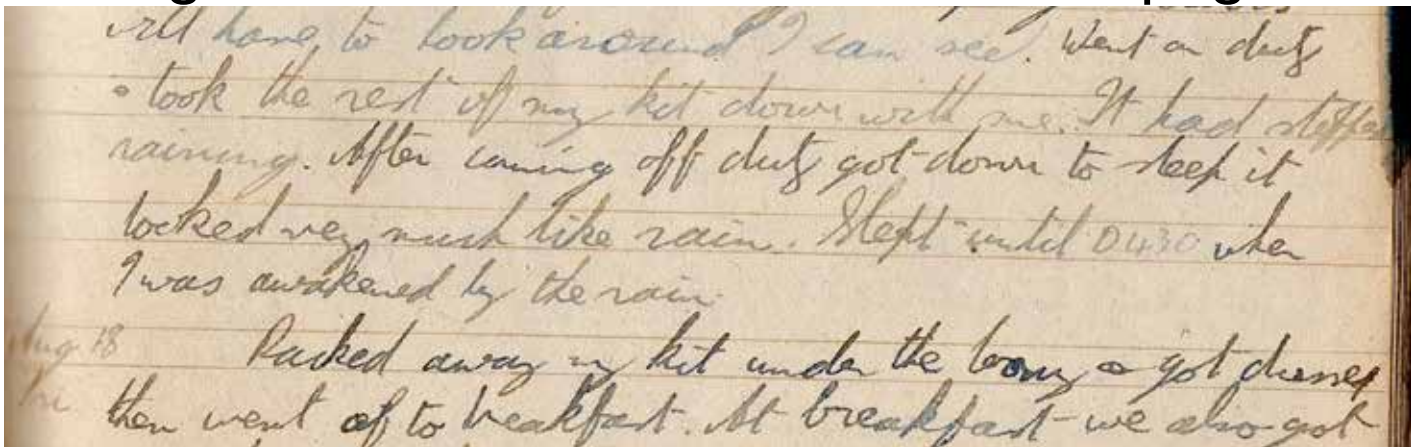
## Thursday 17th



Aug 17. Duty in the morning & I took my pack down thus as we are travelling on the exchange. Tom Dickey & Bert & the driver just the job. In the afternoon got the rest of my kit packed & also it started to rain, looks bad for tonight. Sleeping outdoors &



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

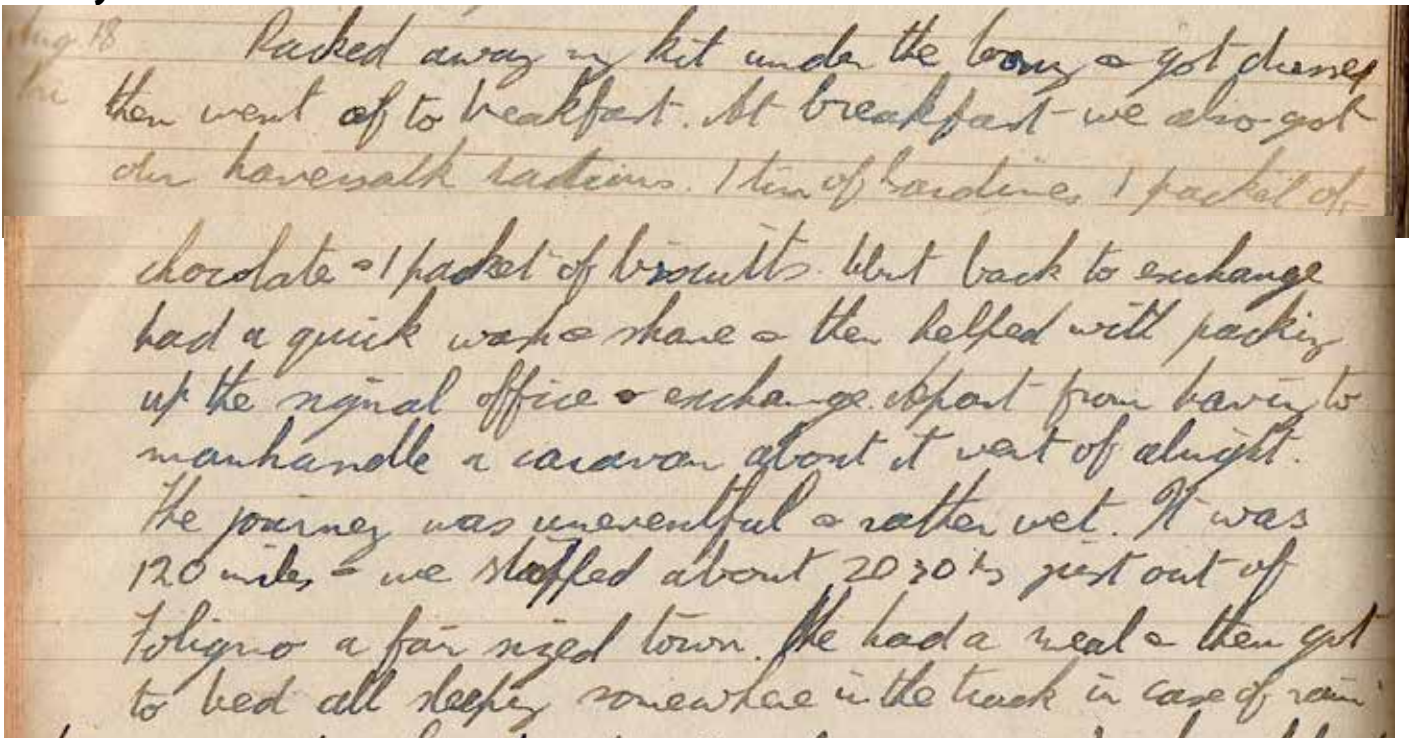


will have to look around I can see. Went on duty  
• took the rest of my kit down with me. It had stopped  
raining. After coming off duty got down to sleep it  
looked very much like rain. Slept until 0430 when  
I was awakened by the rain.

Aug 18 Packed away my kit under the lorry & got dressed  
then went off to breakfast. At breakfast we also got

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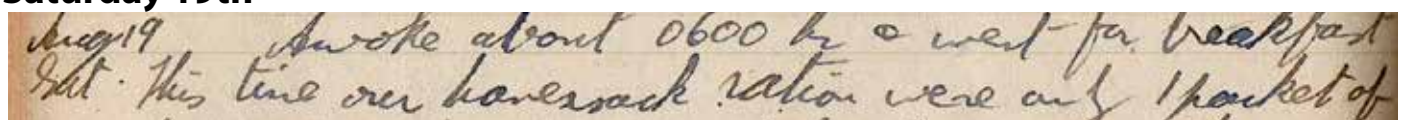
## Friday 18th



Aug 18 Packed away my kit under the lorry & got dressed  
then went off to breakfast. At breakfast we also got  
our haversack rations. 1 tin of sardines, 1 packet of  
chocolate & 1 packet of biscuits. Went back to exchange  
had a quick wash & shave & then helped with packing  
up the signal office & exchange. Apart from having to  
manhandle a caravan about it went off alright.  
The journey was uneventful & rather wet. It was  
120 miles & we stopped about 2030 hrs just out of  
Foligno a fair sized town. We had a meal & then got  
to bed all sleeping somewhere in the truck in case of rain.

Packed away my kit under the lorry & got dressed then went off to breakfast. At breakfast we also got our haversack rations. 1 tin of sardines, 1 packet of chocolate & 1 packet of biscuits. Went back to exchange had a quick wash & shave & then helped with packing up the signal office & exchange. Apart from having to manhandle a caravan about it went off alright. The journey was uneventful & rather wet. It was 120 miles & we stopped about 2030 hours just out of Foligno a fair sized town. We had a meal & then got to bed all sleeping in the truck in case of rain.

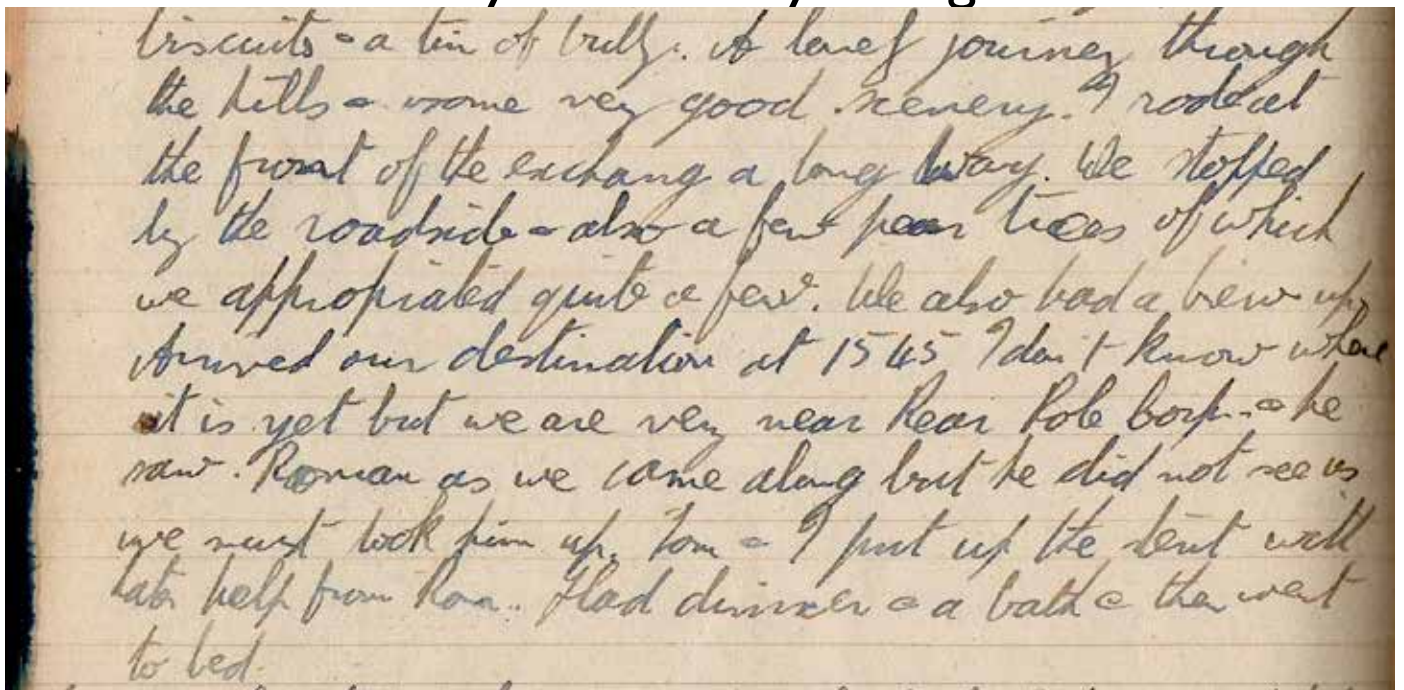
## Saturday 19th



Aug 19 Awoke about 0600 hrs & went for breakfast  
This time our haversack rations were only 1 packet of



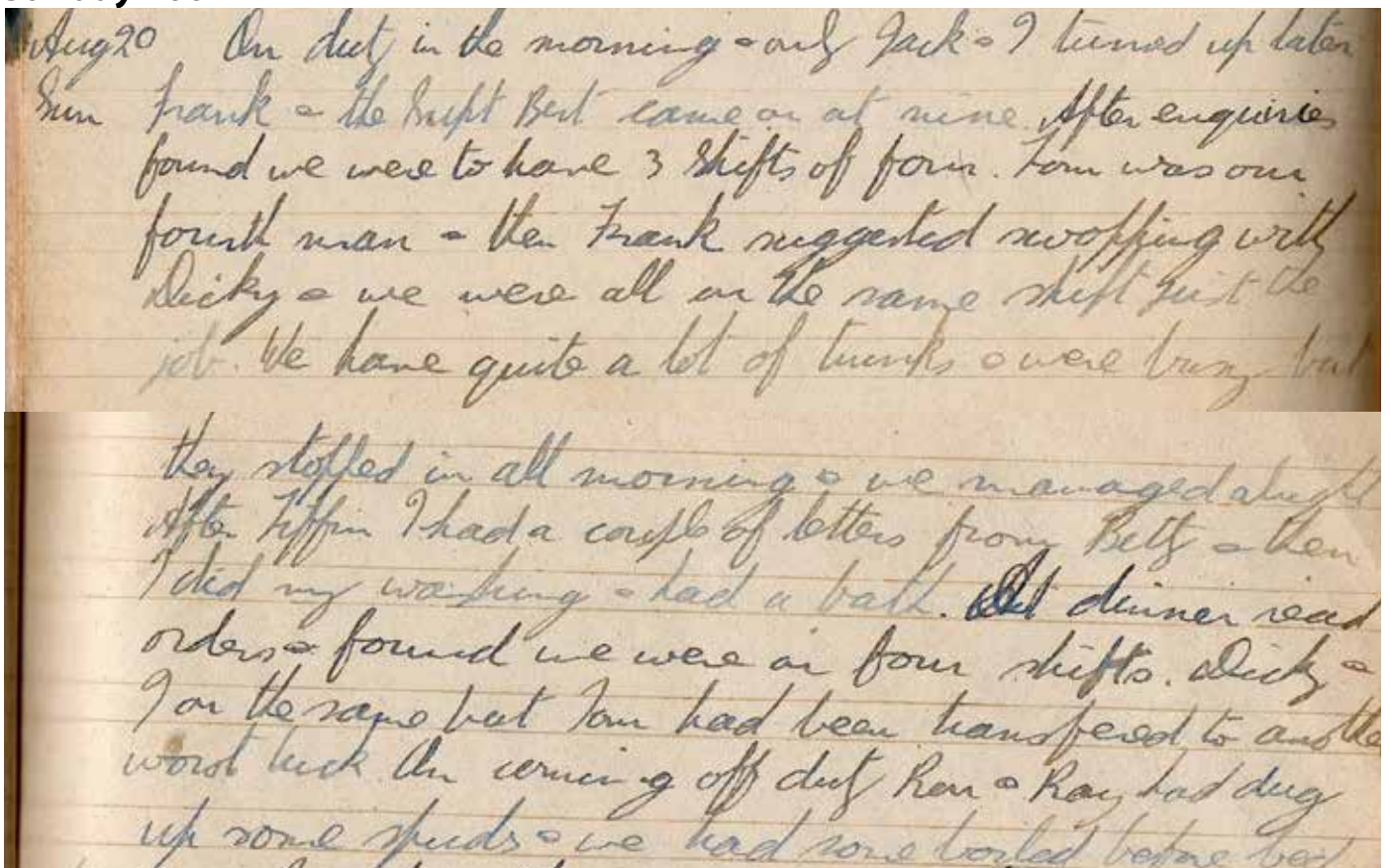
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



biscuits - a tin of bully. A lovely journey through the hills & some very good scenery. I rode at the front of the exchange a long way. We stopped by the roadside & also a few pear trees of which we appropriated quite a few. We also had a brew up. Arrived our destination at 1545 I don't know where it is yet but we are very near Rear Pole Corp. & we saw Roman as we came along but he did not see us we must look him up. Tom & I put up the tent with later help from Ron. Had dinner & a bath & then went to bed.

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## Sunday 20th



Aug 20 On duty in the morning - only Jack & I turned up later  
Sun Frank & the Supt Bert came on at nine. After enquiries found we were to have 3 shifts of four. Tom was our fourth man - then Frank suggested wopping with Dicky & we were all on the same shift just the job. We have quite a lot of trucks & were busy but they stopped in all morning & we managed alright. After tiffin I had a couple of letters from Betty & then I did my washing & had a bath. At dinner read orders & found we were in four shifts. Dicky & I on the same but Tom had been transferred to another word back. On coming off duty Ron & Ray had dug up some spuds & we had some boiled before bed.

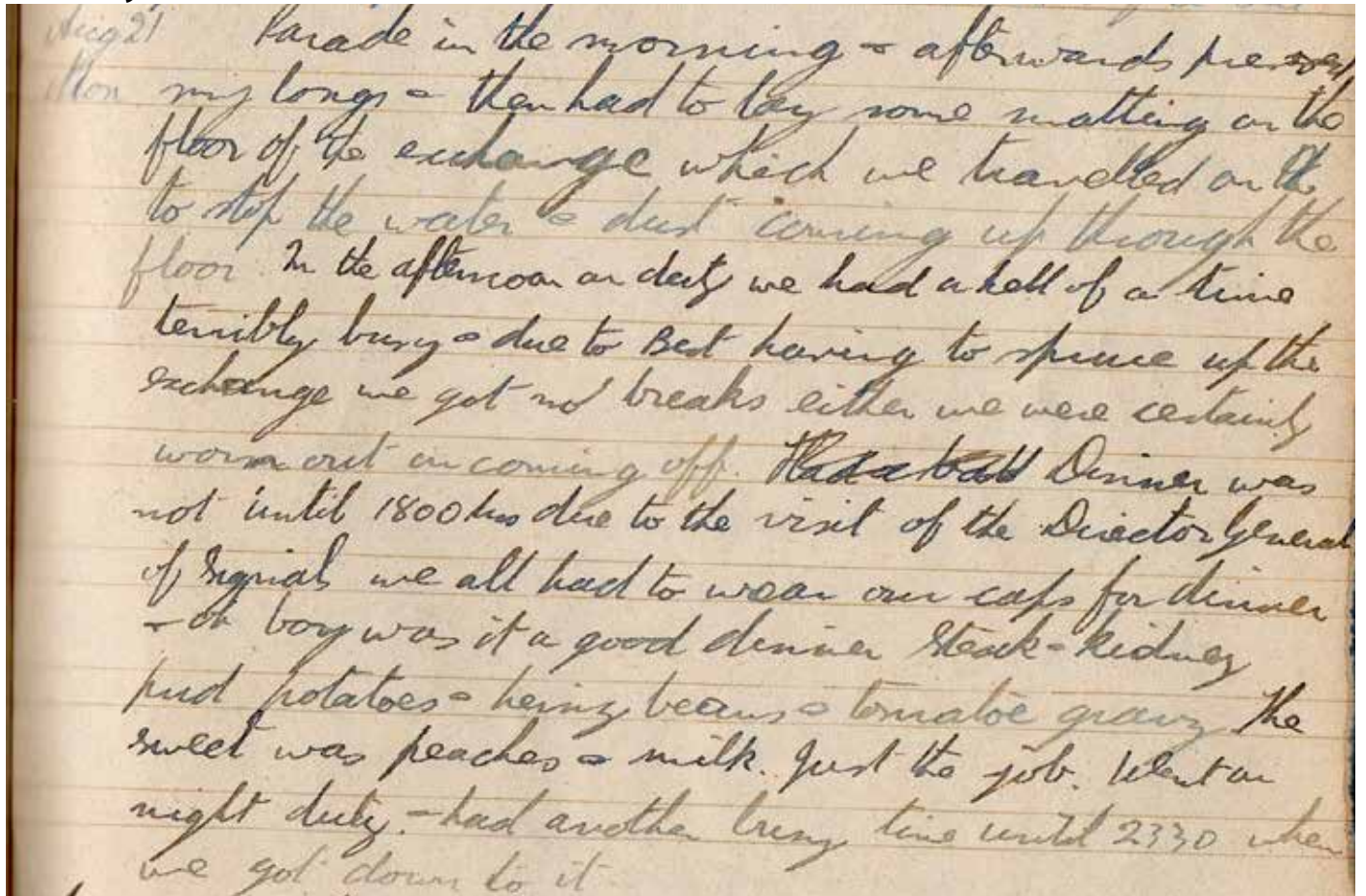
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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

nine. After enquiries found we were to have 3 shifts of four. Tom was our fourth man & then Frank suggested swapping with Dicky & we were all on the same shift just the job. We have quite a lot of trunks & were busy but then stopped in all morning & we managed alright. After tiffin I had a couple of letters from Betty & then I did my washing & had a bath. At dinner read orders & found we were on four shifts. Dicky & I on the same but Tom had been transferred to another worst luck. On coming off duty Ron & Roy had dug up some spuds & we had some boiled before bed.

## Monday 21st

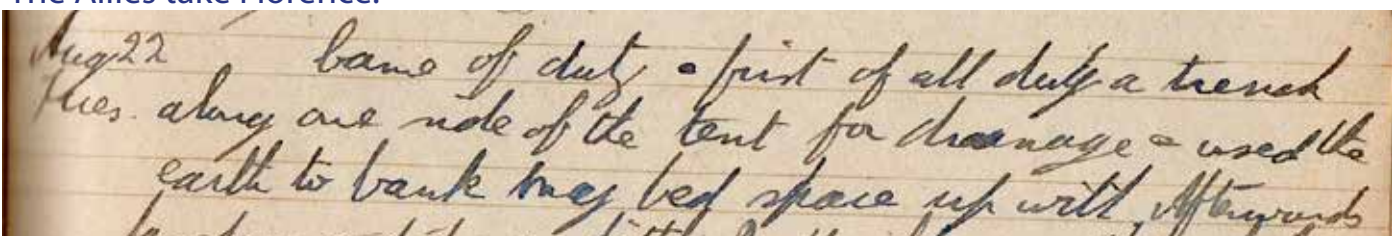


Aug 21 Parade in the morning & afterwards pressed my long & then had to lay some matting on the floor of the exchange which we travelled on to stop the water & dust coming up through the floor. In the afternoon on duty we had a hell of a time terribly busy & due to Bert having to spruce up the exchange we got no breaks either we were certainly worn out on coming off. Dinner was not until 1800 hrs due to the visit of the Director General of Signals we all had to wear our caps for dinner & oh boy was it a good dinner. Steak & kidney pud potatoes & kidney beans & tomatoe gravy. The sweet was peaches & milk. Just the job. Went on night duty & had another busy time until 2330 when we got down to it.

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## Tuesday 22nd

The Allies take Florence.



Aug 22 Same of duty & first of all duty a trench was along one side of the tent for drainage & used the earth to bank my bed space up with. Afterwards



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

my hour & did very little. In the afternoon the whole tent was off & we went swimming in the Adriatic it was great & we were messing about in the water until 1615 when we returned. What a grand time it was. I had a stiff neck due to fighting on one another's shoulders. Coming back we came through a small place called Chiaravalle. I believe our camp is near San Vito. The dinner was a marked contrast to yesterday being bully stew & a piece of pastry with jam on it. I felt very tired after the afternoon exertion & after having some boiled spuds & hearing the news I went to bed. Oh I receive four letters. Two sea letters one from Betty & the other Arnold who is now in France. & an airletter from Denis who now has a commission & an airgraph from Marjorie.

Came off duty & first of all dug a trench along one side of the tent for drainage & used the earth to bank my bed space up with. Afterwards lay down & did very little. In the afternoon the whole tent was off & we went swimming in the Adriatic it was great & we were messing about in the water until 1615 when we returned. What a grand time it was. I had a stiff neck due to fighting on another's shoulders. Coming back we came through a small place called Chiaravalle & I believe our camp is near San Vito. The dinner was a marked contrast to yesterday being bully stew & a piece of pastry with jam on it. I felt very tired after the afternoon exertion & after having some boiled spuds & hearing the news I went to bed. Oh I receive four letters. Two sea letters one from Betty & the other Arnold who is now in France & an airletter from Denis who now has a commission & an airgraph from Marjorie.

## Wednesday 23rd

Aug 23  
Wed. Got up at 0715 & boy did I feel tired also my neck feels as though it is supporting a ton weight. Went on parade but got no fatigues. In the afternoon heard Paris had fallen & at night heard that Rumania had capitulated. Did a spot of washing & also had a bath. Oh & did an airgraph for Dick & Rose. I went on leave & to the ... it was ...

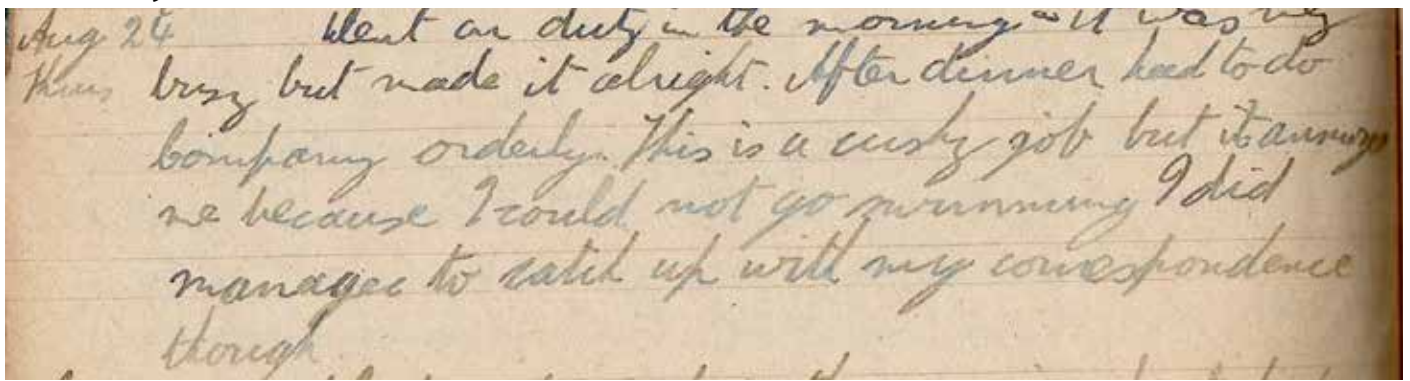
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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

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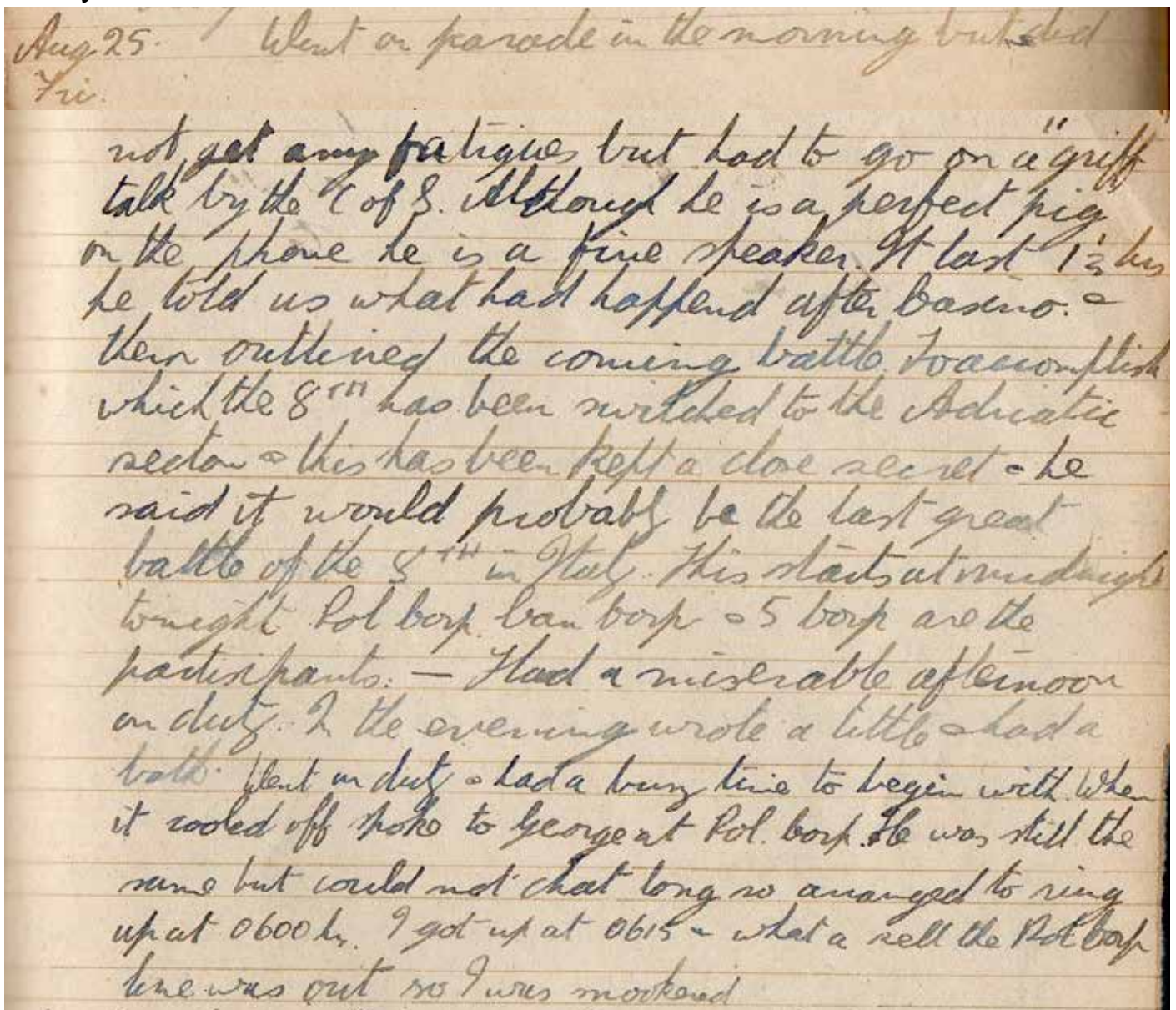
## Thursday 24th



Aug 24  
Thurs. Went on duty in the morning - it was very busy but made it alright. After dinner had to do company orderly. This is a cushy job but it annoyed me because I could not go swimming. I did manage to catch up with my correspondence though.

Went on duty in the morning & it was very busy but made it alright. After dinner had to do company orderly. This is a cushy job but it annoyed me because I could not go swimming. I did manage to catch up with my correspondence though

## Friday 25th



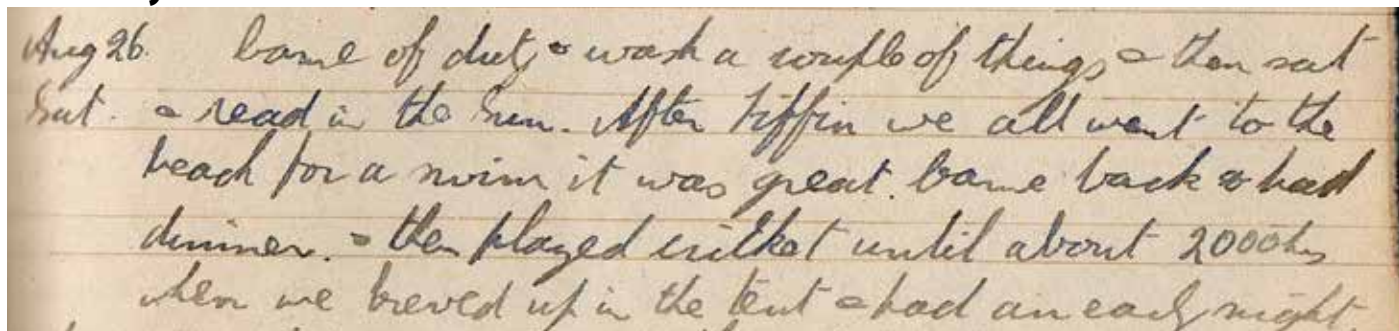
Aug 25  
Fri. Went on parade in the morning but did not get any fatigues but had to go on a "gruff" talk by the C of S. Although he is a perfect pig on the phone he is a fine speaker. At last 12 hrs he told us what had happened after Basiglio. Then outlined the coming battle. To accomplish which the 8<sup>th</sup> has been switched to the Adriatic sector - this has been kept a close secret. He said it would probably be the last great battle of the 5<sup>th</sup> in Italy. This starts at midnight tonight. Pol corp. Can corp. - 5 corp are the participants. - Had a miserable afternoon on duty. In the evening wrote a little & had a bath. Went on duty - had a busy time to begin with. When it cooled off spoke to George at Pol. corp. He was still the same but could not chat long so arranged to ring up at 0600 hrs. I got up at 0615 - what a hell the Pol. corp line was out so I was mooked.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Went on parade in the morning but did not get any fatigues but had to go on a "griff" talk by the C of S. Although he is a perfect pig on the phone he is a fine speaker. It last 1 1/2 hrs he told us what had happened after Casino & then outlined the coming battle to accomplish which the 8th has been switched to the Adriatic section & this has been kept a close secret & he said it would probably be the last great battle of the 8th in Italy. This starts at midnight tonight Pol corp & 5 corp are the participants - Had a miserable afternoon on duty. In the evening wrote a little & had a bath. Went on duty & had a busy time to begin with when it cooled off spoke to George at Pol corp. He was still the same but could not chat long so arranged to ring up at 0600 hrs. I got up at 0615 & what a sell the Pol Corp line was out so I was snookered.

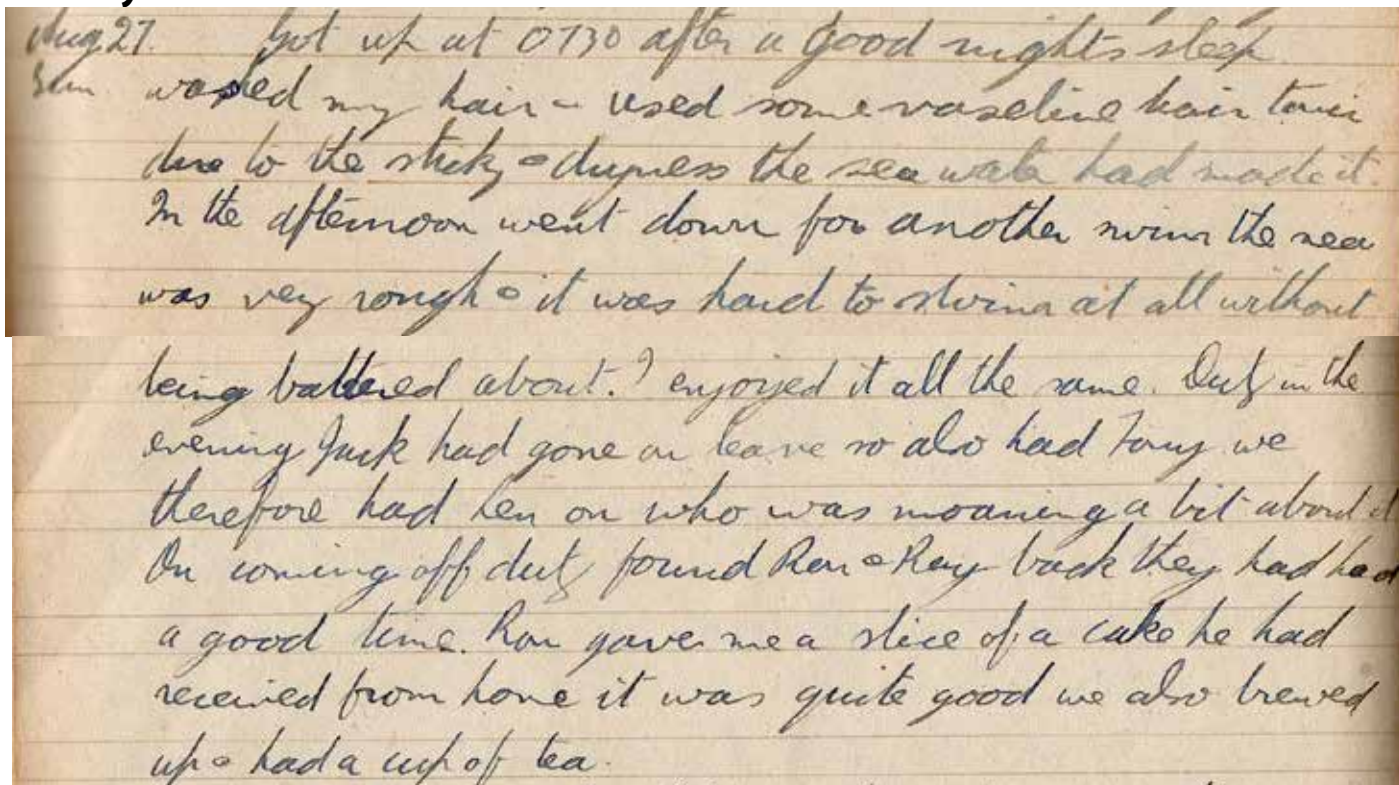
## Saturday 26th



Aug 26. Came off duty & wash a couple of things & then sat & read in the sun. After tiffin we all went to the beach for a swim it was great. Came back & had dinner & then played cricket until about 2000 hrs when we brewed up in the tent & had an early night.

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## Sunday 27th



Aug 27. Got up at 0730 after a good night's sleep. Washed my hair - used some vaseline hair tonic due to the sticky & dryness the sea water had made it. In the afternoon went down for another swim the sea was very rough & it was hard to swim at all without being battered about. I enjoyed it all the same. Duty in the evening Jack had gone on leave so also had Tony we therefore had Ken on who was moaning a bit about it. On coming off duty found Ken & Ray back they had had a good time. Ken gave me a slice of a cake he had received from home it was quite good we also brewed up & had a cup of tea.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

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## Monday 28th

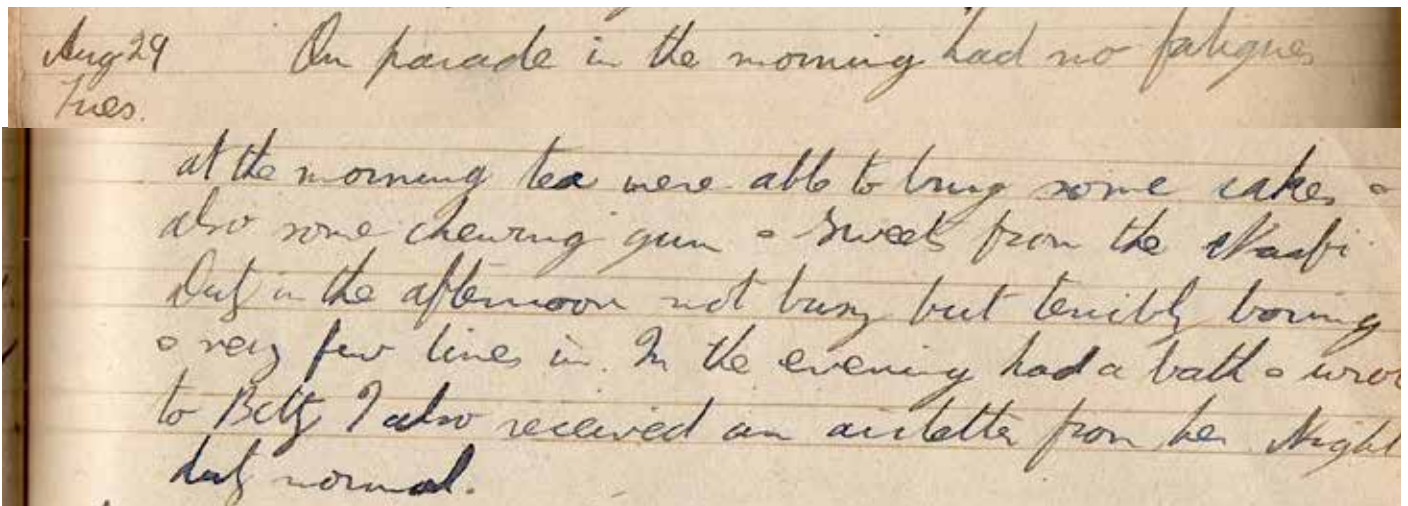
Aug 28 On duty early & I heard Ron & Roy wake me up  
Mon at 0650 so I sat up & started yelling at Dicky  
who in fact had been the first to wake & had woken  
Ron & Roy. I went on duty & it was great to begin with &  
so I rang Pol corp & managed to have a chat with  
George. His English has much improved & he is going  
to come & see us soon. In the afternoon I got ready & went  
for a swim it was very calm & I was able to practice  
up the crawl & it is coming along fine now I just will  
have to practice the breathing a little more & everything  
will be fine. It was great also sat on the beach  
sunning ourselves with nothing on. When I got back  
found we were on three shifts & it is rumoured that  
step up goes on Wednesday. In the evening we went &  
heard the griff talk by G.Ops. there was not much general  
news but there was a talk afterwards by Maj. Willett  
GS.1.2 on the disposition of the German Divs. Something  
like 65 in France, 8 Norway 10 Finland 21 Greece 5  
Denmark 4 Germany 175 Russia.

On duty early & I heard Ron & Roy woke me up at 0650 so I sat up & started yelling at Dicky who in fact had been the first to wake & had woken Ron & Roy. I went on duty & it was great to begin with & so I rang Pol corp & managed to have a chat with George. His English has much improved & he is going to come & see us soon. In the afternoon I got ready & went for a swim it was very calm & I was able to practice up the crawl & it is coming along fine now I will just have to practice the breathing a little more & everything will be fine. It was great also sat on the beach sunning ourselves with nothing on. When I got back found we were on three shifts & it is rumoured that step up goes on Wednesday. In the evening we went & heard the griff talk by G.Ops. there was not much general news but there was a talk afterwards by Maj. Willett GS.1.2 on the disposition of the German Divs. Something like 65 in France, 8 Norway 10 Finland 21 Greece 5 Denmark 4 Germany 175 Russia



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

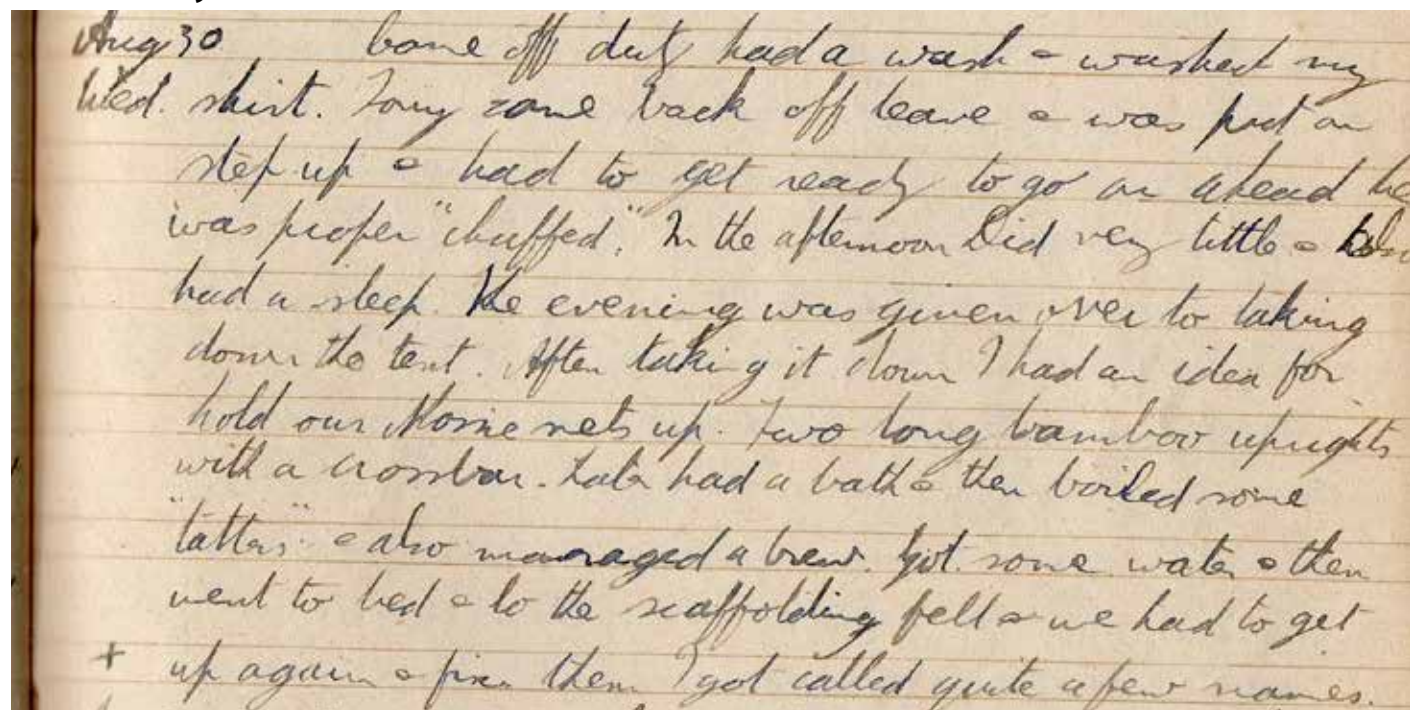
Tuesday 29th



Aug 29  
Tues. On parade in the morning had no fatigue.  
at the morning tea were able to buy some cakes & also some chewing gum & sweets from the Naafi. Duty in the afternoon not busy but terribly boring & very few lines in. In the evening had a bath & wrote to Betty. I also received an airletter from her. Night duty normal.

On parade in the morning had no fatigue at the morning tea were able to buy some cakes & also some chewing gum & sweets from the Naafi. Duty in the afternoon not busy but terribly boring & very few lines in. In the evening had a bath & wrote to Betty. I also received an airletter from her. Night duty normal.

Wednesday 30th



Aug 30  
Wed. Came off duty had a wash & washed my shirt. Tony came back off leave & was put on step up & had to get ready to go on ahead he was proper "chuffed". In the afternoon did very little & also had a sleep. The evening was given over to taking down the tent. After taking it down I had an idea for hold our Mosie nets up. Two long bamboo uprights with a crossbar. Later had a bath & then boiled some "tatters" & also managed a brew. Got some water & then went to bed & lo the scaffolding fell & we had to get up again & fix them. I got called quite a few names.

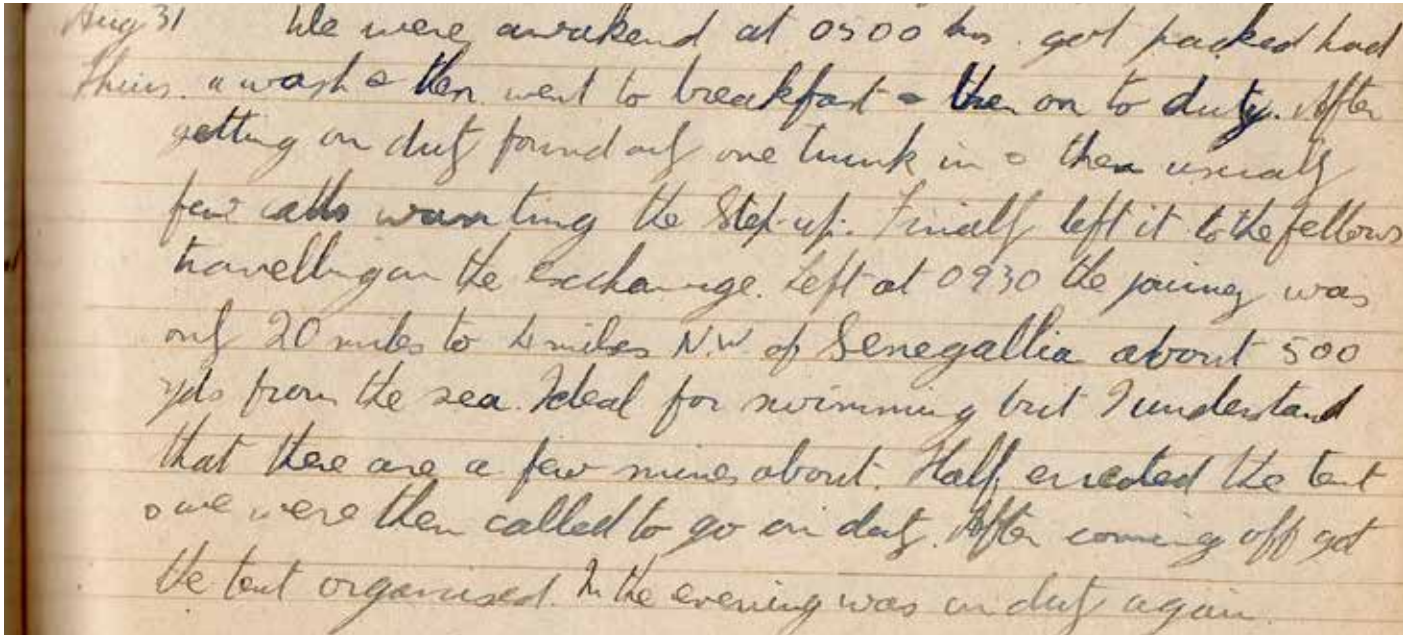
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213 August 1944



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Thursday 31st



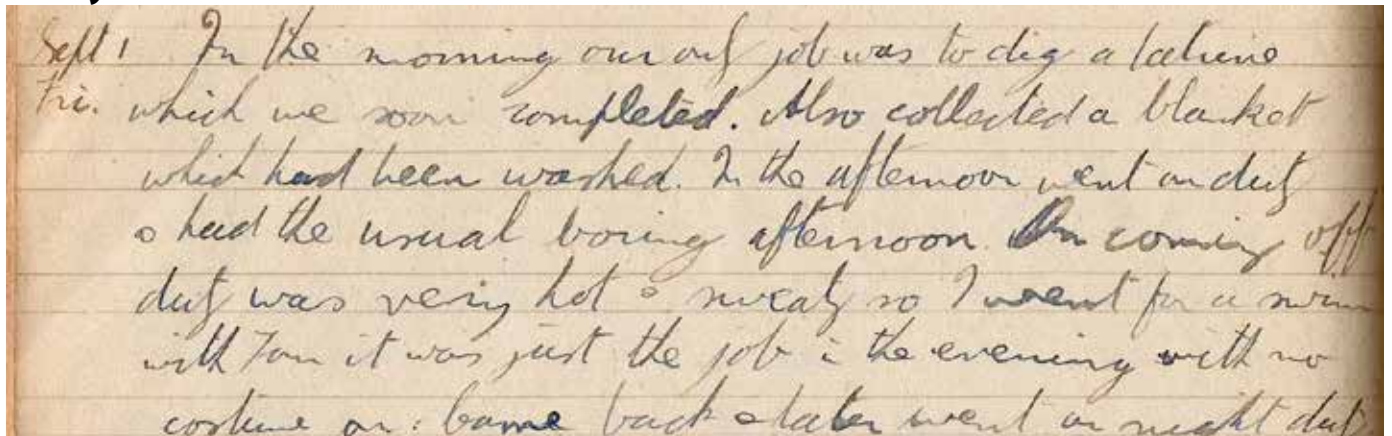
Aug 31 We were awakened at 0500 hrs. got packed had  
a wash & then went to breakfast & then on to duty. After  
getting on duty found only one trunk in & then usually  
few calls wanting the step up. Finally left it to the fellows  
travelling on the exchange. Left at 0930 the journey was  
only 20 miles to 4 miles N.W. of Senegallia about 500  
yds from the sea. Ideal for swimming but I understand  
that there are a few mines about. Half erected the tent  
& we were then called to go on duty. After coming off got  
the tent organised. In the evening was on duty again.

We were awakened at 0500 hrs got packed had a wash & then went to breakfast & then on to duty. After getting on duty found only one trunk in & then usual few calls wanting the step up. Finally left it to the fellows travelling on the exchange left at 0930 the journey was only 20 miles to 4 miles N.W. of Senegallia about 500 yds from the sea Ideal for swimming but I understand there are a few mines about. Half erected the tent & we were then called to go on duty. After coming off got the tent organised. In the evening was on duty again.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## SEPTEMBER 1944

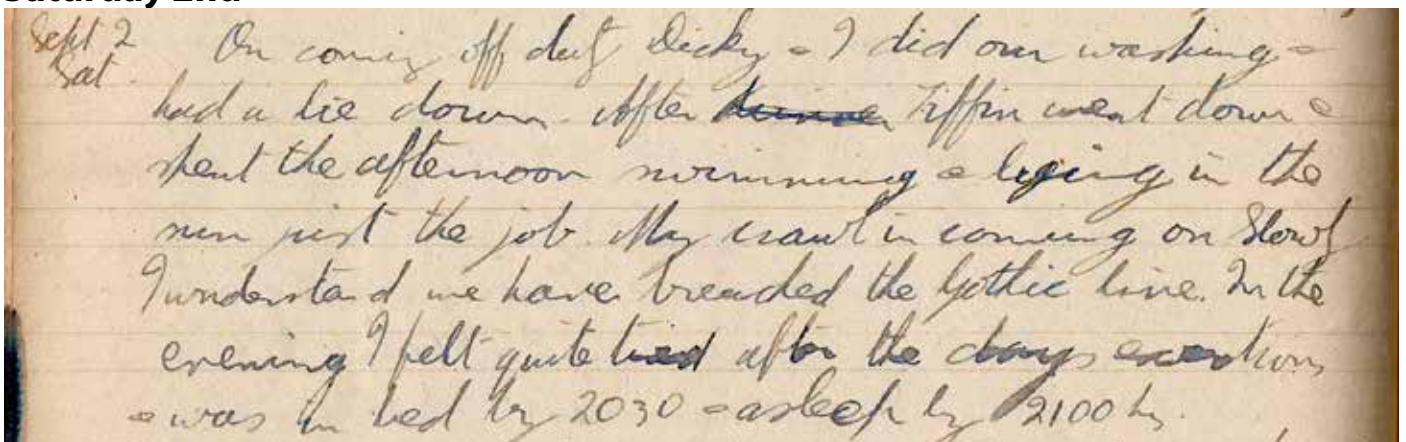
### Friday 1st



Sept 1 In the morning our only job was to dig a latrine  
tr. which we soon completed. Also collected a blanket  
which had been washed. In the afternoon went on duty  
& had the usual boring afternoon. On coming off  
duty was very hot & sweaty so I went for a swim  
with Tom it was just the job in the evening with no  
costume on. Came back & later went on night duty.

In the morning our only job was to dig a latrine which we soon completed. Also collected a blanket which had been washed. In the afternoon went on duty & had the usual boring afternoon. On coming off duty was very hot & sweaty so I went for a swim with Tom it was just the job in the evening with no costume on. Came back & later went on night duty.

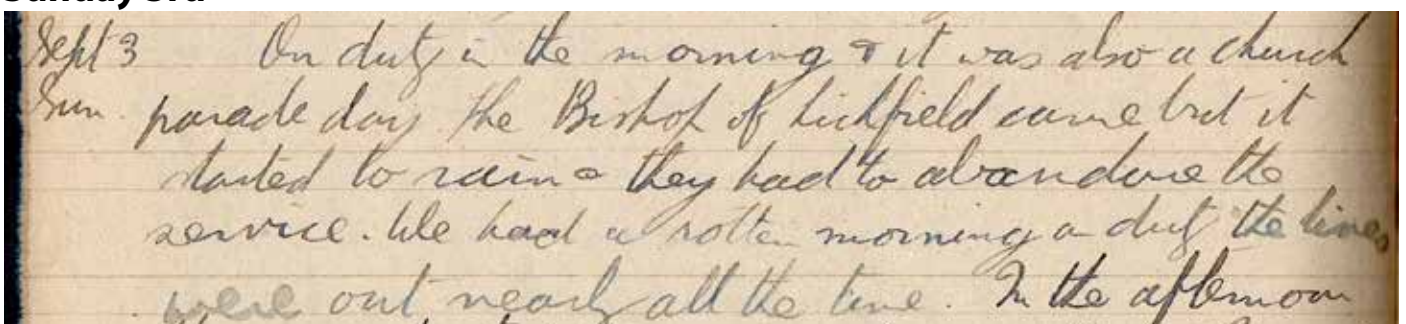
### Saturday 2nd



Sept 2  
Sat. On coming off duty Dicky & I did our washing &  
had a lie down. After tiffin went down & spent  
the afternoon swimming & lying in the  
sun just the job. My crawl is coming on slowly I  
understand we have breached the Gothic line. In the  
evening I felt quite tired after the days exertions  
& was in bed by 2030 & asleep by 2100 hrs.

On coming off Dicky & I did our washing & had a lie down. After tiffin went down & spent the afternoon swimming & lying in the sun just the job. My crawl is coming on slowly I understand we have breached the Gothic line. In the evening I felt quite tired after days exertions & was in bed by 2030 & asleep by 2100 hrs.

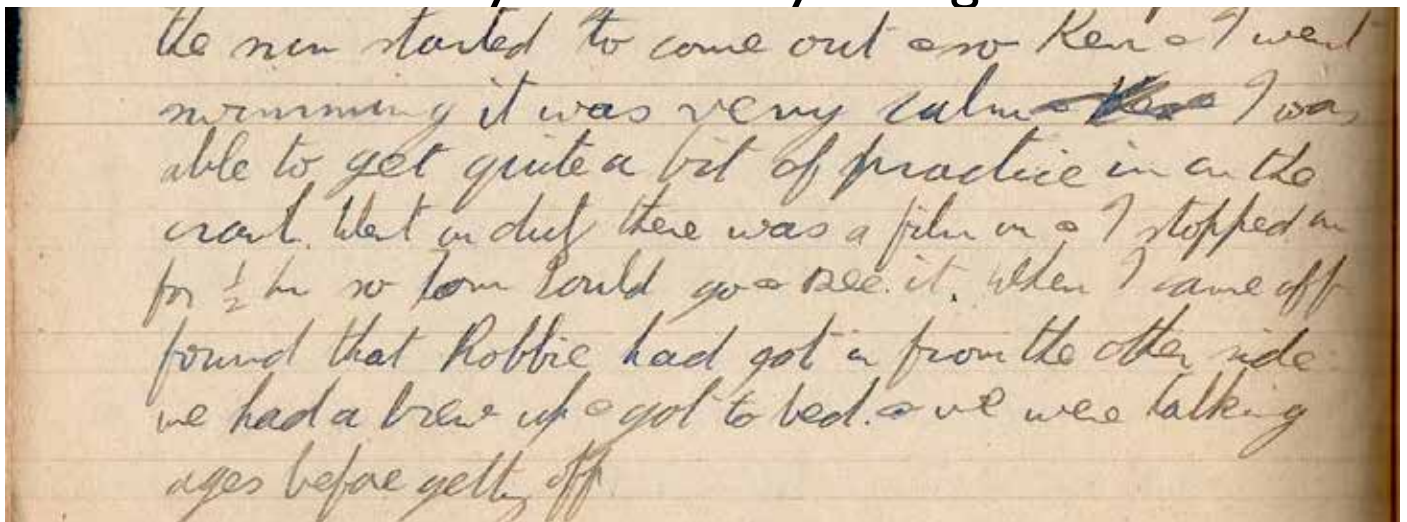
### Sunday 3rd



Sept 3  
Sun. On duty in the morning & it was also a church  
parade day. The Bishop of Lichfield came but it  
started to rain & they had to abandon the  
service. We had a rotten morning & duty the lines  
were out nearly all the time. In the afternoon



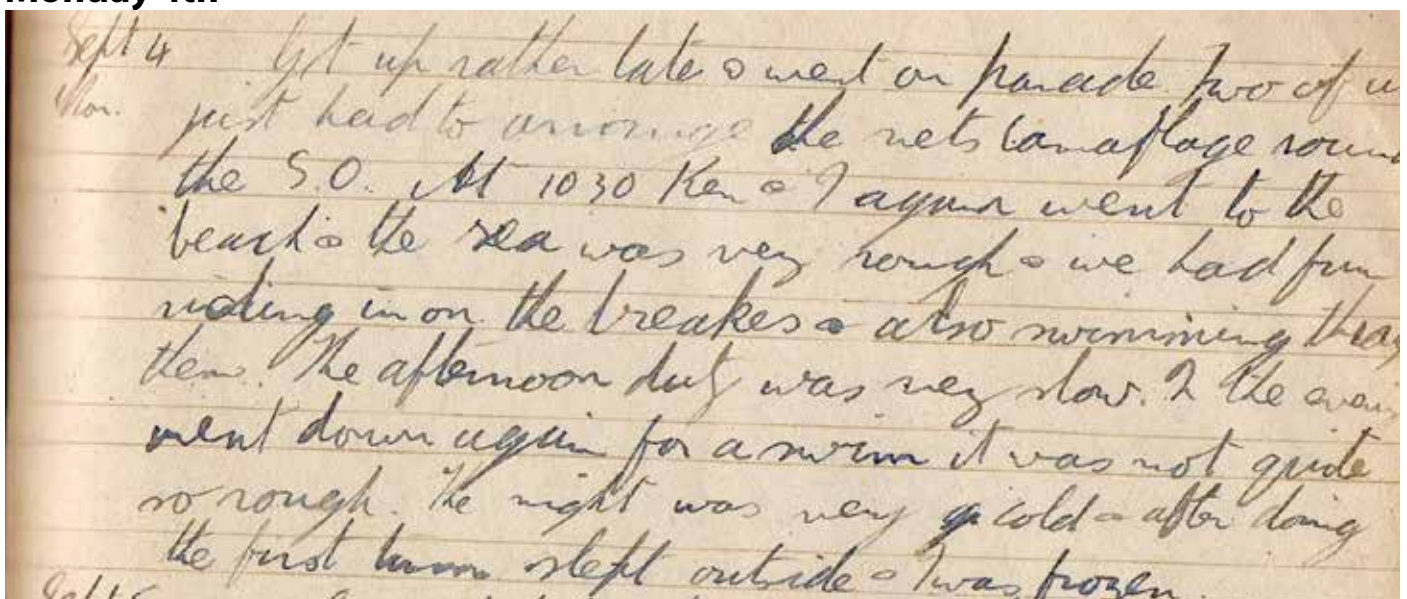
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



the men started to come out so Ken & I went swimming it was very calm ~~then~~ I was able to get quite a bit of practice in on the crawl. Went on duty there was a film on & I stopped in for 1/2 hr so Tom could go & see it. When I came off found that Robbie had got in from the other side we had a brew up & got to bed. & we were talking ages before getting off.

On duty in the morning & it was also a church parade day. The Bishop of Lichfield came but it started to rain & they had to abandon the service. We had a rotten morning on duty the lines were out nearly all the time. In the afternoon the sun started to come out & so Ken & I went swimming it was very calm. I was able to get quite a bit of practice in on the crawl. Went on duty there was a film on & I stopped in for 1/2 hr so Tom could go & see it. When I came off found that Robbie had got in from the other side we had a brew up & got to bed & we were talking ages before getting off.

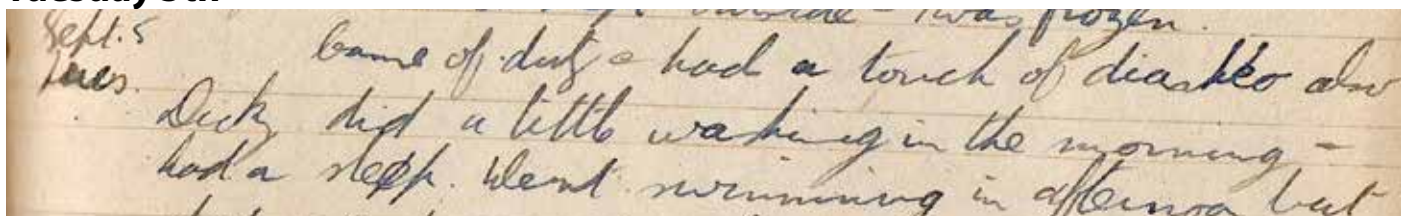
## Monday 4th



Sept 4  
Mon. got up rather late & went on parade. Two of us just had to arrange the nets camouflage round the S.O. At 10:30 Ken & I again went to the beach & the sea was very rough & we had fun riding in on the breakers & also swimming through them. The afternoon duty was very slow. In the evening went down again for a swim it was not quite so rough. The night was very cold & after doing the first turn slept outside & I was frozen.

Got up rather late & went on parade two of us just had to arrange the nets camouflage round the S.O. At 10:30 Ken & I again went to the beach & the sea was very rough & we had fun riding in on the breakers & also swimming through them. In the afternoon duty was very slow. In the evening went down again for a swim it was not quite so rough. The night was very cold & after doing the first turn slept outside & I was frozen.

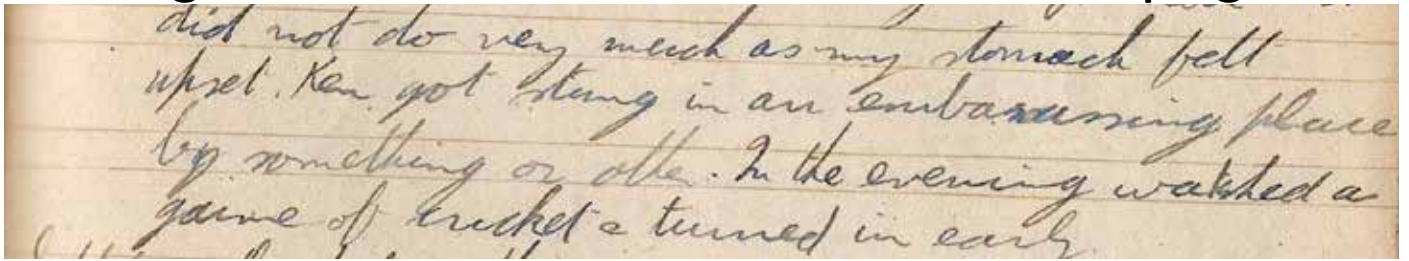
## Tuesday 5th



Sept. 5  
Tues. came off duty & had a touch of diakeo down. Deck did a little washing in the morning - had a sleep. Went swimming in afternoon but



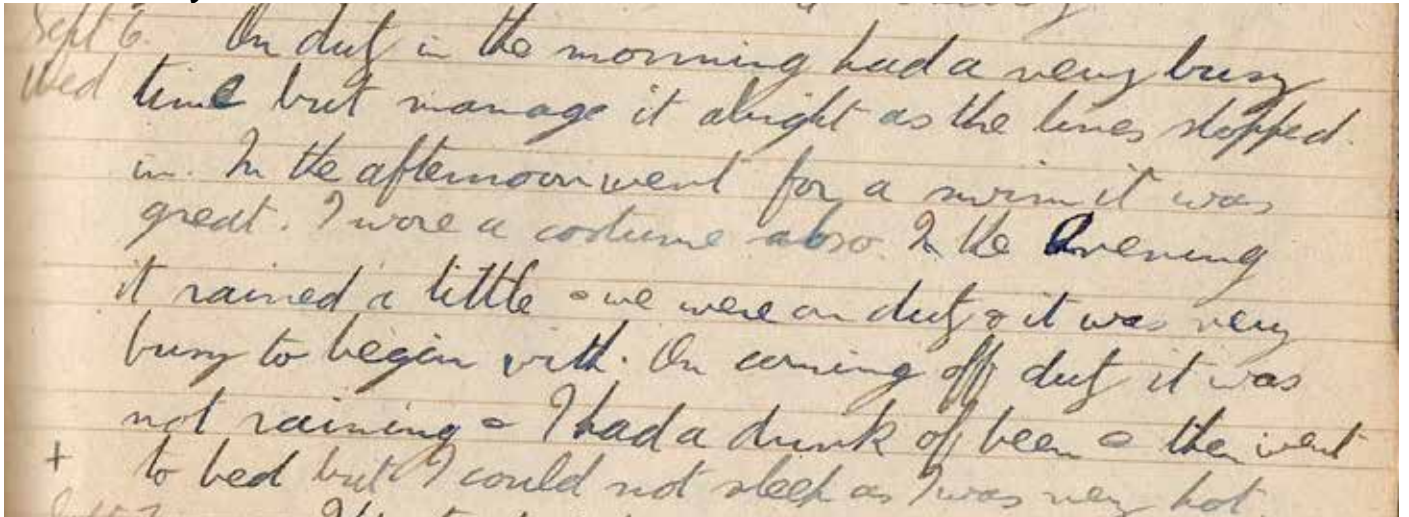
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



did not do very much as my stomach felt upset. Ken got stung in an embarrassing place by something or other. In the evening watched a game of cricket & turned in early.

Came off duty & had a touch of diarrhea also Dicky also did a little washing in the morning & had a sleep. Went swimming in the afternoon but did not do very much as my stomach felt upset. Ken got stung in an embarrassing place by something or other. In the evening watched a game of cricket & turned in early.

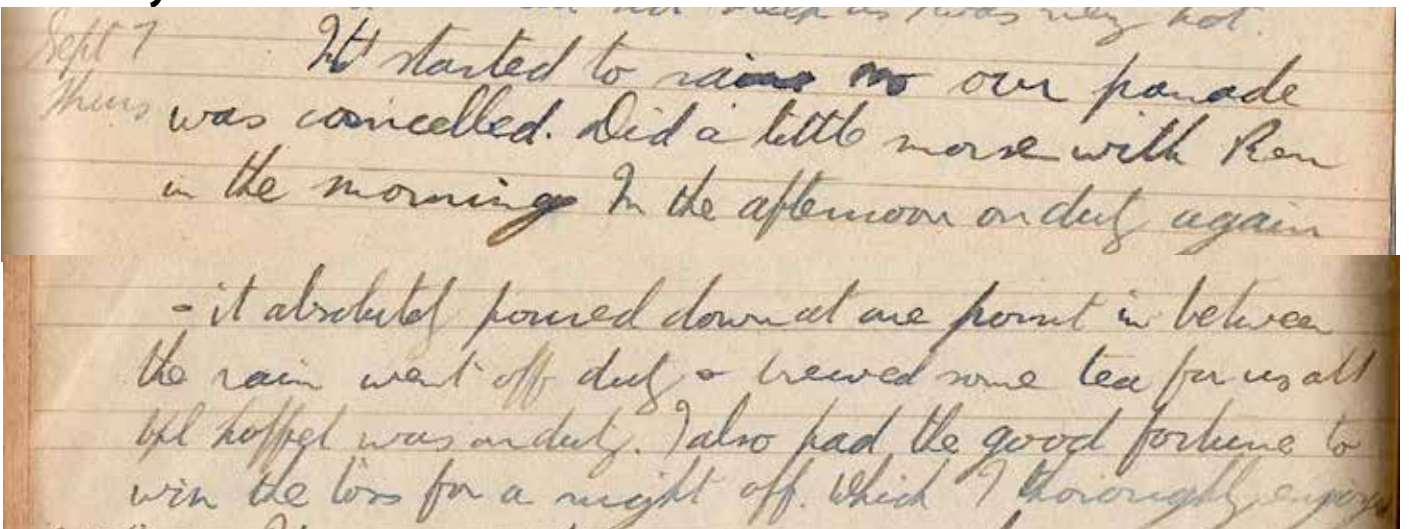
## Wednesday 6th



Sept 6. On duty in the morning had a very busy time but manage it alright as the lines stopped in. In the afternoon went for a swim it was great. I wore a costume also. In the evening it rained a little & we were on duty & it was very busy to begin with. On coming off duty it was not raining & I had a drink of beer & then went to bed but I could not sleep as I was very hot.

On duty in the morning had a very busy time but manage it alright as the lines stopped in. In the afternoon went for a swim it was great. I wore a costume also in the evening it rained a little & we were on duty & it was very busy to begin with. On arriving off duty it was not raining & I had a drink of beer & then went to bed but I could not sleep as I was very hot.

## Thursday 7th



Sept 7. It started to rain so our parade was cancelled. Did a little horse with Ron in the morning. In the afternoon on duty again - it absolutely poured down at one point in between the rain went off duty & brewed some tea for us all. Cpl Hoffel was on duty. I also had the good fortune to win the loss for a night off. Which I thoroughly enjoyed.

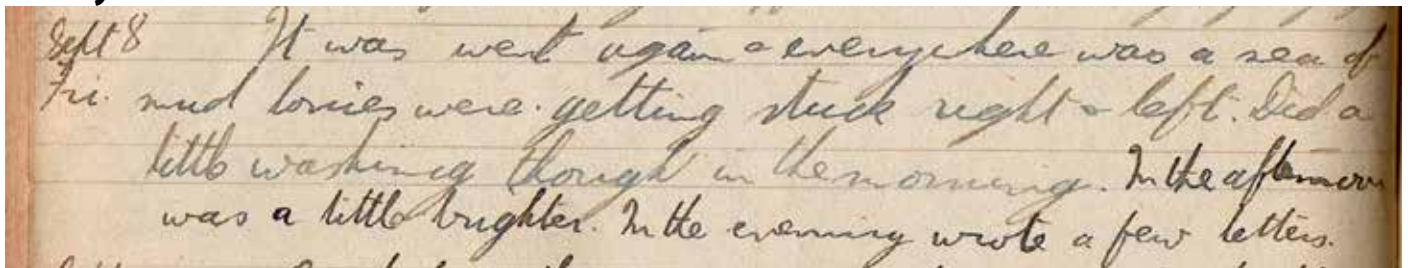
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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

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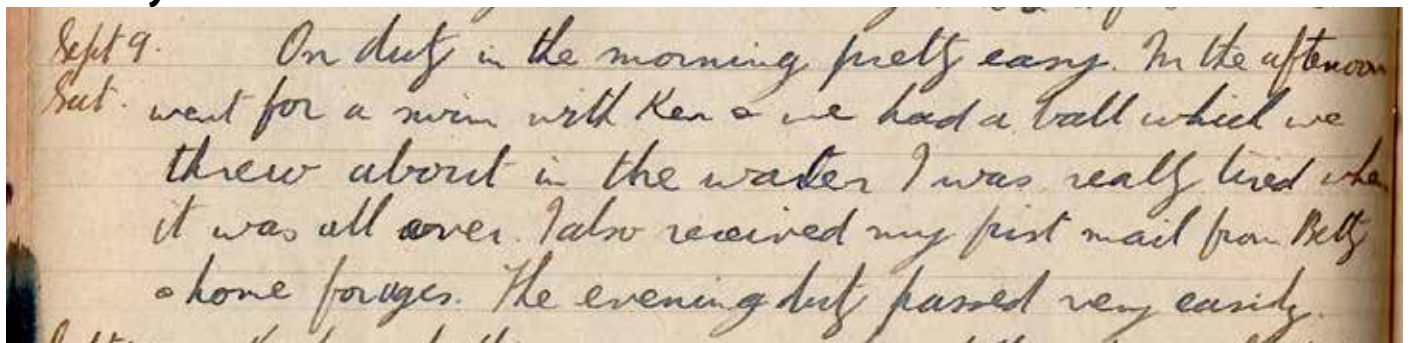
## Friday 8th



Sept 8 It was wet again & everywhere was a sea of mud lorries were getting stuck right & left. Did a little washing though in the morning. In the afternoon was a little brighter. In the evening wrote a few letters.

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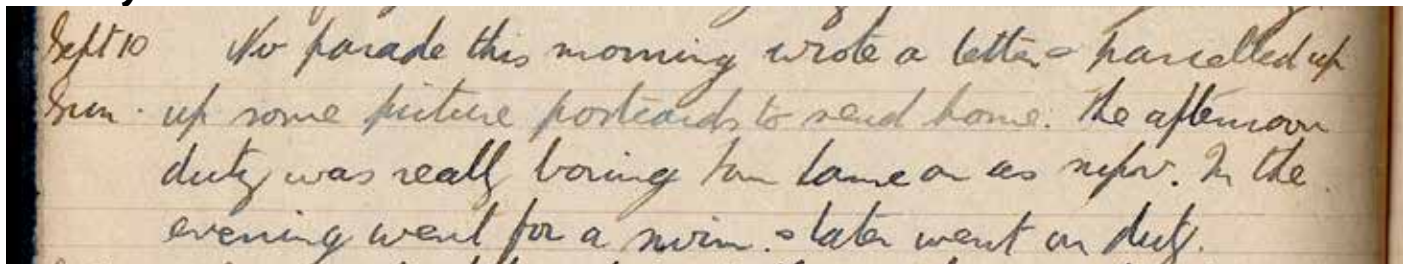
## Saturday 9th



Sept 9. On duty in the morning pretty easy. In the afternoon went for a swim with Ken & we had a ball which we threw about in the water. I was really tired when it was all over. I also received my first mail from Betty & home for ages. The evening duty passed very easily.

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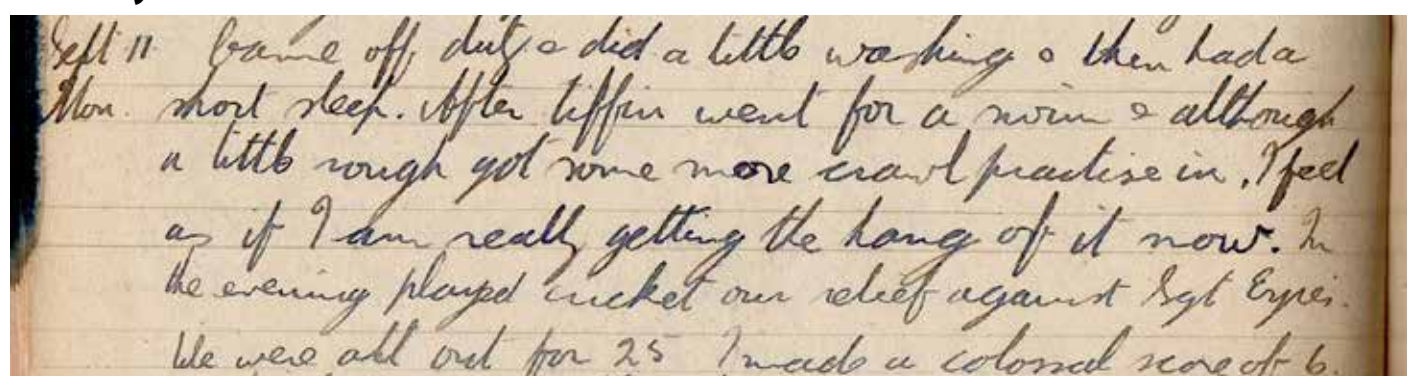
## Sunday 10th



Sept 10 No parade this morning wrote a letter & parcelled up some picture postcards to send home. The afternoon duty was really boring Ian came on as supv. In the evening went for a swim & later went on duty.

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## Monday 11th



Sept 11 Came off duty & did a little washing & then had a short sleep. After tiffin went for a swim & although a little rough got some more crawl practise in. I feel as if I am really getting the hang of it now. In the evening played cricket our relief against Sgt Eyes. We were all out for 25 I made a colonial score of 6.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

the highest was 11. They beat us easily scoring about 86

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## Tuesday 12th

Sept 12 On parade with rifles in the morning Dicky & I had to go to the Qs & here we fold up some tents

The drink this morning was quite good being orangeade. Actually I did not feel so good & just watched the Sgts get beat by the men in the afternoon. In the evening went on duty & on coming off had a cup of tea.

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## Wednesday 13th

Sept 13 Quite cold this morning & got on duty & had a comparatively slack day. Still felt a bit off & also had an egg for breakfast which actually did not feel like. In the afternoon took a couple of aspros & lay down. After dinner we played a cricket match against ciphers & got them all out for 43 Jack bowled very well. We made 63 declared I myself making a duck. In the evening went to see the Kiwi concert party giving there 10<sup>th</sup> edition of their show. They were really top notchers & it was a real treat to watch.

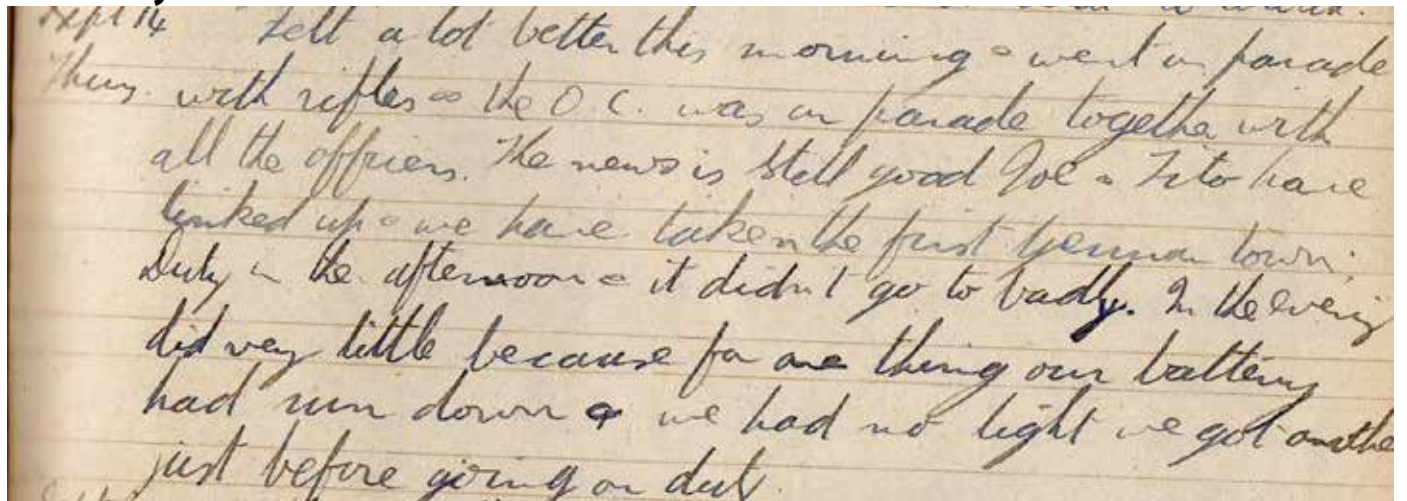
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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

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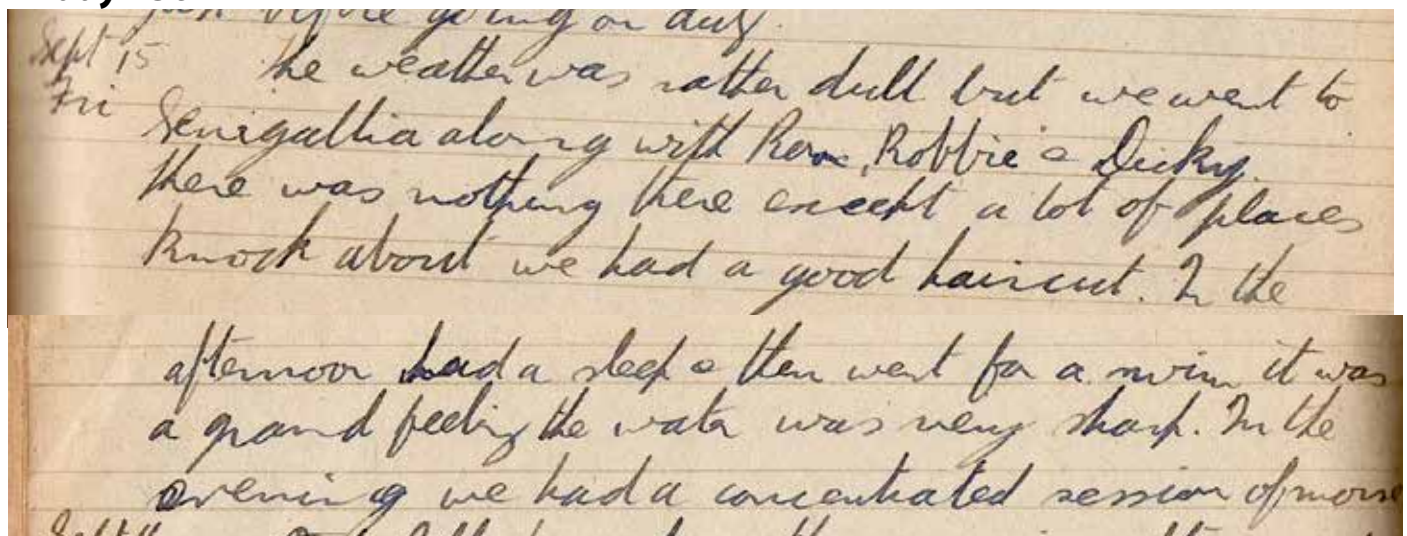
## Thursday 14th



Sept 14 felt a lot better this morning & went on parade  
Thurs. with rifles & the O.C. was on parade together with  
all the officers. The news is still good Joe & Tito have  
linked up & we have taken the first German town.  
Duty in the afternoon & it didn't go to badly. In the evening  
did very little because for one thing our battery  
had run down & we had no light we got another  
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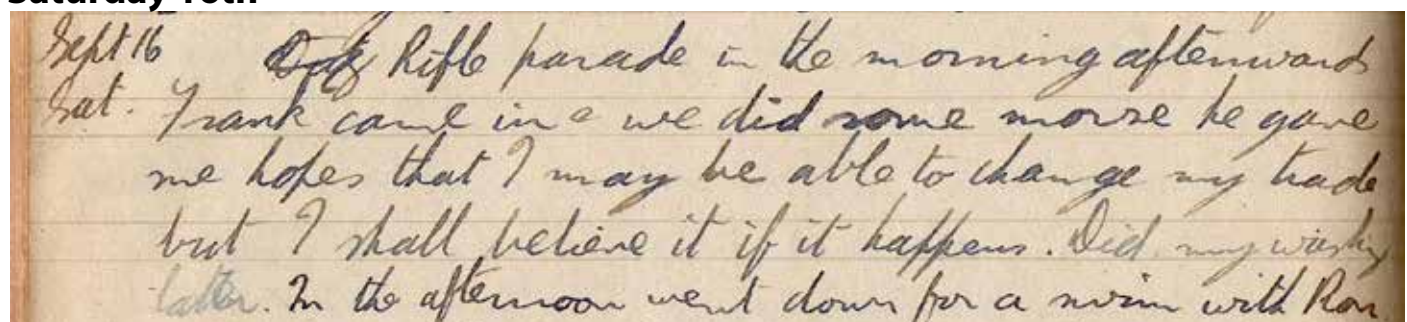
## Friday 15th



Sept 15 Fri  
The weather was rather dull but we went to  
Senigallia along with Ron, Robbie & Dicky.  
There was nothing there except a lot of places  
knock about we had a good haircut. In the  
afternoon had a sleep & then went for a swim it was  
a grand feeling the water was very sharp. In the  
evening we had a concentrated session of morse.

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## Saturday 16th

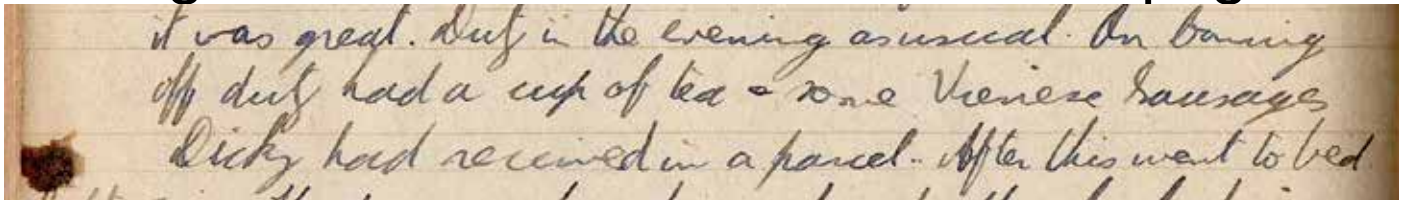


Sept 16 Sat.  
Only rifle parade in the morning afterwards  
Frank came in & we did some morse he gave  
me hopes that I may be able to change my trade  
but I shall believe it if it happens. Did my washing  
later. In the afternoon went down for a swim with Ron

220 September 1944



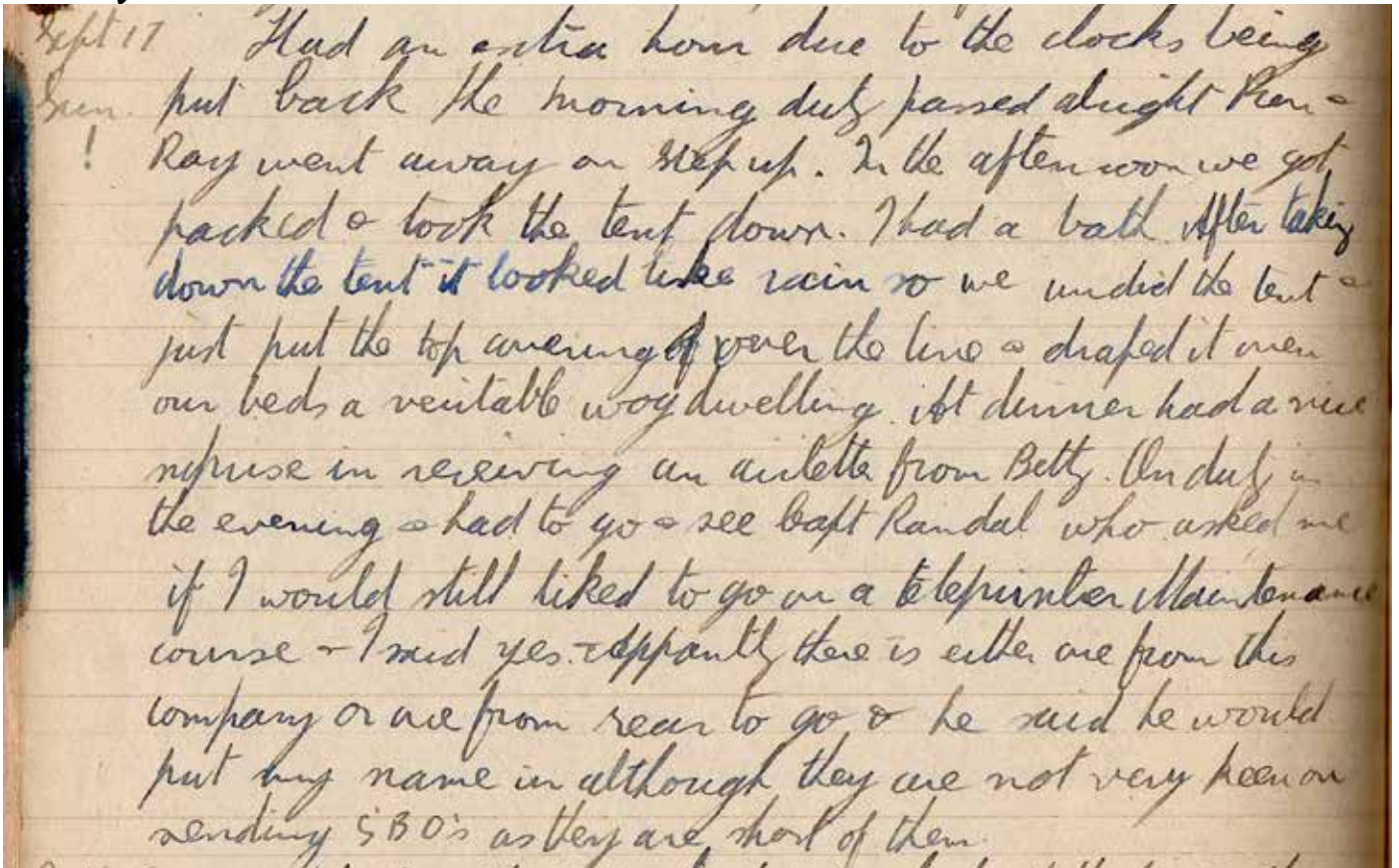
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



it was great. Duty in the evening as usual. On coming off duty had a cup of tea & some Venieser sausages Dicky had received in a parcel. After this went to bed

Rifle parade in the morning afterwards Frank came in & we did some more he gave me hopes that I might be able to change my trade but I shall believe it if it happens. Did my washing later. In the afternoon went down for a swim with Ron it was great. Duty in the evening as usual On coming off had a cup of tea & some Vienese sauasages<sup>1</sup> Dicky had received in a parcel. After this went to bed

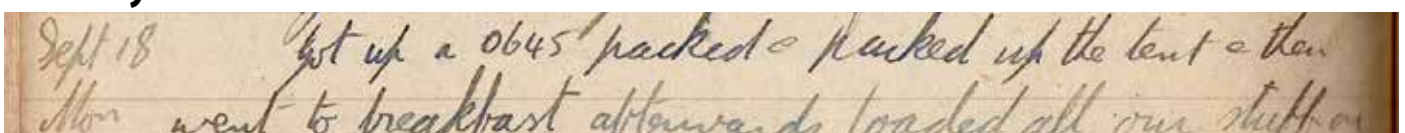
## Sunday 17th



Sept 17 Had an extra hour due to the clocks being put back the morning duty passed alright Ron & Ray went away on step up. In the afternoon we got packed & took the tent down. I had a bath after taking down the tent it looked like rain so we undid the tent & just put the top covering over the line & draped it over our beds a veritable wog dwelling. At dinner had a nice surprise in receiving an airletter from Betty. On duty in the evening & had to go & see Capt Randall who asked me if I would still liked to go on a teleprinter Maintenance course & I said yes apparently there is either one from this company or one from rear to go & he said he would put my name in although they are not very keen on sending SBO's as they are short of them.

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## Monday 18th



Sept 18 Got up at 0645 packed & packed up the tent & then Mon went to breakfast afterwards loaded all our stuff on



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

The lorry & took my small kit to the exchange which we packed up & after the C of S finished about 0930 we clambered aboard & were away. It was only a matter of 23 miles but we did not arrive until 1430 hrs. Position is near Cattolica, which is a town on the coast. After collecting our stuff & having a drink of tea went on duty. I was surprised to find that a great number of lines were in & things were going full tilt. Came off at 1730 & had quite a good dinner our tent was up & we just moved in. At night went on duty it was Dicky's night off.

Sept 19  
Got up at 0645 packed & packed up the tent & then went to breakfast afterwards loaded all our stuff on the lorry & took my small kit to the exchange which we packed up & after the C of S finished about 0930 we clambered aboard & were away. It was only a matter of 23 miles but we did not arrive until 1430 hrs position is near Cattolica which is a town on the coast. After collecting our stuff & having a drink of tea went on duty. I was surprised to find that a great number of lines were in & things were going full tilt came off at 1730 & had quite a good dinner our tent was up & we just moved in. At night went on duty it was Dicky's night off.

## Tuesday 19th

Sept 19  
Tues. Came off duty & was very industrious. Dicky & I made a small table & a set of shelves to keep our mess tins on etc. In the afternoon did some more morse. In the evening somebody said there was a picture house in town so off we went & saw Bud Abbott & Lou Costello in "Hold that Ghost" came back had a cup of tea & turned in.

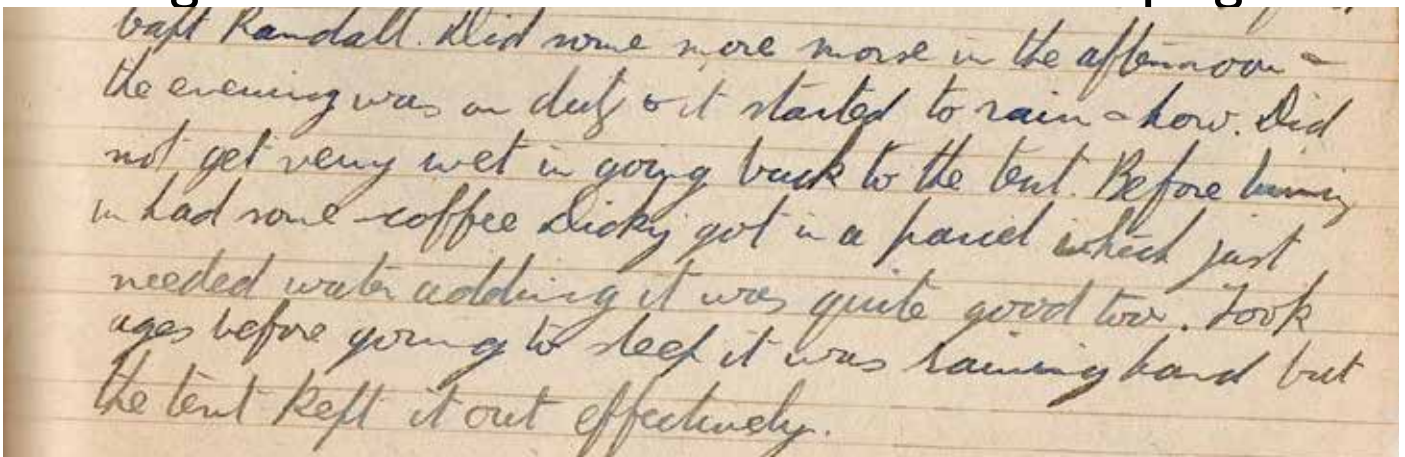
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## Wednesday 20th

Sept 20  
Wed. On parade in the morning but had no fatigues. Tried to get my parcel censored but could not find



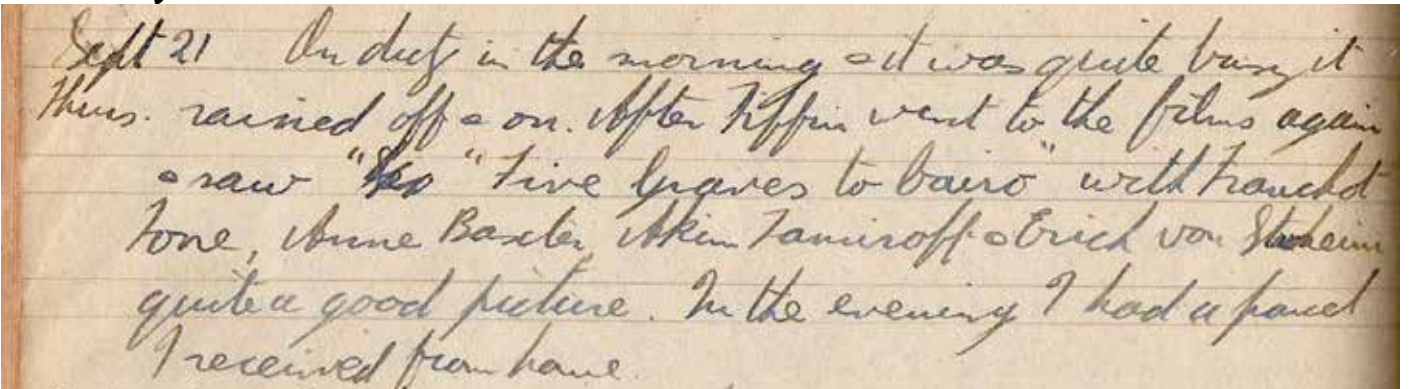
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



Capt Randall. Did some more mose in the afternoon - the evening was on duty & it started to rain - how. Did not get very wet in going back to the tent. Before turning in had some coffee Dicky got in a parcel which just needed water adding it was quite good too. Took ages before going to sleep it was raining hard but the tent kept it out effectively.

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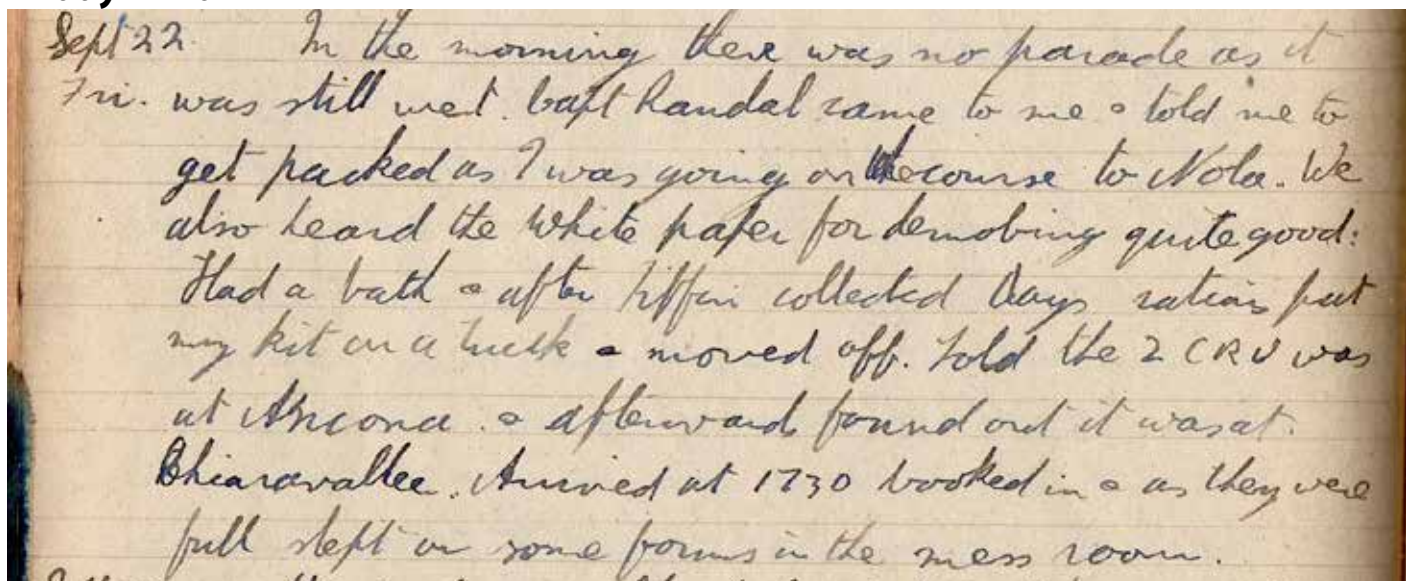
## Thursday 21st



Sept 21 On duty in the morning - it was quite busy it thus. rained off & on. After tiffin went to the films again & saw "Five Graves to Cairo" with Franchot Tone, Anne Baxter, Akim Tamiroff & Erich von Stroheim quite a good picture. In the evening I had a parcel I received from home.

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## Friday 22nd



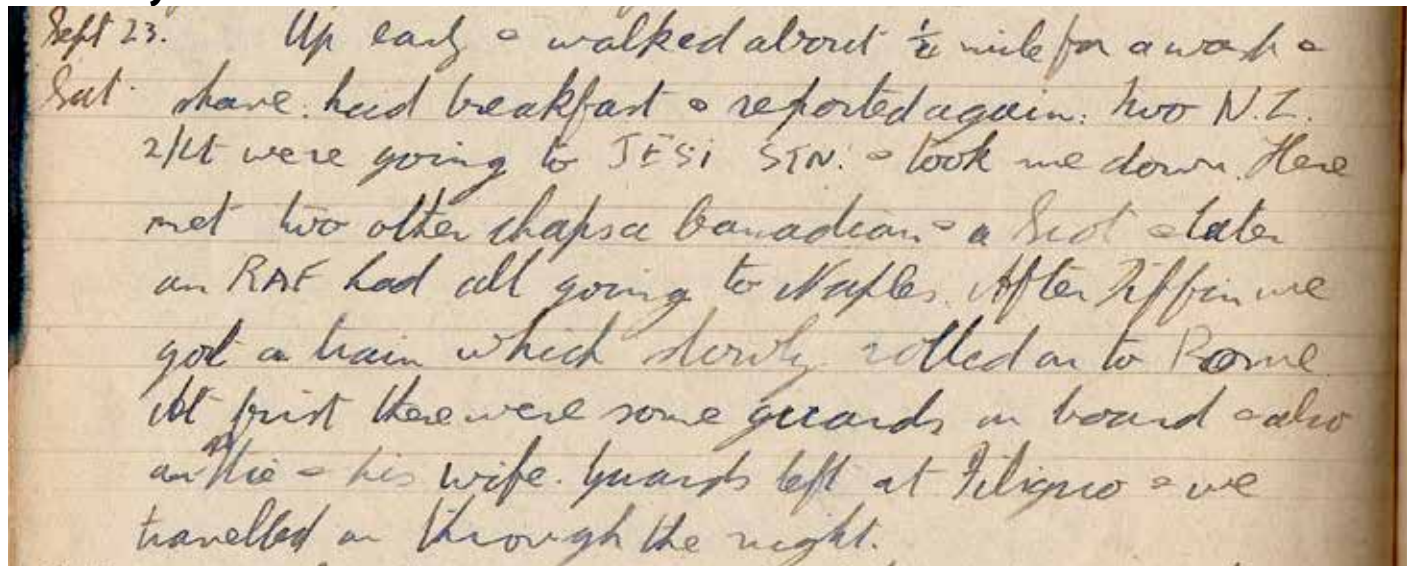
Sept 22 In the morning there was no parade as it Fri. was still wet. Capt Randall came to me & told me to get packed as I was going on the course to Nola. We also heard the white paper for demobing quite good. Had a bath & after tiffin collected bags, rations put my kit on a truck & moved off. Told the 2 CRU was at Ancona. & afterward found out it was at Chiaravalle. Arrived at 1730 booked in & as they were full left on some forms in the mess room.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

In the morning there was no parade as it was still wet. Capt Randall came to me & told me to get packed as I was going on the course to Nola. We also heard the white paper for demobing quite good. Had a bath & after tiffin collected days rations put my kit bag on a truck & moved off. Told the 2 CRV was at Ancona & afterwards found out it was at Chiaravalle. Arrived at 1730 booked in & they were full slept on some forms in the mess room.

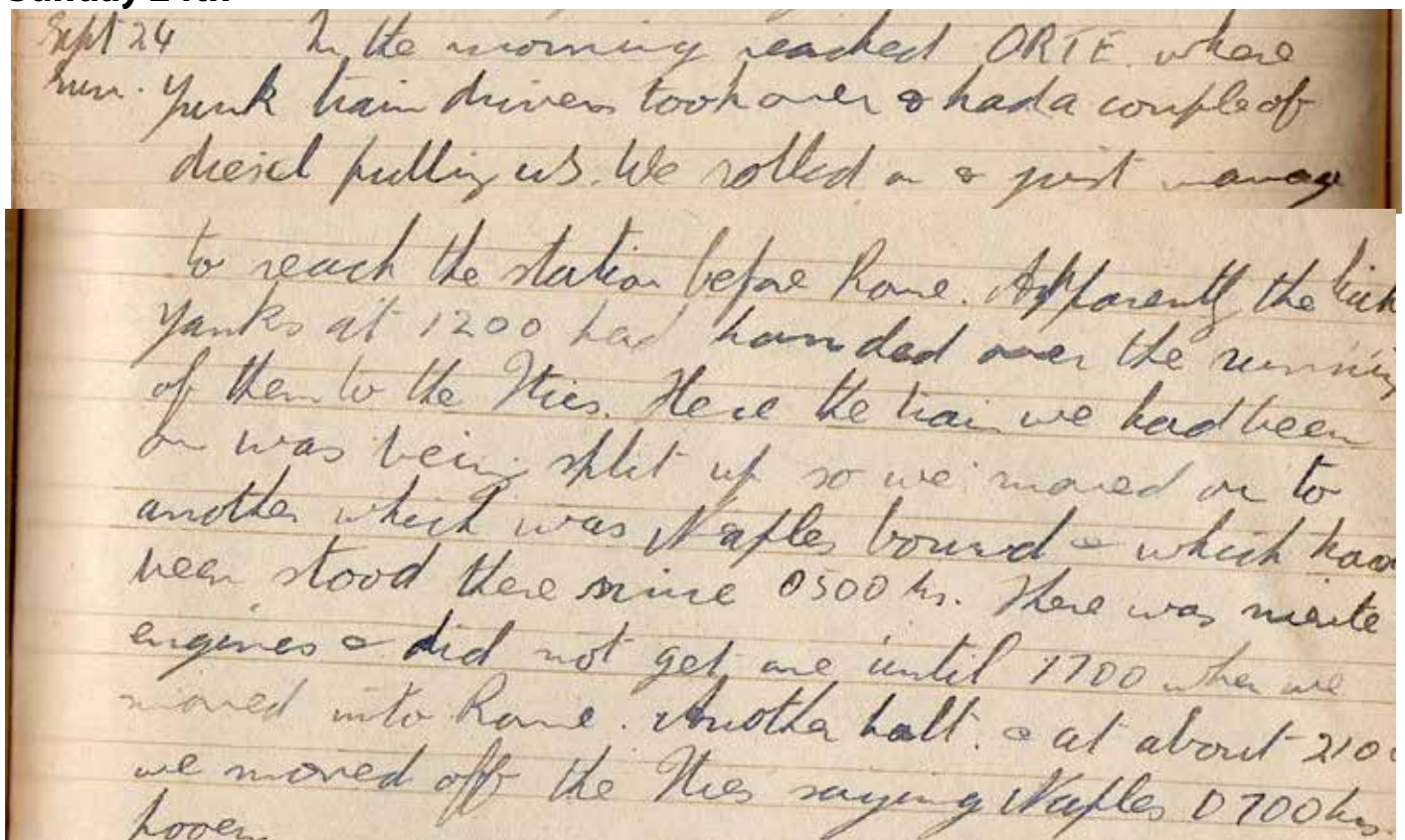
## Saturday 23rd



Sept 23. Up early & walked about 1/4 mile for a wash & shave. had breakfast & reported again. Two N.Z. 2/Lt were going to JESI STN. & took me down. Here met two other chaps a Canadian & a Scot & later an RAF lad all going to Naples. After tiffin we got a train which slowly rolled on to Rome. At first there were some guards on board & also an Ltie & his wife. Guards left at Filigico & we travelled on through the night.

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## Sunday 24th



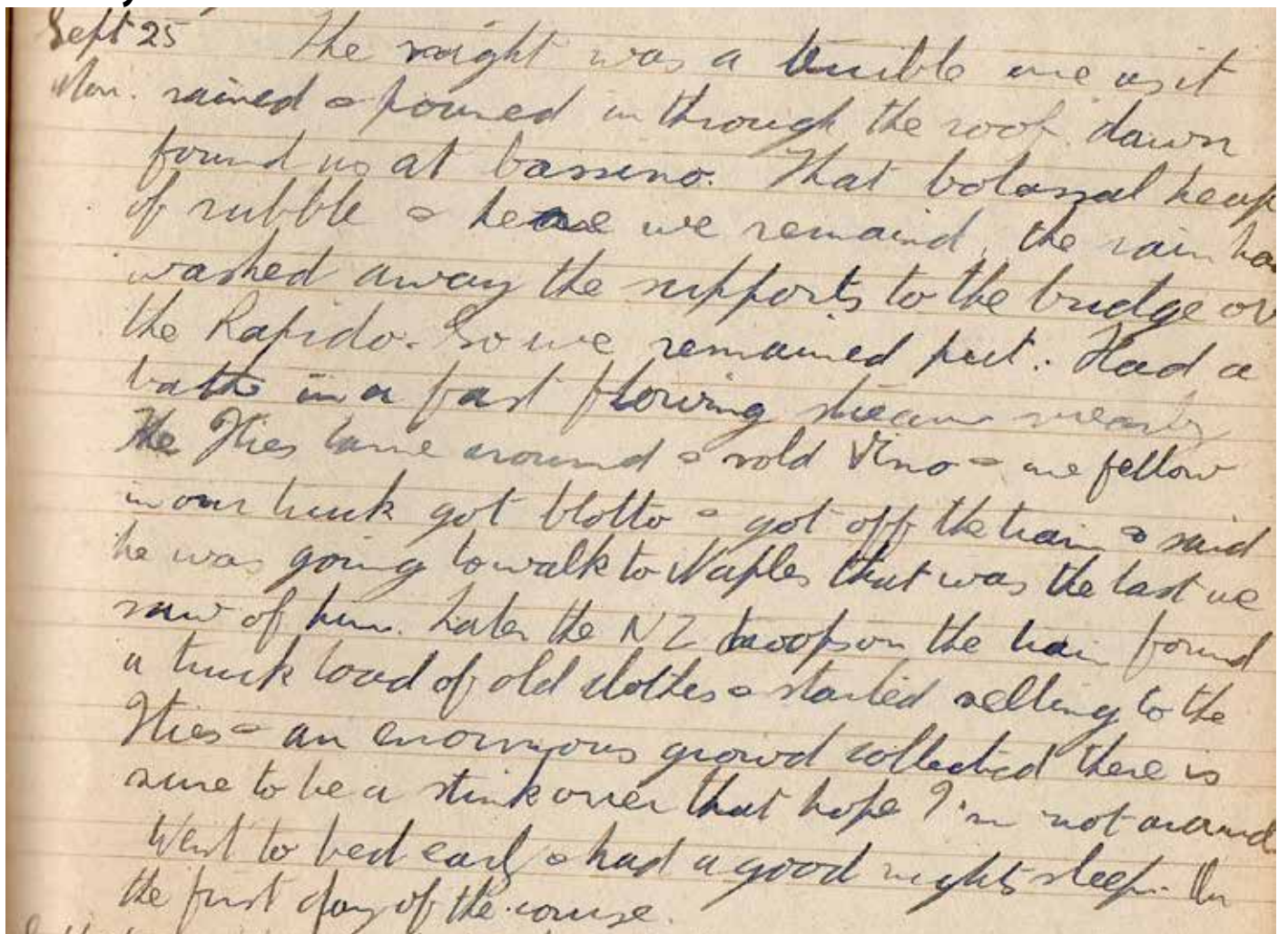
Sept 24 In the morning reached ORTE where Yank train drivers took over & had a couple of diesel pulling us. We rolled on & just managed to reach the station before Rome. Apparently the Yanks at 1200 had handed over the running of them to the Ities. Here the train we had been on was being split up so we moved on to another which was Naples bound & which had been stood there since 0500 hrs. There was misite engines & did not get me until 1700 when we moved into Rome. Another halt. & at about 2100 we moved off the Ities saying Naples 0700 hrs. Hoover.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

In the morning reached ORTE where yank train driver took over & had a couple of diesel pulling us. We rolled on & just manage to reach the station before Rome. Apparently the said yanks at 1200 had handed over the running of them to the Ities. Here the train we were on was being split up & we moved over to another which was Naples bound & which had been stood there since 0500 hrs. There was not enough engines & did not get one until 1700 when we moved into Rome. Another halt & at about 2100 we moved off the Ities saying Naples 0700 hrs hoorey.

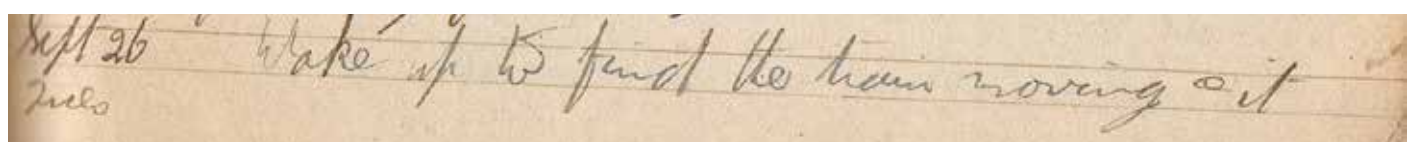
## Monday 25th



Sept 25 The night was a terrible one as it rained & poured in through the roof dawn found us at Cassino. That colossal heap of rubble & here we remained, the rain had washed away the supports to the bridge over the Rapido. So we remained put. Had a bath in a fast flowing stream nearby. The Ities came round & sold vino & one fellow in our truck got blotto & got off the train & said he was going to walk to Naples that was the last we saw of him. Later the N.Z. troops on the train found a truck load of old clothes & started selling to the Ities & an enormous crowd collected there is sure to be a stink over that hope I'm not around. Went to bed early & had a good nights sleep. On the first day of the course.

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## Tuesday 26th



Sept 26 Wake up to find the train moving & it  
26th



## Diary of a D-Day Dodger

went all the way to Carestan. Here a dreary prospect of no train awaited me. So I hopped off with all my kit & got on the road & hitched a lift to Naples. I also saw Norman Ebel in the truck of all people. The yank dropped me off at the station & I saw the R.T.O. Had to go round to the electric Itie Stn. he gave me a ticket got a chap to carry my blankets there & he put me on the right train at 1100 the train was due to move off at 1215. After I got on the train ask an young Itie a few questions about the journey & he told me & then it happened a train came off the rails in front & none could get back from the stn. Had to walk forward to the next station here another Itie porter carried my bag. Waiting for the train chatted with a Palestine. When the train arrived the biggest farce of all happened. Before anyone could get off these brainless Ities started to get on. Eventually this Palestine & I got my kit in through a window & we squeezed on. The train was crammed full people hanging on all corners. Finally much battered arrived at Vola. Here found the R.T.O. was at another station so had to go there. He rang up the rags & they said they would send down a truck. which arrived & I went up there got registered in. Had dinner a bath & then bed.

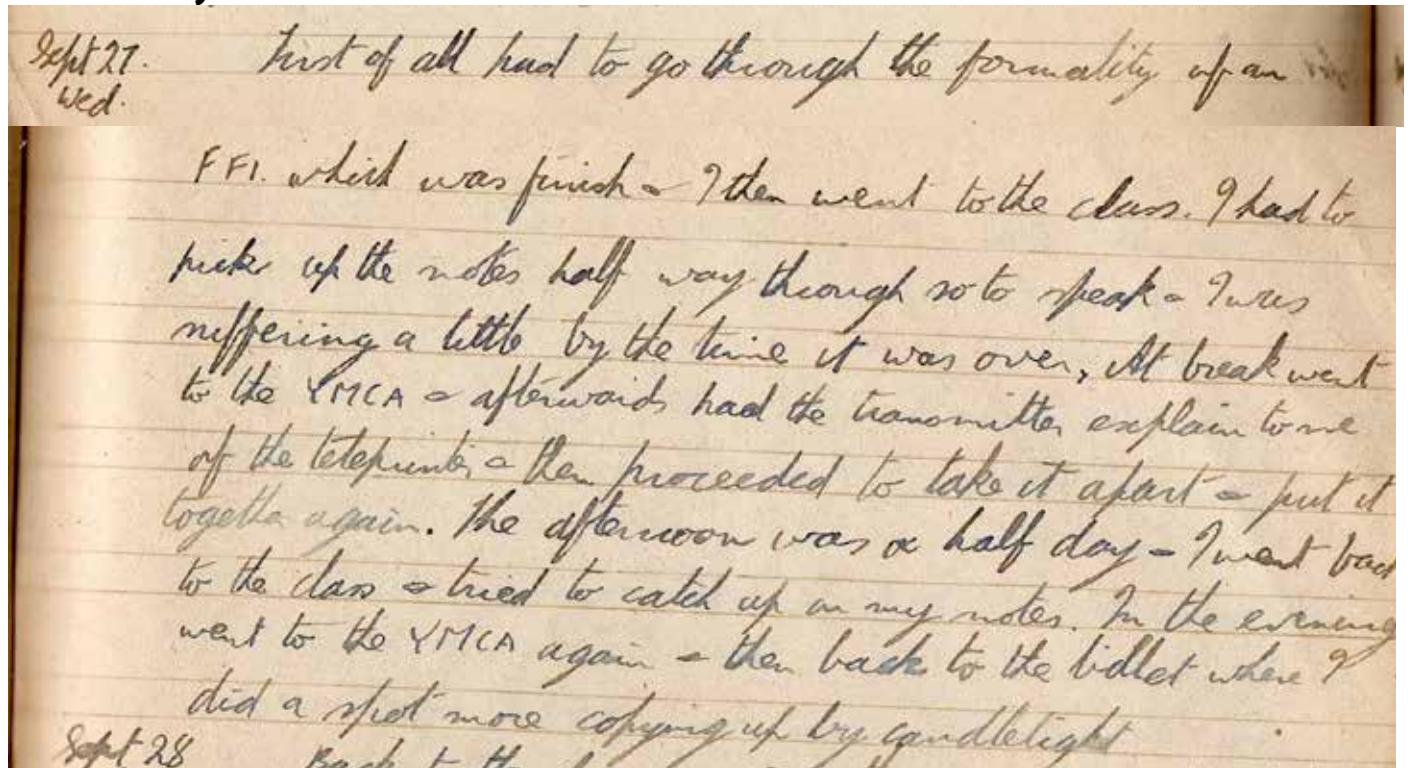
Wake up to find the train moving & it went all the way to Carestan. There a dreary prospect of no train awaited me so I hopped off with all my kit & got on the road & hitched a lift to Naples. I also saw Norman Ebel in the truck of all people. The yank dropped me off at the station & I saw the R.T.O. Had to go round to the electric Itie Stn he gave me a ticket got a chap to carry my blankets there & he put me on the right train at 1100 the train was due to move off at 1215. After I got on the train ask an young Itie a few questions about the journey & he told me & then it happened a train came off the rails in front & none could get back from the stn. Had to walk forward to the next station here another Itie porter carried my bag waiting for the train chatted with a Palestine. When the train arrived the biggest farce of all happened. Before anyone could get off these brainless



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

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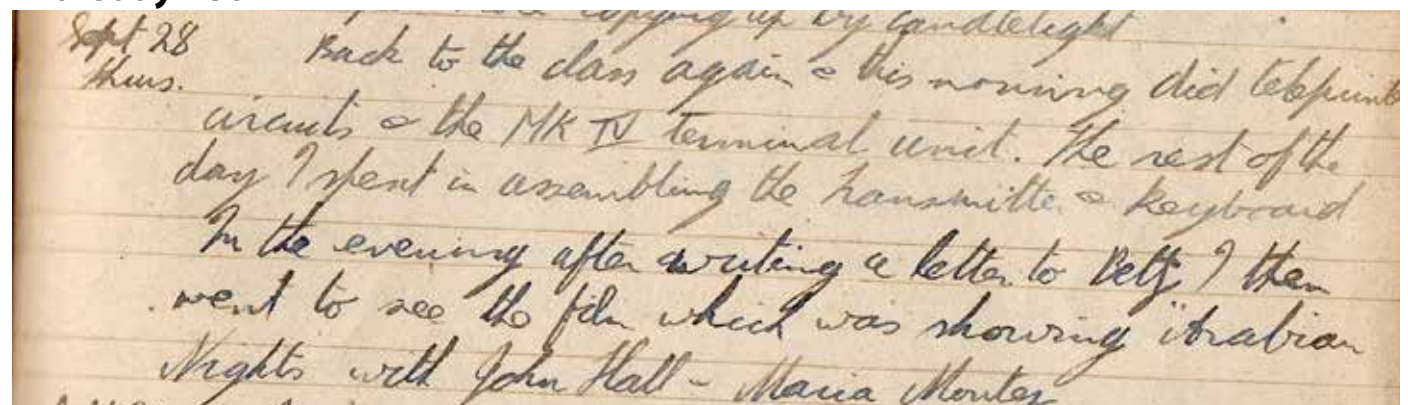
## Wednesday 27th



Sept 27.  
Wed. First of all had to go through the formality of an FFI which was finish - then went to the class. I had to pick up the notes half way through so to speak & I was suffering a little by the time it was over. At break went to the YMCA & afterwards had the transmitter explain to me of the teleprinter & then proceeded to take it apart & put it together again. The afternoon was a half day - I went back to the class & tried to catch up on my notes. In the evening went to the YMCA again & then back to the billet where I did a spot more copying up by candlelight.

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## Thursday 28th



Sept 28  
Thurs. Back to the class again & this morning did teleprinter circuits & the MK IV terminal unit. The rest of the day I spent in assembling the transmitter & keyboard. In the evening after writing a letter to Betty I then went to see the film which was showing "Arabian Nights" with John Hall - Maria Montez.

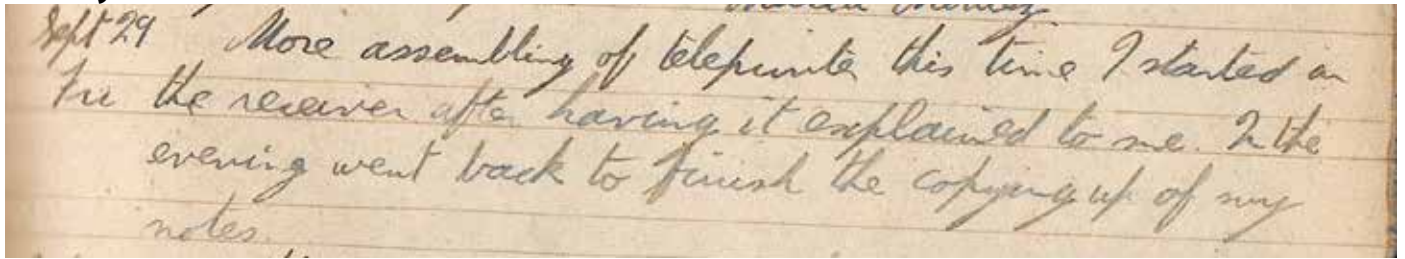
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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

with John Hall & Maria Montez

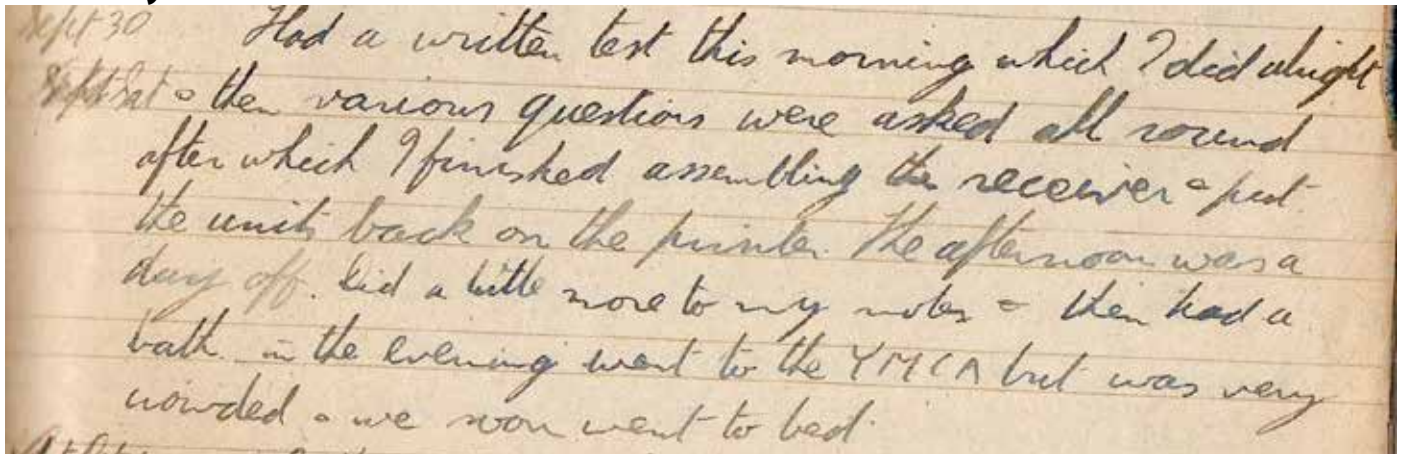
## Friday 29th



Sept 29 More assembling of teleprinter this time I started on the receiver after having it explained to me. In the evening went back to finish the copying up of my notes.

More assembly of teleprinter this time I started on the receiver after having it explained to me. In the evening went back to finish copying up of my notes.<sup>3</sup>

## Saturday 30th



Sept 30 Had a written test this morning which I did alright after which I finished assembling the receiver & put the unit back on the printer. The afternoon was a day off. Did a little more to my notes & then had a bath. In the evening went to the YMCA but was very crowded & we soon went to bed.

Had a written test this morning which I did alright at & then various questions were asked all round after which I finished assembling the receiver & put the unit back on the printer. The afternoon was a day off. Did a little more to my notes & then had a bath in the evening went to the YMCA but was very crowded & we soon went to bed.

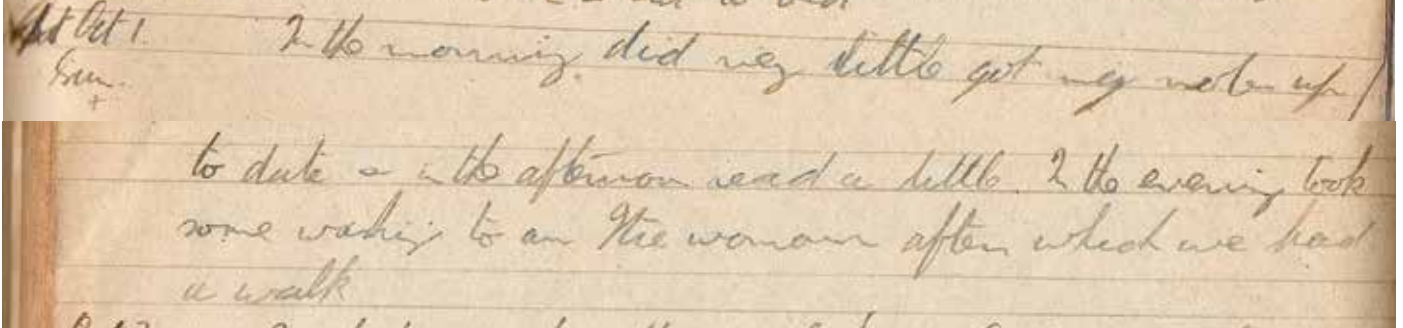
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<sup>3</sup> I remember seeing these they had diagrams of both valves of British and the Italian equivalent plus circuit diagrams for the teleprinters sadly these were lost when both my parents died and I cleared out the house.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## OCTOBER 1944

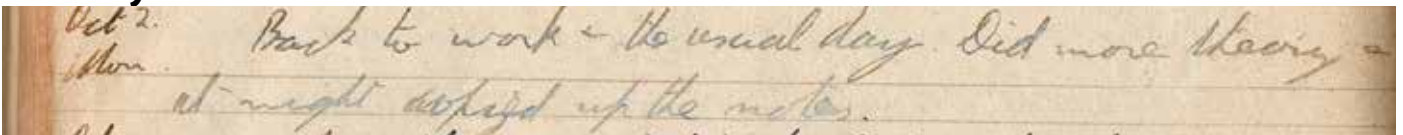
### Sunday 1st



Oct 1st  
Sun.  
In the morning did very little got my notes up to date & in the afternoon read a little. In the evening took some washing to an Itie woman after which we had a walk.

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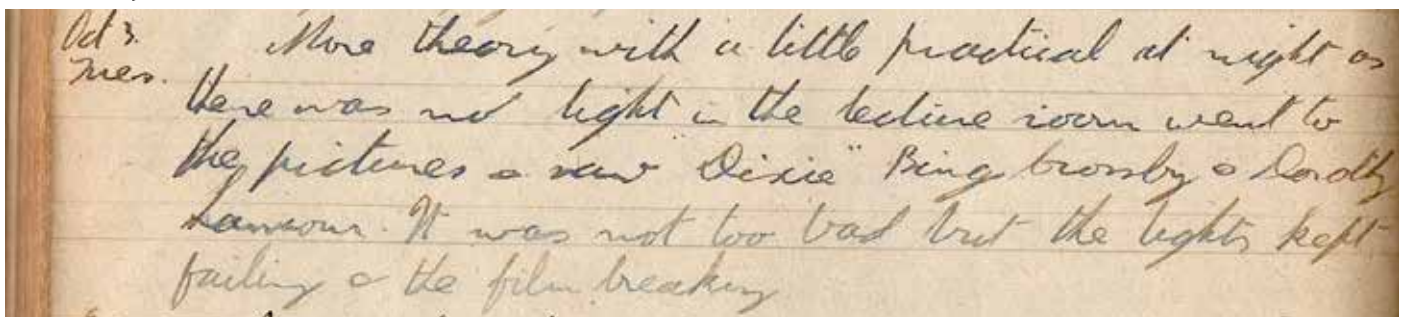
### Monday 2nd



Oct 2nd  
Mon.  
Back to work & the usual day. Did more theory & at night copied up the notes.

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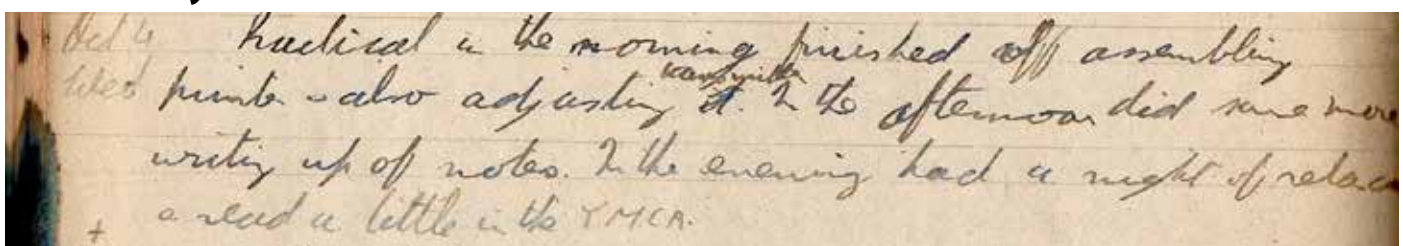
### Tuesday 3rd



Oct 3rd  
Tues.  
More theory with a little practical at night as there was no light in the lecture room went to the pictures & saw Dixie Bing Crosby & Dorothy Lamour. It was not too bad but the lights kept failing & the film breaking.

More theory with a little practical at night as there was no light in the lecture room went to the pictures & saw Dixie Bing Crosby & Dorothy Lamour. It was not too bad but the light kept failing & the picture breaking..

### Wednesday 4th



Oct 4th  
Wed.  
Practical in the morning finished off assembling printer & also adjusting keys width. In the afternoon did more writing up of notes. In the evening had a night of relaxation & read a little in the YMCA.

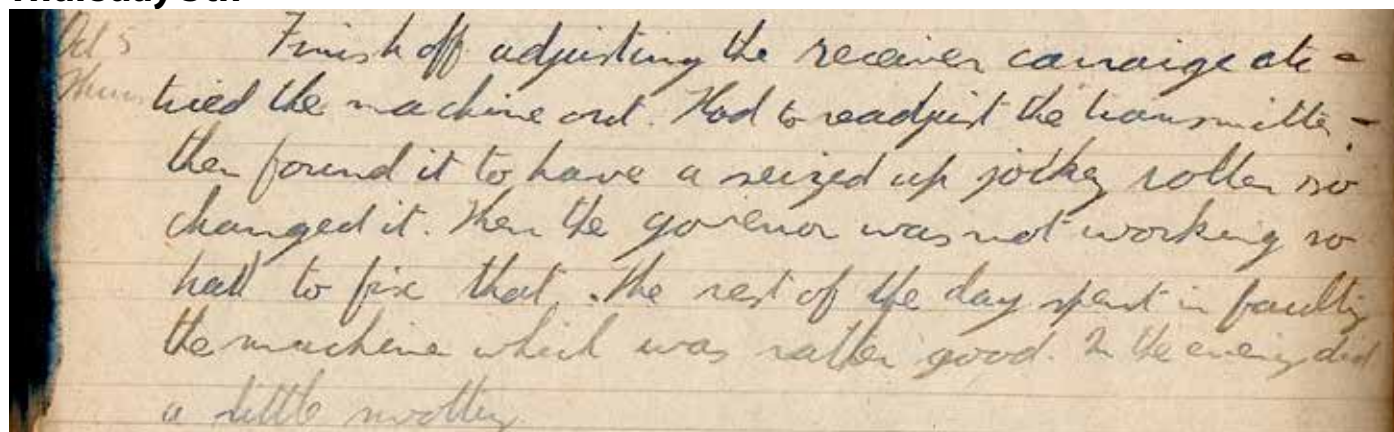
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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

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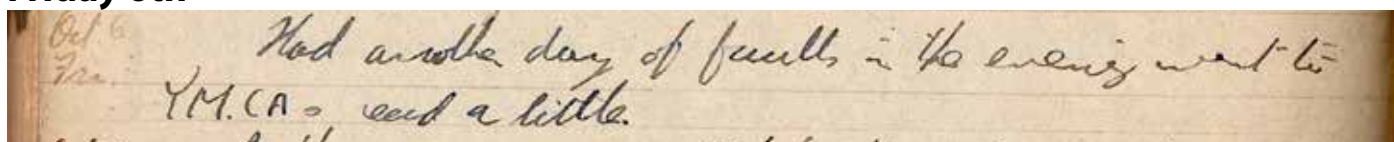
## Thursday 5th



Oct 5  
Thurs  
Finish off adjusting the receiver carriage etc. & tried the machine out. Had to readjust the transmitter - then found it to have a seized up jockey roller so changed it. Then the governor was not working so had to fix that. The rest of the day spent in faulting the machine which was rather good. In the evening did a little swotting.

Finish off adjusting the receiver carriage etc. & tried the machine out. Had to readjust the transmitter & then found it to have a seized up jockey collar so changed it. Then the governor was not working so had to fix that. The rest of the day spent in faulting the machine which was rather good. In the evening did a little swotting.

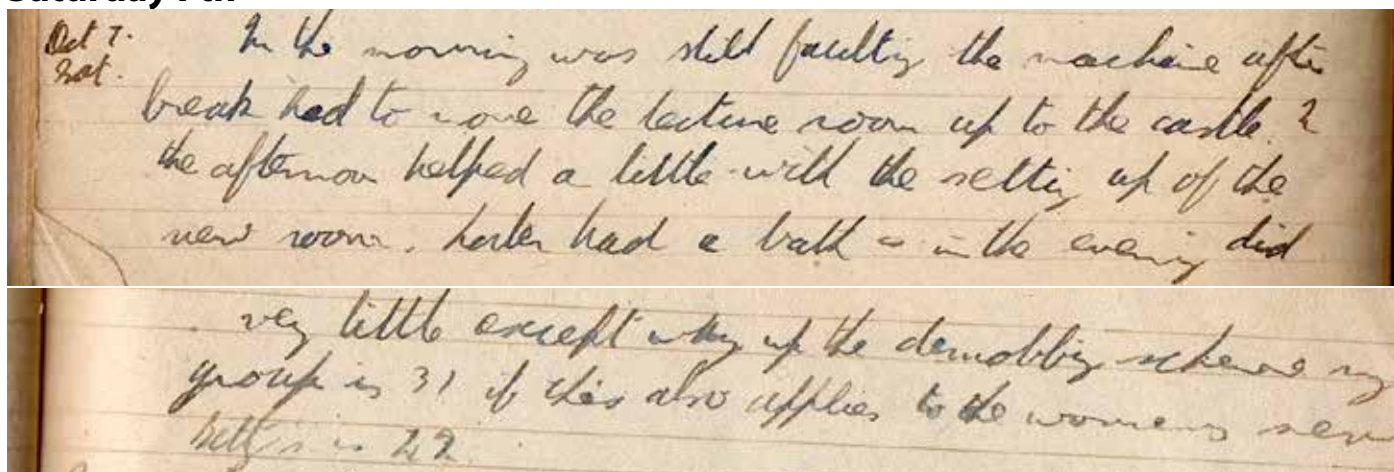
## Friday 6th



Oct 6  
Fri  
Had another day of faulting in the evening went to YMCA & read a little.

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## Saturday 7th



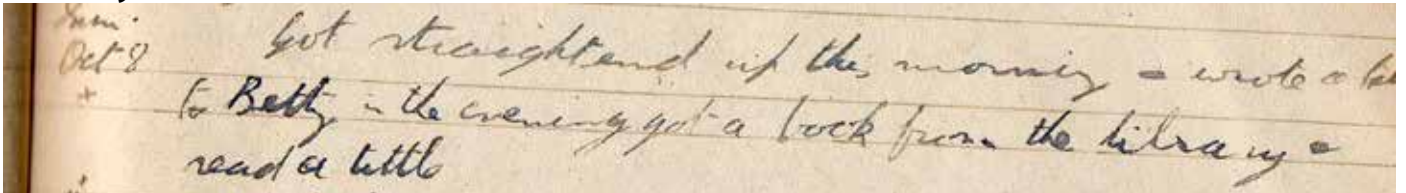
Oct 7  
Sat  
In the morning was still faulting the machine after break had to move the lecture room up to the castle. In the afternoon helped a little with the setting up of the new room. Later had a bath & in the evening did very little except way up the demobbing scheme<sup>1</sup> my group is 31 if this also applies to the women's service Betty is in 42.

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<sup>1</sup> This was first released on the 22nd September where the entry mentions the White Paper on demobbing. The groups were based on age & service number (length of service). Some people in essential industries for rebuilding were also released earlier.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

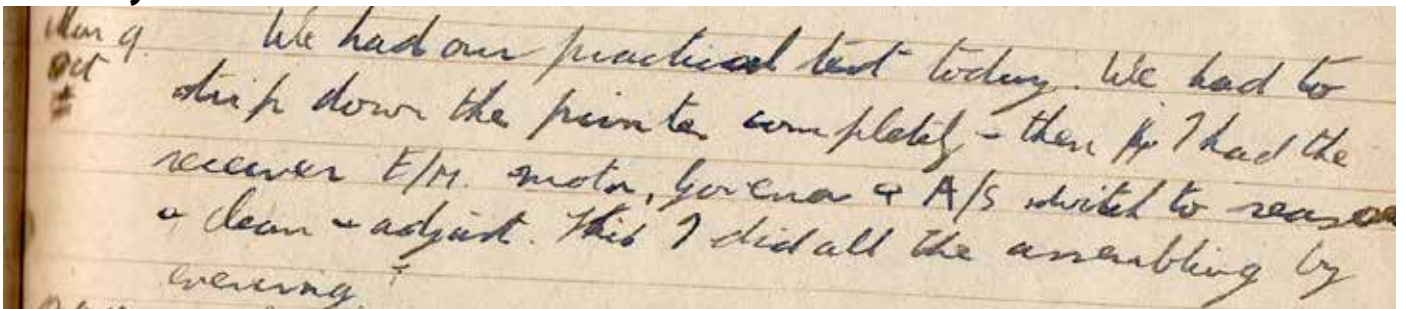
Sunday 8th



Oct 8  
+  
Got straightened up this morning - wrote a letter to Betty - in the evening got a book from the library - read a little

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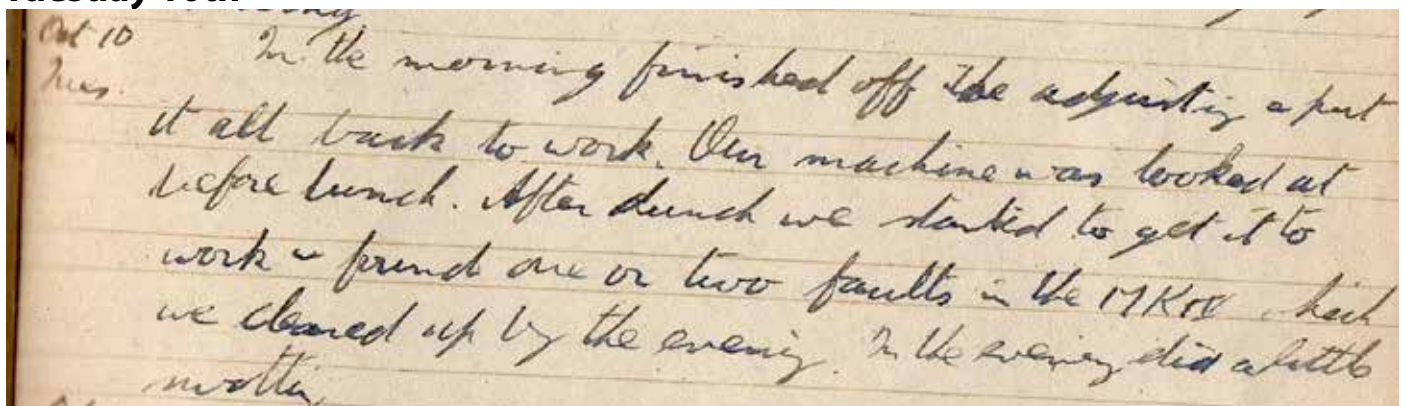
Monday 9th



Mon 9  
Oct  
+  
We had our practical test today. We had to strip down the printer completely - then I had the receiver E/M motor, Governor & A/S switch to reason & clean & adjust. This I did all the assembling by evening.

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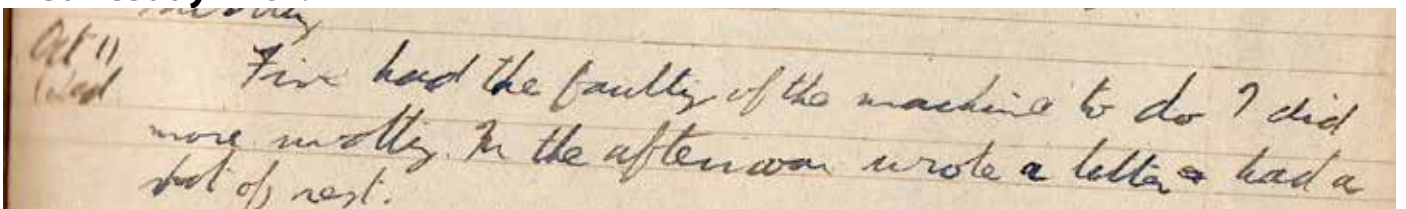
Tuesday 10th



Oct 10  
Tue.  
In the morning finished off the adjusting & put it all back to work. Our machine was looked at before lunch. After lunch we started to get it to work & found one or two faults in the MK IV which we cleared up by the evening. In the evening did a little swotting.

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Wednesday 11th.



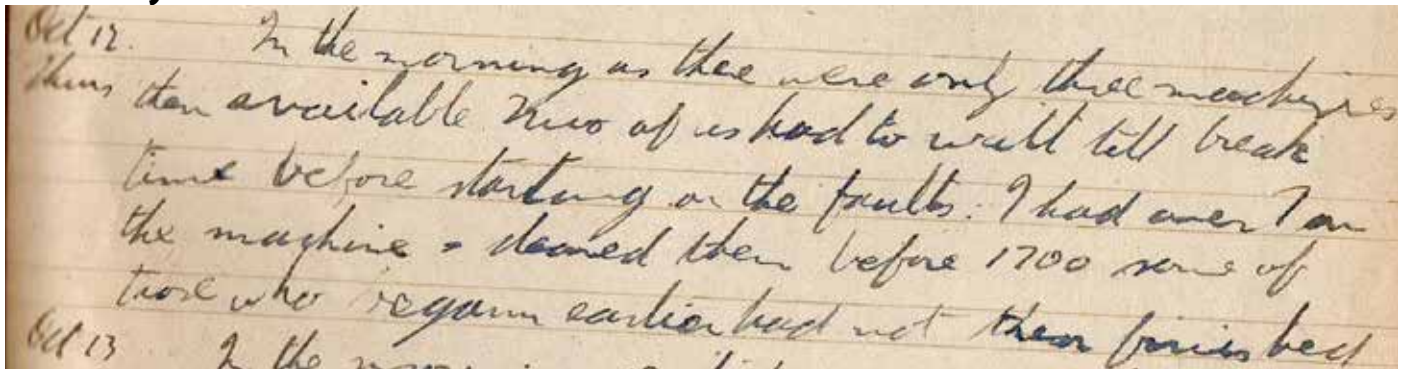
Oct 11  
Wed  
Five had the faulting of the machine to do. I did more swotting. In the afternoon wrote a letter & had a spot of rest.

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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

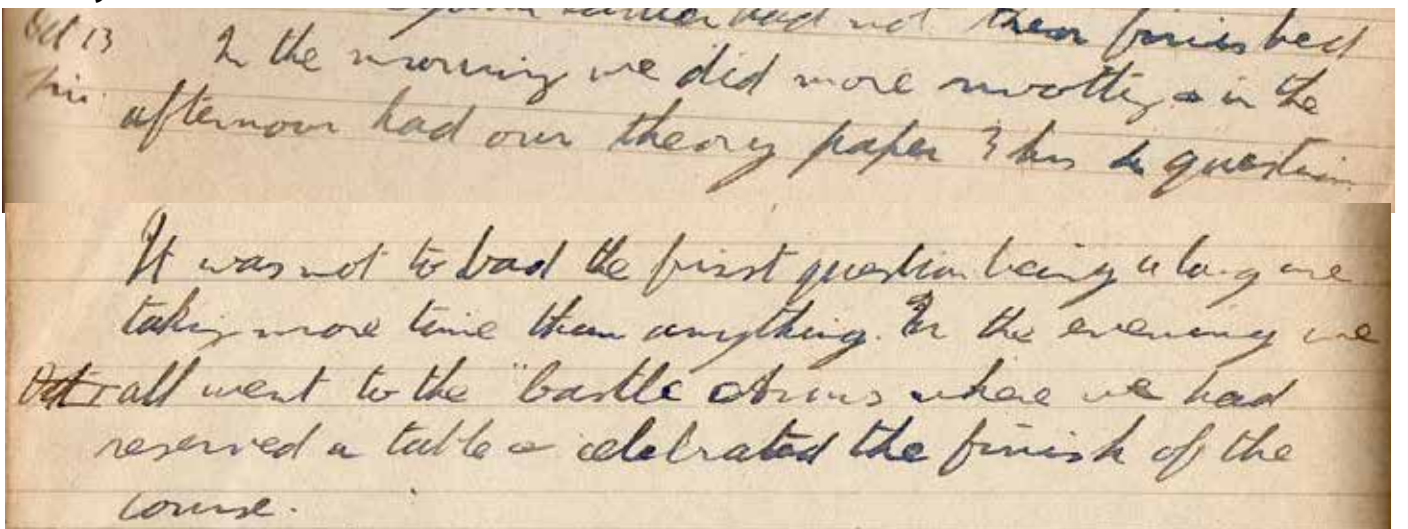
**Thursday 12th**



Oct 12. In the morning as there were only three machines then available two of us had to wait till break time before starting on the faults. I had over 7 on the machine & cleared them before 1700 some of those who began earlier had not then finished.

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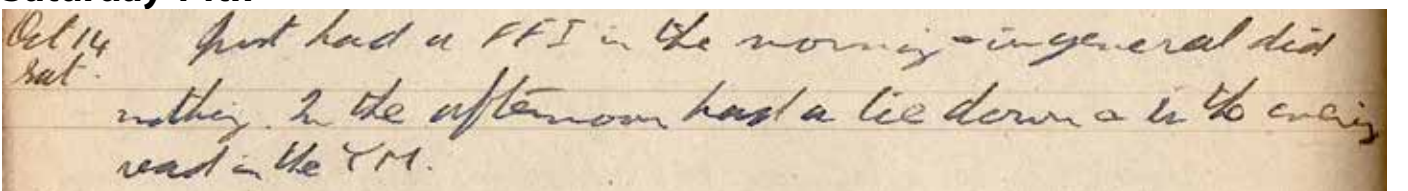
**Friday 13th**



Oct 13 In the morning we did more swotting & in the afternoon had our theory paper 3 hrs 4 questions. It was not too bad the first question being a long one taking more time than anything. In the evening we all went to the "Battle Arms" where we had reserved a table & celebrated the finish of the course.

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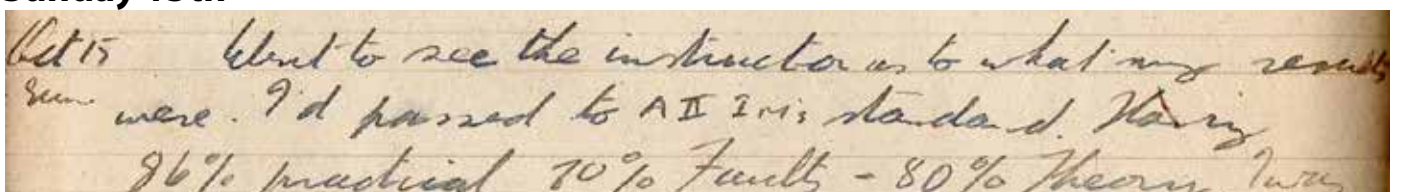
**Saturday 14th**



Oct 14 Sat. Just had a FFI in the morning & in general did nothing. In the afternoon had a lie down & in the evening read in the YM.

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**Sunday 15th**

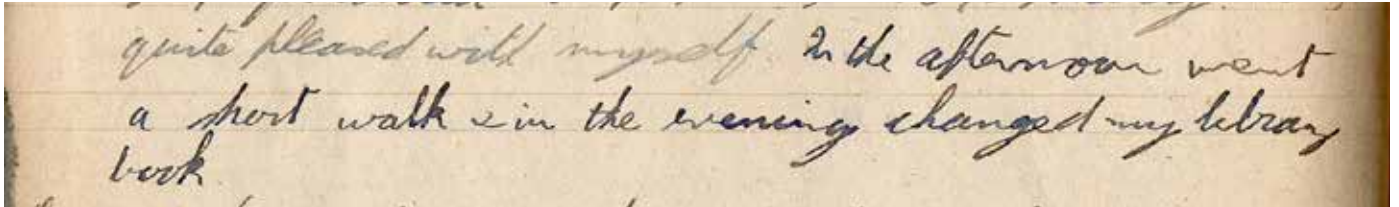


Oct 15 Sun. Went to see the instructor as to what my results were. I'd passed to A II I.M.s standard. Having 96% practical 80% Faults - 80% Theory. Was

232 October 1944



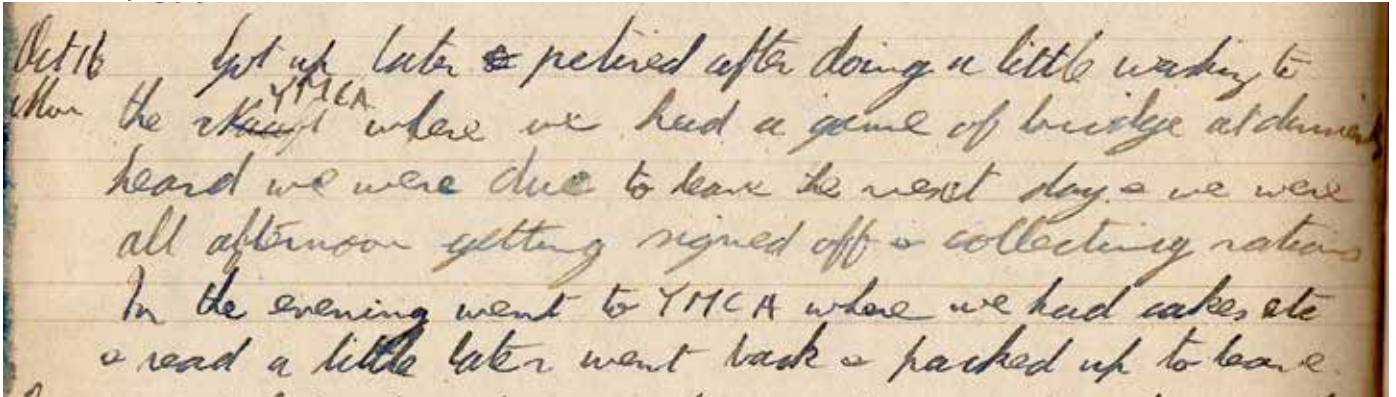
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



quite pleased with myself. In the afternoon went a short walk & in the evening changed my library book

Went to see the instructor as to what my results were. I'd passed to All 1M's standard. Having 86% practical, 70% faults & 80% theory. I was quite please with myself. In the afternoon went a short walk & in the evening changed my library book.

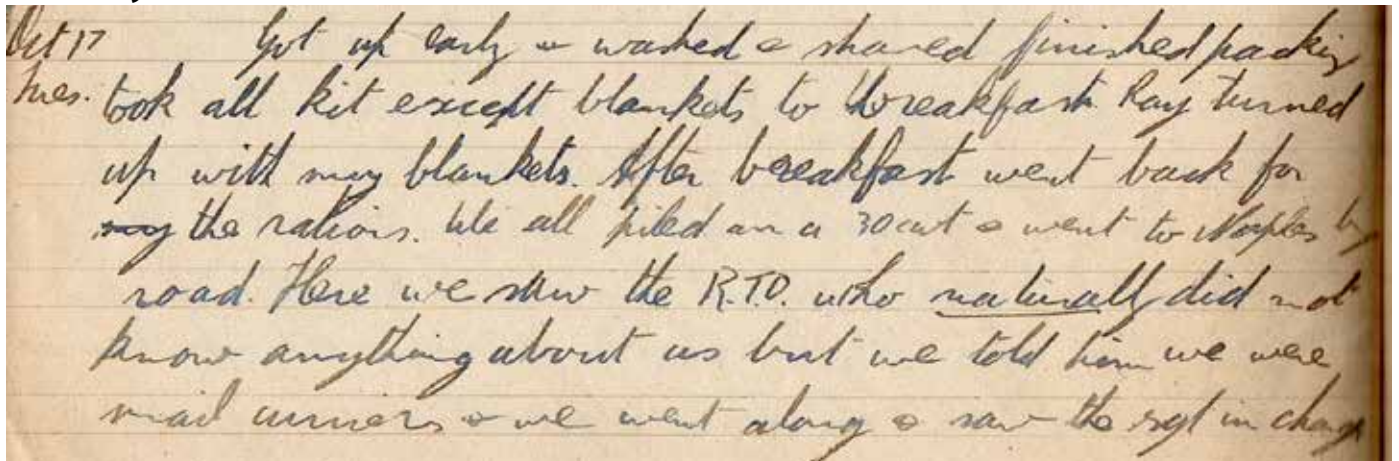
## Monday 16th



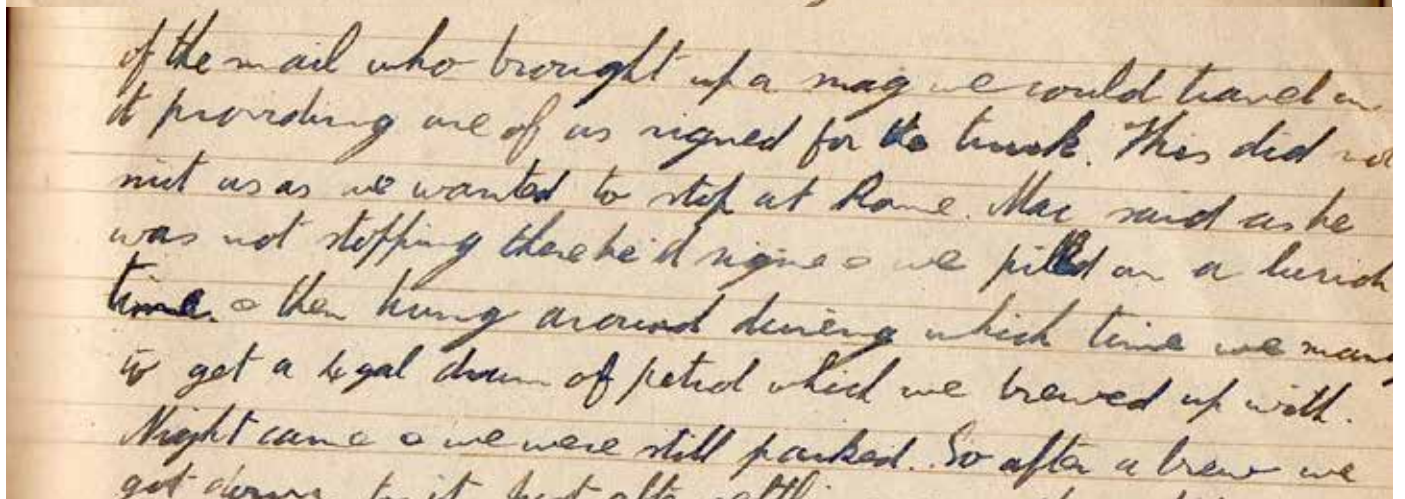
Oct 16  
Mon. Got up later & retired after doing a little washing to the Y.M.C.A. where we had a game of bridge at dinner heard we were due to leave the next day & we were all afternoon getting signed off & collecting rations. In the evening went to Y.M.C.A. where we had cakes etc & read a little later went back & packed up to leave.

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## Tuesday 17th



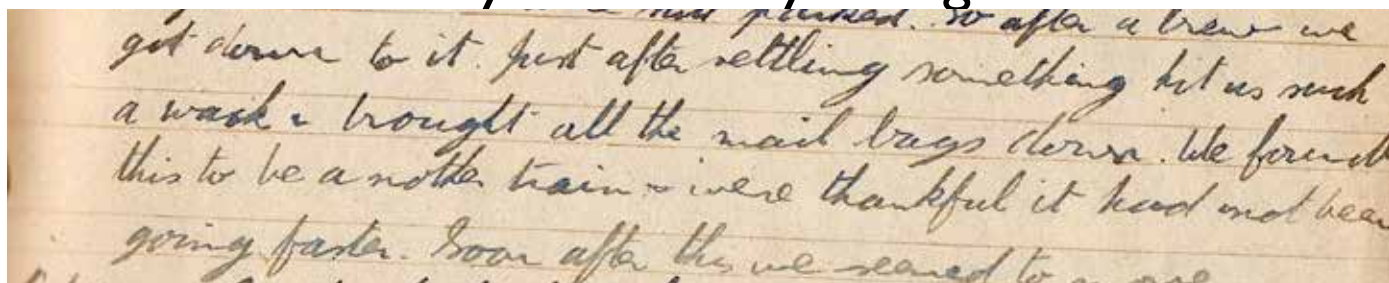
Oct 17  
Tue. Got up early & washed & shared finished packing. Took all kit except blankets to breakfast. Ray turned up with my blankets. After breakfast went back for my rations. We all piled on a 30wt & went to Naples by road. Here we saw the R.T.O. who naturally did not know anything about us but we told him we were mail carriers & we went along & saw the Sgt in charge



of the mail who brought up a mag we could travel in. It providing one of us signed for the truck. This did not suit us as we wanted to stop at Rome. Mac said as he was not stopping there he'd sign & we piled on a hurried time. & then hung around during which time we managed to get a legal down of petrol which we brewed up with. Night came & we were still parked. So after a brew we got down to it but after a little



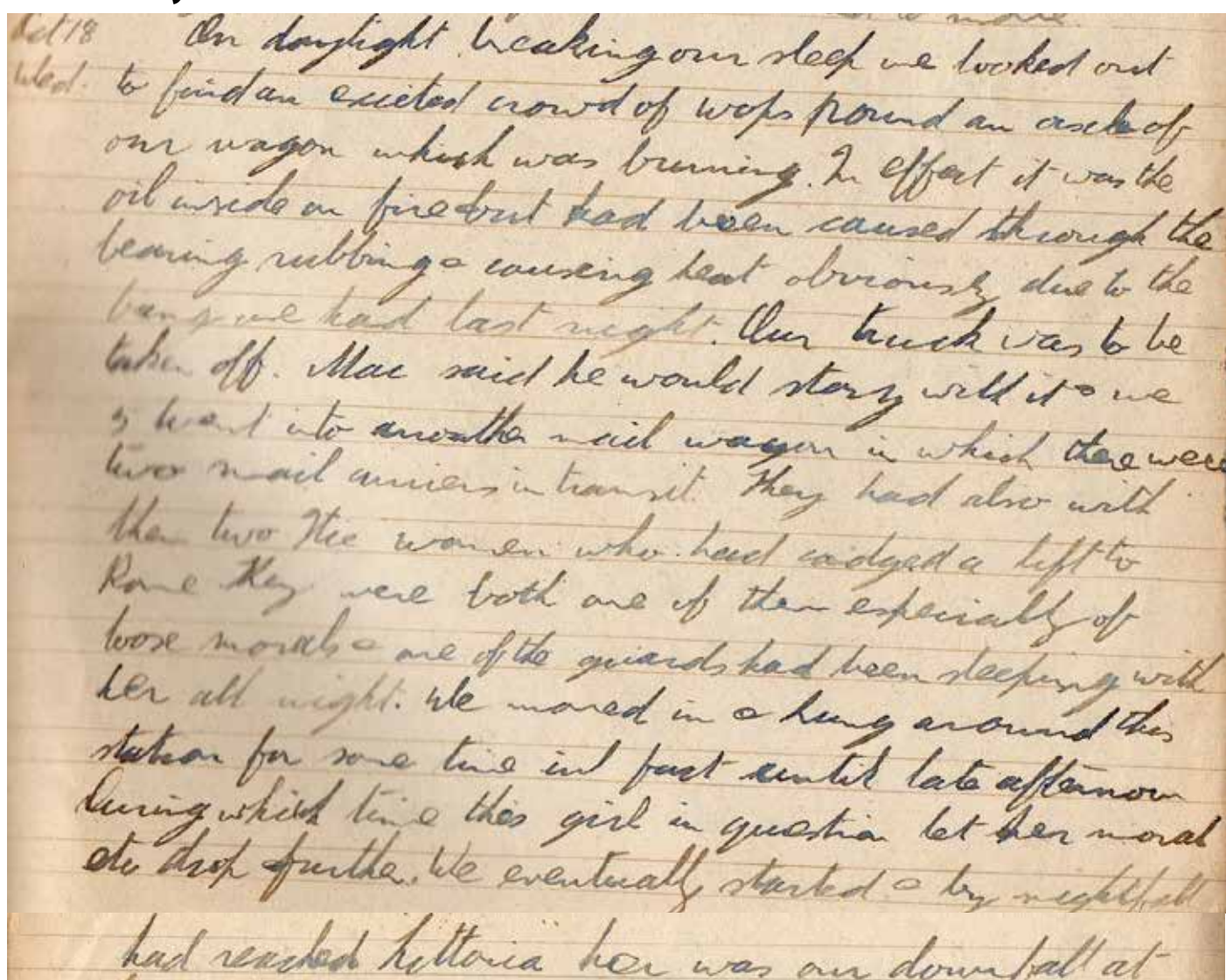
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



...not planned. So after a brew we  
got down to it. Just after settling something hit us such  
a wack & brought all the mail bags down. We found  
this to be another train & were thankful it had not been  
going faster. Soon after this we seemed to move

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## Wednesday 18th



Wed 18 On daylight breaking our sleep we looked out  
to find an excited crowd of wops found an axle of  
our wagon which was burning. In effect it was the  
oil inside on fire but had been caused through the  
bearing rubbings causing heat obviously due to the  
bang we had last night. Our truck was to be  
taken off. Mac said he would stay with it so we  
went into another mail wagon in which there were  
two mail carriers in transit. They had also with  
them two the women who had ridged a lift to  
Rome they were both one of them especially of  
loose morals & one of the guards had been sleeping with  
her all night. We moved in & hung around the  
station for some time in fact until late afternoon  
during which time this girl in question let her morals  
etc drop further. We eventually started & by nightfall  
had reached Vittoria her was our downfall at



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

least Midge & mine. We got off to brew some tea & we found two Yankys guards by a fire so put our water on there to boil. During this time we heard the lads calling after us & thought they were anxious about the tea instead the train was moving. We started back & actually waited while the train moved out of the way while we crossed the lines but then it was too late. We then went & saw the R.T.O (YANK) & the Station Master (Itie) neither very helpful they suggested we went up on the next train which was already waiting. We climbed up with the drivers (the trains being two diesel electric's USA) after a while went to see if we could get any grub but instead met "JOE" a yank guard on the train who had some beer & started supping it. We went back to the train & slept like logs. Joe was a good guy.

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## Tuesday 19th

28/19.  
After much stopping we finally rolled up at Fribank



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Station & found much to our relief the rest of the lads plus our kit. We told the R.T.O. we were off to a transit camp & got a hitch into Rome & went with our kit to the Jewish services club but they could only put three of us up. So we packed our kit & Midge, Lloyd & Ron went searching for other digs. They were back presently & we put our kit on again & marched off & installed ourselves. We then got cleaned up & wandered off to the Alexander club for a meal & a shower the latter being great

in the evening went to a Theatre the Argentine & saw an Ensa Variety show which was welcome. On arriving back at the flat we sat down & chatted with the lady of the house for quite a time when I say we I was forced to listen due to my lack of Itie.

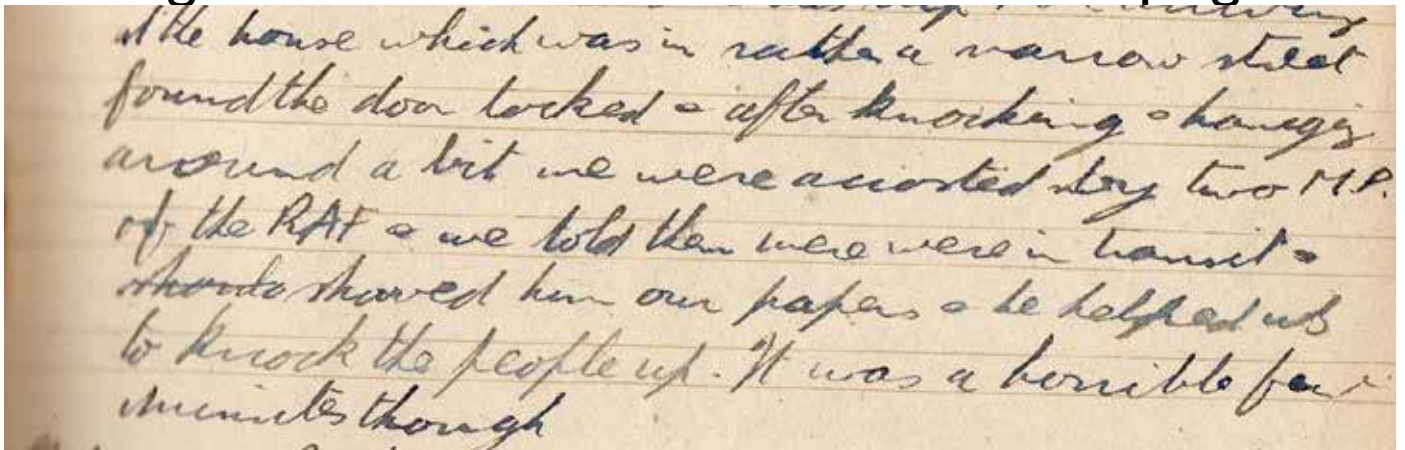
After much stopping we finally rolled up at Filitia station & found much to our relief the rest of the lads plus our kit. We told the R.T.O. we were off to a tranist camp & got a hitch in to Rome & went with our kit to the Jewish services club but they could only put three of us up. So we packed our kit & Midge, lloyd & Ron went searching for other digs. They were back presently & we put our kit on again & marched off & installed ourselves we then got cleaned up & wandered off to the Alexander club for a meal & a shower the latter being great in the evening went to a theatre the Argentine & saw an Ensa Variety show which was welcome. On arriving back at the flat we sat down & chatted with the lady of the house for quite a time when I say we I was forced to listen due to my lack of Itie.

## Friday 20th

20 We rose about 0900 - gave the lady a tin of ravioli & beans & we heard them with a cup of tea & then we went for a look round & had dinner at the Alex Club. This is the only good club I've ever seen. They haven't made a good job of it. In the afternoon went & saw St Peter's - it really is a ~~good~~ marvellous building - I was really thrilled to see it. After this we dashed back to the club - had supper & then went to the <sup>concert</sup> where we saw a woman's face. Ron was not with us on this trip & on arriving



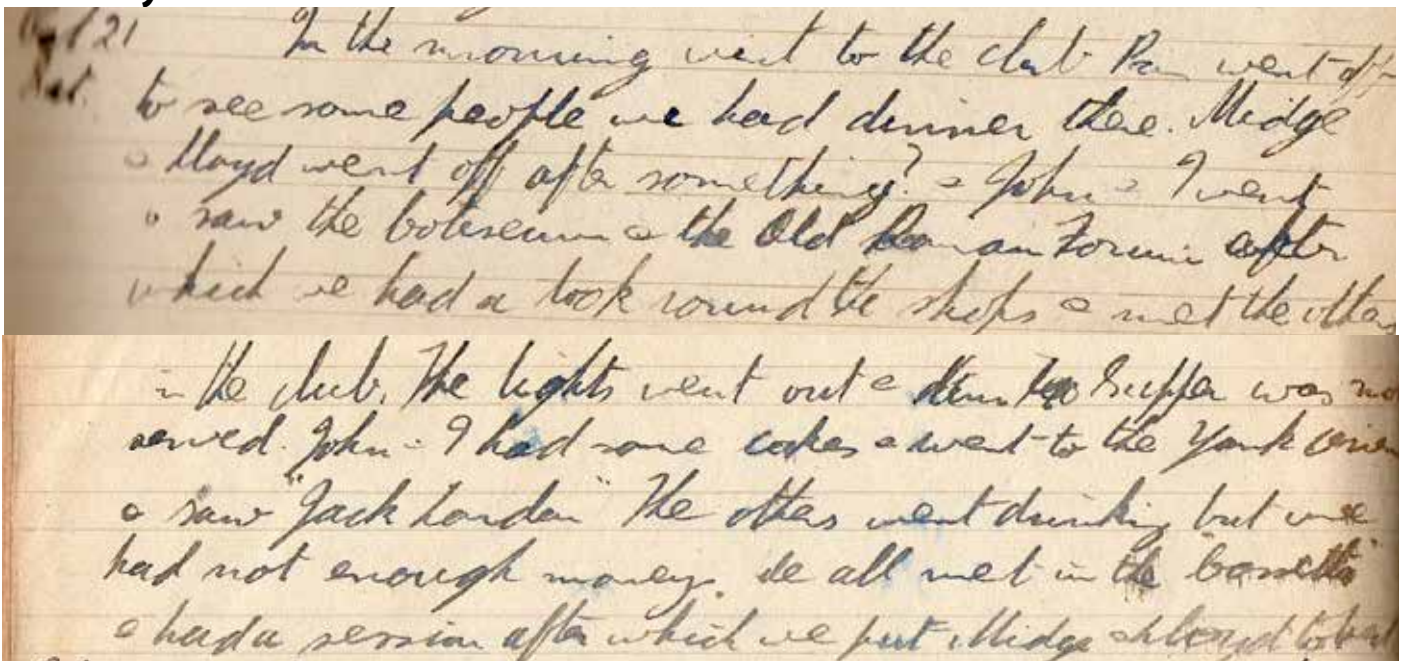
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



at the house which was in rather a narrow street found the door locked - after knocking - hanging around a bit we were accosted by two M.P. of the RAF & we told them we were in transit - showed them our papers & he helped us to knock the people up. It was a horrible few minutes though

We rose about 0900 & gave the lady a tin of sausages & beans & we had them with a cup of tea & then we went for a look round & had dinner at the Mex Club. This is the only good club I've ever seen Naafi do & they have made a good job of it. In the afternoon went & saw St. Peter's & it really is a marvellous building & I was really thrilled to see it. After this we dashed back to the club & had supper & then went to the cinema where we saw A Woman's Face. Ron was not with us on this trip & on arriving at the house which was in rather a narrow street found the door locked & after knocking & hanging around a bit we were accosted by two M.P. of the RAF & we told them we were in transit & showed him our papers & he helped us to knock the people up. It was a horrible few minutes though.

## Saturday 21st



Oct 21  
In the morning went to the club. Ron went off to see some people we had dinner there. Midge & Lloyd went off after something? & John & I went & saw the Coliseum & the Old Roman Forum after which we had a look round the shops & met the others in the club. The lights went out & then supper was not served. John & I had some cakes & went to the Yank centre & saw "Jack London" the others went drinking but we had not enough money. We all met in the Cassetto & had a session after which we put Midge & Lloyd to bed.

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## Sunday 22nd



Oct 22  
Up about 0900 again got packed paid up & then



## Diary of a D-Day Dodger

walked with all our kit to the Central station here a dopey R.T.O. said he could not do anything for us & we would have to go to Fibustina we started out & walked into the CMD's first & got a meal ticket & had dinner in the day leave restaurant we then attempted to get to the stn. After walking nearly half the distance & numerous lifts the rest arrived there. Here we had a setback. There was a train but no rations. We walked to it - two Canadians let us ride with them & also gave us a spot to eat. We stopped there quite a time & were out early morning.

Up about 0900 again got packed paid up & then walked with all our kit to the Central station. Here a dopey R.T.O. said he could not do anything for us & we would have to go to Fibustina we started out & walked into the CMD's first & got a meal ticket & had dinner in the day leave restaurant we then attempted to get to the stn. After walking nearly half the distance & numerous lifts the rest arrived there. Here we had a setback. There was a train but no rations. we walked to it & two Canadians let us ride with them & also gave us a spot to eat. We stopped there quite a time & were out early morning.

### Monday 23rd

Oct 23 Found ourselves stranded at Poggio Mirteto due to some trouble on the line we were here until about 1500 we managed by nightfall to reach Orte where the British took over the running of the railway. Here we made tea some fried potatoes & bully it was quite good.

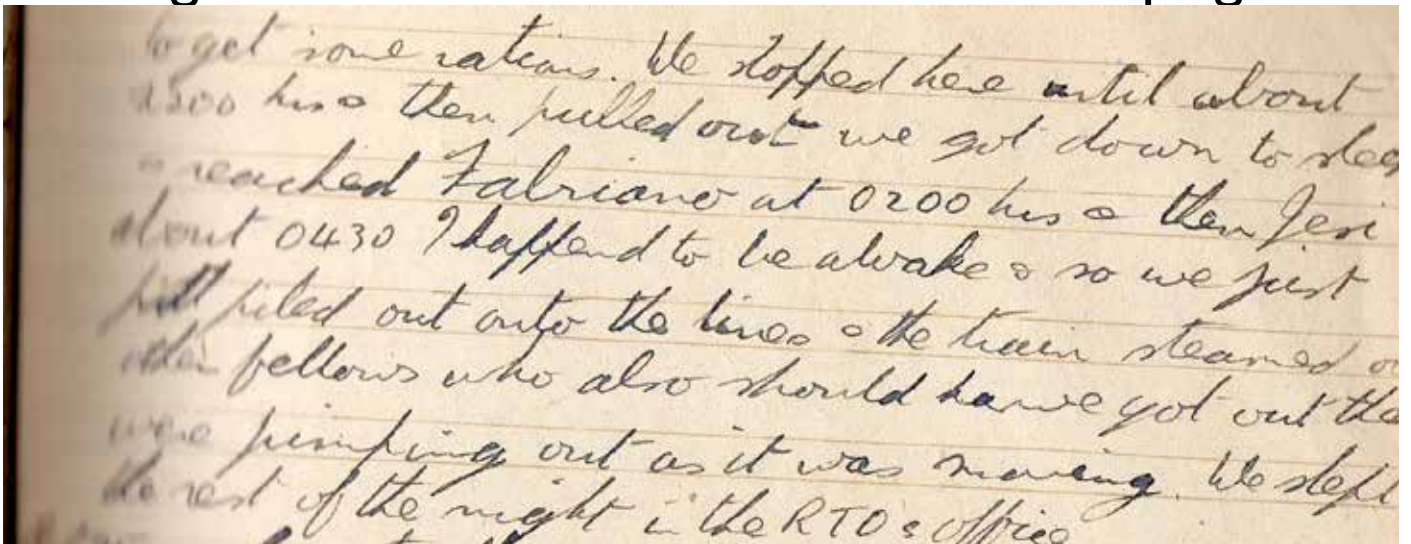
Found ourselves stranded at Poggio Mirteto due to some trouble on the line we were here until about 1500 we managed by nightfall to reach Orte where the British took over the running of the railway. Here we made tea some fried potatoes & bully it was quite good.

### Tuesday 24th

Oct 24 Woke up to find us stopped at Terni. so we made breakfast while they hunted the train about a bit we stopped here till about 1200 when we started to pull out with a load of 5 engines to do it. By evening we had reached Tivigno where we managed



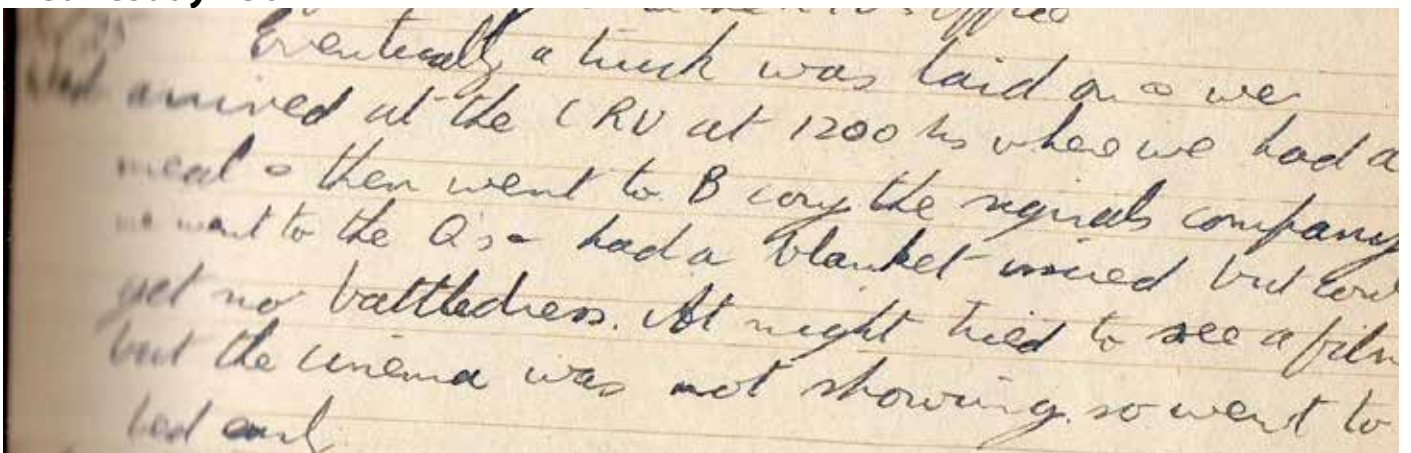
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



to get some rations. We stopped here until about 2200 hrs & then pulled out we got down to sleep & reached Fabriano at 0200 hrs & then Lesi about 0430. I happened to be awake & so we just piled out onto the line & the train steamed out other fellows who also should have got out there were jumping out as it was moving. We slept the rest of the night in the RTO's office.

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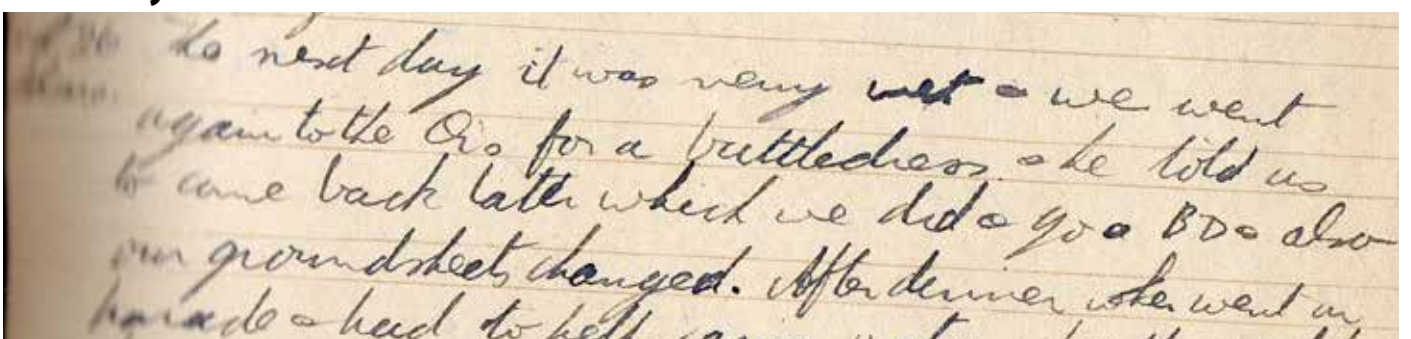
## Wednesday 25th



Eventually a truck was laid on & we arrived at the CRV at 1200 hrs where we had a meal & then went to B Coy the signals company. We went to the Q's & had a blanket issued but could get no battledress. At night tried to see a film but the cinema was not showing so went to bed early.

Eventually a truck was laid on & we arrived at the CRV at 1200 hrs where we had a meal & then went to B Coy the signal s company. We went to the Q's & had a blanket issued but could get no battledress. At night tried to see a film but the cinema was not showing so went to bed early.

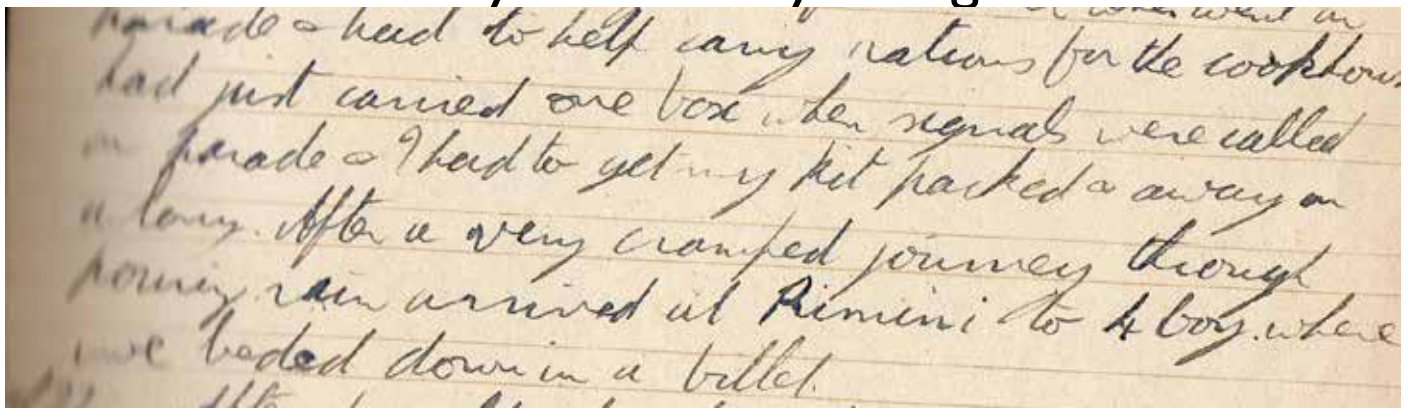
## Thursday 26th



The next day it was very wet & we went again to the Q's for a battledress & he told us to come back later which we did & go & B D's also our groundsheet changed. After dinner she went on parade & had to help carry water.



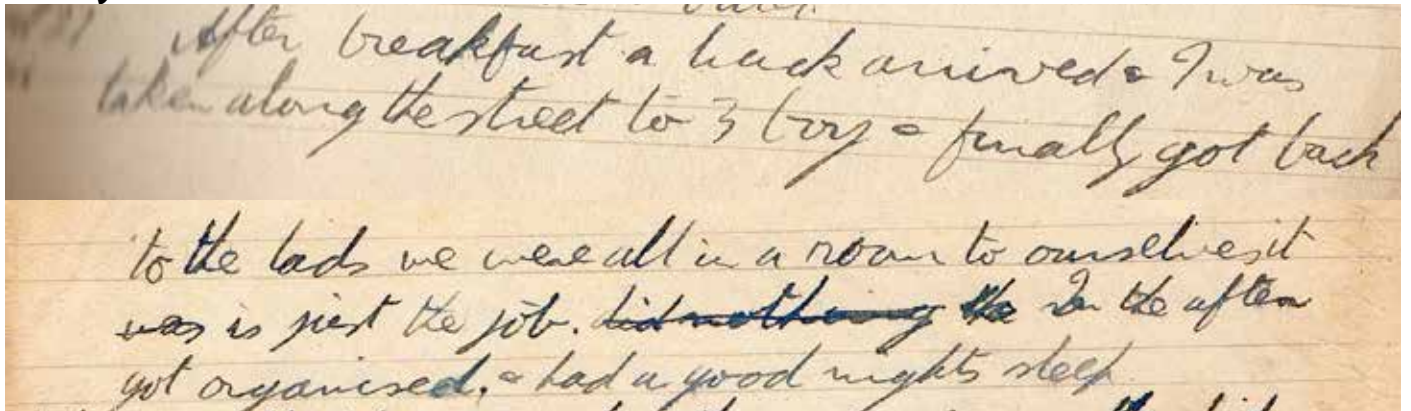
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



parade & had to help carry rations for the cookhouse. Had just carried one box when signals were called on parade & I had to get my kit packed & away on a lorry. After a very cramped journey through pouring rain arrived at Rimini to 4 Coy where we bedded down in a billet.

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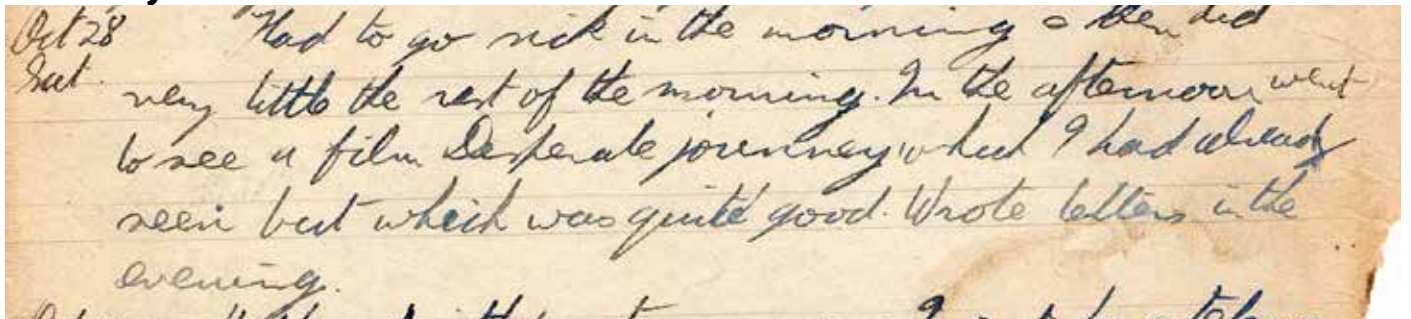
## Friday 27th



After breakfast a truck arrived & I was taken along the street to 3 Coy & finally got back to the lads we were all in a room to ourselves it was just the job. In the afternoon got organised & had a good night's sleep.

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## Saturday 28th



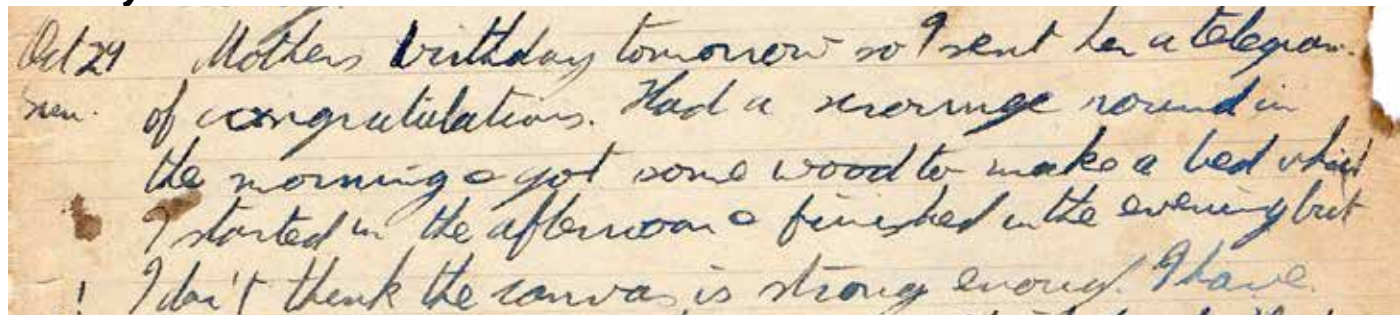
Oct 28 Had to go sick in the morning & then did very little the rest of the morning. In the afternoon went to see a film "Desperate Journey" which I had already seen but which was quite good. Wrote letters in the evening.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

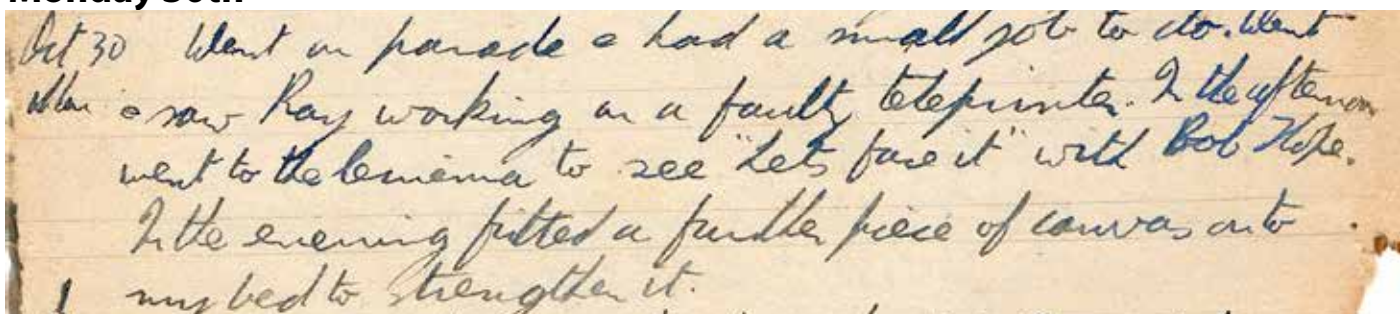
Sunday 29th



Oct 29 Mothers birthday tomorrow so I sent her a telegram  
of congratulations. Had a scrounge round in  
the morning & got some wood to make a bed which  
I started in the afternoon & finished in the evening but  
I don't think the canvas is strong enough I have

Mother's birthday tomorrow so I sent a telegram of congratulations. Had a scrounge round in the morning & got some wood to make a bed which I started in the afternoon & finished in the evening but I don't think the canvas is strong enough I have

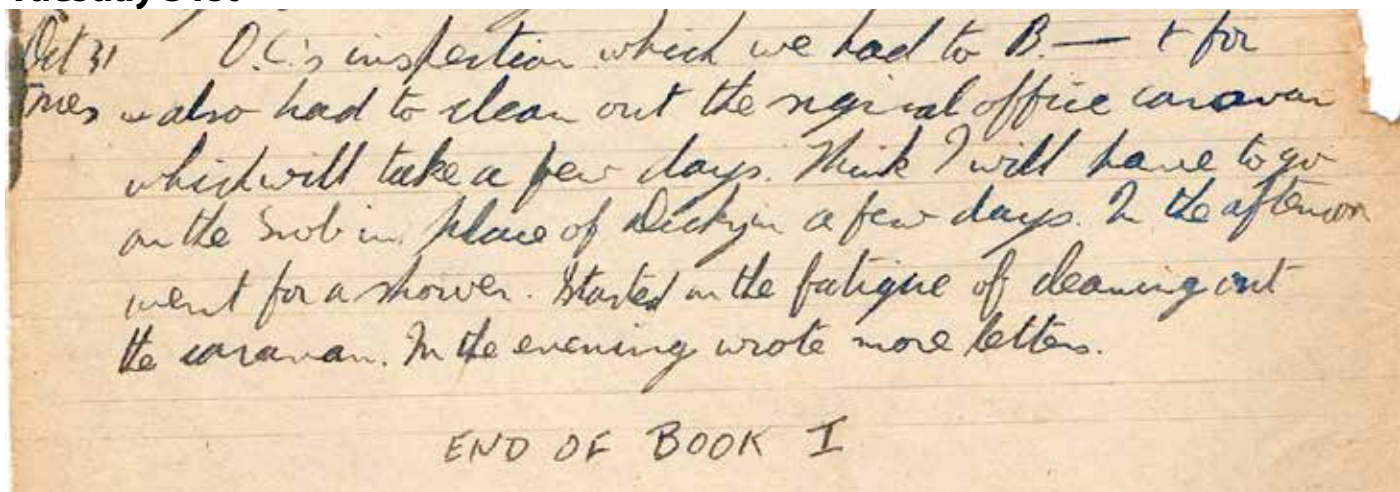
Monday 30th



Oct 30 Went on parade & had a small job to do. Went  
to see Ray working on a faulty teleprinter. In the afternoon  
went to the cinema to see "Let's Face It" with Bob Hope.  
In the evening fitted a further piece of canvas onto  
my bed to strengthen it.

Went on parade & had a small job to do. Went & saw Ray working on a faulty teleprinter. In the afternoon went to the cinema to see "Let's Face It" with Bob Hope. In the evening fitted a further piece of canvas onto my bed to strengthen it.

Tuesday 31st



Oct 31 O.C.'s inspection which we had to B-----t for  
also had to clean out the signal office caravan  
which will take a few days. Think I will have to go  
on the Snob in place of Dicky in a few days. In the afternoon  
went for a shower. Started in the fatigue of cleaning out  
the caravan. In the evening wrote more letters.

END OF BOOK I

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**END OF BOOK I**

October 1944241



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

## NOVEMBER 1944

### BOOK II

### Service Abroad

#### Wednesday 1st

BOOK II Service Abroad.  
Nov 1 Wed. Finished off my fatigue in the caravan in the morning in afternoon did some writing & caught up with my correspondence in the evening wrote a letter to Betty.

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#### Thursday 2nd

Nov 2 Thurs Did odd jobs I wanted doing & little else as it rained nearly all day.

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#### Friday 3rd

Nov 3 Fri. Played a little bridge during the morning with Robbie Tom Dicky & I. In the afternoon I tried to make a toaster from gauze but the idea would not quite work. In the evening played more bridge instead of going to the canteen a "Vino" night. Ron went & was pretty merry on his return.

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#### Saturday 4th

Nov 4 Sat. In the morning had to help erect the signal office with trucks for the CO's inspection. After Fiffin went down

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

to the barbers with Ray & managed to get in the 86 Area cinema which was showing "The Adventures of Tartu" with Robert Donat. In the evening wrote to Betty

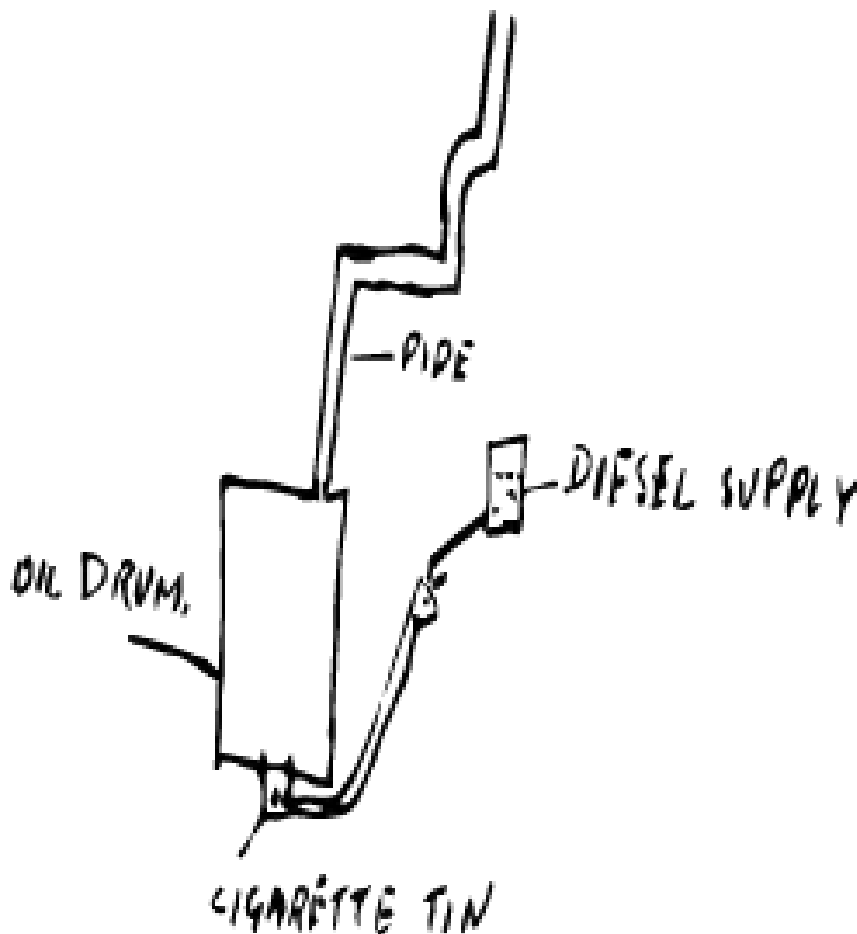
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## Sunday 5th

Had to go for typhus inoculation this morning - god he did not half hurt injecting it to. After tiffin decided to make a diesel stove so we went scavenging round the bombed houses for pipes tins etc - managed to have it working for the evening

it certainly warmed things up a lot. (see diagram)

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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Monday 6th

Nov 6.  
Mon. Had to replace Dicky on the switchboard this morning as he was going on leave to Rome. it was quite queer at first but soon got used to it. In the afternoon had another go at making the stove more efficient made a better feed by soldering a drip feed on but had great difficulty with the pipe as it is of too great a bore. Was all evening in getting it going to dinner everything I knocked the water off the primus just as it was about to boil for our tea.

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Tuesday 7th

Nov 7  
Tues. Had a short fatigue folded one tent up. In the afternoon went on duty & also at night. I had to collect the supper before going on duty. First night duty for some time slept in faults so I had quite a good sleep & I was up last.

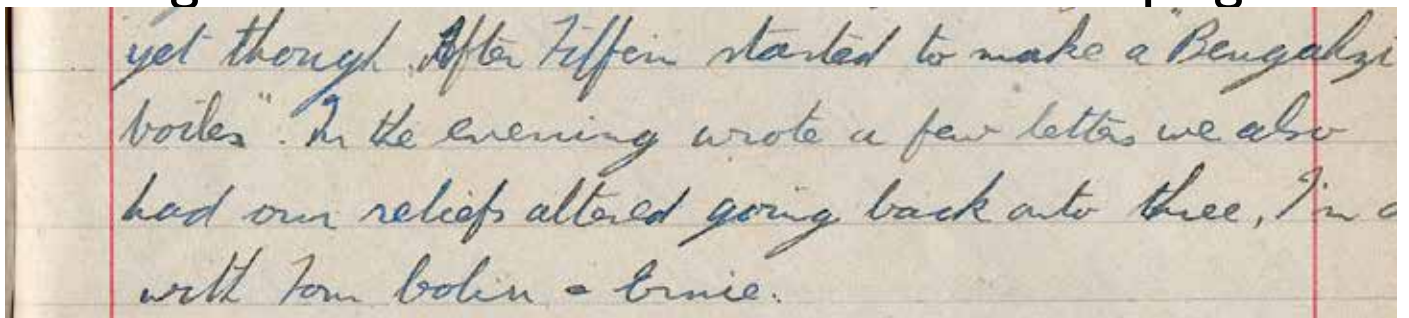
had a short fatigue folded one tent up. In the afternoon went on duty & also at night. I had to collect the supper before going on duty. First night duty for some time slept in faults so I had quite a good sleep & I was up last.

Wednesday 8th

Nov 8  
Wed. There was due to be a billet inspection in the morning & I had just finished having a bath & was dressed in my long wollen vest. I also had underpants on but you could not see them due to the length of the vest. they have not introduced it generally for O.C. units.



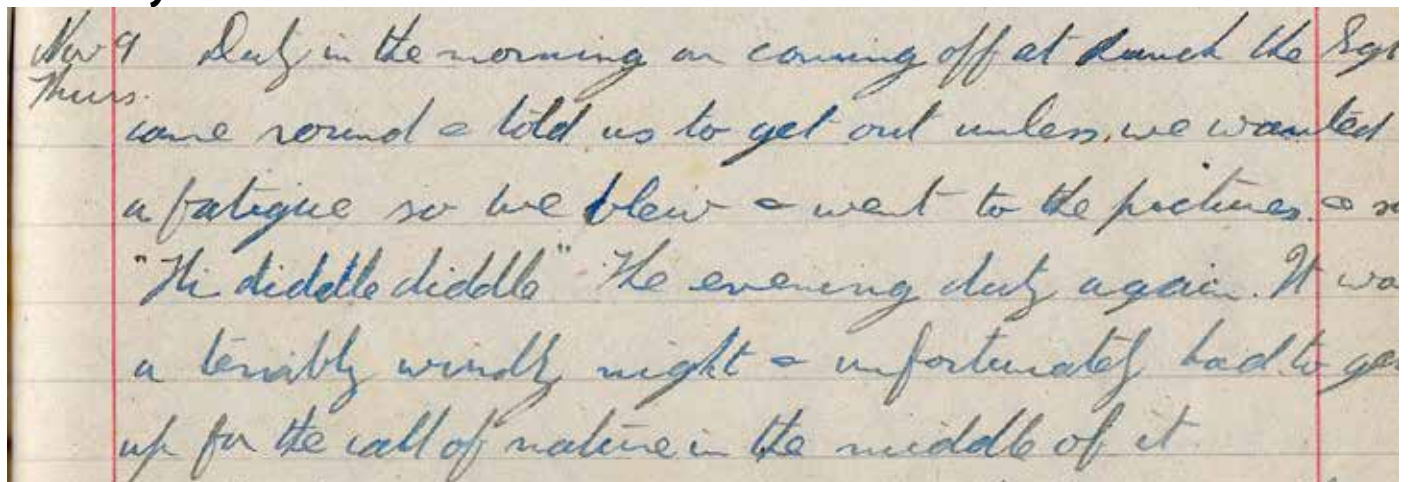
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



yet though. After Tiffin started to make a "Benghazi boiler". In the evening wrote a few letters we also had our reliefs altered going back onto three, I'm on with Tom Bohin & Ernie.

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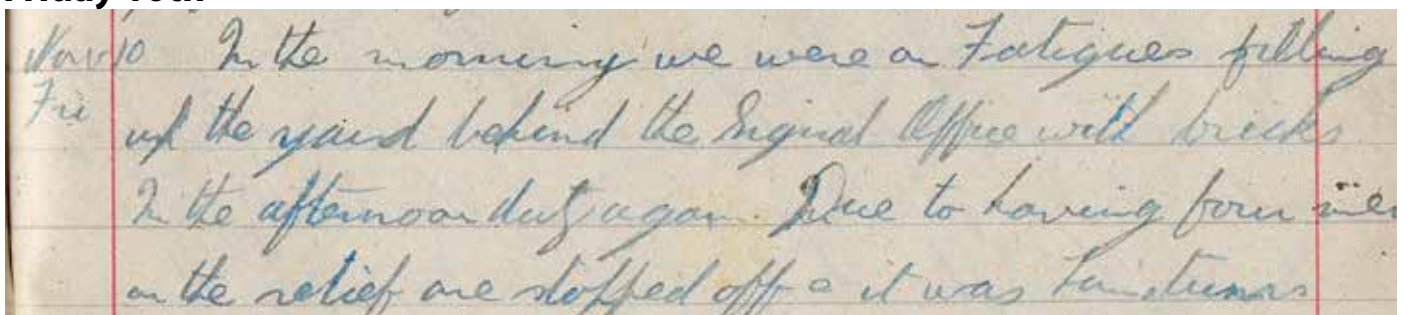
## Thursday 9th



Nov 9 Thurs. Duty in the morning on coming off at lunch the Sgt came round & told us to get out unless we wanted a fatigue so we flew & went to the pictures & saw "Hi Diddle Diddle". The evening duty again. It was a terribly windy night & unfortunately had to get up for the call of nature in the middle of it.

Duty in the morning on coming off at lunch the Sgt came round & told us to get out unless we wanted a fatigue so we flew & went to the pictures & saw "Hi Diddle Diddle". The evening duty again. It was a terribly windy night & unfortunately had to get up for the call of nature in the middle of it.

## Friday 10th



Nov 10 Fri. In the morning we were on Fatigues filling up the yard behind the Signal Office with bricks. In the afternoon duty again. Due to having four men in the relief one stopped off & it was Ian's turn.

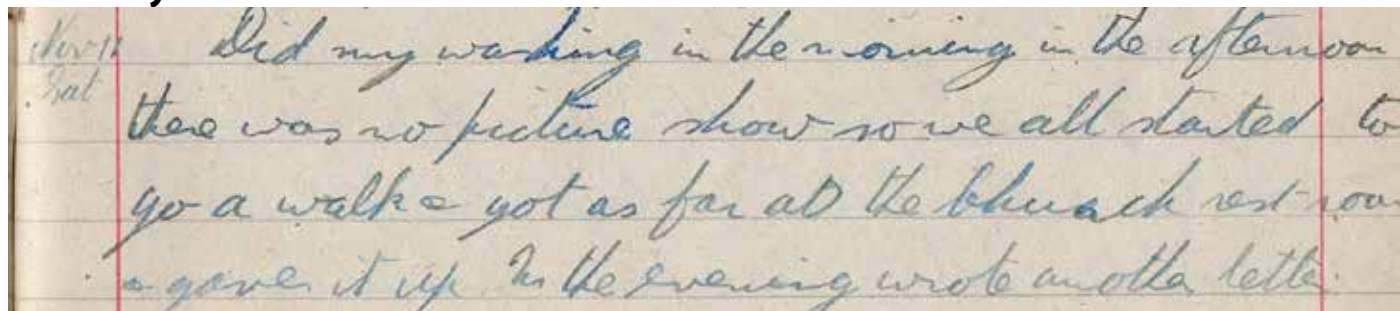
In the morning we were on fatigues filling up the yard behind the signal office with bricks. In the afternoon duty again. Due to having four men in the relief one stopped off & it was Ian's turn.

<sup>1</sup> An improvised stove consisting of a single empty steel fuel can usually 4 gallons (18 litre) or biscuit tin. Holes are pierced in the sides of the top half and the bottom half filled with sand. Petrol is then stirred into the sand and ignited. A second can of the same size is placed on top as a cooking vessel.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

**Saturday 11th**

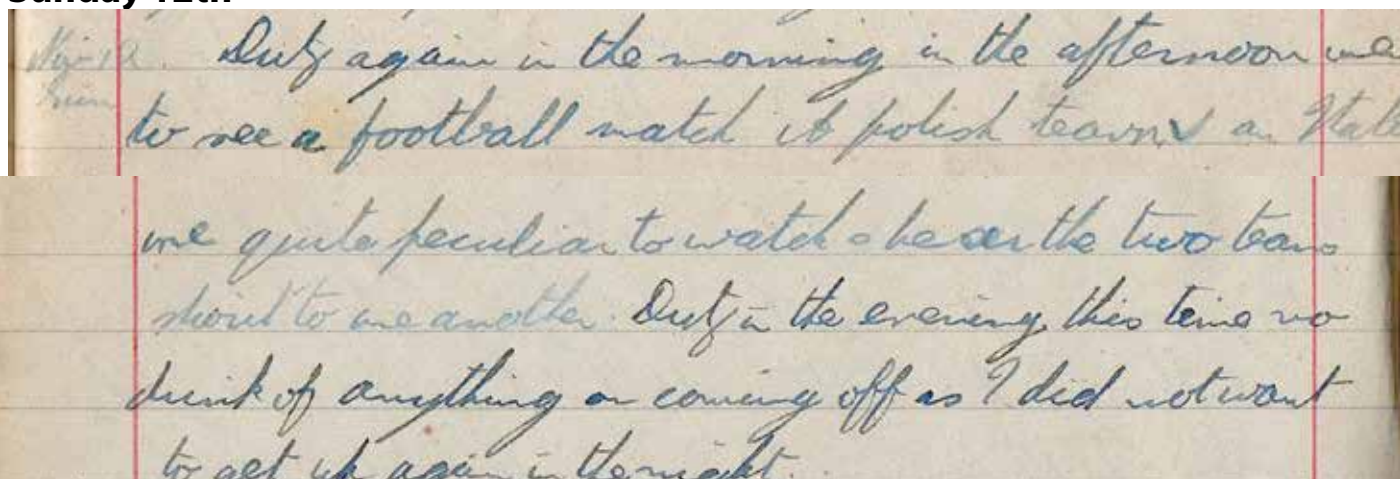


Nov 11  
Sat

Did my washing in the morning in the afternoon there was no picture show so we all started to go a walk & got as far as the Church rest room & gave it up. In the evening wrote another letter.

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**Sunday 12th**

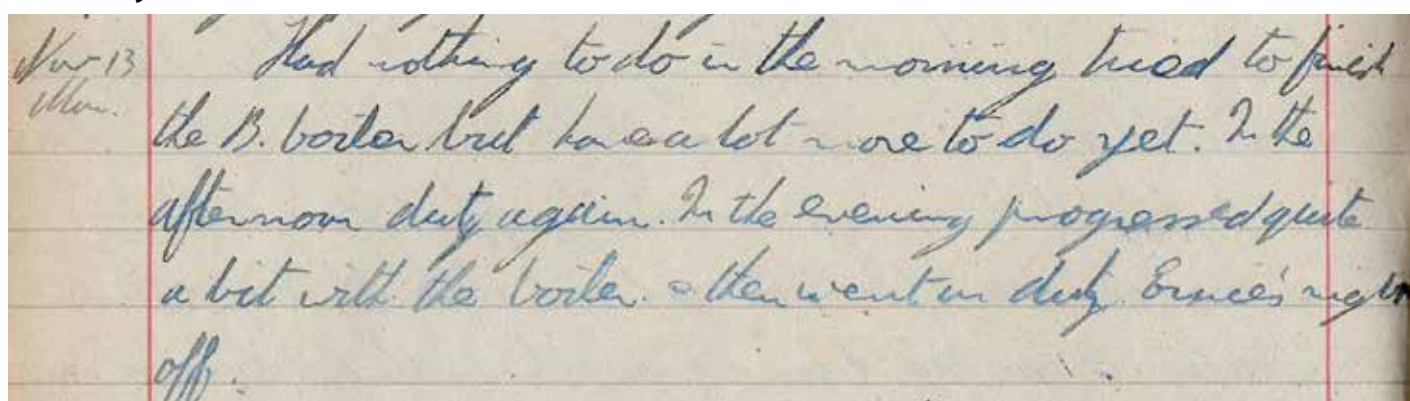


Nov 12  
Sun

Duty again in the morning in the afternoon went to see a football match it Polish team & an Italian one quite peculiar to watch & hear the two teams shout to one another. Duty in the evening this time no drink of anything on coming off as I did not want to get up again in the night.

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**Monday 13th**

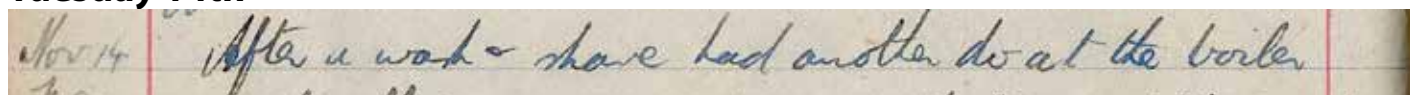


Nov 13  
Mon

Had nothing to do in the morning tried to finish the B. boiler but have a lot more to do yet. In the afternoon duty again. In the evening progressed quite a bit with the boiler. & then went on duty Ernie's night off.

Had nothing to do in the morning tried to finish the B. boiler but have a lot more to do yet. In the afternoon duty again. In the evening progressed quite a bit with the boiler & then went on duty Ernie's night off.

**Tuesday 14th**



Nov 14  
Tue

After a wash & shave had another go at the boiler

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Tues. & in the afternoon went to see Mutiny on the Bounty it was very good. Had an early night of it.

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## Wednesday 15th

Nov 15 Morning duty & they gave us plenty to do in the afternoon we decided to go to the pictures after starting out & then going back for our caps we finally saw "Tarzan Triumphs" which was quite fantastic but not bad entertainment. Dicky arrived

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## Thursday 16th

Nov 16 got up rather late Afternoon duty in the evening  
Thurs + wrote one or two letters. On duty all night.

Got up rather late. Afternoon duty in the evening wrote one or two letters. On duty all night.

## Friday 17th

Nov 17 Had a walk to 86A & had a haircut & saw an  
Fri. art exhibition by mag men serving in the forces it was quite good. In the afternoon had a bath &

used to draw - Dicky not very much of a success. In the evening heard on the wireless that the scheme for leave from here has started to Blighty go. I'd like that but it will be a long time before it becomes my turn.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

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## Saturday 18th

*Nov 18  
Sat* Duty in the morning fairly busy. In the afternoon went with Ron to see Stan Bullis's professional touring XI play an 8 Army XI which was also nearly all professionals. It was a grand game to watch but the 8th lost 4-1. In the evening duty again. On coming off duty found two letters waiting for me. One from the firm which I opened expecting it to be about owing them more money due to my recent increase of pay but it was raising my basic wage to £169 per annum. I was very pleased as it will mean quite a bit to me & will give me a start after the war in getting a home together. The other letter from Dad to say that Arthur had had his hand off to just below the elbow that really did make my enjoyment come to nil in fact it went a way down below zero. It is a real tragedy for him & I feel really sorry that it had to happen to him.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

happen to him<sup>2</sup>.

## Sunday 19th

Nov 19  
Sun. Got up late & after breakfast started cleaning out the stove. Dicky & I were told we were on step-up. Work on the stove all morning & it went really well by dinnertime. Duty in the afternoon the usual slow dragging one. Tom informed us when he came on at 1730 that only I was going on the step-up - Dicky not. Wrote home to Dad & also Arthur & Betty.

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## Monday 20th

Nov 20.  
Mon. Got up at 0650. & packed bed up it came apart just like the blue print & packed it on the lorry. Also packed the stove. It was a lovely day & had a good journey up to the new position arrived just before lunch at Besena. Unpacked moved into our room & had lunch. Saw Ken & arranged to release him at 1730 & go on tomorrow. Di & Jack are doing the night a bit of trouble about the new S.B.O. who came up. Went on duty in the evening intending to read but got very little done due to fiddling little calls.

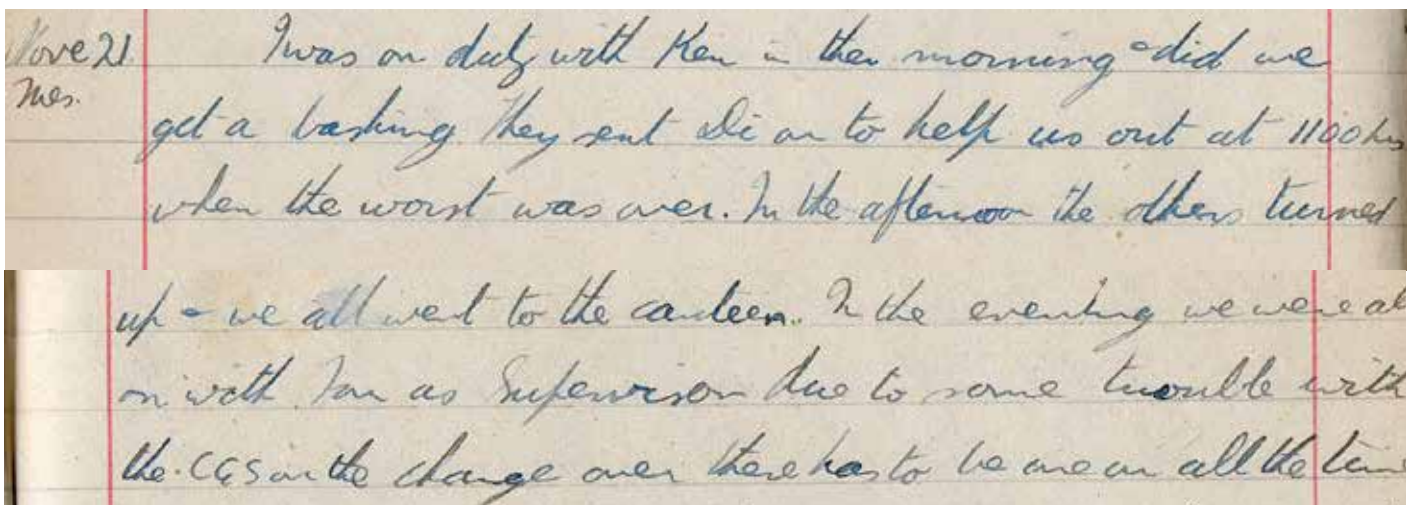
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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

position arrived just before lunch at "Cesena" unpacked moved into our room & had lunch. Saw Ken & managed to release him at 1730 & go on tomorrow. Di & Jack are doing the night a bit of trouble about the new SBO who came up. Went on duty in the evening intending to read but got very little done due to fiddling little calls.

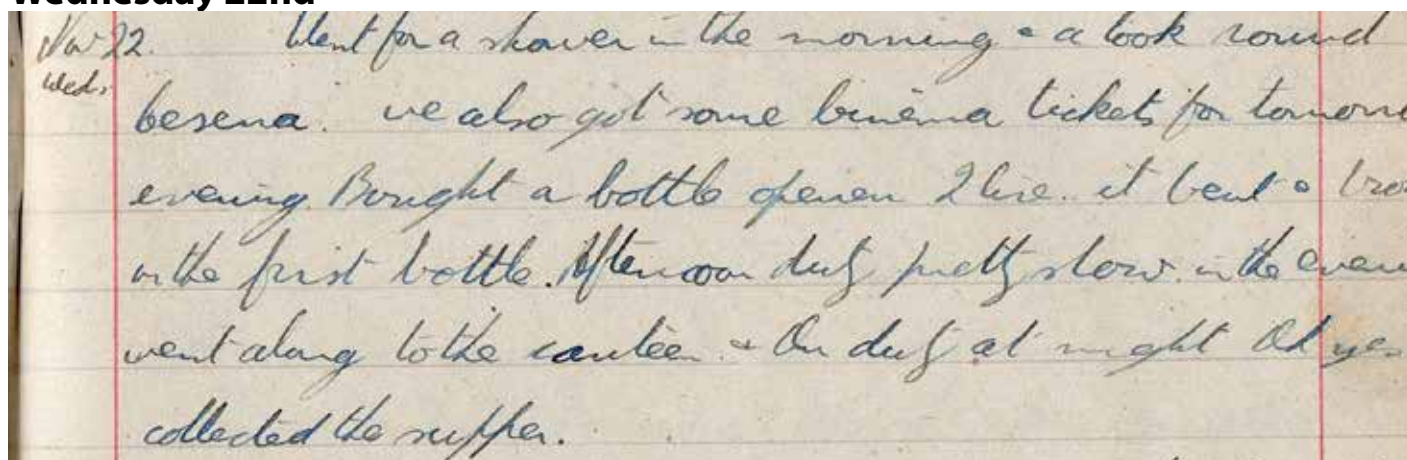
## Tuesday 21st



Nov 21  
Tue. I was on duty with Ken in the morning & did we get a bashing they sent Di on to help us out at 1100 hrs when the worst was over. In the afternoon the others turned up & we all went to the canteen. In the evening we were all on with Ian as supervisor due to some trouble with the CGS in the change over there has to be one on all the time.

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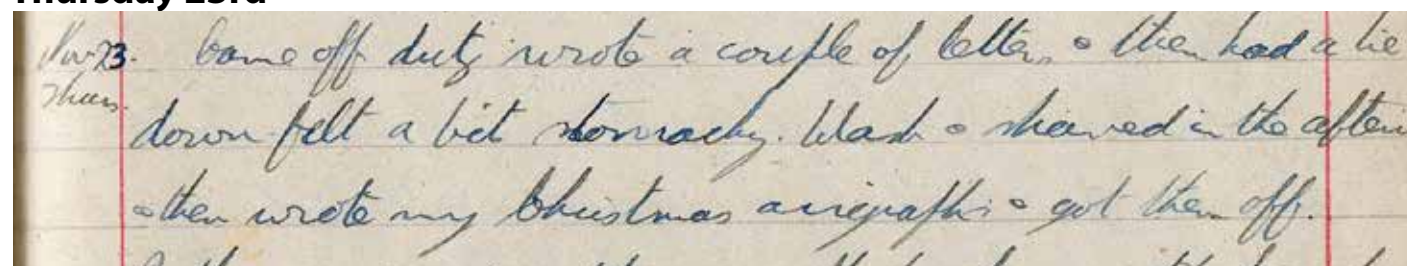
## Wednesday 22nd



Nov 22  
Wed. Went for a shower in the morning & a look round Cesena. We also got some cinema tickets for tomorrow evening. Bought a bottle opener 2 lire. It bent & broke on the first bottle. Afternoon duty pretty slow. In the evening went along to the canteen & on duty at night Oh yes collected the supper.

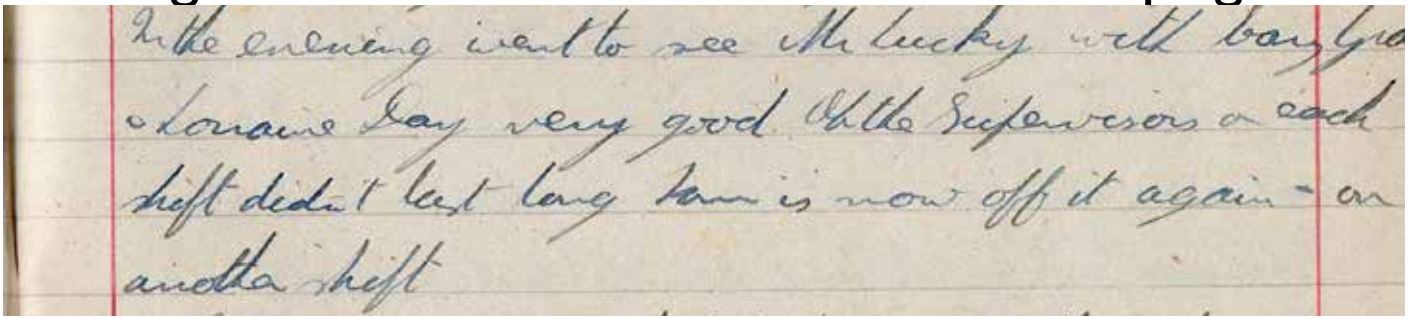
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## Thursday 23rd



Nov 23  
Thurs. Came off duty wrote a couple of letters & then had a lie down felt a bit stonracky. Wash & shaved in the afternoon then wrote my Christmas ariegraphs & got them off.

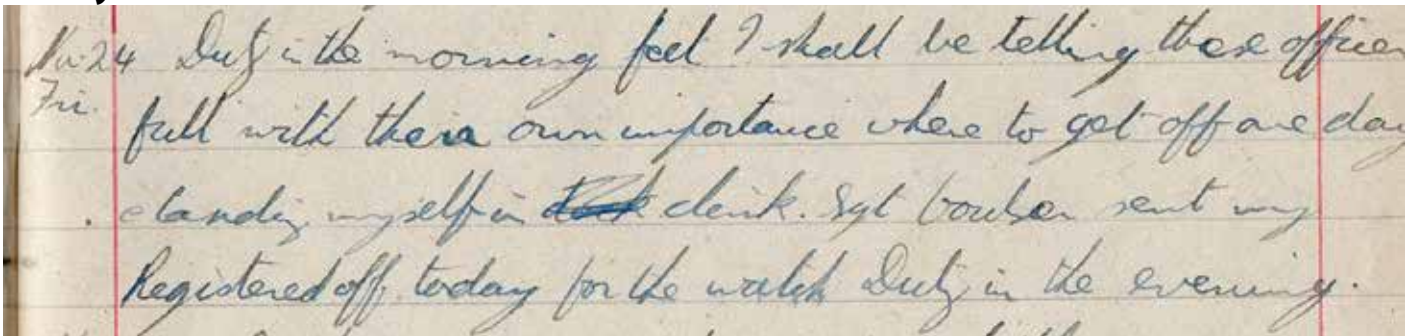
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



In the evening went to see Mr Lucky with Cary Grant & Loraine Day very good. Oh the Supervisors on each shift didn't last long Ian is now off it again - on another shift

Came off duty wrote a couple of letters & then had a lie down felt a bit stomachy. Wash & shaved in the afternoon. & then wrote my Christmas airgraph & got them off. In the evening went to see Mr Lucky with Cary Grant & Loraine Day very good. Oh the supervisors on each shift didn't last long Ian is now off it again & on another shift.

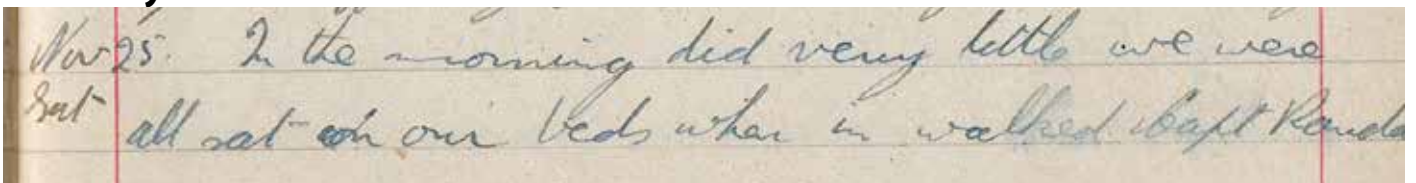
## Friday 24th



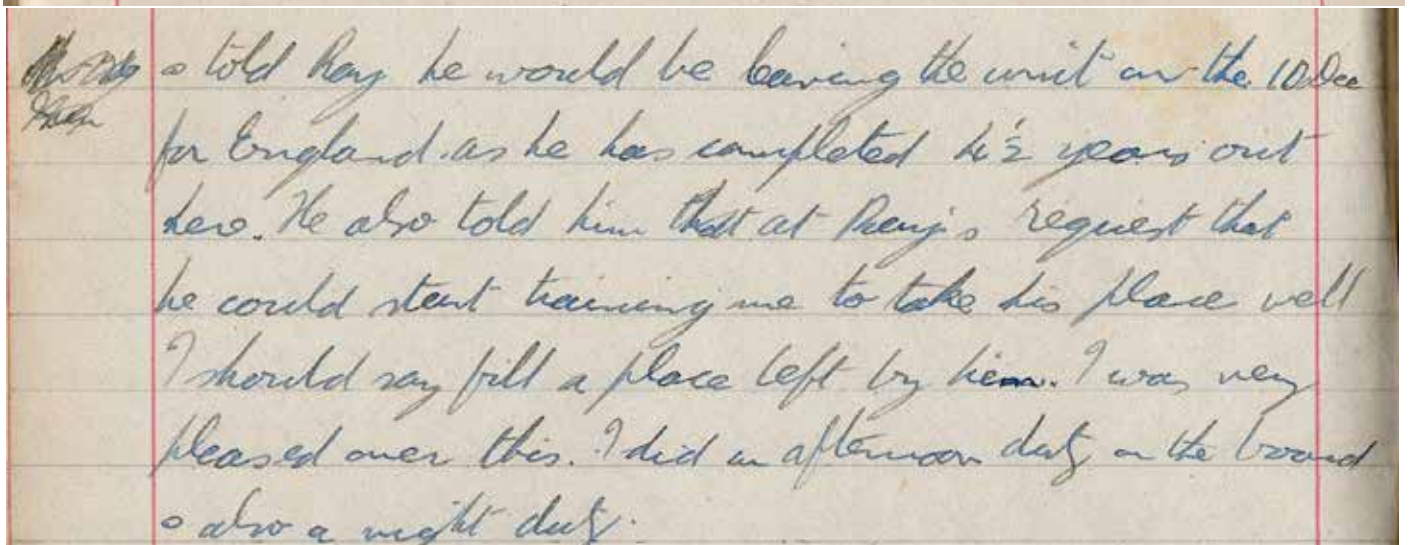
Nov 24. Duty in the morning feel I shall be telling these officers full with their own importance where to get off one day & landing myself in clink. Sgt Coulson sent my registered off today for the watch. Duty in the evening.

Duty in the morning feel I should be telling these officers full with their own importance where to get off one day & landing myself in clink. Sgt Coulson sent my registered off today for the watch. Duty in the evening.

## Saturday 25th



Nov 25. In the morning did very little we were all sat on our own beds when in walked Capt Randall



& told Ray he would be leaving the unit on the 10 Dec for England as he has completed 4 1/2 years out here. He also told him that at Ray's request that he could start training me to take his place well I should say fill a place left by him. I was very pleased over this. I did an afternoon duty on the board & also a night duty.

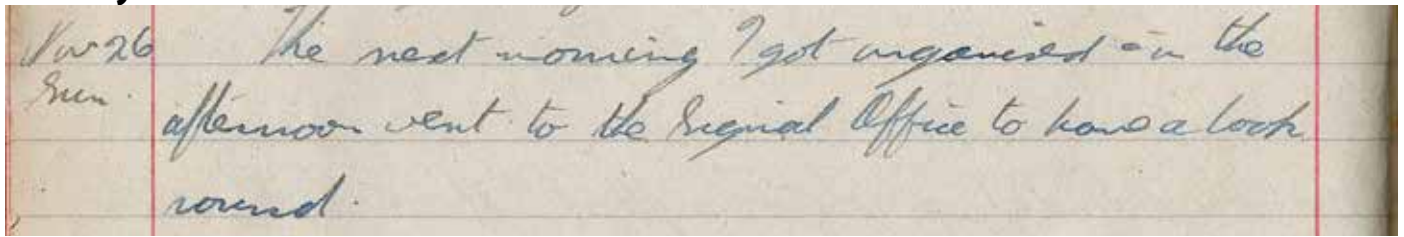
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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

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## Sunday 26th



Nov 26  
Sun. The next morning I got organised in the afternoon went to the Signal Office to have a look round.

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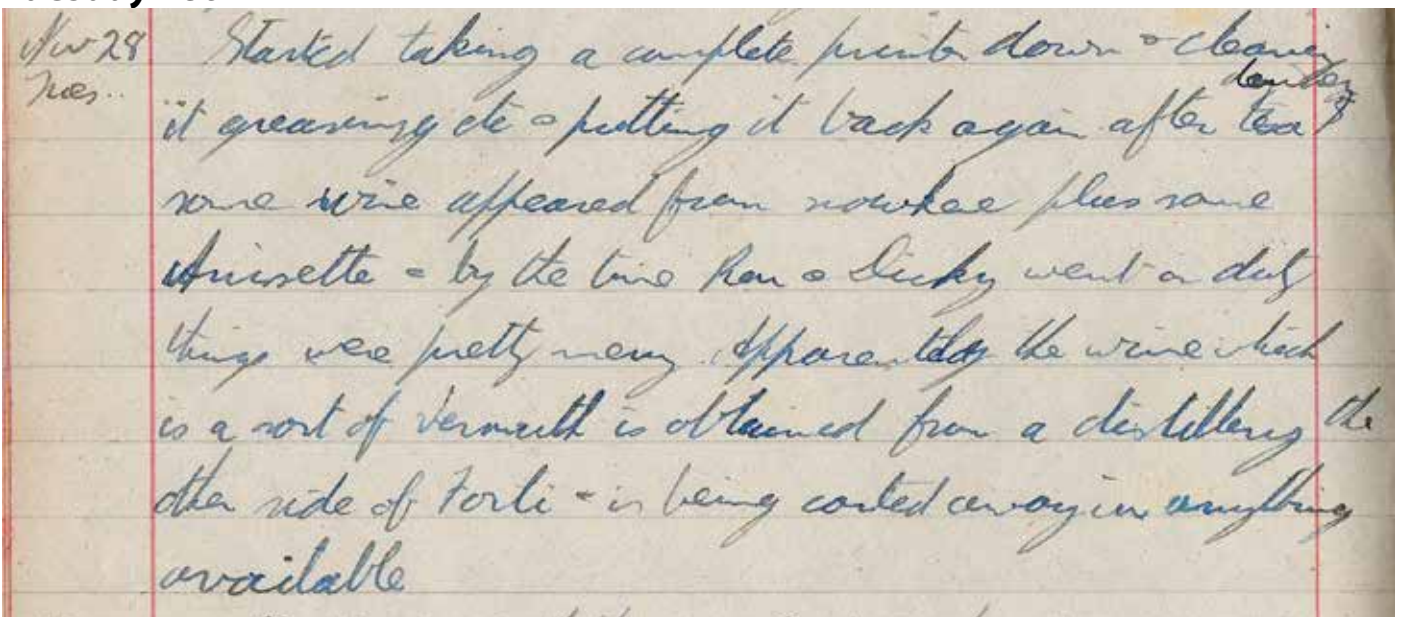
## Monday 27th



Nov 27  
Mon. Another day of faulting the printer I quite like the job but wonder how long it will last.

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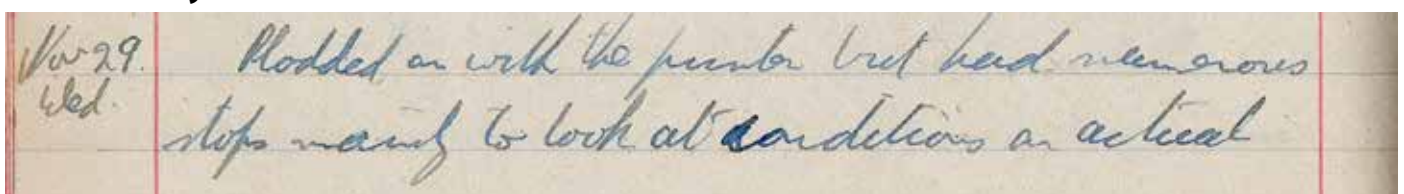
## Tuesday 28th



Nov 28  
Tue. Started taking a complete printer down & cleaning it greasing etc & putting it back again after tea & some wine appeared from nowhere plus some Anisette - by the time Ron & Dicky went on duty things were pretty merry. Apparently the wine which is a sort of Vermouth is obtained from a distillery the other side of Forte & is being carted away in anything available.

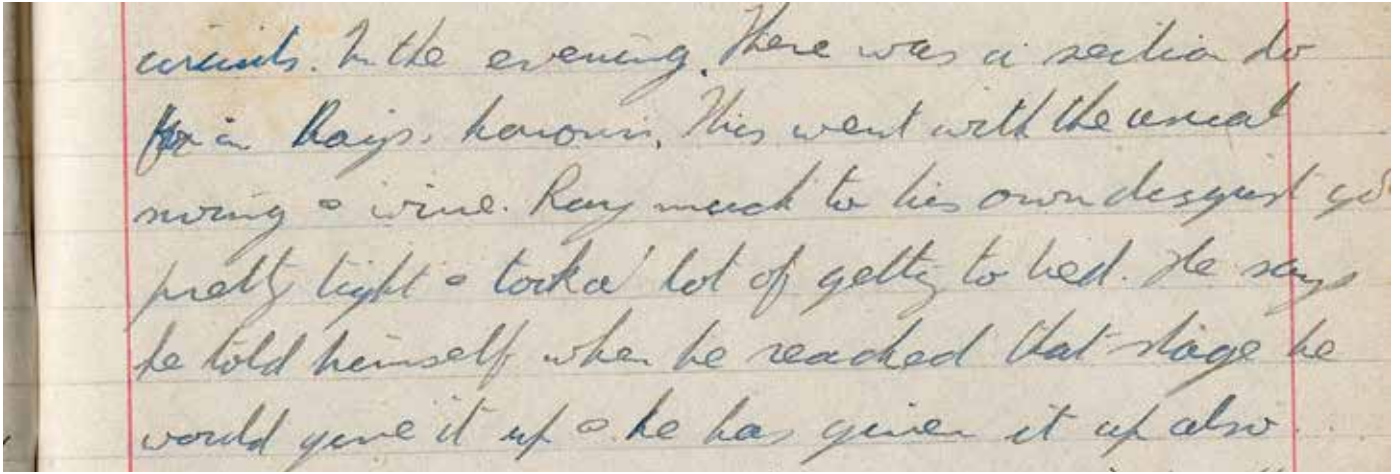
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## Wednesday 29th



Nov 29  
Wed. Plodded on with the printer but had numerous stops mainly to look at conditions on actual

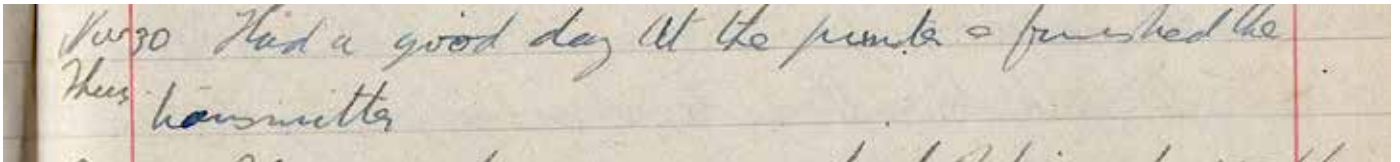
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



circuits. In the evening there was a section do  
for in Ray's honour. This went with the usual  
morning & wine. Ray much to his own disgust got  
pretty tight & took a lot of getting to bed. He says  
he told himself when he reached that stage he  
would give it up & he has given it up also.

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## Thursday 30th



Nov 30 Had a good day at the printer & finished the  
transmitter

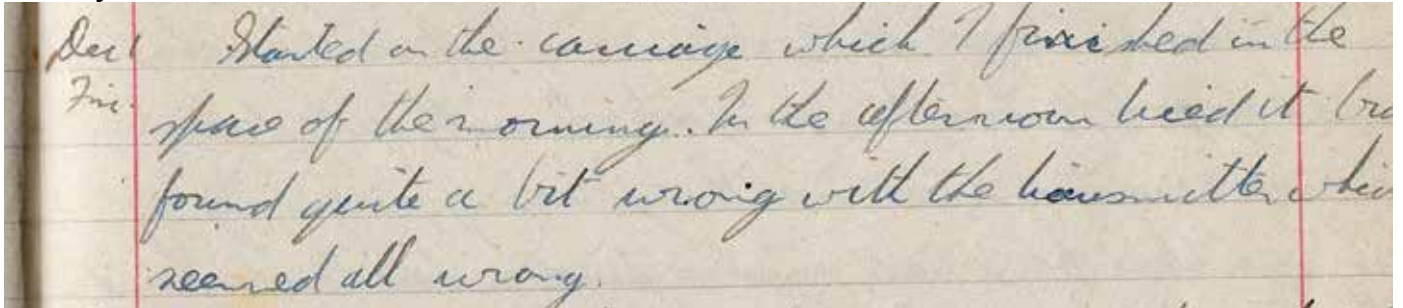
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## DECEMBER 1944

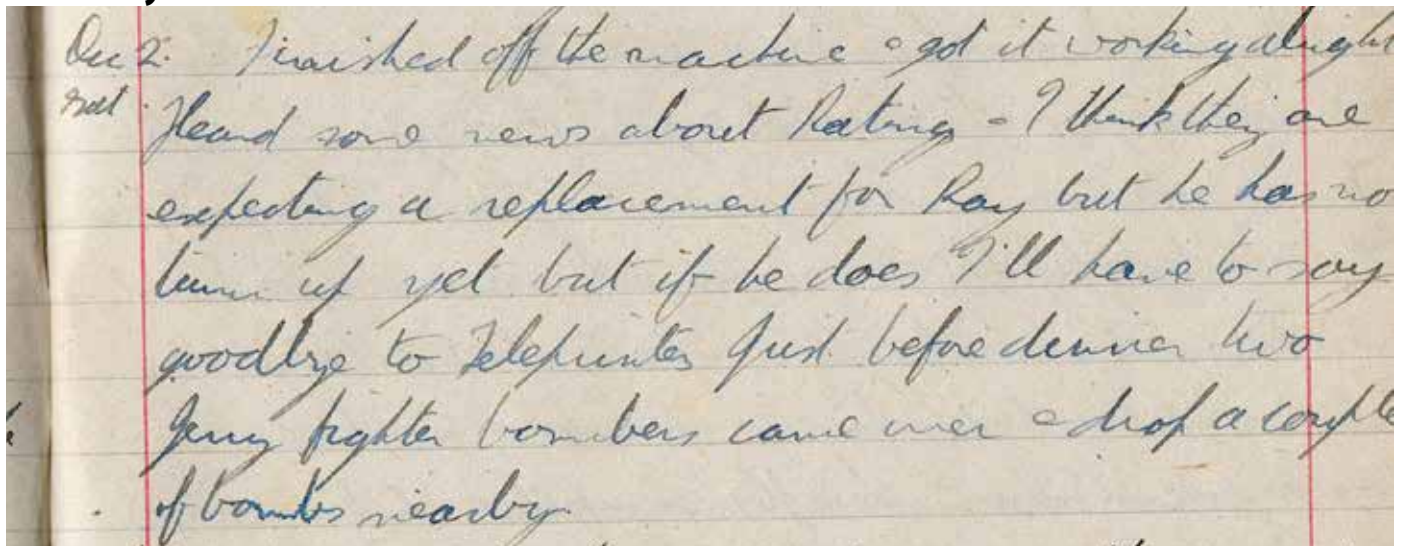
### Friday 1st



Dec 1  
Fri Started on the carriage which I finished in the space of the morning. In the afternoon tried it but found quite a bit wrong with the transmitter which seemed all wrong.

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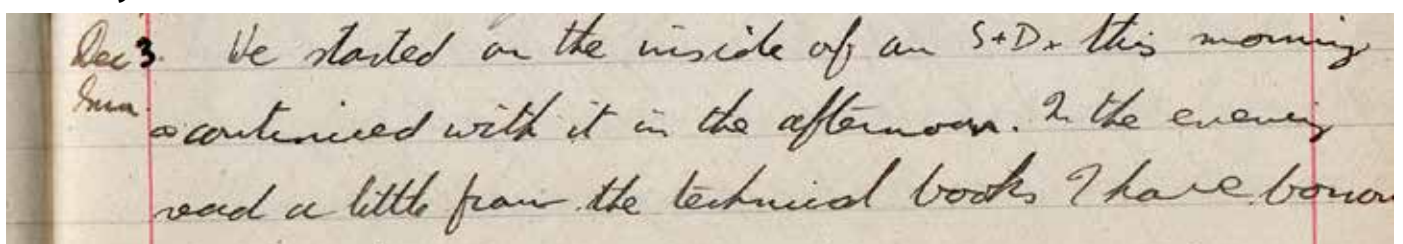
### Saturday 2nd



Dec 2  
Sat Finished off the machine & got it working alright. Heard some news about posting - I think they are expecting a replacement for Ray but he has not turned up yet but if he does I'll have to say goodbye to teleprinters Just before dinner two Jerry fighter bombers came over & drop a couple of bombs nearby.

Finished off the machine & got it working alright. Heard some news about posting & I think they are expecting a replacement for Ray but he has not turned up yet but if he does I'll have to say goodbye to teleprinters Just before dinner two Jerry fighter bombers came over & drop a couple of bombs nearby.

### Sunday 3rd



Dec 3  
Sun We started on the inside of an S+D this morning & continued with it in the afternoon. In the evening read a little from the technical books I have borrowed.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Monday 4th

Dec 4  
Mon.  
Tried to get a shower this morning but the shop was closed & so I walked on a ten minute walk to the other place but there was too big a queue there so I had to give it up. & went down to the Signal Office.

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Tuesday 5th

Dec 5  
Tues.  
This morning it was decided that the workshop would have to go to the TMO's - that Ray & Ron were to work down there. The idea being to try & force a decision to get the workroom back at the SO when Ray goes. In the afternoon Jock & I really got down to the S+D & found out one thing wrong anyway.

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Wednesday 6th

Dec 6  
Wed.  
Went for a bath & also had a haircut. Heard that due to one of the new SBO's going back I might have to go on the board again its a poor do really.

Went for a bath & also had a haircut. Heard that due to one of the new SBO's going back I might have to go on the board again its a poor do really.

Thursday 7th

Dec 7  
Thurs.  
We were very busy moving the workroom upstairs & had difficulty in moving the a wooden cabinet down. it was alright once we started though

December 1944255



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

We were very busy moving the workroom upstairs & had difficulty in moving a wooden cabinet down. It was alright once we started though.

## Friday 8th

Dec 8  
Fri. Tested a batch of new printers & worked on a keyboard also in the afternoon fitted up two SVR 13 for the power supply for a couple of the motors.

Tested a batch of new printers & worked on a keyboard also in the afternoon fitted up two SVR13 for the power supply for a couple of the motors.

## Saturday 9th

Dec 9  
Sat Ray's last day here & he is getting quite excited & who would not be going home tomorrow.

Ray's last day here & he is getting quite excited & who would not be going home tomorrow.

## Sunday 10th

Dec 10  
Sun. Ray was up early & we saw him off on his way home. The day wore on peacefully Dave had done the previous night duty. It was about 1630 & we were all in the printer room Jack & Ron near the far end & I just inside the door. Just then it happened so quick we hardly realised what had happened. Without a warning I heard two shots from the Bog. People started moving quickly about & then the air seemed to be alive. Part of the room above the printer room fell through in to the printer tracks, appeared in the walls plaster & dust was falling everywhere a bomb had dropped but we did not hear any explosion the reason being it was so very near the Signal office it had dropped in the garden behind the house. Luckily the house was protected by 150



## Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

tracks - are out building. Well after everyone there he  
subsided we started to collect ourselves the printer  
room was a shambles I shouted to Ron & asked him  
how he was he said OK. I went outside & the exch  
truck had a terrific hole in the roof & Dick was  
at the door with a pained look on his face & another  
fellow helped him down his leg was bent & he was

agony. We carried him away from the signal  
Office & laid him down the other bloke went for the  
M.O. I then went back to the printer room & help to  
extricate Jock who was braced behind a printer  
we carried him outside on a door. he was bent  
but still alive. Ron had been hit in the back with  
something & also cut his knuckle but was alright  
Then the work started. we had to get organised &  
the first thing was lights. The generators we braced  
but were dug out & we started up that was enough  
for us we had lights laid on pretty quick another  
room was started & we set about salvaging  
the printers & setting up again. Everyone was working  
the house next door one of our billets was completely  
destroyed & parties were working hard to get out  
the trapped fellows. By 0300 hrs. we had all circuit  
back in again. 6 of them quite good really a new  
exchange was also in operation.

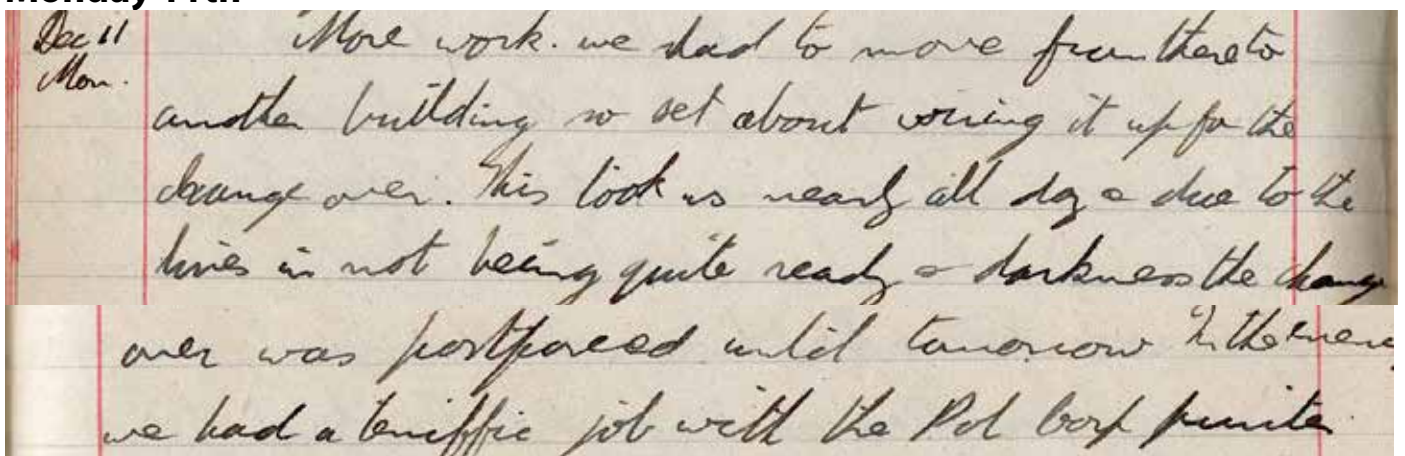
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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

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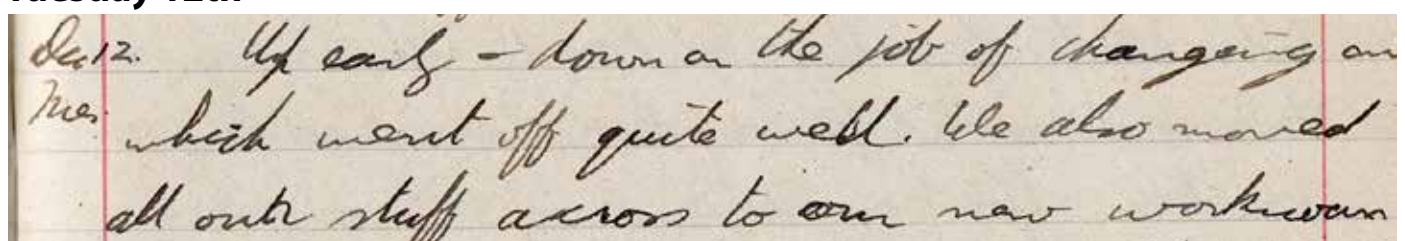
## Monday 11th



Dec 11  
Mon. More work. we had to move from there to another building so set about wiring it up for the change over. This took us nearly all day & due to the lines in not being quite ready & darkness the change over was postponed until tomorrow. In the evening we had a terrific job with the Pol Corp printer.

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## Tuesday 12th



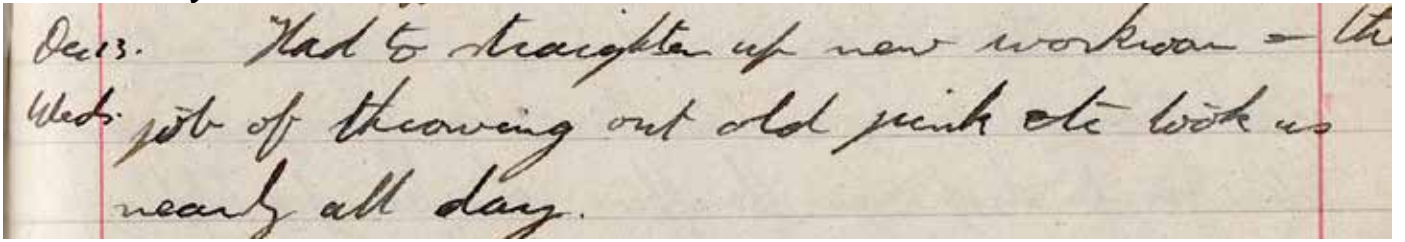
Dec 12.  
Tue. Up early - down on the job of changing over which went off quite well. We also moved all our stuff across to our new workshop.

Up early & down on the job of changing over which went off quite well. We also moved all  
1 I think this is the action that he received the Mention in Dispatches for.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

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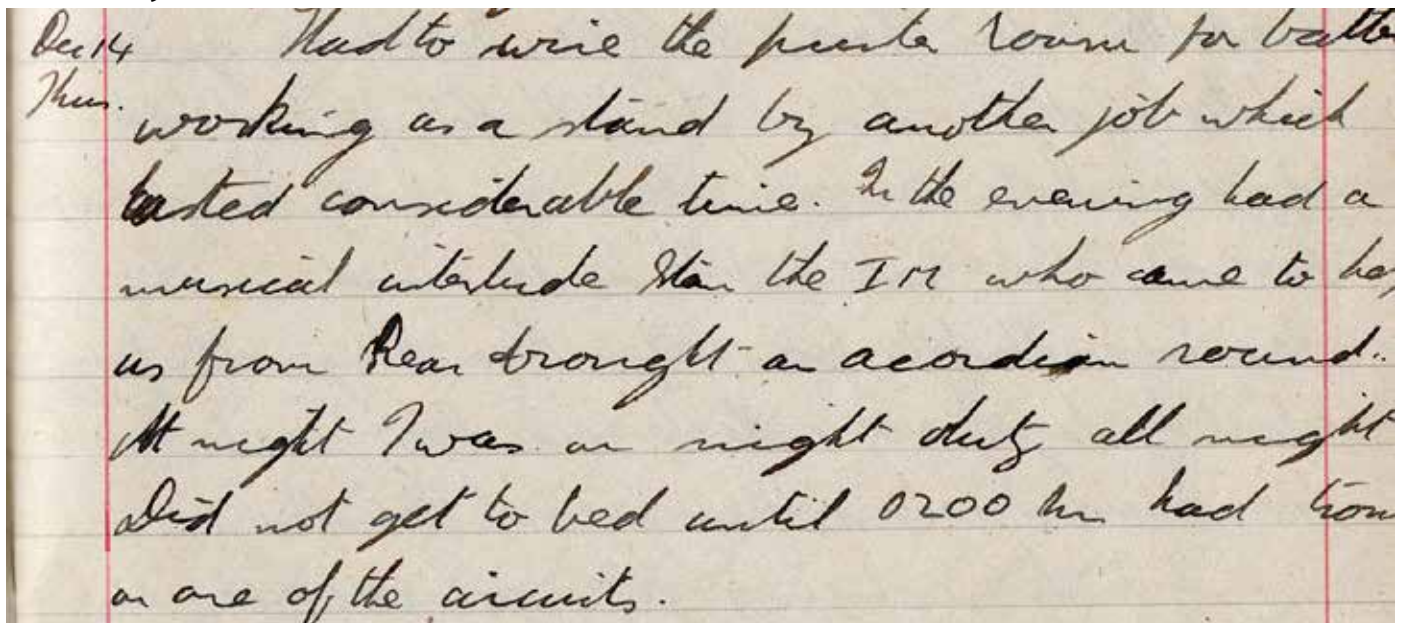
## Wednesday 13th



Dec 13. Had to straighten up new workroom - the  
Wed. job of throwing out old junk etc took us  
nearly all day.

Had to straighten up new workroom & then job of throwing out old junk etc. took us nearly all day.

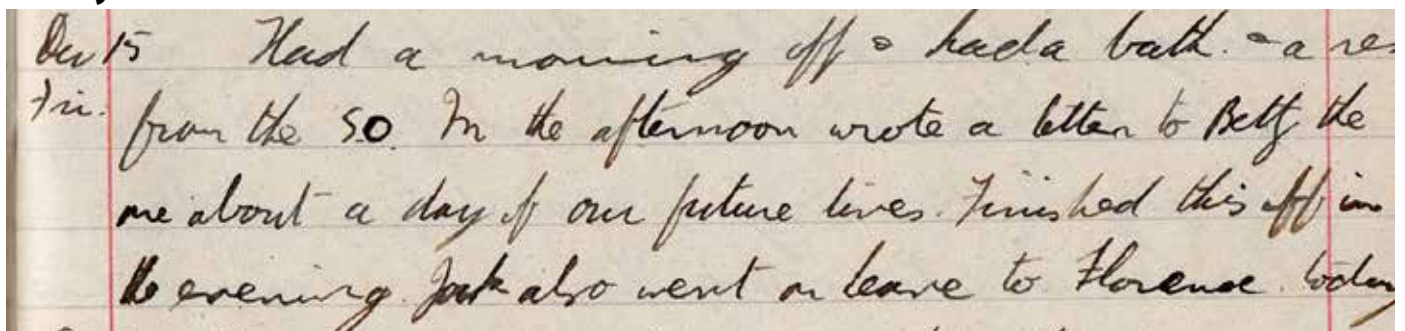
## Thursday 14th



Dec 14  
Thurs. Had to wire the printer room for battery  
working as a stand by another job which  
lasted considerable time. In the evening had a  
musical interlude Stan the IM who came to help  
us from Rear brought an accordion round.  
At night I was on night duty all night.  
Did not get to bed until 0200 hrs had trouble  
on one of the circuits.

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## Friday 15th



Dec 15  
Fri. Had a morning off - had a bath - a rest  
from the SO. In the afternoon wrote a letter to Betty the  
one about a day of our future lives. Finished this off in  
the evening. Jock also went on leave to Florence today.

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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Saturday 16th

Dec 16. The morning passed very easily with not very much doing. Started on the two teleprinters we have there which need fixing. After dinner went down early & none knowing I was there went round to Ron for an IM. Ron had a bit of a do with the Sgt over it. In the evening went down to do a spot for Ron & Dave. I received quite a few letters two from Betty

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Sunday 17th

Dec 17  
Sun  
Ron & I were down on duty first cleared out the good teleprinters round to the section office just in case other bombs drop near the office. Also fix up a teleprinter line to the Public Phone in the Office. In the evening wrote a letter to Betty - went on nights with Ron. We had a bit of a do with the T.T. & when we were seeing things straight Ron went to bed & I after a little trouble turned in at 0300. Received another letter from Betty with something rather funny about this day of ours - ~~she~~ he said that I was to <sup>light</sup> write the fire & I have already written to her with that effect.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

already written to her with that effect.

## Monday 18th

Dec 18  
Mon. In the morning got organised once more & changed my underclothes. After which had a slight kip. In the afternoon felt browned off & went to pictures with Tony. In the evening I was on duty again. Dave & Ron had connected a test point up & I connect two SVR-13 up for power for testing the teleprinter also put an S+D on test to see if it would run off mains it didn't.

In the morning got organised once more & changed my underclothes. After which had a slight kip. In the afternoon felt browned off went to pictures with Tony. In the evening I was on duty again. Dave & Ron had connected a test point up & I connect two SVR-13 up for power for testing the teleprinter also put our S+D on test to see if it would run off the mains it didn't

## Tuesday 19th

Dec 19  
Tue. On duty all day with Dave in the morning had to clear faults on governor of new machine found it in the choke box. In afternoon further tested a machine & in the evening wrote to Betty had very little trouble with the printers.

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## Wednesday 20th

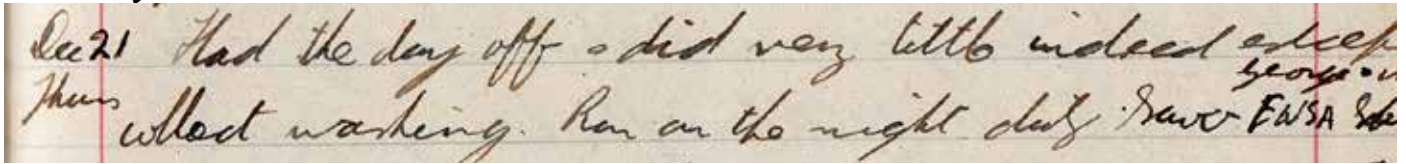
Dec 20  
Wed. Was rather late in getting up slept pretty heavily during the night. Usual job of testing printer in the morning had some more gruff on T.T. business. Usual day. At night went on duty with Ron we both slept the whole time.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

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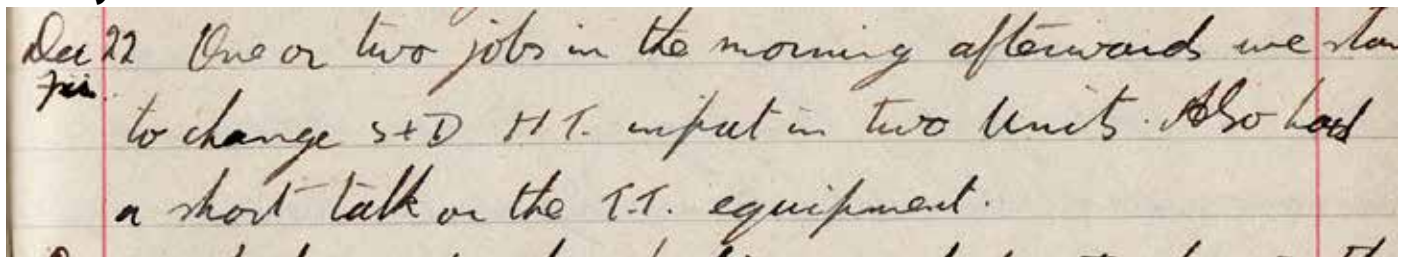
## Thursday 21st



Dec 21 Had the day off - did very little indeed except collect washing. Ron on the night duty. Saw George & May ENSA show.

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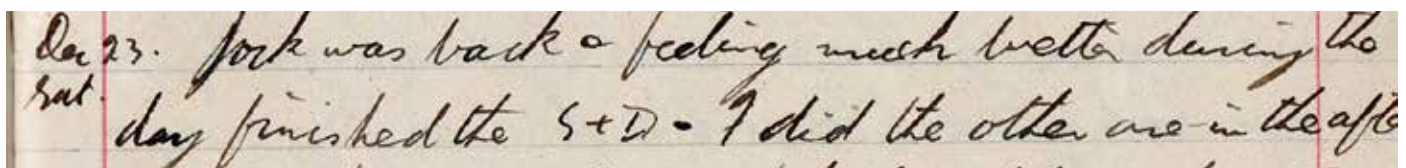
## Friday 22nd



Dec 22 One or two jobs in the morning afterwards we started to change S+D HT input in two units. Also had a short talk on the T.T. equipment.

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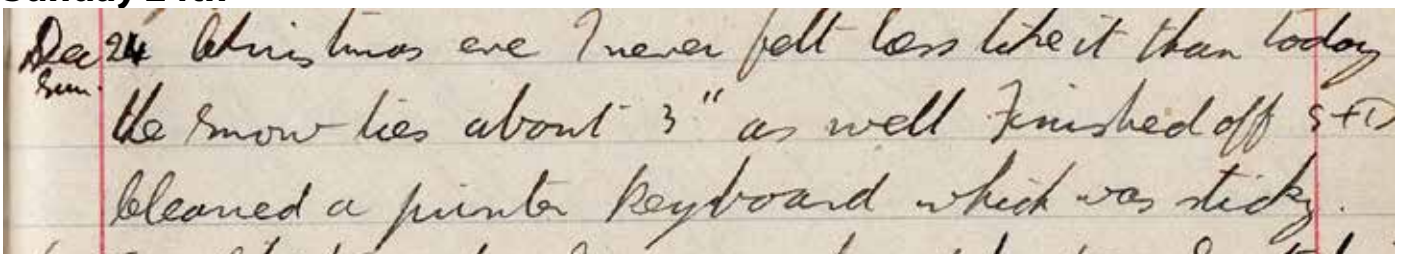
## Saturday 23rd



Dec 23. Jock was back & feeling much better during the day finished the S+D - I did the other one in the afternoon.

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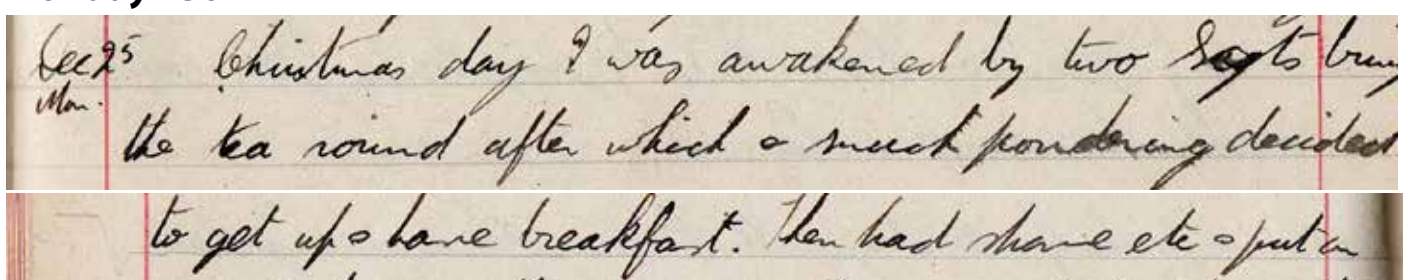
## Sunday 24th



Dec 24 Christmas eve I never felt less like it than today the snow lies about 3" as well finished off S+D & cleaned a printer keyboard which was sticky.

Christmas eve I never felt less like it than today the snow lies about 3" as well. Finished off S+D & cleaned a printer keyboard which was sticky.

## Monday 25th



Dec 25 Christmas day I was awakened by two soft bangs the tea round after which a much pondering decided to get up & have breakfast. Then had shave etc & put on

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

my posh B.D. after cleaning the room up. We then watch the high spot of the day the Skeleton SO relief going on this included many officers Capt Randall wearing a sword in its scabbard. Went to the Naafi for a cake & then had a couple of drinks before dinner this being pork went down very well. The Officers waited on us & also some Ensa girls from the show "George & Margaret." after dinner went to bed & after tea we all gathered round the fires & Robbie played his banjo & we drank & sang & finally broke up about 2300 hrs after being quite merry.

Christmas day I was awakened by two Sgts bringing the tea round after which & much pondering decided to get up & have breakfast. Then had shave etc. & put on my posh B.D. after cleaning the room up. We then watch the high spot of the day the skeleton SO relief going on this included many officers Capt Randall wearing a sword in its scabbard. Went to the Naffi for a cake & then had a couple of drinks before dinner this being pork went down very well. The officers waited on us & also some Ensa girls from the show "George & Margaret" after dinner went to bed & after tea we all gathered round the fires & Robbie played his banjo & we drank & sang & finally broke up about 2300 hrs after being quite merry.

## Tuesday 26th

Boxing day this day to me has become even more dear than Christmas day as it holds a very dear memory to me I spent the day very quietly & we had one or two jobs to do

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## Wednesday 27th

After doing the morning maintenance went to had a bath & it was really cold after that



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

had a haircut & then tiffin. In the evening went on duty for Ron who was trying to buy a violin under Dave's guidance.

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## Thursday 28th

Dec 28 Up early once more & went down to the S.O. but there was very little to do. In the afternoon there was a real tragedy Colin shot himself whether this was accidental or not I don't know. but it has come as a shock to us all especially Tony who heard in a peculiar way.

Up early once more & went down to the S.O. but there was very little to do. In the afternoon there was a real tragedy Colin shot himself whether this was accidental or not I don't know but it has come as a shock to us all especially Tony who heard in a peculiar way.

## Friday 29th

Dec 29 Usual sort of day ending up with our section party which was a very good effort. We had the smaller men round two long tables opposite one another & one across the top. White paper served as table cloths & it was a lovely meal Roast beef turkey stuffing potatoes cauliflower & then a sort of apple tart tea cigarettes & afterwards vino. There was a speech by Capt Randal & Mr Jones both very good followed by sing song & individual musical numbers.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

... finally finishing up with a dance among our only one person was tight & it was a very respectable do

Usual sort of day ending up with our section party which was a very good effort we had the smaller mess room two long tables opposite one another & one across the top. White paper served as table cloths & it was a lovely meal Roast beef turkey stuffing potatoes cauliflower & then a sort of apple tart tea cigarettes & afterwards vino. There was a speech by Capt Randall & Mr Jones both very good followed by sing song & individual numbers & finally finishing up with a dance among ourselves only one person who was tight & it was a very respectable do.

## Saturday 30th

Dec 30  
Sat Day of clearing up in the S.O. etc. of machines

A day of clearing up in the S.O. etc. of machines.

## Sunday 31st

Dec 31  
Sun The last day of 1944. Had quite a day Ron & I went back in the evening - tried to finish off

The diesel & water stove we had built for the central heating but were snookered on the last position in not having a box to stand the tins on. Went back had a cup of Ovaltine & a talk - were in bed before midnight

The last day of 1944. Had quite a day Ron & I went back in the evening & tried to finish off the diesel & water stove we had built for the central heating but were snookered on the last position in not having a box to stand the tins on. Went back had a cup of ovaltine & a talk & were in bed before midnight



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

## JANUARY 1945

**Monday 1st**

1945  
Jan 1st  
Mon  
The dawning of what we all hope to be a really good year as we all hope to see the end of the war I certainly do as it will mean the possibility of seeing Betty again something which I do want to happen very much.

The dawning of what we all hope to be a really good year as we all hope to see the end of the war. I certainly do as it will mean the possibility of seeing Betty again something which I do want to happen very much

**Tuesday 2nd**

Jan 2nd  
Tues  
Quite a day at the office swapped a number of circuits about - in the evening we were all caught on the hop down there with lights going out & two faults in the switch on the modified S+Ds it was terrific.

Quite a day at the office swapped a number of circuits about - In the evening we were all caught on the hop down there with lights going out & two faults in the switch on the modified S+Ds it was terrific

**Wednesday 3rd**

Jan 3rd  
Wed  
Battery had to be changed what a job it is I am glad it does not happen every day. We had quite a number of punters to alter & adjust - took us the better part of the day.

Battery had to be changed what a job it is I am glad it does not happen every day. We had

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

quite a number of printers to alter & adjust- took us the better part of the day.

Thursday 4th

Jan 4 Mail situation very slow indeed. expect they  
thurs. are just getting over Christmas with it. The weather  
now is quite snowy. a boy is it cold. The powers  
that be are deciding to hold a dance it is to  
take place next Thursday out of a total of  
50 couples going the number allocated to  
our unit is 15 barely 1 man per section  
not a very good effort really is it? Robbie  
had a pleasant surprise on Sunday he was  
told out of 30 names put into the hat he  
was one of five picked out to go home on  
a months leave. One of Mr Churchill's  
LIAP boys. He is going to get married. which  
is a good thing for him really as his girl will  
not then have to go abroad. Had a letter from  
Dick today (which is the 10) He has got a fracture  
Feena or Thigh & has his leg in plaster stuck  
up in the air. Was for rang me up today but  
I was unable to speak to him he was under  
the impression I had been hurt expect he had  
heard of our bombing episode.

Mail situation very slow indeed expect they are just getting over Christmas with it. The weather now is quite snowy & boy is it cold. The powers that be are deciding to hold a dance it is to take place next Thursday out of a total of 50 couples going the number allocated to our unit is 15 barely 1 man per section not a very good effort really is it? Robbie had a pleasant surprise on Sunday he was told out of 30 names put into the hat his

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

was one of the five picked out to go home on a months leave. Due to Mr Churchill's LIAP<sup>1</sup> boys. He is going to get married which is a good thing for him really as his girl will not have to go abroad. Had a letter from Dicky today (which is the 10) He has got a fractured femur or thigh & has his leg in plaster strung up in the air. Chas tor rang me up today but I was unable to speak to him he was under the impression I had been hurt expect he had heard of our bombing episode.

## Thursday 11th

Jan 11th This is a week of more cold wet & damp weather. I went to see the Barber of Seville given by the Florence Opera Company. It was very good although the Soprano was a bit off. I saw a smacking show given by the boys in 2 A.G.R.A. & were they good it lasted for 4 hrs. & was the panto Ali Baba, in which with an all male cast they had ballet, & Fairy (good) & puniers etc it was amazing & needed seeing to believing. Robbie started on his way on the 13<sup>th</sup> & Surf arrived back on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Dave has gone on leave to Florence & we have some jobs down here now. Got them learning teleprinting - 3 teleprinter maintenance. Eugene who was with us before has wangled himself the job of interpreter. Have been to the big Maafi which has opened up called the "Berkeley" it is very good having snack bar wine bar wet bar. Dining Hall with a band playing Table Tennis, Billiard reading

1 PYTHON was leave after 4 years abroad LIAP reduced this to 2 years 9 months.

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

writing rooms it is very good indeed. Did my first night duty on my own on Thursday 18th was very successful but I'm afraid I have developed a terrific cold which is not so good at all. The Russians have launched a terrific winter offensive from Poland in the first week they are 1/4 the way to Berlin.

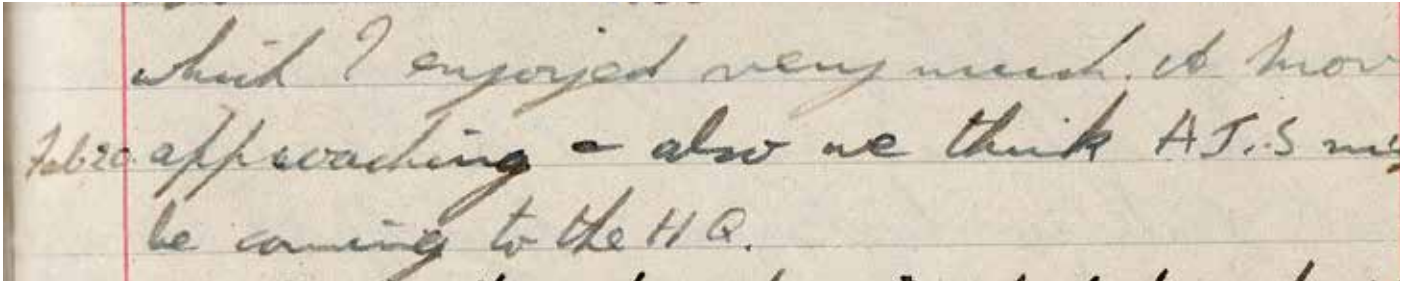
A week of more cold, wet & dampness. Went to see "The Barber of Seville" given by the Florence Opera Company. It was very good although the soprano was a bit off. I saw a smashing show given by the boys in 2 AGRA & were they good it lasted for 4 hrs. & was the panto Ali Baba. In which with an all male cast they had ballet & fairy (good) & princess etc. it was amazing & needed seeing to believing. Robbie started on his way on the 13th & duly arrived back on the 17th. Dave has gone on leave to Florence & we have some Poles down here now. 6 of them learning teleprinting & 3 teleprinter maintenance. Eugene who was with us before has wangled himself the job of interpreter. Have been to the big Naafi which has opened up called the "Berkley" it is very good Having snack bar wine bar nett bar. Dining Hall with a band playing Table tennis, Billiard reading & writing rooms it is very good indeed. Did my first night duty on my own on Thursday & it was very successful but I'm afraid I have developed a terrific cold which is not so good at all. The Russians have launched a terrific winter offensive from Poland & in the first week they are 1/4 the way to Berlin.

## Friday 19th

Nothing particular has happened. We heard from Robbie who has got married honeymooning at the moment. Tom & Ron been to Florence on leave. Also Ron closed the deal with Joe - has bought a vic. I have been approached by Staff Randal changing my trade & I am intent of learning Keyboard Operating now. have also launched out & been to a



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



which I enjoyed very much. A move  
Feb. 20 approaching - also we think A.T.S. may  
be coming to the H.Q.

Nothing particular has happened. We have heard from Robbie who has got married & honey mooning at the moment. Ian & Ron have been to Florence on leave. Also Ron closed the deal with Joe & has bought a violin. I have been approached by Capt. Randall to changing my trade & I am intent of on learning keyboard operating now. I have also launched out & been to a dance which I enjoyed very much. A move is approaching & also we think A.T.S.<sup>2</sup> might be coming to the H.Q.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## FEBRUARY 1945

Tuesday 20th

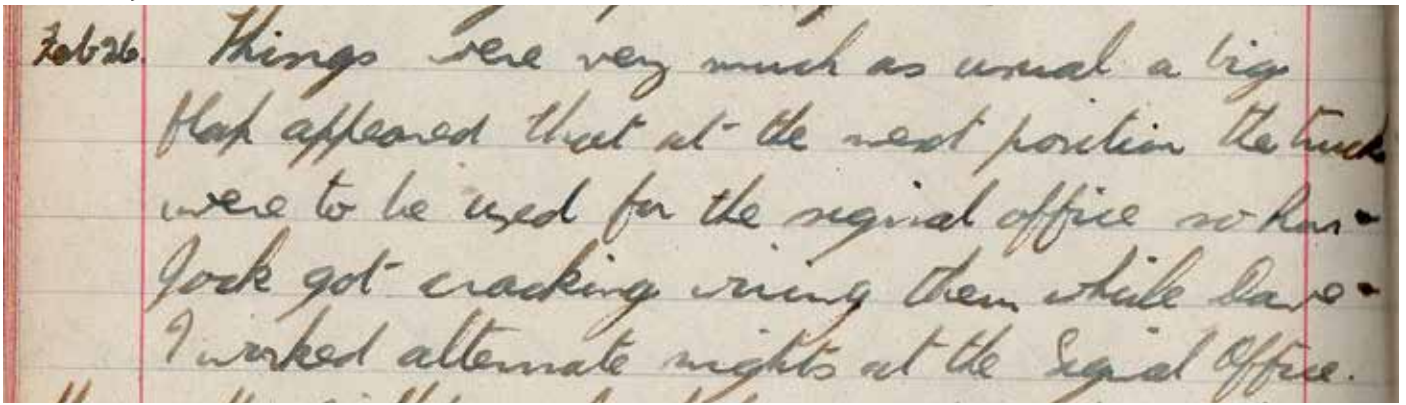
During the week a few incidents have happened. Ron first of all was told he was going home on this LIAP business & then they found they had not included everyone in the draw & they cancelled Ron's because he was not drawn the second time. Tom has got a stripe now as he expected to. I have been on the S.O. Roster as a K.B.L. for the last few days for some practice in an attempt to re-master. The other night I had gone to the pictures & was just waiting for the show to start when Tom & Eugene came in & dragged me out. As the class had now finished they were having a bit of a do & had hired a room & had cakes & vino laid on & it was a good do also. Heads were a bit heavy the next day especially Ron's

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# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Monday 26th

A photograph of a handwritten diary entry on lined paper. The text is written in cursive and matches the typed transcription below. The entry is dated 'Feb 26' and describes a change in plans for trucks at a signal office.

Feb 26. Things were very much as usual. a big flap appeared that at the next position the trucks were to be used for the signal office so Ron & Jock got cracking wiring them while Dave & I worked alternate nights at the Signal Office.

Things were very much as usual a big flap appeared that at the next position the trucks were to be used for the signal office so Ron & Jock got cracking wiring them while Dave & I worked alternate nights at the signal office.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## MARCH 1945

Saturday 10th

Mar 10. My Birthday - luckily my day off we had a bit of a do. We bought 8 litres of wine - had about 10 bottles of beer. Also by means of going to the naafi - each buying more cakes than we could eat got some cakes. The people who came were Ron Tom Tony Colin, George Jock, Eugene, Eugene Picolo, Jamie & Ian - also Dave looked in for some time too. The party went with quite a swing having Tony on the mouth organ. Eugene piccolo on the piano accordion Ron & also Ian on the violin. Colin got tight very soon & we had to take him home. Ron & I managed to stay sober & another incident which was funny was the stove pipe falling & hitting Eugene on the head. The next day we were all on duty & what a mess we had to clean up first.

My birthday & luckily my day off we had a bit of a do. We bought 8 litres of wine & had about 10 bottles of beer also by means of going to the naafi & each buying more cakes than we could eat got some cakes. The people who came were Ron Tom Tony Colin, George Jock, Eugene, Eugene Picolo, Jamie & Ian & also Dave looked in for some time too. The party went with quite a swing having Tony on the mouth organ. Eugene piccolo on the piano accordion Ron & also Ian on the violin. Colin got tight very soon & we had to take him home. Ron & I managed to stay sober & another incident which was funny was the stove pipe falling & hitting Eugene on the head. The next day we were all on duty & what a mess we had to clean up first.

March 1945273



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

**Tuesday 13th**

Mon 13. Went on leave to Florence & very nice  
Tues. journey there through the appennines but what a  
a road & what dust. Did very little the first  
day except visit the "Robertson Club" the  
big Naafi in Florence & in the evening wrote to  
Betty & home.

Went on leave to Florence & very nice journey there through the appennines but what a road & what dust. Did very little the first day except visit the "Robertson Club" the big Naafi in Florence & in the evening wrote to Betty & home.

**Wednesday 14th**

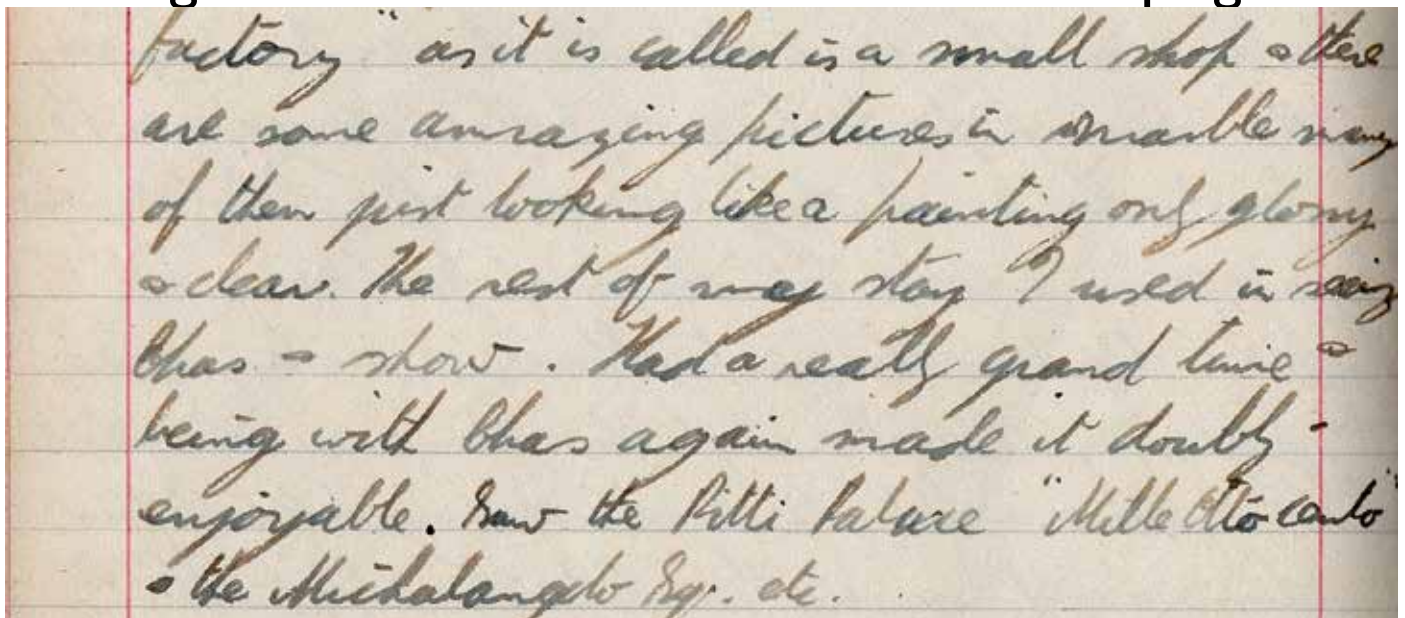
Mon 14. Went to try & see Ron Dusty & Bert who are  
Wed in 15 A.G. & actually managed it had a bit  
of a grip with them & agreed to see them on Saturday.  
I left then & walk into the Robertson Club again  
& who should I see but Charlie sitting waiting for  
a game it was his day off & we had a good  
chat I was very pleased to see him.

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**Thursday 15th**

Mon 15. Went on a tour round the night with  
Thurs. Jack. Saw mainly the "Palazzo Vecchia" &  
the "de' Groce" two very interesting buildings  
we also went in a factory where they make  
mosaic pictures in colored marble. The

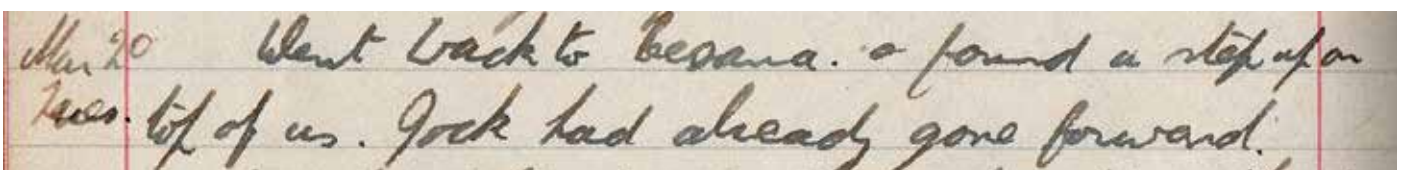
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



factory" as it is called is a small shop & there are some amazing pictures in marble many of them just looking like a painting only glossy & clear. The rest of my stay I used in seeing Chas & show. Had a really grand time & being with Chas again made it doubly enjoyable. Saw the Pitti Palace "Mille alto canto" & the Michelangelo Sq. etc.

Went on a tour round the sights with Jack. Saw mainly the "Palazzo Vecchio" & the "St Croce". Two very interesting buildings we also went in a factory where they make mosaic pictures in coloured marble. The "factory" as it is called is a small shop & there some amazing pictures in marble many of them just looking like a painting only glossy & clear. The rest of my stay I used in seeing Chas & show. Had a really grand time & being with Chas again made it doubly enjoyable. Saw the Pitti Palace "Mille alto canto" & the Michelangelo Sq. etc.

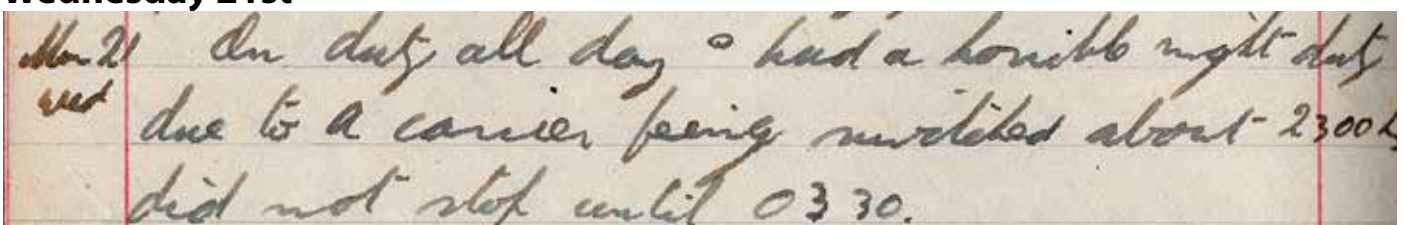
## Tuesday 20th



Mon 20  
Tues. Went back to Cesena. & found a step up on top of us. Jock had already gone forward.

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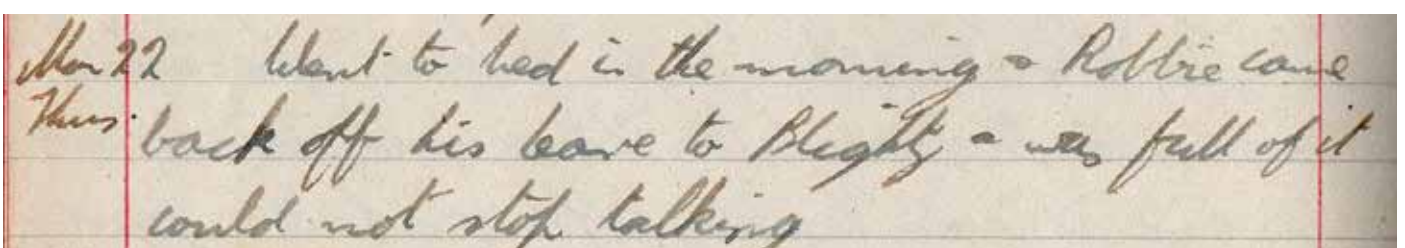
## Wednesday 21st



Mon 21  
Wed on duty all day & had a horrible night duty due to a carrier being switched about 2300 hrs did not stop until 0330.

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## Thursday 22nd



Mon 22  
Thurs. Went to bed in the morning & Robbie came back off his leave to Blighty & was full of it could not stop talking



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Went to bed in the morning & Robbie came back off his leave to Blighty & was full of it could not stop talking

## Friday 23rd

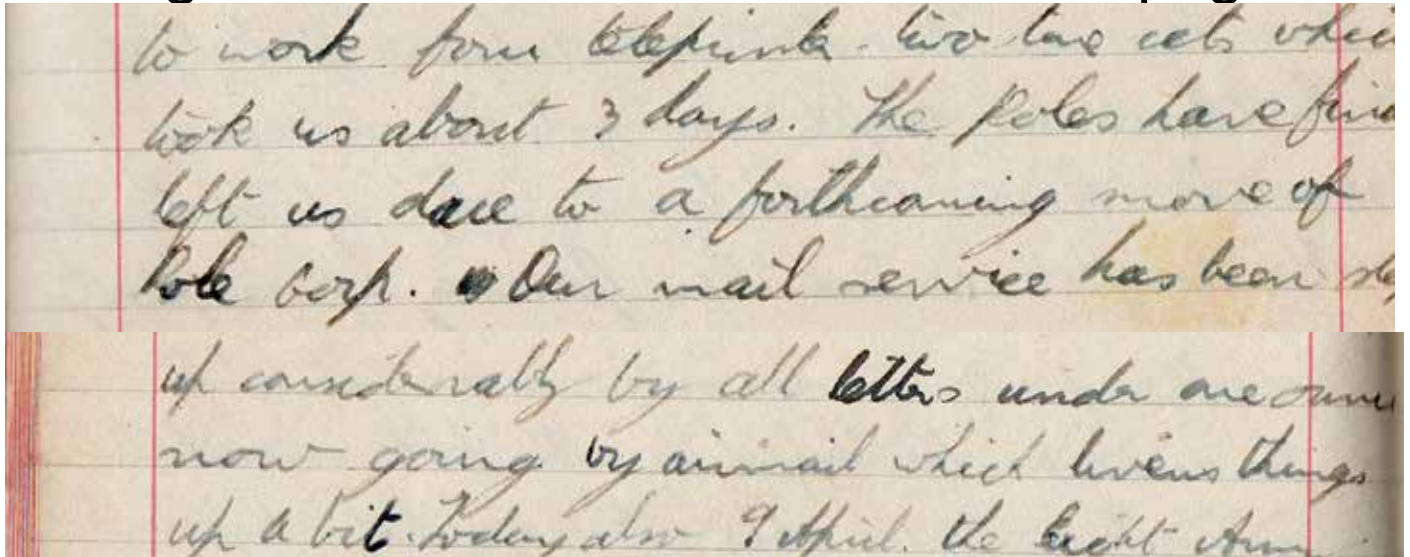
Mon 23.  
Fri Main party moved out - we went up to the new position which is in the field near Forli we all went in a tent the four Poles Ron Ian Tony & I. The signal office being about 2 miles away one has to be carried there in trucks the go at the relief times & make it hard for us who do not work regular shifts. Also the Major has brought on another wave of bull\*\* & we have to lay our kits out. This coupled with the situation of taking over an hour for meals has forced Ron & I to sleep up at the signal office in a room arranged for the purpose.

Main party moved out & we went up to the new position which is in the field near Forli. We all went in a tent the four Poles Ron Ian Tony & I. The signal office being about 4 miles away one has to be carried there in trucks go at the relief times & make it hard for us who do not work regular shifts. Also the Major has brought on another wave of bull\*\*\* & we have to lay our kits out. This coupled with the situation of taking over an hour for meals has forced Ron & I to sleep up at the signal office in a room arranged for the purpose.

## Tuesday 27th

Mon 27. We have had a very good time after all  
Tue. sleeping at the signal office we have made our hide-a-way very comfortable & have the wireless to listen to. We have also been very busy as another step up is on the cards & Ron & I wired out another two

## Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

A photograph of a handwritten note on lined paper. The text is written in cursive and matches the typed transcription below. The paper has two vertical red lines on either side of the text. The handwriting is in dark ink and is somewhat slanted to the right.

to work from teleprinter. two two sets which  
took us about 3 days. The poles have finally  
left us due to a forthcoming move of  
Pole Corp. Our mail service has been stepped  
up considerably by all letters under one ounce  
now going by airmail which livens things  
up a bit. Today also 9 April. The light storm.

We have had a very good time after all sleeping at the signal office we have made our hide-a-way very comfortable & have the wireless to listen to. We have also been very busy as another step up is on the cards & Ron & I wired out another truck to work from teleprinter two line sets which took us about 3 days. The Poles have finally left us due to a forthcoming move of Pole Corp. Our mail service has been stepped up considerably by all the letters under one ounce now going by airmail which livens things up a bit.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## APRIL 1945

Monday 9th

up a bit. Today also 9 April, the Eighth Army started to attack once more in Italy & our Corp 5 goes in at 1920 & Pol at 1930 the bang is on now we can hear it thumping out all afternoon the bombers have been going over. Have received also word I have had a £21 per annum rise also. The battle is going very well & we are going ahead. The water obstacles of the Saticino & Serio were bridged successfully & the Poles pushed on towards Imola. Eugene turned up with 8 Polish boys who were to learn teleprinting but they went back due to the Pole Corp making such a lot of moves. I also went back to Cesena with Dave in order to get some holders for emergency lighting in the trucks. I also went to the shops & made a record to send home to Betty for her birthday hope she gets it in time.

Today also 9 April the Eighth Army started to attack once more in Italy & our corp 5 goes in at 1920 & Pol at 1930 the bang is on now we can hear it thumping out all afternoon the bombers have been going over Have received also word I have had a £21 per annum rise also. The battle is going very well & we are going ahead. The water obstacles of the Saticino & Serio were bridged successfully & the Poles pushed on toward Imola. Eugene turned up with 8 Polish boys who were to learn teleprinting but they went back due to the Pole Corp making such a lot of moves. I also went back to Cesena with Dave in order to get

April 1945278



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

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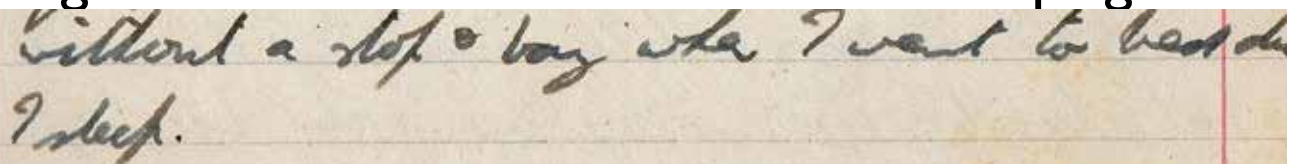
Friday 20th

4/20. We Ran - ? started a step up together with the complete circus. Our journey up was pretty good but passed scenes of violent fighting & arrived at the new location at about 0930 hours. First job was to step - have a cup of tea the place was situated on the high ground above Incola which sits astride Route 9 to Bologna. By midday the signal office was arranged in position. After Piffin Ran - ? set to do the wiring. First our board was placed firmly in position then the wiring I started on the battery leads - Ran brought in the quads - boy we worked solid with a break for dinner until about Midnight. Shipping wire erecting prints etc - then started lining up the T/T. - later the lines from 0400 - 0600 at 0600 they all started to come in - we had a slight mishap in having one S+D set fire - another faulty. but after a hectic morning the others arrived plus the rest of our equipment - a tent worked on until 220

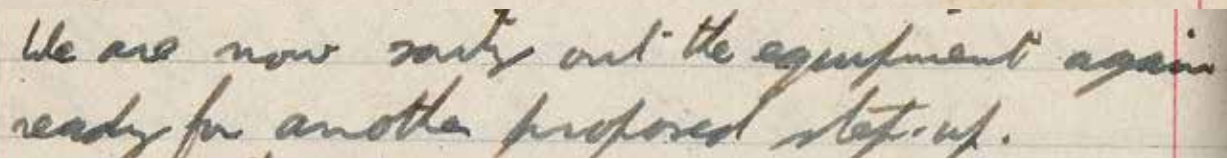
1 We had this at one time but is something else lost on clearing the house after my Mum died. It was very thin and would only play when placed on another record to support it on my sister's old record player. If I ever really heard it I would have been about 5.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



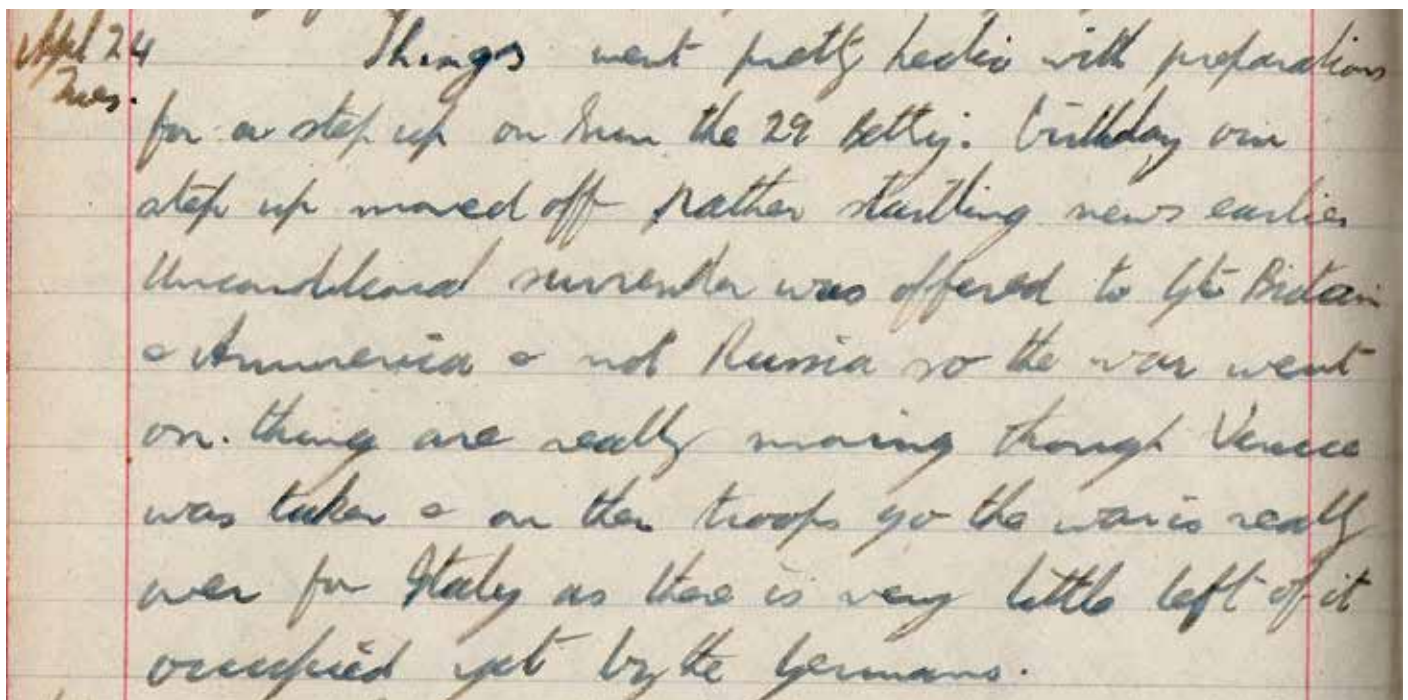
Without a stop & boy when I went to bed did I sleep.



We are now sorting out the equipment again ready for another proposed step-up.

We Ron & I started on step up together with the complete circus. Our journey up was pretty good but passed scenes of violent fighting & arrived at the new location at about 0930 hours. First job was to stop & have a cup of tea the place was situated on the high ground above Imola which sits astride Route 9 to Bologna. By midday the signal office was arranged in position & after tiffin Ron & I set to do the wiring. First our board was placed firmly in position then the wiring I started on the battery leads & Ron brought in the quads & boy we worked solid with a break for dinner until about midnight. Stripping wire erecting printers etc & then started lining up the C/T & later the lines from 0400-0600 at 0600 they all started to come in & we had a slight mishap in having one S+D set fire & another faulty but after a hectic morning the others arrived plus the rest of our equipment & a tent worked on until 2200 without a stop & boy when I went to bed did I sleep. We are now sorting out the equipment again for another proposed step-up.

## Tuesday 24th



April 24  
Tues. Things went pretty hectic with preparations for a step up on Sun the 29 Betty's birthday our step up moved off rather startling news earlier unconditional surrender was offered to Gt. Britain & America & not Russia so the war went on. things are really moving though Venice was taken & on the troops go the war is really over for Italy as there is very little left of it occupied yet by the Germans.

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## Saturday 28th

Mussolini is executed as the Allies take Milan and Venice.

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Mussolini and his mistress, Clara Petacci, were shot by Italian partisans ...

## Sunday 29th

The war in Italy is over

## Monday 30th

4/30  
Ron & I got up 0500 hrs & dismantled the S.O. & packed our kit onto the 155 teleprinter truck which Ron drove this time & I sat beside him only one mishap really in the narrow lane from the camp the engine stalled & we could not get it going for a bit & held up quite a bit of traffic we arrived at the new location 10 miles south of Ferrara before dinner. & after putting up the tent dived into work. Ron doing all the night & I knocked off at about 0030. There are wild rumours around & everyone is expecting the war to finish anytime. Also there are rumours of our unit being split up somewhat.

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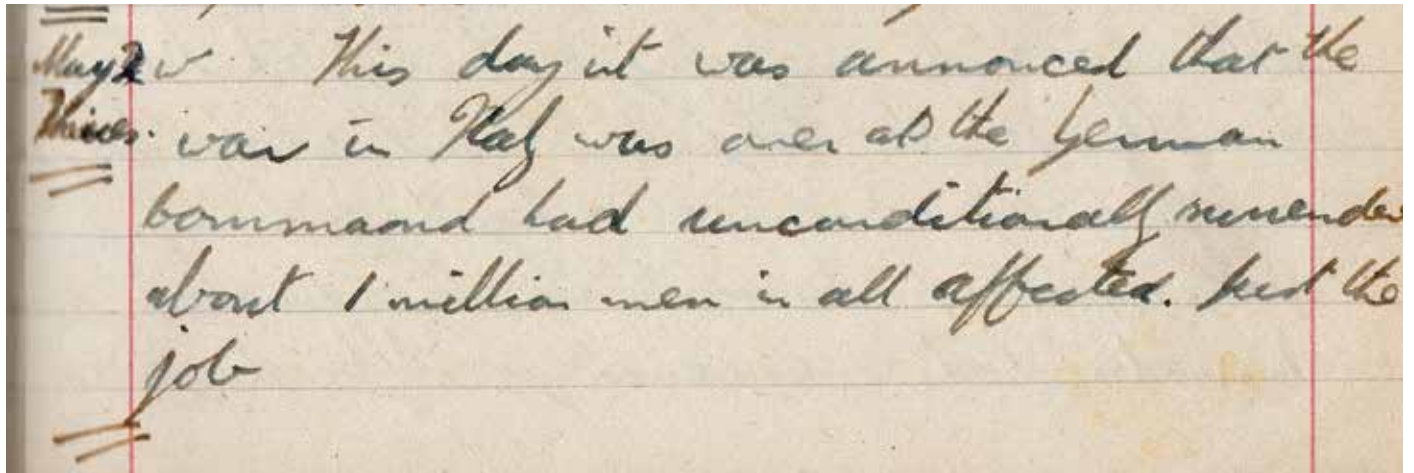


# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## MAY 1945

Wednesday 2nd

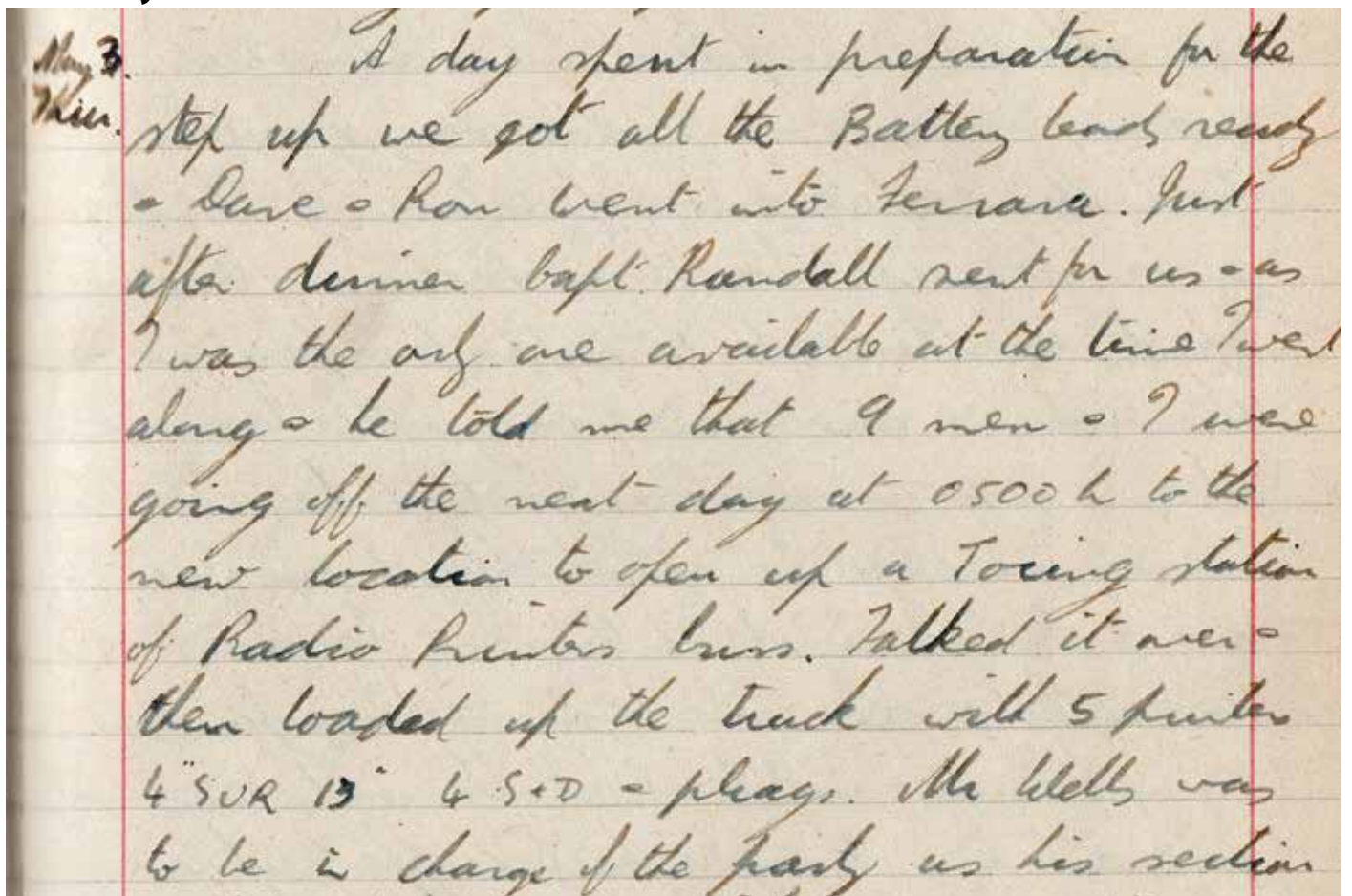
All 1,000,000 troops in Italy and Austria surrender.



May 2<sup>nd</sup> This day it was announced that the  
war in Italy was over as the German  
command had unconditionally surrendered  
about 1 million men in all affected. Just the  
job

This day it was announced that the war in Italy was over as the German command had unconditionally surrendered about 1 million men in all affected. Just the job.

Thursday 3rd



May 3<sup>rd</sup> A day spent in preparation for the  
step up we got all the Battery loads ready  
• Dave • Ron went into Ferrara. Just  
after dinner Capt. Randall sent for us • as  
I was the only one available at the time I went  
along • he told me that 9 men • I were  
going off the next day at 0500 h to the  
new location to open up a Towing station  
of Radio Printer buss. Talked it over •  
then loaded up the truck with 5 printers  
4 SUR 13 4 S+D • plugs. Mr Wells was  
to be in charge of the party as his section

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

was supplying the wireless requirements.  
Slept at the lines that night in Toms bed.

A day spent in preparation for the step up we got all the Battery leads ready & Dave & Ron went into Ferrara. Just after dinner Capt. Randall sent for us & as I was the only one available at the time I went along & he told me that 9 men & I were going off the next day at 0500 hrs to the new location to open up a touring station of radio printers truck. talked it over then loaded up the truck with 5 printers 4 "SVR 13" 4 S+D & plugs. Mr Wells was to be in charge of the party as his section was supplying the wireless requirements slept at the lines that night in Toms bed.

## Friday 4th

May 4  
Fri. we were awakened at 0445 - got packed  
- had breakfast then loaded up - went  
down to meet the conveyance. Our destination  
was Meastre a place near Venezia.  
(venice to you). He made very good time  
had the experience of crossing the Po  
on a bridge built on Pontoon - then we  
ped northwards except for places near  
the rivers are now very little war  
damaged - on entering Meastre itself  
we were amazed to see trolley buses run-  
ning. On arrival at the new location  
everything seems to be disorganised  
& we were not to work the set originally  
planned one thing which cropped up we  
had to fit up a stand by telephone to work  
in "T6V6" the automatic exchange in Meastre  
after much arguing & long breakdown



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

finally got the teleprinter truck installed next to the receiver & I got to work wiring it up to work the two radio printer sets necessary. After dinner

was whisked away in a 15 cwt to Telve complete with teleprinter station & had to fit it up there. Did this but could not test it due to a breakdown on the co set over which it was to work. At about 2300 hrs the lorry came for me again to take me back.

We were awakened at 0415 & got packed & had breakfast then loaded up & went down to meet the convoy. Our destination was Mestre a place near Venezia (Venice to you). We made very good time had the experience of crossing the Po on a bridge built on pontoon & then we sped northwards except for places near the rivers one saw very little war damaged & on entering Mestre itself were amazed to see trolley buses running. On arrival at the new location everything seem to become disorganised & we were not to work the sets originally planned one thing which cropped up we had to fit up a stand by teleprinter to work in "TELVI" the automatic exchange in Mestre. After much arguing & lorry breakdown finally got the teleprinter truck installed next to the receiver & I got to work wiring it up to work the two radio printer sets necessary. After dinner was whisked away in a 15 cwt to Telve complete with teleprinter station & had to fit it up there. Did this but could not test it due to a breakdown on the co set over which it was to work. At about 2300 hrs the lorry came for me again to take me back.

## Saturday 5th

May 5  
Sat. Well at 0130 we arrived back in had taken us 2 hrs to do 6 miles due to the fact that we could not find the right way out of the town it was a snasperating condition I must say. Got back just as the set to 5 lorry was



## Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

due to come it & had to dash about  
test the machine & joining the line  
on in the dark. Also plain army air  
was ready shortly after for test. Had  
on of the SVR's faulty and also a printer  
but with one cut less was able to work  
that difficultly. Then a horrible thing  
occurred in the receiver truck the  
speaker got crossed & I was sending a

5 corp & receiving it on Plain Army. Anyway  
we finally sorted this out & I went under  
a couple of blankets at 0615 out again at  
0730 for breakfast. The two cut with  
minor adjustments then worked all morning  
by the tiffin time Ron & the stop up had arrived  
and after tiffin we got cracking on the main  
Signal Office. I had to dash down to Telme  
again to try & work this printer but all the  
routes were out for it so came back without  
success. Had to go in again at 2200 hrs to  
bring the whole lot back & then I finished  
working etc at about 0100. Then I got down  
to it feeling pretty tired.

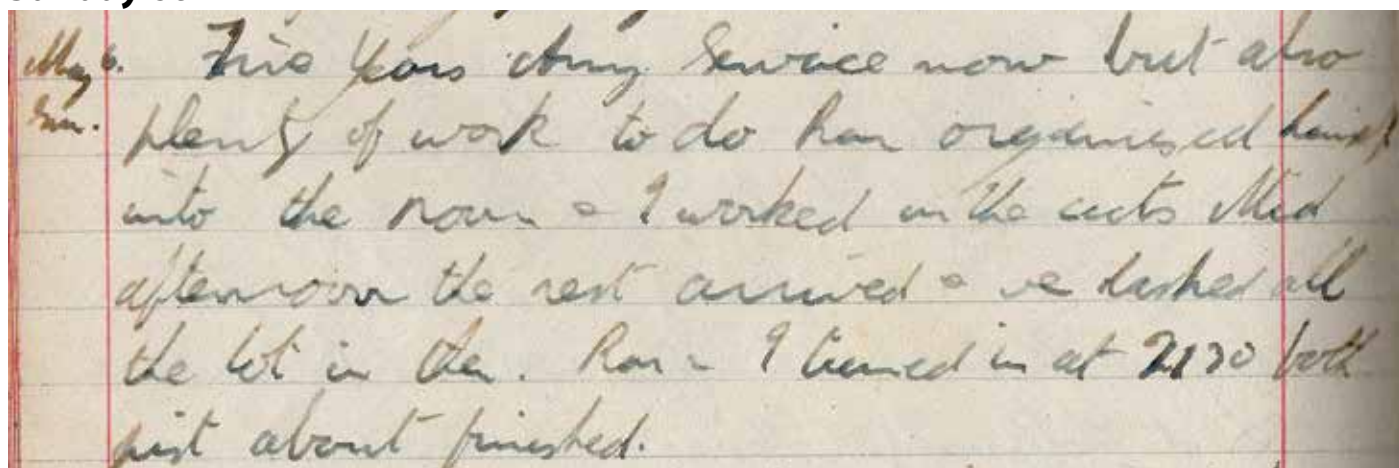
Well at 0130 we arrived back it had taken us 2 hrs to do 6 miles due to the fact that we could not find the right way out of the town it was an exasperating condition I must say got back just as the cut to 5 corp was due to cover it & had to dash about test the machine & joining the line on in the dark. Also plain army air was ready shortly after for test. Had



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

one of the SVR's faulty and also a printer but with one cut less was able to overcome that difficulty. Then a horrible thing occurred in the receiver truck there speaker got crossed & I was sending on 5 corp & receiving it on Plain Army. Anyway we finally sorted this out & I crawl under a couple of blankets at 0615 out again at 0730 for breakfast. The two sit with minor adjustments then worked all morning by the tiffin time Ron & the step up had arrived and after tiffin we got cracking on the main signal office. I had to dash down to Telve again to try & work this printer but all the routes were out for it so came back without success. Had to go in again as 2200 hrs to bring the whole lot back & Ron & I finished wiring etc. at about 0100 when I got down to it feeling pretty tired.

## Sunday 6th

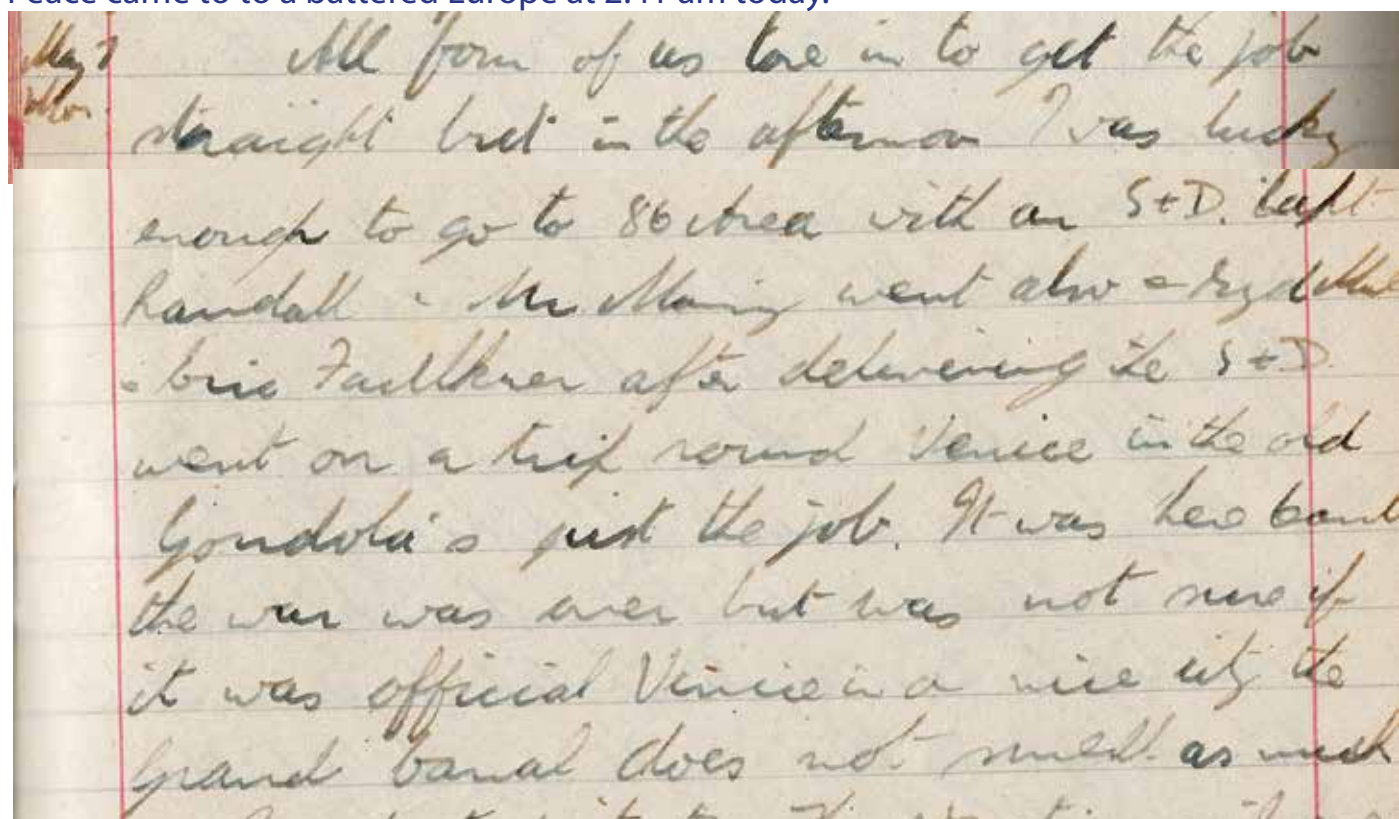


May 6. Five years Army Service now but also plenty of work to do. Ron organised himself into the room & I worked on the cuts mid afternoon the rest arrived & we dashed all the lot in then. Ron & I turned in at 2130 both just about finished.

Five years army service now but also plenty of work to do. Ron organised himself into the room & I worked on the cuts mid afternoon the rest arrived & we dashed all the lot in then. Ron & I turned in at 2130 both just about finished.

## Monday 7th

Peace came to a battered Europe at 2:41 am today.

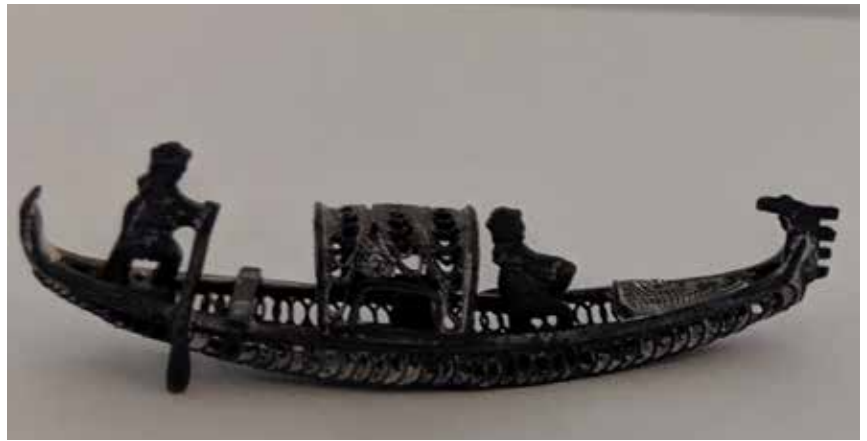


May 7. All four of us tore in to get the job straight but in the afternoon I was lucky enough to go to 86 area with an S+D. Left Randall & Mr. Manning went also & by 10:00 - Miss Faulkner after delivering the S+D went on a trip round Venice in the old Gondola's just the job. It was her band the war was over but was not sure if it was official Venice is a nice city the Grand Canal does not smell as much

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

as I expected it to. The Venetian girls are about the prettiest I have seen in Italy. Also things are not too dear either, Unfortunatly I did not have a lot of cash on me. In the evening Syd bought a bottle of Grappa - we started drinking that got back to camp a little merry but found the war was official over tomorrow.

All four of us tore in to get the job straight but in the afternoon I was lucky enough to go to the 86 Area with an S+D. Capt. Randall & Mr Waring went also & Syd called a bus Failure after delivering the S+D went on a trip round Venice in the old Gondola's<sup>1</sup> just the job. It was here learnt the war was over but was not sure if it was official Venice is a nice city the Grand Canal does not smell as much as I expected it to. The venetian girls are about the prettiest I have seen in Italy. Also things are not too dear either. Unfortunately I did not have a lot of cash on me. In the evening Syd bought a bottle of Grappa - we started drinking that got back to camp a little merry but found the war was officially over tomorrow.



## Tuesday 8th

Field Marshall Keitel signs Germany's final act of capitulation.

May 8 We had our 8<sup>th</sup> Army News delivered to us which said "TODAY IS VICTORY IN EUROPE DAY - OFFICIAL". It was a peculiar sensation we did not know what to do. Jack Lane & I had arranged to go to Venice & I went to work had a bar

<sup>1</sup> A wire model of a gondola purchased in Venice during the war although this is not mentioned. He also bought a tree made of Venetian glass for my Mum. This I have also lost but had two birds on the branches although one had fallen off and was held on with sellotape. It apparently also had a small vase behind it to hold flowers but this had broken off long before I was born.



## Diary of a D-Day Dodger

time but managed to fit up a wireless to hear the official announcement by the P.M. & we then all led by Capt. Randall gave three very hearty cheers & all had a drink of whisky. In the evening had one or two drinks but was not tight as anticipated had a rotten time during the night & got to bed at 0230 after having been visited by various people offering one drinks out of bottles etc. Things do not seem much different & yet the atmosphere is different. What is to happen now I don't know but we are to move to Udine soon & I believe a great sort out will take place.

We had our 8th Army News delivered which said "TODAY IS VICTORY IN EUROPE DAY - OFFICIAL". It was a peculiar sensation one did not know what to do. Jock Dave & Ron as arranged went to Venice & I went to work had a bad time but managed to fit up a wireless to hear the official announcement by the P.M. & we then all led by Capt. Randall gave three very hearty cheers & all had a drink of whisky. In the evening had one or two drinks but was not tight as anticipated had a rotten time during the night & got to bed at 0230 after having been visited by various people offering one drinks out of bottles etc. Things do not seem much different & yet the atmosphere is different. What is to happen now I don't know but we are to move to Udine soon & I believe a great sort out will take place.

### Wednesday 9th

May 9. We all had great rumours going around. I believe, evidently though one thing is certain we are due to be Occupation troops of the British zone in Austria which has as its H.Q. Vienna. Whether we all will be going I don't know there is a lot of talk of



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

splitting the unit at the next location - I expect that is what is to happen.

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## Saturday 12th

My 12th Sat. Jock & Dave went off on a step-up to Moline which lies at the foot of the Alps. There was a talk of leaving me behind to look after this signal center at Mestre but it has been all washed out & none of us are stopping although we shall be leaving some equipment behind. Ron's turn for night duty & he fell into the river on coming back to the billet about 0200 hrs he had to change & go to Rear Army as a fault on the radio printer.

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## Sunday 13th

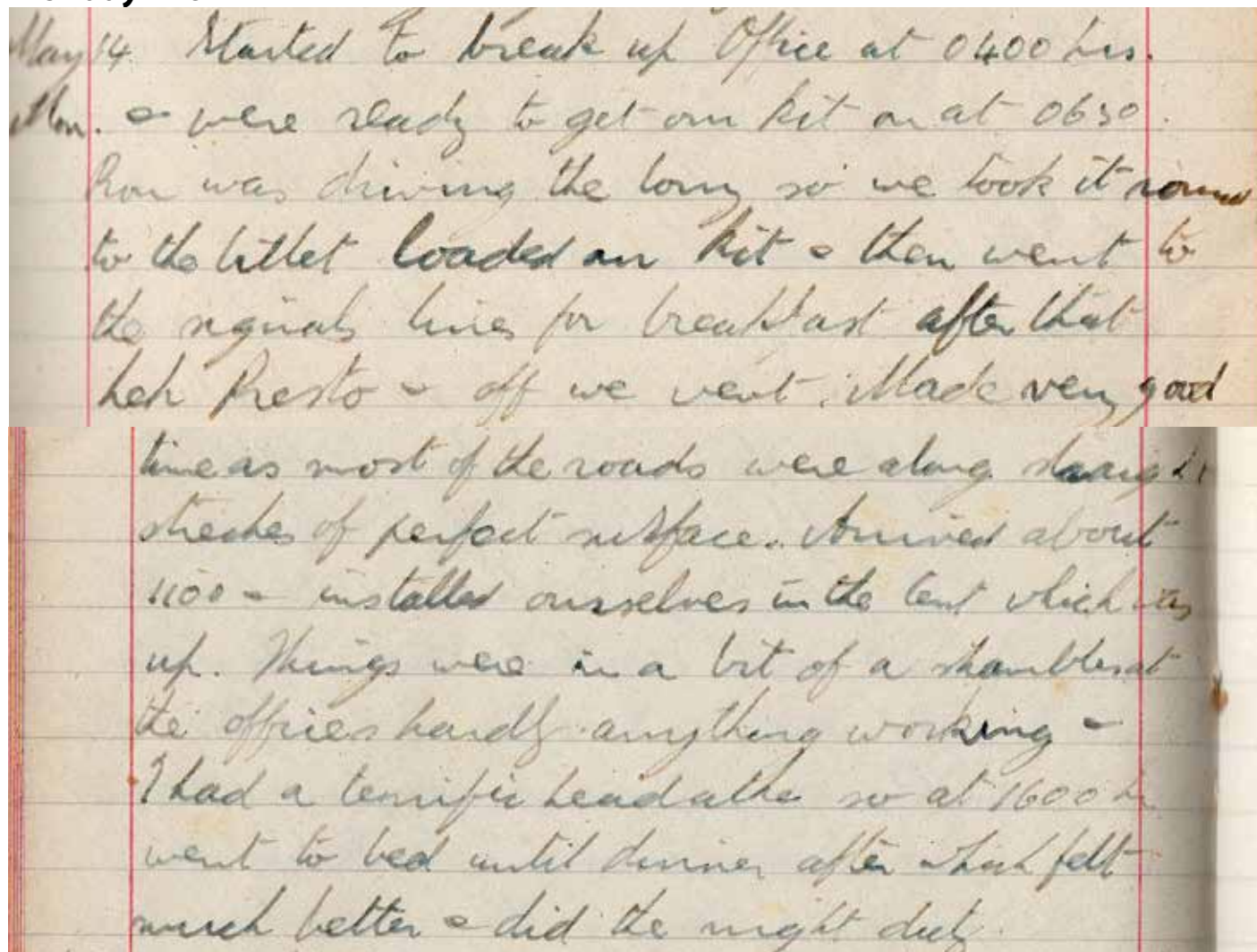
My 13th Sun. Thanksgiving day for the peace in Europe but was unable to go to church due to duty. It was very hot & hot & I had to fault an S+D found one of the resistances in the H.T. faulty consequently giving low H.T. on the set up. Had a sticky night duty.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Thanksgiving day for the peace in Europe but was unable to go to Church due to duty. It was very hot & Ron & I had to fault an S+D found one of the resistances in the H.T. faulty consequently giving low H.T. on the set up. Had a sticky night duty.

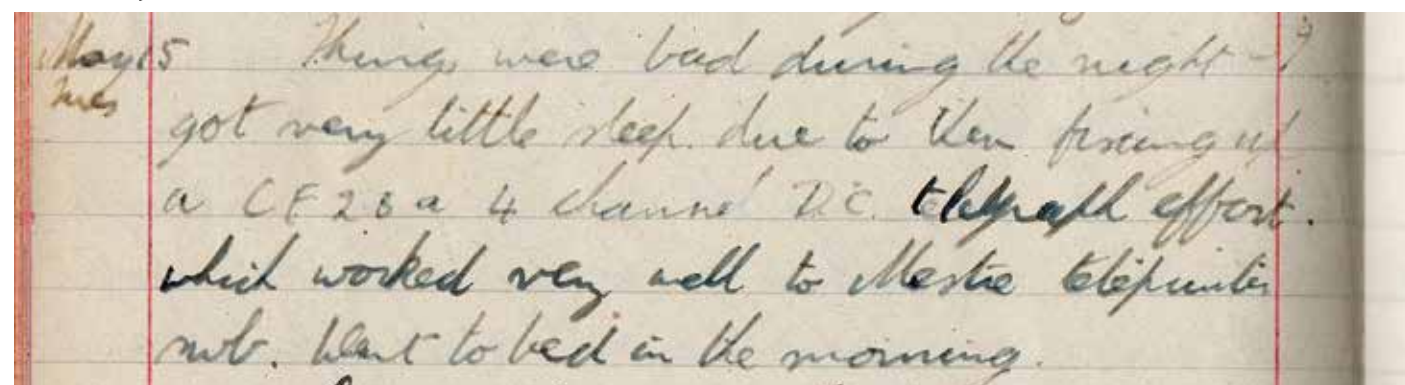
## Monday 14th



May 14. Started to break up Office at 0400 hrs. & were ready to get our kit on at 0630. Ron was driving the lorry so we took it round to the billet loaded our kit & then went to the signals lines for breakfast after that heh Presto & off we went. Made very good time as most of the roads were along straight stretches of perfect surface. Arrived about 1100 & installed ourselves in the tent which was up. Things were in a bit of a shambles the offices hardly anything working & I had a terrific headache so at 1600 hrs went to bed until dinner after which felt much better & did the night duty.

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## Tuesday 15th



May 15. Things were bad during the night & got very little sleep due to them fixing up a CF 20 a 4 channel D.C. telegraph effort. which worked very well to the teleprinter sub. Went to bed in the morning.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Communication in this position really was bad at first this Messie Duble effort was a dead loss. & there was a big stink about communication south but luckily that is 15 A.G. pigeon & of course it did not worry us at all except in the way of giving us many sleepless nights. Went along to these Italian people whom Dave got to know & had a supper of macaroni etc which Dave eat all off but there was a terrific plateful &

Dave & I could not get it all down. Afterward sat & spoke German to the old man who was 73 & had worked in Austria for some time. The weather in this position was terrific being very wet & changeable to very hot indeed. There are all sorts of rumours going about now. All leave & posting & Promos. Apparently they are not taking anybody to Burma who would not do a year out there before coming home on leave & as they have reduced pay there to 3/6 I should say if you have done over two years here it will not affect me at all. so a keep my fingers crossed until the end of the month.

Dave also had a find in going round to the signal park & managing to get a few bits of old wireless equipment which was not needed.



## Diary of a D-Day Dodger

• we are at the moment barely making a net it has only two valves at the moment but we hope to improve considerably on it • bring in another radio amplifier for it we have also managed to buy a speaker also for same. We had quite a big do the other week when

All the old fellows in our section went home Robbie Leffly Frank - all the rest. I hardly know anyone in the section now. Ron is due to go on the next draft but there is some doubt as to whether or not they will have to do the full four or not. anyway the latest on Pythia is that it has been reduced to four years. Petty wrote & said that she would probably be made up to sergeant in a week or two. Have been into Madeline twice but there is not very much to see at all. It strikes one as nearly being the centre of all the surrounding countryside. Malarial precautions have been relaxed here & one does not have to take any preventive measures at all now. Have been to an "Iris" dance which was pretty dead & very "boring". At the moment we are working two & two a day in a day off & it is much better one gets more time to gether ones thoughts together. Had a talk with Capt Randall about a trader & he is going to do all in his power to





# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

the full four 6 or not anyway the latest on python is that it has been reduced to four years. Betty wrote & said that she would probably be made up to sergeant<sup>2</sup> in a week or two. Have been into Udine twice but there is not very much to see at all. It strikes me as merely being the centre of all the surrounding countryside. Malarial precautions have been relaxed here & one does not have to take any preventative measures at all now. Have been to an Itio dance which was pretty deadly & very "Corny". At the moment we are working two & two a day on a day off & it is much better one gets more time to gather ones thoughts together. Had a talk with Capt. Randall about a trade & he is going to do all in his power to get me an A rating when he goes home on the python which should be very soon now. In the meantime am going to swot a few things just in case I have to sit a form of task test. which I hope I don't have to. Round here a great industry with all the people is cultivating silk worms & Ron & Dave have had a couple & now they have changed in cigarettes I don't know what they are going to do with them now. They seem very short of technical men in the army although I believe they are cutting down on the members in the unit. Hope this will not make any difference to my trade at all.

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<sup>2</sup> She did not take this thinking, mistakenly, she would have to stay in the army longer.

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## JUNE 1945

Sunday 10th

Sum.  
June 10. Quite an eventful week really as Stan went on a course to II U.S. Corp for three days for some instruction on a teletyp. The day after he went Dave & I started on the course for a Telegraph Mechanics rating don't know whether I will make it or not but we are going to have a good shot at it. Stan arrived back on Sunday Morning & he was all over Yanky. From what he says they have a worse time of it there than any we do here. The leave to Blighty has been drawn for & is being called land liap. Think we might all get on it eventually & I do anyway.

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Sunday 17th<sup>1</sup>

Sum.  
17 MAY. Today we had a rest off the course, and we were able to do a little digesting of the work we had already done. Monday we

1 This is marked May but from the day, date & continuity must be June.



## Diary of a D-Day Dodger

started again - it is really quite good -  
I think I have profitted quite a lot from  
being on it. Friday we had our test which  
consisted of 9 questions of a fair standard.  
Heard some news on Saturday night that  
Rear Army were doing the step up to  
Vienna - that Stan Ron & Dave would be  
going I shall be left behind with Jack Pain  
from Rear Army which is not so good really  
but expect we will all be together again  
eventually. Saturday night also finished of the  
wireless set - managed to get it test it works  
grand - just needs a little improvement here  
& there about 2330 we picked up America  
direct on the short wave system just the job.  
Had also a lovely letter from Betty plus a tie  
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### Sunday 24th

response: During the week heard that I had done  
well on the course - that I had been put

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

21/6/45  
Sun. During the week heard that I had done well on the course & that I had been put forward to O2E for a telegraph mechanics rating. Which I am very pleased about. Dave's upgrading came through he is now A II telegraph mechanic. Jock & Ron are completely browned off with there courses especially the getting up part in the morning. Went as a bit of a change to the pictures & saw an American slapstick comedy with Ann Southern. Had some notepaper & envelopes from Betty also heard she had gone on a course & arrived safely. Sent off my vote & have voted for the liberal candidate.

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<sup>2</sup> My Mum was livid when I read this and told her. Luckily she was in her nineties and my Dad had been dead for ten years or I don't like to think what might have happened.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## JULY 1945

Sunday 1st

July 1st  
Sun. Jock & Ron struggle on & took the exam on Tuesday exactly the same paper as ours only the last question had been split into two. Just after they finish the course Dave & Jock went to 91 U.S. Inf. Div for a teletype course. Ron & I worked on & boy did we have a week of trouble.

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Sunday 8th

Sunday 8th  
We had to rewire a lot of the office to allow the existing trailer to come out & a new one to be put in. On top of this had about 4 or 5 dulites up the spout & at one time wondered if we would not have to close a circuit down or not. Jock & Dave returned & Ron heard he'd be going home on the following Monday so he downed tools.

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July 1945298

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Sunday 15th

15 July Ron pretty well packed up & ready also Dave heard he had to get packed ready for Vienna at 0900 on Tuesday. Ron left on Monday afternoon & seemed real funny to see him going. Dave went to Rear the next day had to have all his medal ribbons & also flashes etc. Jock & I were left with the office & boy was it a job another spell of machines up the spout. Heard my rating had come through & on reading orders find I became a Telegraph Mechanic A II from the 23 of June.

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Sunday 22nd

22 July Ron's trip was cancelled & then a couple of days later he had to go to rear again. Again Stan & I were on our own & we have had quite a rough time of it trying to keep our equipment going it seems to be getting a bit tired of working after the war is over. The leave side still seems to be on the increase. Stan & I went to Uxbridge to get a main transfer

29 July 1945



## Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

• eventually after much wangling bought one for 2000 lire. well it cost me 500 & 300 cigarettes quite good really. Built a power pack with it & found we had too much oscillation due to the increased voltage. The weather has been terribly hot & have even had a slight drought on our hands. They are going to do a step up from here. Stan is going forward & we should follow up in about four days. Gosh four days on my own I can see me working all day & night.

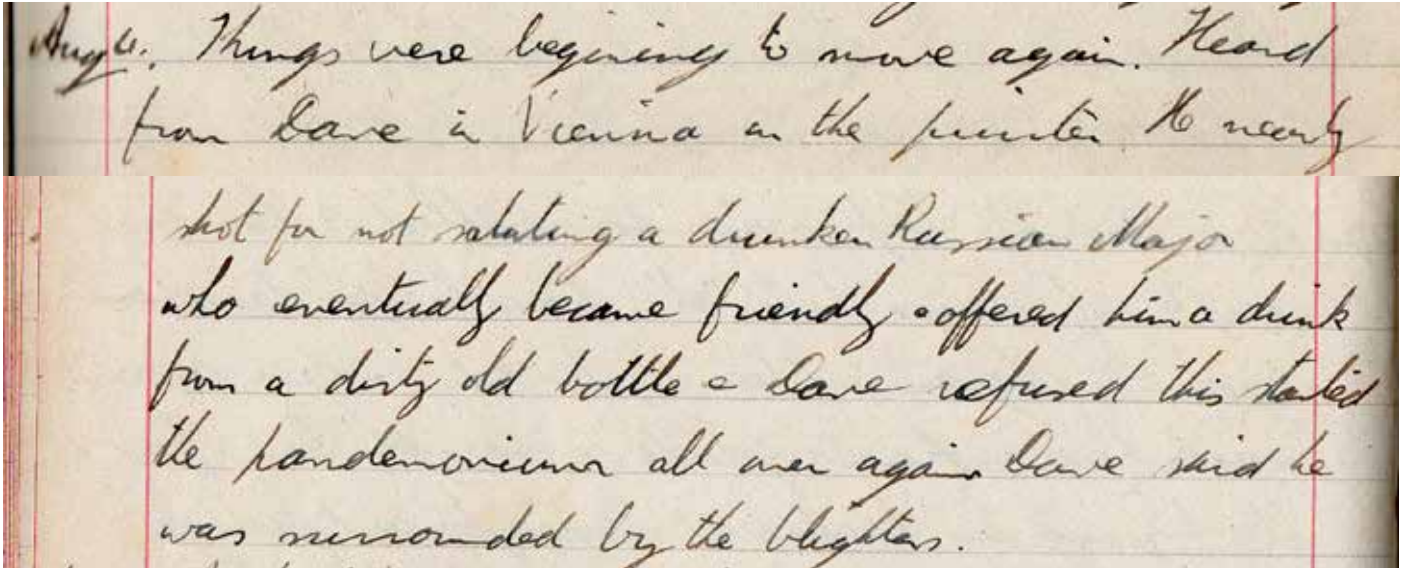
Dave's trip was cancelled & then a couple of days later he had to go to Rear again. Again Stan & I were on our own & we have had quite a rough time of it trying to keep our equipment going it seems to be getting a bit tired of working after the war is over<sup>1</sup>. the leave scheme still seems to be on the increase. Stan & I went to Udine to get a mains transformer & eventually after much wangling bought one for 2000 Lire. Well it cost me 500 & 300 cigarettes quite good really. Built a power pack with it & found we had too much oscillation due to increased voltage. The weather has been terribly hot & have even had a slight drought on our hands. They are going to do a step up from here. Stan is going forward & we should follow up in about four days. Gosh four days on my own I can see me working all day & night.

<sup>1</sup> My Dad's tells a story that about this time a team of repair people arrived. They asked where they had been for the past 2 years and then put all the duff parts into one machine and said "fix that then"

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## AUGUST 1945

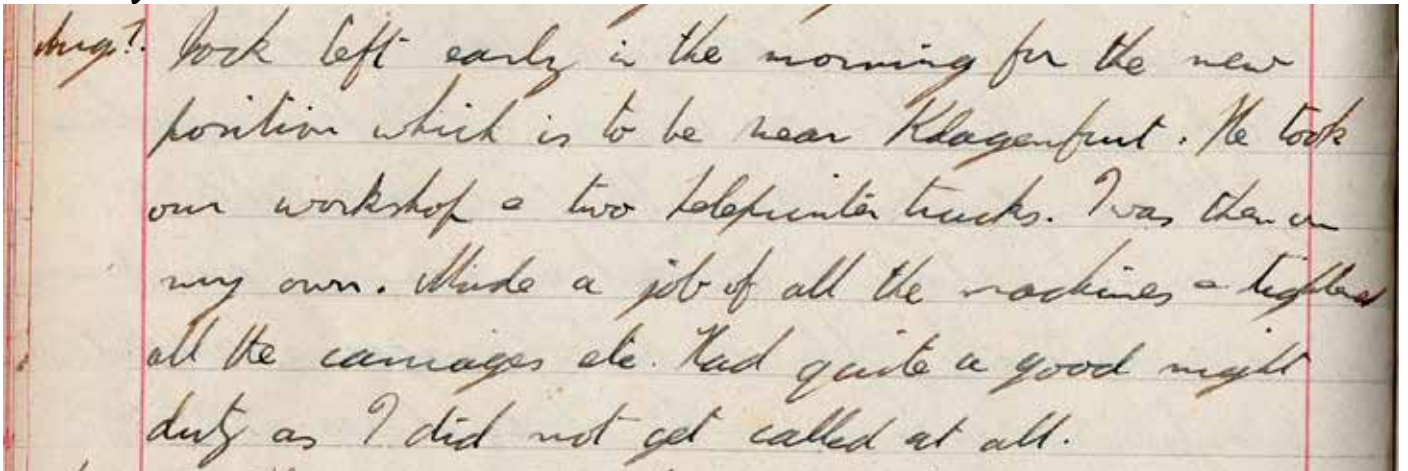
### Saturday 4th



Aug 4. Things were beginning to move again. Heard from Dave in Vienna on the printer. He nearly shot for not saluting a drunken Russian Major who eventually became friendly & offered him a drink from a dirty old bottle & Dave refused this started the pandemonium all over again. Dave said he was surrounded by the blighters.

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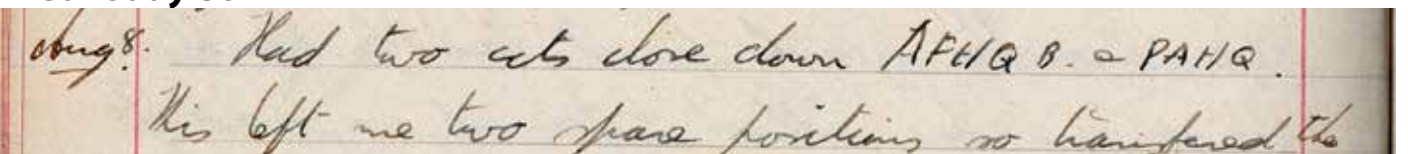
### Tuesday 7th



Aug 7. Jock left early in the morning for the new position which is to be near Klagenfurt. He took our workshop & two teleprinter trucks. I was then on my own. Made a job of all the machines & tightened all the carriages etc. Had quite a good night duty as I did not get called at all.

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### Wednesday 8th



Aug 8. Had two cets close down APEHQ B. & PAHQ. This left me two spare positions so transferred the



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Vienna cit which had previously been erected in the middle of the office to a truck & also set up S+D cit to work to Jock. The weather was very bad & in the afternoon had plenty of trouble in AFHQ(A). This was finally cleared up in the evening. & also we had a terrific hail stone storm actually measured one of them & was found to be 1 1/2" in diam.

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## Thursday 9th

Aug 9. The day began bad again with further trouble in AFHQ also had one a bucket of water from the roof poured inside another printer which I had then to dismantle & clean & dry out. Another amusing incident also happened we had a new battery trailer from the T.M. sect & it arrived minus the straps which I had to arrange to be brought up. This meant AFHQ out for a further 40 mins.

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## Sunday 12th

Sun. 12th Aug. We finally closed down in Italy today got up at 0400 hrs & packed & then packed up.

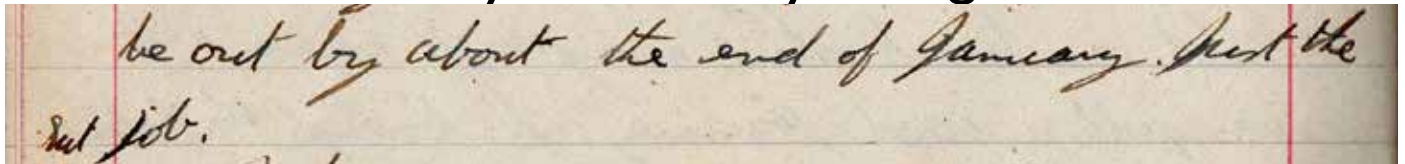


## Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

disconnected everything in the signal office. Loaded my kit aboard & then went down to the lines for breakfast which was eggs. After this persuaded the G.I.s to let our truck start away & off we went. It was quite a good journey up. through the Dolomites pass it really was great. The scenery after the frontier seemed to visibly change. all the way along from the frontier to Klagenfurt there were hotels & hotels & some of the loveliest ones I have ever seen set in amazing scenery it really was beautiful can't understand people living in such lovely surroundings wanting to go to war. We arrived at Klagenfurt after making very good time & then did the other 25 miles to the camp location which is out in the wilds at a place called Freibach. Here met Jack again & we pitched the tent & after some hard graft I fell asleep & boy was I tired. The days that followed were of work & more work we never seemed to get a moment's peace at all. The weather was bad also being wet & dismal & everywhere was damp. We were brightened up though by two things one the Japs war finishing & the other was the fact that release from the army is to be speeded up. According to the outline of the new plan I should



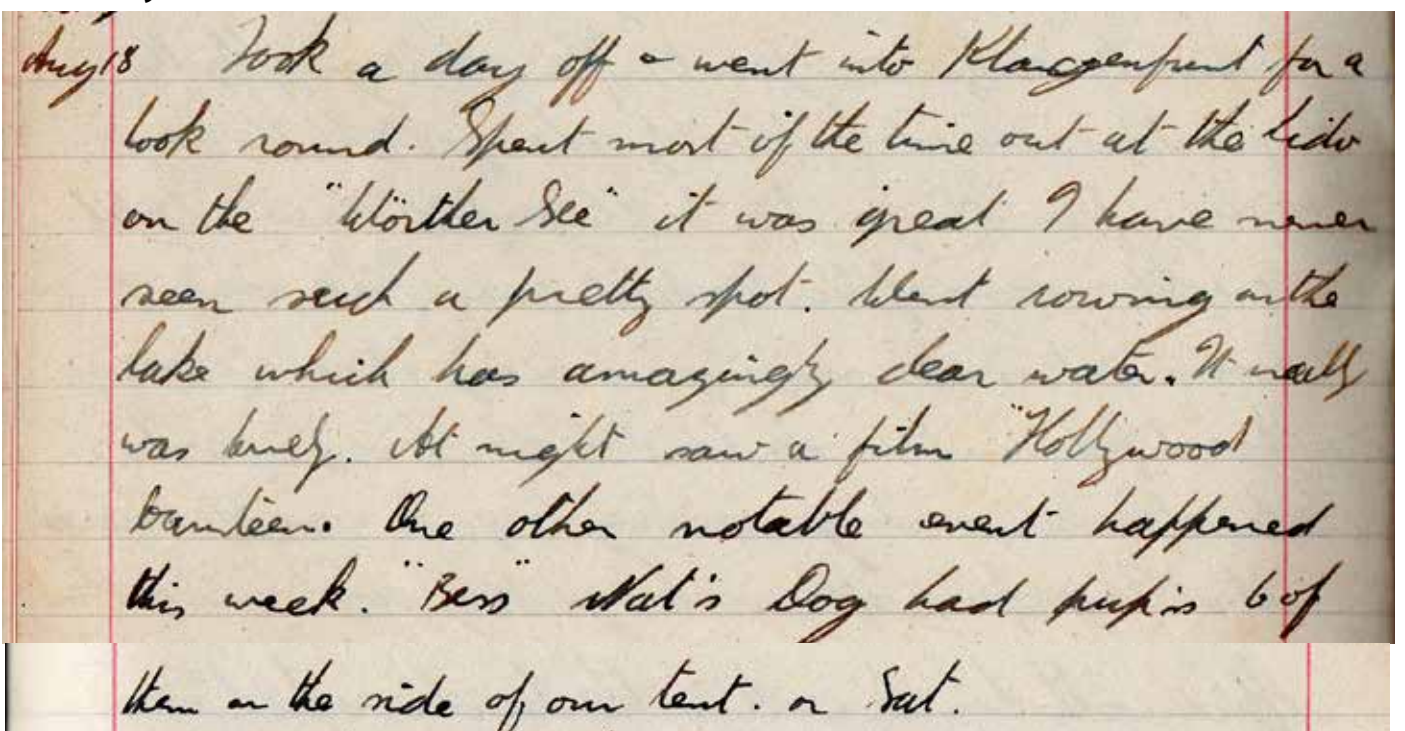
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



be out by about the end of January. Just the  
out job.

We finally closed down in Italy today got up at 0400 hrs packed & then packed up & disconnected everything in the Signal Office. Loaded my kit aboard & then went down to the lines for breakfast which was egg. After this persuaded them to let our truck start away & off we went. It was quite a good journey up through the Udine pass it really was great. The scenery after the frontier seemed to visibly change all the way along from the frontier to Klagenfurt there were hostel & hotel & some of the loveliest ones I have ever seen set in amazing scenery it really was beautiful can't understand people living in such lovely surroundings wanting to go to war. We arrived at Klagenfurt after making very good time & then did the other 25 miles to the camp location which is out in the wilds at a place called Freibach. Here met Jock again & we pitched the tent & after some hard graft I fell asleep & boy was I tired. The days that followed were of work & more work we never seemed to get a moment peace at all. The weather was bad also being wet & dismal & everywhere was damp. We were brightened up though by two things one the gap was finishing & the other was the fact that release from the army is to be speeded up. According to the outline of the new plan I should be out by about the end of January. Just the job.

## Saturday 18th



Aug 18 Took a day off & went into Klagenfurt for a look round. Spent most of the time out at the lido on the "Wörther See" it was great I have never seen such a pretty spot. Went rowing on the lake which has amazingly clear water. It really was lovely. At night saw a film "Hollywood Canteen". One other notable event happened this week. "Bess" Nat's dog had pups 6 of them on the side of our tent. on Sat.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

Sunday 26th

Aug. 26  
Aug. Another week beginning one of designing etc have modified our terminal board with a pick strip now to enable tone testing to be easier. The Colonel is having a hand in the building of our new signal office & wants us to work D.C. extension but we are all against it & Op to press are not going to work it. The room we are having is a small effort 20' by 19'6" & we are having a job to cram 10 printers in it.

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# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## SEPTEMBER 1945

Saturday 1st

Sept 1st  
Sat. I actually received my wrist watch today from the D.P.O. together with some paper & envelopes from Betty the latter being just in time. The weather here is still fine but we are having very cold evenings & mornings. There is talk of us having skating during the winter on the "Worther See". On Friday afternoon Stan together with Johnny & a complete Signal Office went forward or rather in this case backwards to Klagenfurt. I settled down to a peaceful existence of just waiting for the move to come off. Stan had to take a complete Signal Office with him to work in the trucks which were going to be in the grounds connected to the building we were due to occupy eventually.

I actually received my wrist watch today from D.P.O. together with some paper & envelopes from Betty the latter being just in time. The weather here is still fine but we are having very cold evenings & mornings. There is talk of us having skating during winter on the "Worther See". On Friday afternoon Stan together with Johnny & a complete signal office went forward or rather in this case backwards to Klagenfurt & I settled down to a peaceful existence of just waiting for the move to come off. Stan had to take a complete Signal Office with him to work in the trucks which were going to be in the grounds connected to the building we were due to occupy eventually.

Sunday 9th

Sept 9  
Sun. Was just whiling away the time before diffin when an urgent phone call came that Stan had



## Diary of a D-Day Dodger

broken his leg. I was to go down there immediately to fit it all up. So hurriedly packed & sailed down there in the afternoon. Stan actually had not broken his leg but badly strained his cartilage & he could hardly walk. So Johnny went back & I had the signal office ready by about 2200 hrs. The next day Mon we started to change over at 1100 hrs but no circuits came in until well on in the afternoon. The following week was really hectic they kept piling new circuits in on us & I had to do every night duty & some were pretty rough to.

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### Sunday 16th

Sun 16 Sept. Stan leg was definitely on the improve - he could walk much better & even bend somewhat. The signal office inside had been started on & things were going along in fine fettle. Mon I took the afternoon & evening off & wandered down to the lido & had a row. Then went round the fun fare in town.

Stan's leg was definitely on the improve & he could walk much better & even bend somewhat. The Signal Office inside had been started on & things were going along in fine fettle. Mon I took the afternoon & evening off & wandered down to the lido & had a row. Then went round the fun fare in town.



Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

**HERE THE DIARY ENTRIES END**

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## **AFTERWORD**

This has been a labour of love producing this from my Dad's diaries. I originally started this by putting the scans and transcriptions onto a website.. I then decided to produce it in pdf form using Adobe Indesign which allowed me lay it out and easily produce a table of contents and index. I am hoping to do more research which currently has only involved searches on the internet and a few World War 2 histories.

Ideally I would like to retrace my Dad's footsteps and visit the places in person to see what they now look like.. I have included as footnotes things I remember him telling me.

My one regret is that I did not start this while he was still alive and could ask him questions about some of the things he wrote. and the people he mentions. I cannot ever remember him mentioning meeting any Poles but would love to have heard first hand about George who comes across as a real character.

I shall continue to research and update the file and update the website.. I have found his address book which contains many service numbers of his colleagues so am searching for these on the Forces War records site.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## GLOSSARY

AA	Anti-Aircraft
AP	Anti Personell
BD	Battle dress
BGS	Brigadier General Staff
CCS	Casualty Clearing Station
CI	Communications Interface
CSM	Colour Sergeant Major
CMF	Central Mediterranean Force
DD	Deputy Director
DP	Discharged Patient
EFI	Expeditionary Force Institute
E/S	Equipment Specialist
FFI	Free From Infection
FSMO	Full Service Marching Order
GRTD	General Refit and Training Depot
IM	Independent Maintenance
IMI	Independent Maintenance Inspection
IP	Initial Position
KD	Khaki drill
LCP	Landing Craft Personnel
LIAP	Leave in addition to Python
LST	Landing Ship Tank or Tank Landing Ship
MO	Medical Officer
NAAFI	Navy, Army & Air Force Institute
QM	Quarter Master
RD	Receive Data
RSM	Regimental Sergeant Major
SBO	Switch Board Operator
S+D	
SO	Signal Office
TMO	Teleprinter Maintenance Operator
TSBO	Telephone Switch Board Operator
TT	Teletype

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

## APPENDIX A - DOCUMENTS

### Autograph Book



Good for young and good for old,  
SULPHUR TABLETS - so I'm told,  
They who take them create a den  
And wear away their inner skin.

Norman.  
Warrington  
8/7/40.

The Sally Mumfry's Prayer  
When the last V.E. is sounded,  
And the angels call C.I.  
May my message to P.D. be  
For there'll be no I.M.I.

J. Mumfry  
3/12/40

God gave me a memory  
so that I might have  
roses in December.

Very best wishes  
to  
Kathleen  
29-1-40

Not goodbye just our Revoir  
All Best Wishes  
from the Naafi Staff  
at Shriwenham,  
Joyce  
Catharina  
Kathleen  
Jinxie  
Edie  
Dorothy  
Jury  
Magg  
Kathie  
Dot.  
Gaudie

Chorus of Good Luck  
and a speedy return  
back to those you love

11/1/40  
1949



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



I'm not sure why he is signing his own autograph book. Mickey Mouse was the only thing he could draw. Certo Cito is the Latin motto of the Royal Signals - Swift & Sure and is a parody of a Shell advertisement.

From the day you set  
 Down.  
 Till you ride in a  
 Plane.  
 There's nothing that  
 Happens.  
 That couldn't be worse.  
 S.S.W. Wakefield  
 Dec 29 1940

Asken first I came to Rudloe Manor  
 The food was good - as sweet as manna,  
 I could not appreciate this as yet  
 As I have had such awful spots  
 The origin of which he I mean  
 Are not so bad as first appear.  
 However even with these faults  
 I was in the best of sorts,  
 And if one day he should depart  
 From the glory of these parts  
 I only hope the hole he makes  
 Appreciate the best of mates.  
 Ted  
 Rudloe  
 Dec. 29. 40

Samuel Sharples Wakefield  
 my Maternal Grandfather

I was a signalman  
 not on the trains.  
 But pushing the jobs around  
 following the planes.  
 Denis  
 12/1/40

If!  
 If we noticed little pleasures  
 as we notice little pains,  
 If we quite forgot our losses  
 and remembered all our gains,  
 If we looked for people's virtues  
 and their faults refused to see,  
 What a jolly happy world  
 this place would be.  
 E. Bonall,  
 Rudloe  
 20-2-41

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

JOE !!!

Joe Blah he had a happy band  
 of Cavalry and Yeoman,  
 Who fought on sea, on shore, on land,  
 'Twas said they had an omen.

First old Robie on his horse  
 would gallop into battle.  
 "Cata, cata!" galloped he in noise  
 "Come on! cut the cattle!"

A worthy man is Austin Blah  
 He's fought in many a campaign  
 but now he's parted from the fold  
 To serve Joe (J) in the Ukraine.

The Chief M.O. is in this corps  
 of truly royal gushin'.  
 He cries "O-o-o-h-h-h-h!" when in war,  
 But it's not the wavy lurchin'.

I mustn't forget the best old song,  
 A relic of Fred Karno.  
 A human tank, and oh, so large,  
 It's sure the goose-stroke wonder.

ARNOLD  
11/4/42

..... 'shoo! of-ite! of-ite! up'ba! up'ba! Swing  
 those arms, whirle! lead up, fill! you want an elastic in  
 your hat! 'shoo! shoo! you young fellows! get off your  
 home, shoo! up'ba! up'ba! p'ib! p'ib! .....

Happy days at  
 the location Bath.  
 May A. Wheldon - 26/8/41.

Best Wishes  
 Barbara to Bees,  
 26/8/41

Best Wishes and  
 Good Luck (Daddy)

With Best Wishes  
 to a good friend  
 & to his wife (Katie)

Best wishes to  
 you from  
 (Barbara)

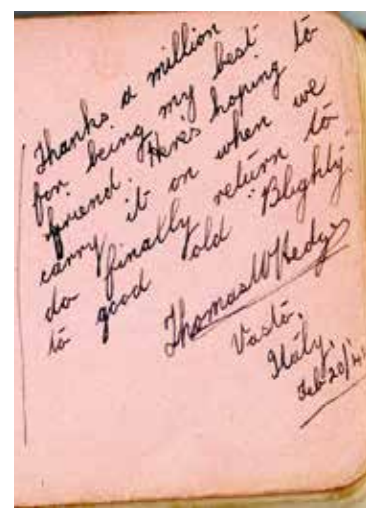
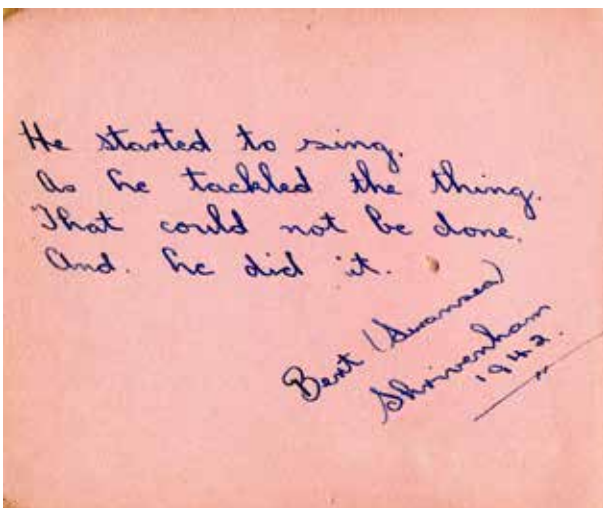
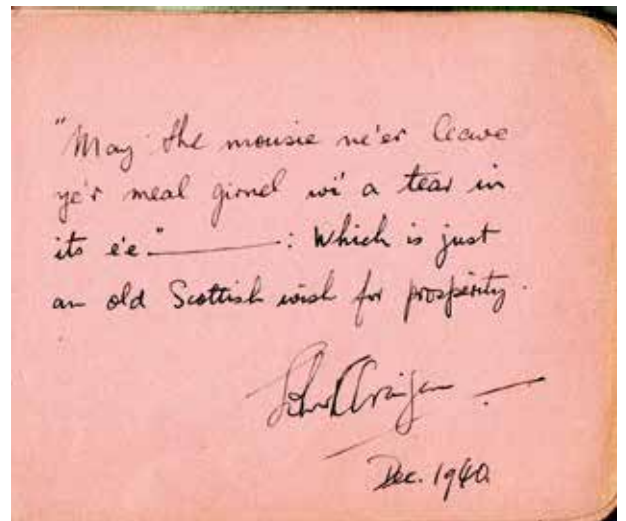
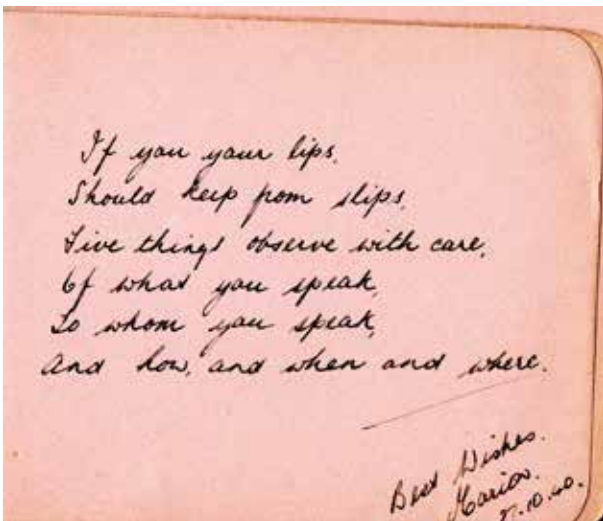
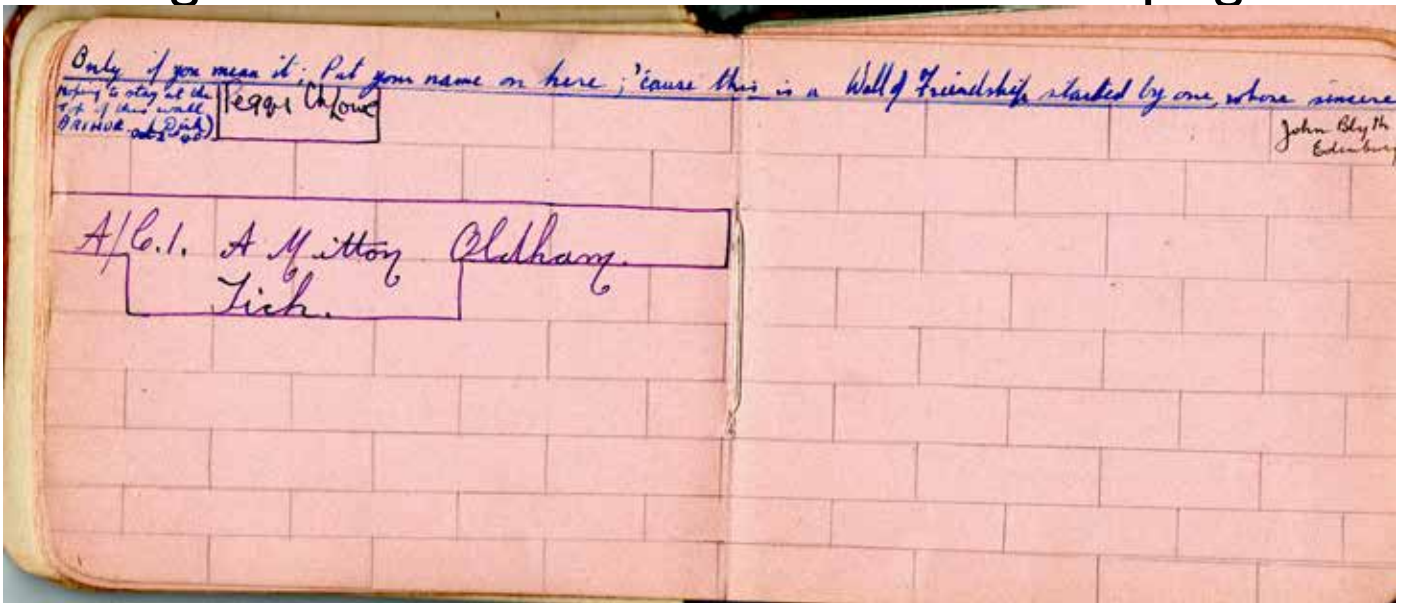
Na pamiatke tobie,  
 ktorej pomoglo mi w chwile  
 olamnie, moeno hitopokliwej.  
 Ofiaraweto mi swoje miete  
 towarzystwo wtoke, gaj bytem  
 supelnie sam wiodo  
 chup mi supelnie ludzi.  
 Bytem surgajing gaj bytem  
 mozt mitemm kusowoi  
 zrewowrowei sie w Polsce!  
 Jerry Burzynski  
 Typ. pow. Vasto  
 27. II. 44

Good Luck and Cheery Comrades.  
 Wherever you may be.  
 And a safe return when peace shall rule  
 O'er land and air and sea.

Barbara (Sheffield)  
 28.1.41.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

ONE DAY WHEN YOU HAVE SETTLED DOWN  
IN A LAND THAT'S DECENT AND FREE  
YOU'LL THINK OF ALL THOSE PLEASANT TIMES  
WE SPENT IN ITALY

YOU'LL THINK OF "ROBBY" AND HIS DRUMS  
MAYBE "LOFELY" WITH HIS TEA  
BUT LEW I PRAY, THAT ON THAT DAY  
AS YOUR FRIEND YOU'LL THINK OF ME.

Sorry Lew -  
I'm not of the poetical mind,  
So I'll just sign my name,  
& wish you all the things  
you wish yourself.

Annie M.  
4.10.46

In remembrance of the  
happy days spent  
together at Radlax.

Annie M.  
14.7.46



ZUR ERINNERUNG  
AN JHRENAUFENT-  
HALT IN ÖSTERREICH  
UND SCHÖNE GEMEIN-  
SAME STUNDEN VON

ANNI FULOP  
KLAGENFURT  
ENTENBERG-  
STRASSE - 8.

In the corner of my heart  
There's a place I keep for you;  
It's filled with love and happiness,  
And it's got a lovely view  
Of steps near the hills of heaven,  
Where all my prayers are laid,  
And little shimmering flowers of gold  
Run gold near heaven's glade.

In the corner of my heart  
There's a dream I keep for you;  
It's life with a silver lining,  
And little roads of stars,  
And stars, like silver dew,  
Shining in life's sky,  
My dear, stay in the corner  
Of my heart until I die.

Betty  
Sat. 1st June



NUR EIN TRAUM - NUR EIN TRAUM -

Denke auch manchmal  
an die Zeit, die wir zusammen  
verbracht.

Wilma  
Klagenfurt, am 28. Mai 46.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

For it has been written, that  
some are wise and others otherwise.

Manchester.

H. Stringer (1844)  
Rudloe 24/1/41

"Above all, let us envy the past of  
no man. Our own past was created  
by ourselves and for ourselves alone.  
No other could have suited us, no  
other could have taught us the truth  
that it alone can teach or give  
the strength that it alone can give."  
Hastelriek  
With best wishes - Barbara. 29/1/41

Une du le jamais, joyeux d'Angleterre; -  
One of the happiest memories of England.

"Car Lewis"  
« Notre Louis ».

Tom Allport.  
Grosvenor Sq.  
LONDON. W. 1.

Life is mostly froth and bubble  
Two things stand like stone;  
Dodging duty at the double,  
Leaving work alone.

Ken (Liverpool)  
Rudloe 1941.

I wish you all the best,  
Lewis, and hope to meet you  
again in later years.

Row  
Plymouth  
July 16, 1941

Very Best wishes -  
thanks for a lovely  
friendship.

Sarawentham. Blanche.  
1-2-43.

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

The Part of a Letter  
Tell me the tale of a letter,  
Well here aint a lot to tell.  
They tell the photo when the  
planes arrive  
And they tell em when they  
turn tail.

Bill Winder  
1901-Keeler St.  
Wichita Falls, Texas  
26/1/42

Dear how,  
Heres wishing  
a swell fellow lots  
and lots of luck.  
Your pal,  
Bill  
Bill Winder  
1901-Keeler St.  
Wichita Falls, Texas

Think not of me when I am gone,  
Nor let these be the tolling of the Bells  
For I shall come back, not as a Criminal,  
But as a Silver King,  
I am going to be rich one day,  
I am not going to be worth Thousand,  
Oh Ho! Blue Pencil Millions  
Yesterday (Taff).  
8<sup>th</sup> July 1940.  
Comerston. S.Wales

Remember me in All I ask,  
And if Remembrance proves a task,  
Forget - Me.

Charles (Taff)  
8/7/40

Happy memories of the Gun Room,  
Rudloe.  
The best of luck  
Stanley Coleman  
Capt RA  
12-4-42

With kindest recollections of Rudloe  
and good luck wherever you are  
on the "Road to Home".  
Rudloe  
Capt RA 19/5/42



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

I'll remember for years or so,  
 The happy days at Rudloe,  
 When we were learning telling,  
 The accent kept them yelling,  
 For goodness sake give us the spelling.

Jack.  
 Father of Dundee  
 27 August 1940.

Hast du beendet dein Bemühen  
 So must du an den Kitchin gehen,  
 Mach's künster auf.  
 Lass Luft herein  
 Per Nächste wird dir Dankbar sein

Marger  
 Oct. 17/1940

You'll have forgotten me,  
 When you're back in civvy boots  
 But I'll jog your memory.  
 Should we ever chance to meet  
 With "To be or not to be"  
 Boy, I'd like to kick your seat.

All the best Lew.  
 Rob.  
 25 February 1940  
 Vae To.

We've come happily through some muddy  
 experiences together to better times, here's  
 hoping you will as happily get through all  
 difficulties ahead to even better times.

With genuine regret that you have been  
 ordered away & the best of wishes, Good  
 Luck and Good Health.

Ever yours sincerely,  
 Rudloe Manor. R. Roworth Capt R.A.  
 Box. Wilts.  
 22.  $\frac{5}{42}$

Write caution steps the bugles stole  
 This bag of chink he chink  
 And using a wisher smile he smile  
 And using a wish he went

W. Roworth  
 Jan 10<sup>th</sup> 1941

Write caution steps the bugles stole  
 This bag of chink he chink  
 And using a wisher smile he smile  
 And using a wish he went

W. Roworth  
 Jan 10<sup>th</sup> 1941

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

AT RUDAGE HERE WE ARE TWELVE  
ARMY TELLERS COME TO REST  
INTO ALL SORTS OF MISCHIEF DRIVE  
AND MAKE OURSELVES A PERFECT PAIR.

IN THE OPS WE SHOUT AND BELL  
DOWN THE TELEPHONE AT 'EM ALL.  
THEN THE R.A.F. ARE GOOD.  
WHEN OUR FLOOR THEY DO SCUB.

IN THE BILLET ITS A SCREAM,  
UPSET THE BEDS IS THE THEME  
AND SOLO SCHOOLS DO AROUND  
WITH FREE FIGHTS ALL AROUND

THE ONLY TROUBLE UP TO NOW  
WHEN THINGS ARE LOST IS FINDING HOW  
THEY ALWAYS TURN UP INTO LIGHT  
BEFORE WE SAY GOODNIGHT, GOODNIGHT.

Walter (over) 5274

Caro Len  
Mantenimento è finito  
E siamo quasi pagati  
Perché sei andato a casa  
le macchine andavano all'inferno.

Ma, che bell'giorno ha trovato  
la donna che ti aspettava!  
E com'è proprio stato felice  
di finire così amato!

Per il futuro, amico mio,  
Ti auguro il più bene dal Dio,  
felicità e salute per i due  
che sempre in amore vivranno.

Dal mio tuo dell'ottavo amato,  
Alan Wilson

In your golden chain of  
friendship consider me a link.

With many best wishes  
and good luck  
always (Ludlow)  
1941

Am going to be  
beliguent towards you  
today, Len! Remember!

Dave (for herille man)  
Hollander

774 fine #6.  
Hollander.

4.12.41.

It's hard to part with those you  
love!  
It's hard to say "Goodbye"!  
It's harder still to find the  
towel,  
When soap gets in your  
eye!

All the Best, Len  
Lola  
Rudlow  
1941.

the time will come, when those  
shutt lift their eyes.  
To watch, a long drawn battle  
in the skies.  
While aged peasant, till among  
for woods.  
"Stare at the flying flocks of  
wonderous birds,  
England, so long the  
mistress of the sea.  
Whose winds a waves, confers,  
her sweetening  
Her varied triumphs yet in  
high, shall bear  
eternal reign, the sovereignty  
of the conquered air.

John Keats  
Cambridge 177.

John  
R.A.P. 1941.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

If when this war is over you still retain this book and occasionally browse over it, I do hope you will spare a little kindly thought for me. I know I shall always treasure the memory of the many happy hours I have spent in your company

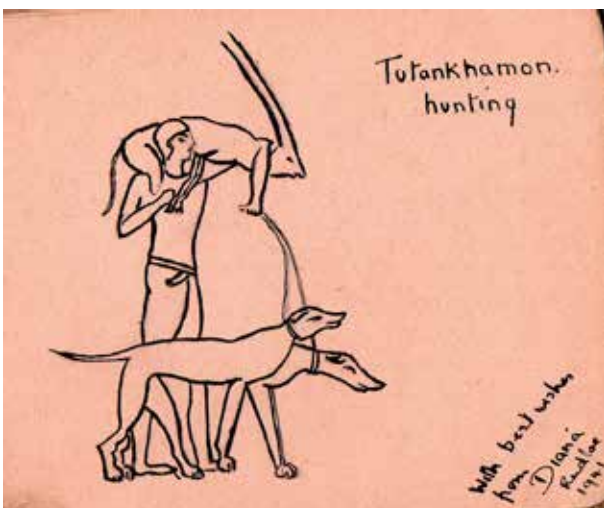
J. Burris  
24/9/41

He who loves not lives not.

Henry T. C. Capps,  
Huncator.

MIEJ  
SERCE  
PATRZAJ  
W SERCE  
Mićmum kolecho Lusowi  
z, ktoroyas sped. tem miće  
chis la w "San ANGELO"  
ROMEK.  
WEOCHY  
15. IV 44 R.

Al. ho. ho.  
Five little Sellen boys trying to win the war  
One did a 5 to 10 then there were four.  
Four little Sellen boys snoring happily  
The guard came and waked one then there were <sup>three</sup> three.  
Three little Sellen boys with nothing much to do  
One said "hid damn to dance!" - then there were two.  
Two little Sellen boys saw the nest had gone  
One said "hem men" and then there was one.  
One little Sellen boy waving on the hill  
A car came & picked him up & that left one.



Our Deepest Regret That  
Our Friendship Has Been  
So Suddenly Severed,  
But We Will Renew  
Same At The Earliest  
Opportunity.

Your Sincere Pals,  
Johnny Blyth  
Gordon Smith.  
Libby. 1/9/43

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

I wish the owner of this book  
All the very best of luck.....

Bert. E. Hickman  
Ripley, Derbyshire.

16<sup>th</sup> July 1940.

Recd. me.  
vetro amico di  
Alton Granta.  
Have a "slight"  
Sept. 1945.  
Kindest yours.  
R.M.

Don't worry -  
- It may never happen.

O.K. - O.K.  
R.M.  
11/1/40

Nero had four dozen wives  
Each night he'd tell 'em a riddle  
But what's the use of four dozen  
wives  
If you've only one string to  
your fiddle

A. Easterton  
Kensington London  
16/7/40

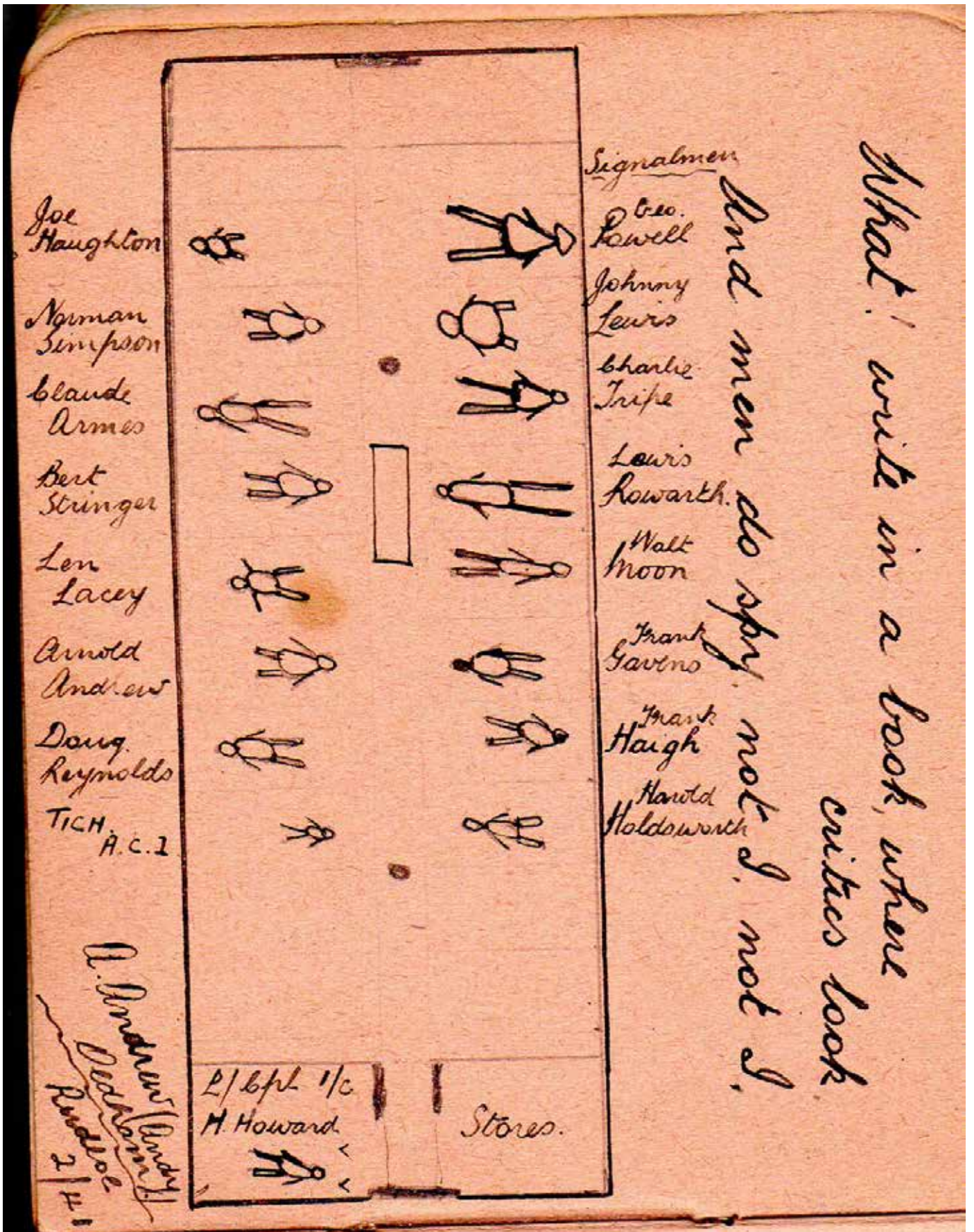
## Signalmen

Joe Maughton  
Norman Simpson  
Claude Oswald  
Bert Stringer  
Len Lacey  
Arnold Andrew  
Doug Reynolds  
Tich A.C.2  
Lance Corporal M. Howarth

Len Powell  
Johnny Lewis  
Charlie Tripe  
Lewis Roworth  
Walt Moon  
Frank Govens  
Mark Haigh  
Harold Holdsworth  
Stores



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign





# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

## Teleprinter Printout

TOOLS HELD BY THE BOY	
SCREWDRIVERS	3
ROUND NOSED PLIERS	1
BRUSH	1
LARGE PLIERS	1
SMALL SPANNERS	6
BOX SPANNERS (WITH HANDLES)	3
MOVABLE SPANNER	1
OIL CAN	1
<hr/>	
TOMMY BARS	3
CONTACT CLEANERS	2
BUTTON HOOK	1
TYPEHEAD BRUSH	1
EXTRACTOR KLOCKING RING	1
STROBSCOPE	1
SMALL PLIERS - FLAT NOSED	1
SCREWDRIVER NO. 1	1
TWEESERS	1

Teleprinter printout found folded in the second volume of the diaries. This appears to be a list of tools in my Dad's possession.



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign Release Book

My Dad's release book

ARMY BOOK X 801

289802 Surname Roworth  
 Initials T. L.  
 Army No. 2592957

## SOLDIER'S RELEASE BOOK

### CLASS "A"

Any person finding this Book is requested to hand it in to any Barracks, Post Office, or Police Station, for transmission to the Under Secretary of State, The War Office, London, S.W.1.

This book must be presented at the Post Office whenever you cash a postal draft or one of the drafts in your payment book, to enable the Post Office official to record the date of payment on the inside page of the front cover.

11-5215

PAGE TWELVE  
Army Form X 402

### PART I INSTRUCTIONS TO RELEASED PERSON MEDICAL TREATMENT AFTER LEAVING MILITARY DISPERSAL UNIT

You are now entitled to medical benefit under the National Health Insurance Acts, and a medical card telling you how to get treatment will be sent to you as soon as possible.

Medical benefit includes free treatment from an insurance doctor at his surgery, or if your condition requires it, at your home, and free medicine.

If you go back to live in your old district and had an insurance doctor before you joined up you will be restored to his list if he is still in practice himself or by deputy.

If you fall ill before the medical card comes, fill in the application below and hand this book to your previous insurance doctor (or, if absent, his deputy). If you did not have an insurance doctor before you joined up or if you go to live in another part of the country, apply to any insurance doctor. You can see a list of insurance doctors at the local Post Office.

Do not detach the form from the book. The doctor will do this.

Form Mod. 50A.

### PART II--To be completed in Unit

Rank SIGNAL Number 2592957  
 Initials T. L. Surname (Block Letters) ROWORTH  
 Date of Birth 12/03/20 Sex MALE (If a married woman, state maiden name)

Military Dispersal  
Stamp  
No. 11  
**15 JUN 1946**

The above-named individual left this Military Dispersal Unit on the date in the stamp opposite.

### PART III

*Available for three months from date of leaving Military Dispersal Unit.  
To be completed by released person ONLY if needing medical treatment before a medical card is received.*

I have NOT received a medical card since leaving the Military Dispersal Unit and I hereby apply for a medical card to be issued to me.

Delete as may be necessary ( I was on the list of Dr. .... immediately before I was mobilised or called up for service.  
 I was not on the list of a doctor in the district where I am now, and I desire to be placed on the list of..... (Insert name of doctor or approved institution.)

My present address is .....

Do you intend to leave this district within three months from the date hereof? If so when? .....

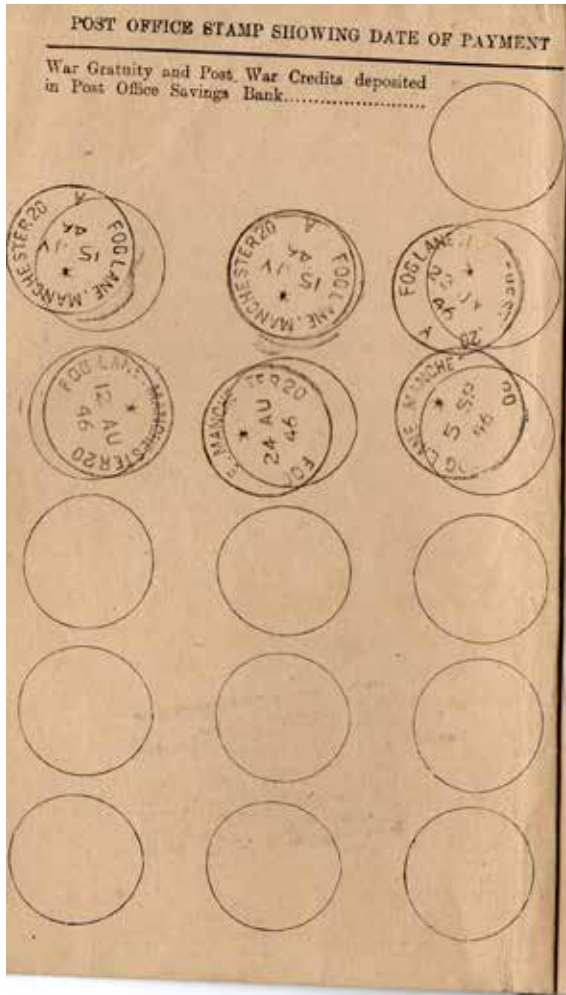
Name of Approved Society\* (if any).....  
 (If a deposit contributor write "D.C.")  
 Name of Branch (if any) of Society .....  
 Membership number.....

(Signature of released individual)  
Date.....

\* If you were a member of an Approved Society before you were mobilised or called up for service, or if you joined an Approved Society during service, your membership is still effective. (See also overleaf.)



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



POST OFFICE STAMP SHOWING DATE OF PAYMENT

War Gratuity and Post War Credits deposited in Post Office Savings Bank.....

PAGE ONE (4)

NO STAMP REQUIRED

Postage Prepaid by War Office

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE

The Officer i/c R. SIGNALS Records,  
at CAVERSHAM  
READING.

Army No. 2592857 Present Rank SGM.

Unit.....  
Regiment or Corps No. 11 R SIGNALS  
Surname (Block Letters) ROWORTH  
Christian Name/s THOMAS LEWIS  
The recipient's man's greatest is hereby acknowledged.  
Signature of G.O.C. Civilian Clothing Depot.....  
Place.....  
Date.....

Note.—In cases where a soldier is not in possession of a greatcoat, the certificate on the reverse of this form should be completed.

RELEASE LEAVE CERTIFICATE Army Form X 202/A

Army No. 2592857 Present Rank SGM.

Surname (Block Letters) ROWORTH

Christian Name/s THOMAS LEWIS

Unit, Regt. or Corps R SIGNALS

Date of Last enlistment.....

\* Calling up for military service.....

\* Strike out whichever is inapplicable.

(a) Trade on enlistment CLERK

(b) Trade courses and trade tests passed TSB Co. II / MECH. II

(c) Service Trade TELE/MECH. ATT

(d) Any other qualification for civilian employment.....

Military Conduct: Excellent

Testimonial: This man has done excellent work as a teleprinter mechanic. He is very hard working, trustworthy and intelligent. He works well under the most trying circumstances. A June 1946

Place AUSTRIA Date.....

Officer's Signature [Signature]

Signature of Soldier [Signature]

Release leave expires on 10 AUG 1946

Army Education Record (including particulars under (a), (b), (c) and (d) below).—

(a) Type of course..... (b) Length..... (c) Total hours of instruction..... (d) Record of achievement.....

\* Instructors will insert the letter "I" here to indicate that in their case the record refers to courses in which they have acted as Instructors.

Signature of Unit Education Officer.....

Portion of Soldier's Testimonial on Release Leave

1. A regular soldier with Reserve service to complete will be transferred to the Royal Army Reserve, and will receive Reserve pay until his period of Reserve service has been completed. If so that date emergency still exists, he will cease to draw Reserve pay, and will then be transferred to Army Reserve Class "X" (unpaid).

2. A regular soldier who has completed his Colour and Reserve service engagement will be transferred to Army Reserve Class "X" (unpaid).

3. All other soldiers will be transferred to Army Reserve Class "Z" or Class "Y" (CP).

SPECIAL NOTE.—Army Reservists are liable to recall to the colours, if necessary, during the continuing period of the Emergency.

Note: (1) Further details of service and of medals to which entitled may be had on application in O.A.G. Reports, accompanied by the applicant's A.R.54, Part I.

(2) If this certificate is lost or mislaid, no duplicate can be obtained.

(3) Any alteration of the particulars given in this certificate may render the holder liable to Detention under the Soldiers' and Sailors' Pledge Characters Act, 1906.

THE ABOVE-NAMED MAN PROCEEDED ON RELEASE LEAVE ON THE DATE SHOWN IN THE MILITARY DISPERSAL UNIT STAMP OPPOSITE.


N.B.—A certificate showing the date of transfer to the appropriate Army Reserve (A.F. X 202/B) will be issued by the Officer i/c Record Office.

Military Dispersal Unit Stamp

No. 11  
M.D.C.U. and M.D.U.  
15 JUN 1946  
CAVERSHAM



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign Buying Permit



## BUYING PERMIT

This permit contains 30 Utility Furniture Units  
and the following Priority Dockets

	.....1.....Curtain material
	.....1.....Floor covering
	.....1.....Mattresses
	.....2.....Blankets
	.....3.....Sheets

To be quoted in any correspondence

Reference Number 3473460

The person to whom this permit is issued **MUST**  
complete these particulars **BEFORE** using it

1. Name Miss B. Wakefield
2. National Registration (Identity Card) Number  
or Service Number and Rank } .....
3. Address .....

---

**AREA OF VALIDITY**

For the purpose of obtaining Utility Furniture, this permit may be used only at a shop within a radius of 15 miles of the address to which the furniture is to be delivered or anywhere in.....

Date of issue 22 APR 1946 194 **UF4/C 633059**

*Please see Notes inside the front and back covers*

51-1966

A buying permit for utility goods issued after the war. I am not sure why one of the docket for linoleum was not used. When my parent's got married after the war they originally lived with my paternal grandparents.

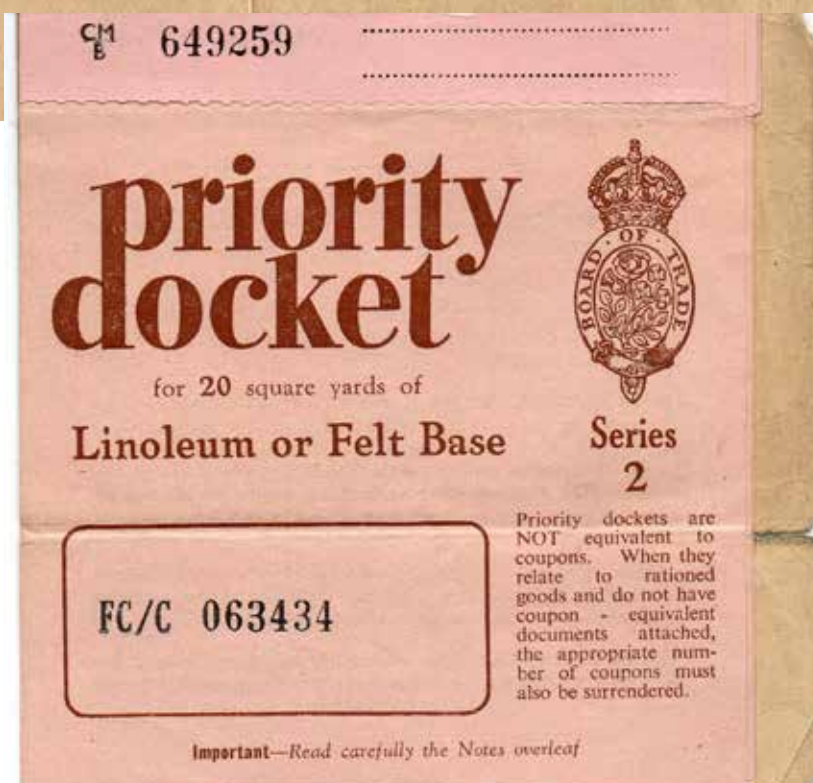


# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

## Notes on Utility Furniture Units

*(for Notes on Priority Dockets, please see inside back cover)*

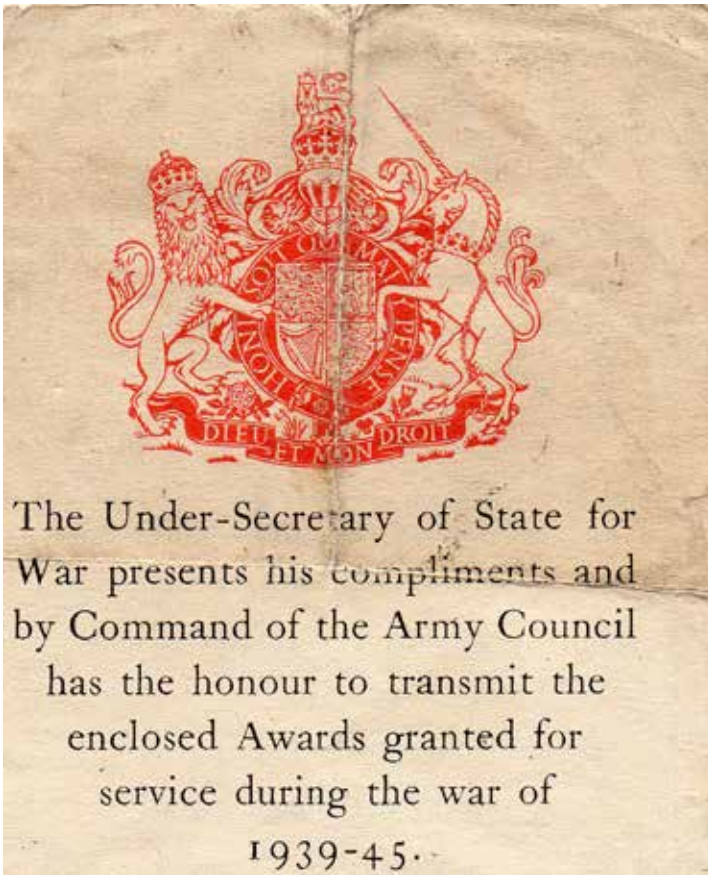
1. The utility furniture units in this permit are valid only for six months from the date of issue. Unused units must be returned to the Board of Trade if, after they have been issued, the circumstances of the holder change so that he no longer needs furniture for the reasons he gave on his application form.
2. The name of the person to whom this permit is issued is entered on the front cover and the permit may only be used by or on behalf of that person. Before using the permit, he should enter on the front cover also his address and either his National Registration (Identity Card) Number or his Service Number and Rank.
3. When shopping you must hand the permit complete with the utility furniture units to the shopkeeper. If there are more units than he needs for your order, he will cut out the number required and return the rest to you. You must not cut units out yourself and it is illegal for the shopkeeper to accept loose units.
4. The shopkeeper may not retain units except when an order has been placed.
5. When ordering goods by post, send the permit complete with the utility furniture units. If there are more units included in the permit than are needed for your order, the shopkeeper will return the permit together with the surplus units.





# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## Medal Certificate Front and Rear



Campaign Stars, Clasps and Medals instituted in recognition of service in the war of 1939-45

NUMBER OF STARS, MEDALS, CLASPS or EMBLEMS ENCLOSED **4/1**

Order of Wearing	Description of Ribbon	Clasp or Emblem (if awarded)
1 1939-45 Star	Dark blue, red and light blue in three equal vertical stripes. This ribbon is worn with the dark blue stripe furthest from the left shoulder.	Battle of Britain
2 Atlantic Star	Blue, white and sea green shaded and watered. This ribbon is worn with the blue edge furthest from the left shoulder.	Air Crew Europe or France and Germany
3 Air Crew Europe Star	Light blue with black edges and in addition a narrow yellow stripe on either side.	Atlantic or France and Germany
4 Africa Star	Pale buff, with a central vertical red stripe and two narrower stripes, one dark blue, and the other light blue. This ribbon is worn with the dark blue stripe furthest from the left shoulder.	8th Army or 1st Army or North Africa 1942-43
5 Pacific Star	Dark green with red edges, a central yellow stripe, and two narrow stripes, one dark blue and the other light blue. This ribbon is worn with the dark blue stripe furthest from the left shoulder.	Burma
6 Burma Star	Dark blue with a central red stripe and in addition two orange stripes.	Pacific
7 Italy Star	Five vertical stripes of equal width, one in red at either edge and one in green at the centre, the two intervening stripes being in white.	
8 France and Germany Star	Five vertical stripes of equal width, one in blue at either edge and one in red at the centre, the two intervening stripes being in white.	Atlantic
9 Defence Medal	Flame coloured with green edges, upon each of which is a narrow black stripe.	Silver laurel leaves (King's Commendation for brave conduct. Civil)
10 War Medal 1939-45	A narrow central red stripe with a narrow white stripe on either side. A broad red stripe at either edge, and two intervening stripes in blue.	Oak leaf





# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

## A letter from Mum posted on the 17th March, 1944

I found a leather case containing some letters. There are some received from Dad before he left for Italy. This is the only one written by Mum to Dad during the war and contains a photograph. I am not sure where all the other letters written and received went to.





# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

## APPENDIX B - PEOPLE

**Andy** - A fellow signalman (possibly a nickname for Arnold)

**Arnold Andrew** - A signalman who did basic training with Dad at Rudloe.

**Arthur** - see Roworth, Arthur

**Aunty Mag** - See Wakefield, Margaret

**Bert Stringer** - A fellow signalman

**Betty** - Wakefield, Betty

**Bob** - A fellow signalman

**Captain Fisher** - In charge of section June, 1944

**Captain Randall** - In charge of unit May, 1944-June, 1945

**Chalky** - A fellow signalman

**Chas** - See Tripe, Charles

**Colonel Hudson** - A gambling man from the Royal Engineers DD survey

**Colin** A fellow signalman

**Corporal Sharpe** A fellow signalman told to get a shave during review.

**Dad (In diary entries)** - See Roworth, Lewis

**Dave** A fellow signalman

**Denis Norman** Denis Hankinson a school friend, together with Dirk they went on holidays and were known as "the three musketeers". He was a sergeant in the R.A.F. during the war service number 1304034.

**Dirk** - Dirkin, Arthur,

**Dirkin, Arthur** - My Mum's Cousin, one of his best friends at school and later his best-man. He was in the R.A.F. during the war service number 1135927.

**Dicky** A fellow signalman

**Dusty** A fellow signalman

**Eddie** A fellow signalman

**Ernie** A fellow signalman

**Eugene** A Pole assigned to the 8th Army signals

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

**Eugene Piccollo** A (possibly smaller) Pole called Eugene assigned to the 8th Army signals

**Frank Gavens or Haigh** - A fellow signalman

**Freddie Lee** A fellow signalman

**General Nicholls** The Senior Officer in Charge

**General Wemies** Commander of the Corp

**Geoff** - A fellow signalman

**George** The first Pole assigned to my Dad's Company in 8th Army Signals. He seems to be quite a character able to obtain goods and delighted in cooking

.

**Ian** A fellow signalman

**Joan** - Chas' Fiancee

**Jack** A fellow signalman

**Jock** A fellow signalman

**Joe Haughton** - A fellow signalman

**John Craigen** - Husband of my Mum's Cousin

**Johnny Lewis** A fellow signalman

**Ken** -- A fellow signalman

**Len Lacey** - A fellow signalman

**Lewis** - See Roworth, Thomas Lewis

**Lloyd** A fellow signalman

**Loff, Loffty** A fellow signalman



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

**Major Betts** Officer in Charge of Dad's company November, 1943

**Major Willett** A member of the General staff

**Mam** - See Roworth, Mary Ethel

**Midge** A fellow signalman

**Mr Wells** A fellow signalman?

**Norman Ebel** A fellow signalman

**Olive** - My Mum's Cousin

**Phil** A fellow signalman

**Pop** A fellow signalman

**Ray** A fellow signalman

**Red** A fellow signalman

**Robbie, Robi, Roby** A fellow signalman

**Roman Fostiak**- A Pole assigned to the 8th Army signals

**Ron C Harris**- A fellow signalman (Service number: 2349250)

**Roworth, Arthur** My Father's younger brother. He had his right arm amputated to just below the elbow after an industrial accident during the war (see 18th November, 1944)

**Roworth, Lewis** My Paternal Grandfather

**Roworth, Mary Ethel - Nee Swift** - My Paternal Grandmother

**Roworth, Thomas Lewis** - See Introduction.

**Russell** - A fellow signalman

**Sergeant Eyres** A fellow signalman

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

**Sergeant Gordon** A fellow signalman

**Sergeant Avins** A fellow signalman

**Sergeant Coulson** A fellow signalman

**Signalman Badcock** A fellow signalman

**Stan** A fellow signalman

**Syd** A fellow signalman

**The Professor** A fellow signalman

**Tom** A fellow signalman

**Tony** A fellow signalman

**Tripe, Charles** - Dad must have met him in training as he is one of the ones shown in the drawing of the autograph book in Rudloe. This is a photograph taken of the two of them and sent to my Mum and Joan, Chas' fiancée. It appears from a letter Chas asked Dad to be his best man. He lived in Budleigh Salterton and we met the family when on holiday in the Exeter area on a few occasions. He took Joan's surname, Robinson, as his daughter was being teased at school.



**Tubby Stevens** A fellow signalman

**Vic** A fellow signalman

**Vin** A fellow signalman



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

**Wakefield, Betty** - My Mum. They were married in 1946 after the war. They were happily married for over 50 years until my Dad's death. They had three children my brother Graham in 1947, my sister Elizabeth in 1950 and me in 1959. She was in the A.T.S. (Auxillairy Territorial Service) based in Bramley near Reading.



**Wakefield, Margaret** - My Maternal Grandmother

**Wally** - (Possibly Walt) A fellow signalman

**Walt Moon** - A fellow signalman

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

## APPENDIX C - PLACES

**Ancona** 19 July, 1944

A city on Italy's Adriatic coast and the capital of the Marche region.



**Augusta** 13 July, 1943

A port on Sicily where Dad first landed.

**Bari** 4 November, 1943

A port city on Italy's Adriatic coast.

**Bizerta** 6 October, 1943

Few cities have a strategic position as the town the Romans called Hyppo Diarrhytus. It is located on a strip of land that connects the Mediterranean and the huge, natural harbour named after the city. The incomparable shelter for ships explains why Bizerta has always been so important, and why it has been

Punic, Roman, Byzantine, Arab

and Turkish. Today the city is lively and prosperous. The well preserved Median, with its mosques, souks, and Moorish houses, offers many pleasant discoveries for the visitor. Its winding streets end at the Old Port, where there are coffees and small docks for fishing boats, and the atmosphere here is unique. A visit to the fish market is a must. The modern city is full of gardens and wide avenues; Bizerta continues to the north along the famous Corniche, which now has tourist accommodations with well equipped and comfortable hotels, and to the south lies the beach of El-Rimel, where the white sand has a backdrop of stately pines. Strolling along the streets and tiny alley-ways, the tourist





# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

will discover the many kinds of handicrafts available, the result of years of experience: embroidery, rug weaving, wrought iron, etc.

**Campobasso** 12 March, 1944

A city in Italy

**Carlentini** 22 July, 1943



A town in Sicily.

**castelcisto** 31 May, 1944

This may be a misreading as I cannot find any place near Cassino tht matches with this.

**Castelnuova** 15 June, 1944

**Cattolica** 18 September, 1944

A town on Italy's Adriatic coast.

**Cesena** 20 November, 1944

A city on Italy's North Adriatic coast. A



**Charing Cross 5**

A main line station in London.

**Chiaravalle** 22 August, 1944

A town Noth-West of Ancona

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

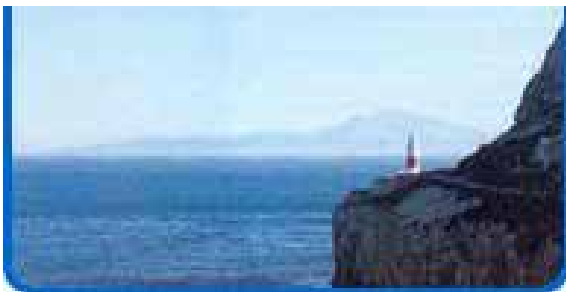
## Civita Castellana 17 June, 1944

A town and commune 65 kilometres north of Rome

### Elba 17 June, 1944

An Italian island in the Tyrrhenian Sea. Famously where Napoleon was first exiled to .

### Europa Point (*The Voyage*)



Europa Point is the southernmost tip of Gibraltar, and the home to the lighthouse. This lighthouse is the most southerly of all Trinity House Lighthouses, being the only one outside the United Kingdom. It stands 49 metres above the High Water mark at the southernmost

end of the Rock of Gibraltar. The foundation stone was laid by Governor Sir Alexander Woodford on the 26th April, 1838, with the assistance of the Masonic Order in Gibraltar and was opened on 1 August 1841, attracting over 2000 onlookers from the surrounding countryside. It was fully automated in February 199 and its loom can be seen over a distance of 27 kilometres.



### Fabriano 24 October, 1944

A town west of Ancona.

### Ferrara 30 April, 1945

A city in Italy



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

**Filigico** 23 September, 1944

???

**Filitia** 19 October, 1944

???????

**Florence** 19 January, 1945

**Foggia** 5 August, 1943

A city in Southern Italy.

**Foligno** 18 August, 1944

A town in Italy south west of Perugia.

**Forli** 23 March, 1945

A town in Italy south of Venice

**Forte** 28 November, 1944

???

**Freibach** 12 August, 1945

A place in Austria.

**Frittorica** 18 October, 1944

???

**Frosinone** 5 June, 1944

A town in central Italy

**Greenock** 27 June, 1943

A town near Glasgow in Scotland.

**Imola** 9 April, 1945

A town in Northern Italy now the site of the Italian Grand Prix.

**Isle of Aran** 29 June, 1943

An island in Scotland

**Klagenfurt** 7 August, 1945

A town in Austria (left)



**Larino** 12 March, 1945

A town in Italy near Campobasso.

**Lauro?**

Wartime postcards of Lauro (right).



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

**Lentini** 5 August, 1943

A town in the South East of Sicily.

**Liverpool** 27 June, 1943

A port in England

**London** 27 June, 1943

The capital of the United Kingdom

**Lucera** 6 November, 1943

## Postcards of Lucera purchased during the war



**Mestre** 4 May, 1945

A district of Venice.

**Moline** 12 May, 1945

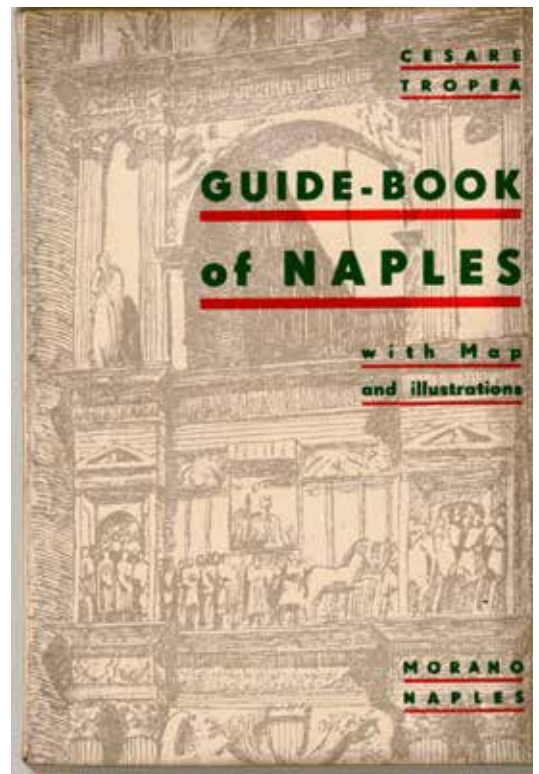
A town at the foot of the Alps in Austria.

**Monte Cassino** 16 February, 1944

A mountail with a monastery which was heavily bombed during the war.

**Naples** 10 January, 1944

A city that lies at the north end of the Bay of Naples and the Amalfi coast. It is overlooked by Vesuvius which was erupting at the time Dad was in Italy. Illustrated are the cover of the guide book and postcards purchased during the war.





# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



*Napoli - Museo Nazionale*



*Napoli - Via Portici*



*Napoli - Palazzo Provincia*

# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

**Nola** *22 September, 1944*

A city inland to the East of Naples

**Orte** *24 September, 1944*

A town North of Rome

**Orvieto** *23 June, 1944*

A city situated on the flat summit of a large butte of volcanic tuff. A wartime photograph of Pozzo di San patricio orari and two of the cathedral one in colour.

**Panicarola** *5 July, 1944*



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

A town in central Italy.

**Perugia** 19 June, 1944

A town in central Italy.

**Philippeville** (*In Hospital*)

Skikda, formerly Philippeville, city and port, northeastern Algeria, on the Gulf of Stora, near Constantine.



**Poggibonsi** 2 August, 1944

A town south-west of Florence.

**Poggio Mirteto** 23 October, 1944

A municipality in central Italy

**Pompeii** 7 May, 1944

Pompeii is a Roman settlement destroyed when Vesuvius erupted in 79 A.D. IT was buried under ash and lava preserving it and the site has been excavated to reveal the vast Roman city preserved beneath.

My Dad's wartime visit to pompeii is documented on the 7th May 1944. He always said that he had gone AWOL (absent without leave) to do this but from the diary it appears he

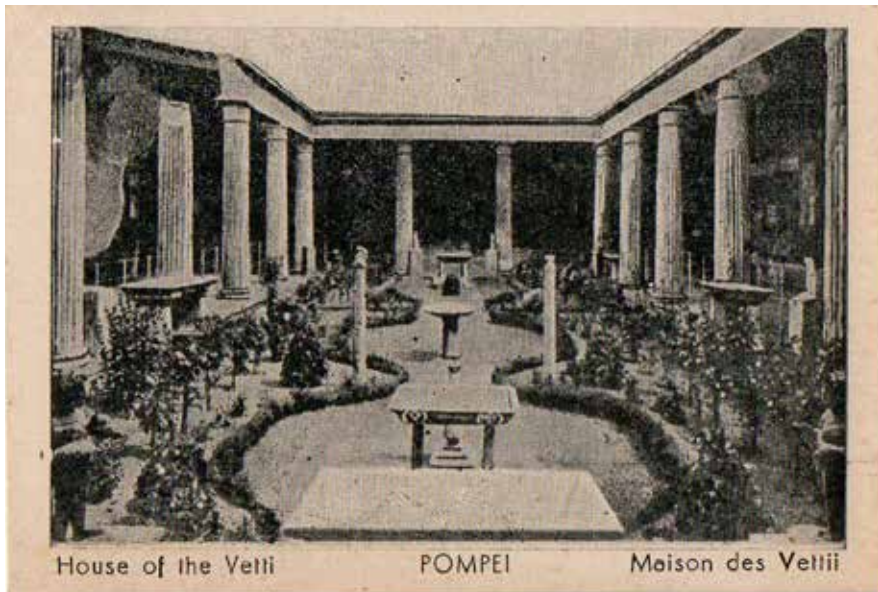


# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

was on leave and the only thing he did was arrive late back to camp one night, which was

not noticed ( I suppose with the years of telling of the story the length of absence also grew).

At the time Vesuvius had just erupted so there was a fine layer of ash covering the ruins. Here are the postcards purchased at he time but the guide book mentioned is not



amongst the memorabilia.

He also said the guide, mentioned in the diary, unlocked a cabinet to reveal some pornographic images. I take it these are the ones in the street of prostitutes which on my last visit were on open display.

He revisited Pompeii on a family holiday in the 1980's. It was quite amusing as Italians would keep asking him if he had been to Italy before. to which he replied "Yes. In 1943".

**Rimini** 26 October, 1944

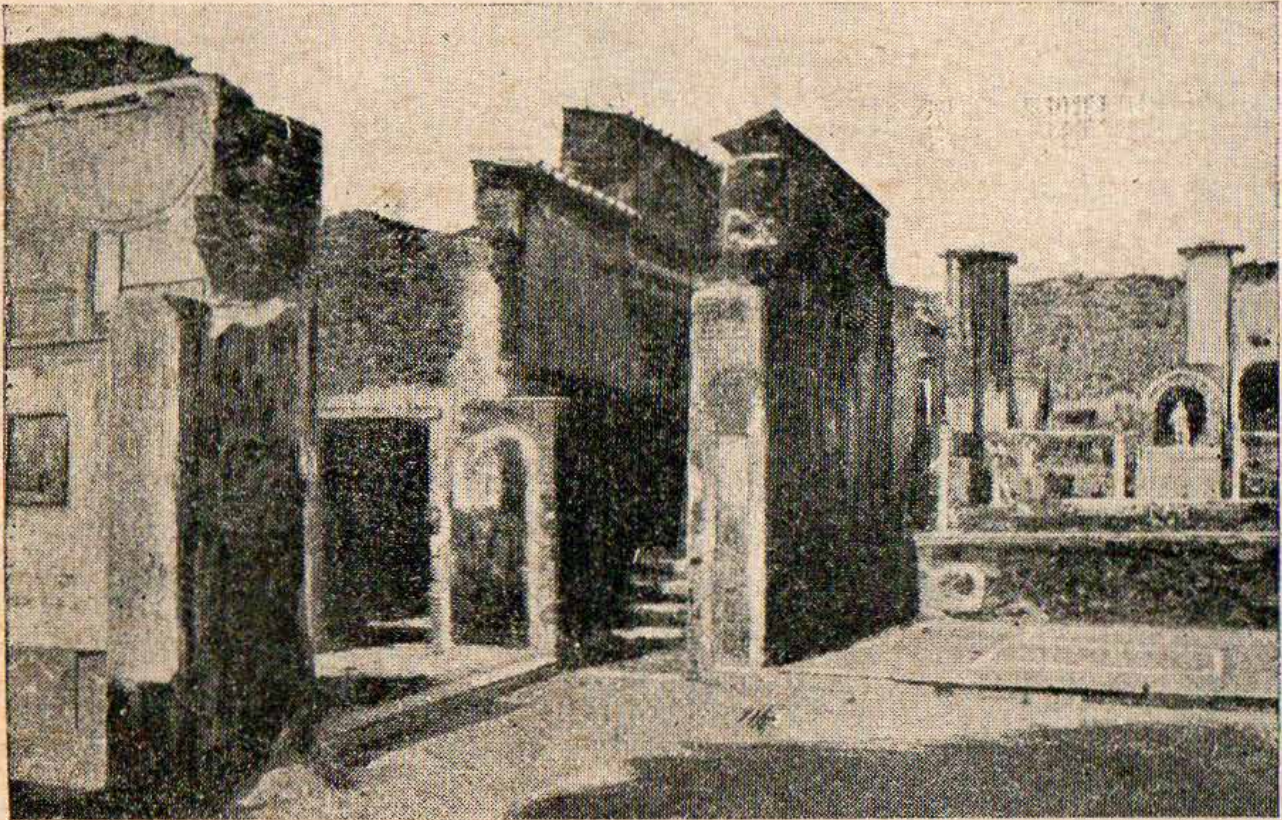
iA town on the Northern Adriatic coast South of Venice.

**Rudloe** (*Introduction*)

A town in England near Bath where Dad did some of his basic training.



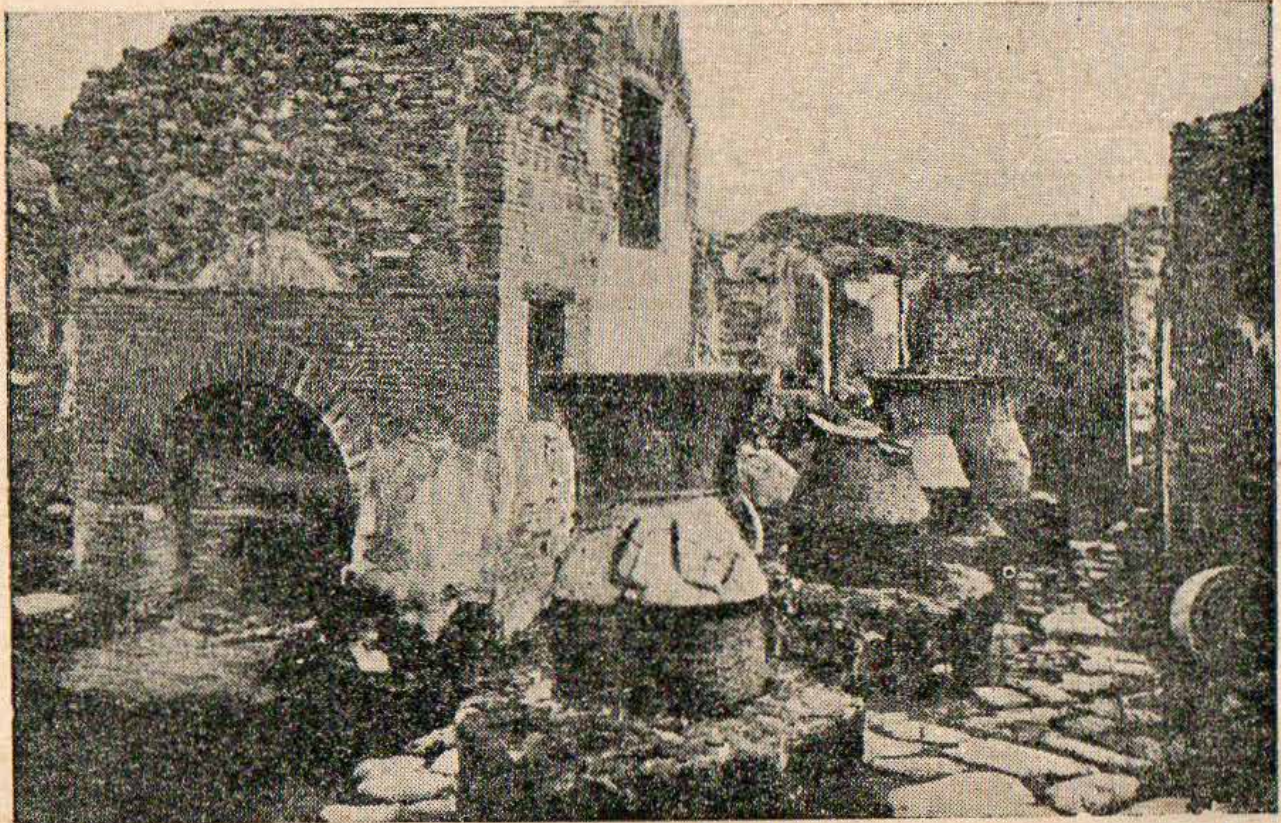
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



House of Lucretius

POMPEI

Maison de Lucretius



POMPEI

Interior of a house



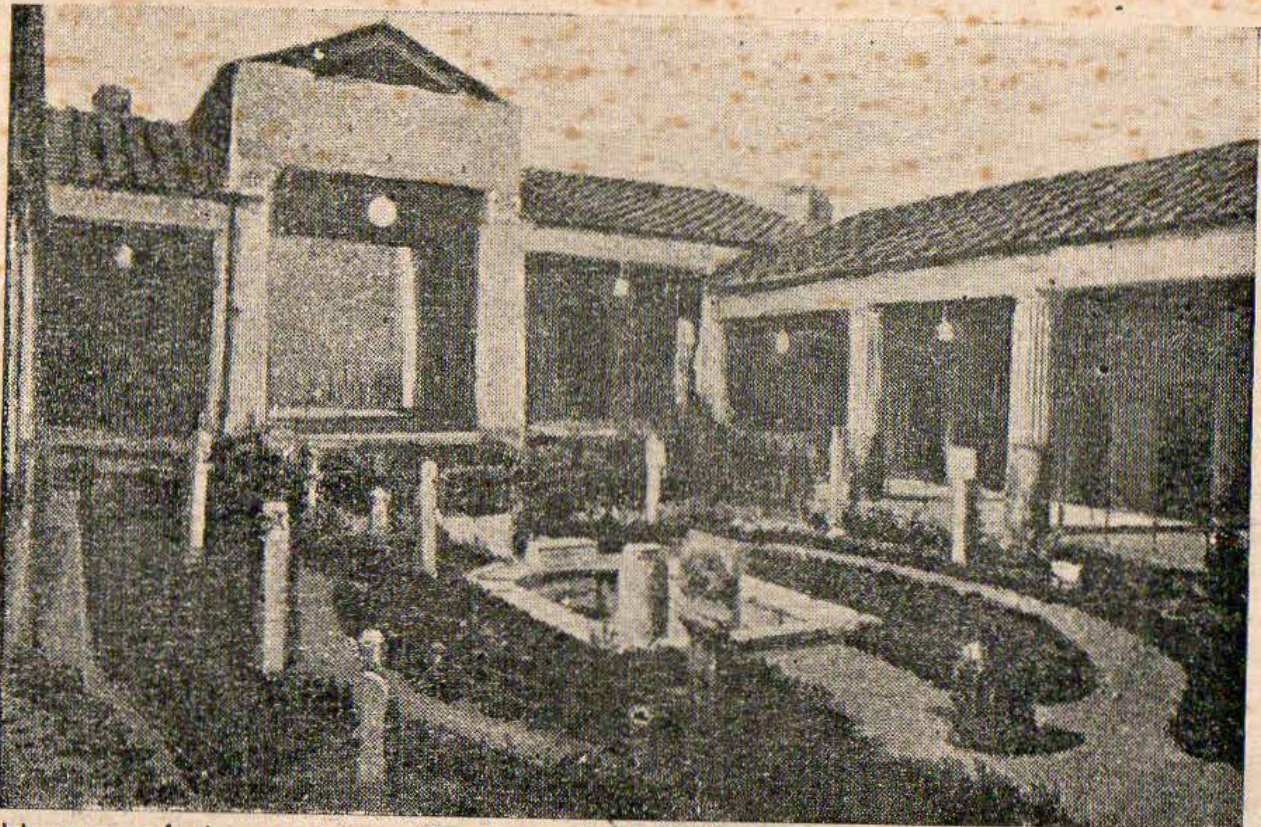
# Diary of a D-Day Dodger



The temple of Apollo

POMPEII

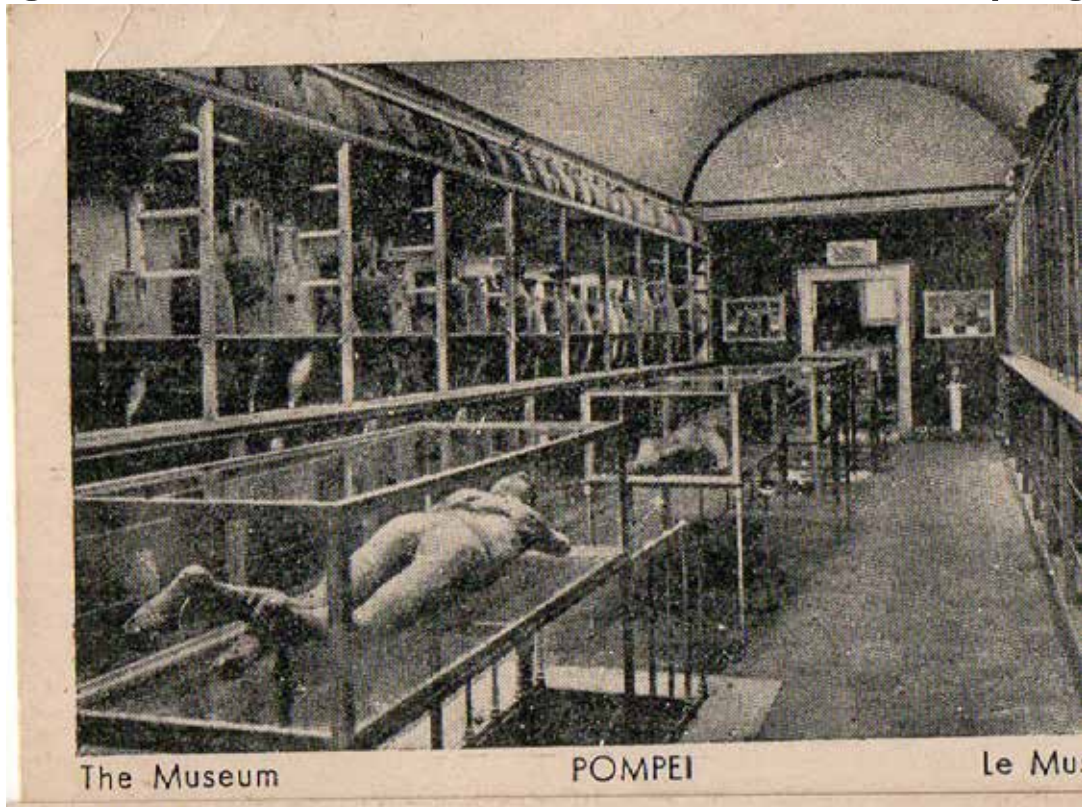
Temple d'Apollon



House of the golden Cupids POMPEII Maison des amours dorés



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



The Museum

POMPEI

Le Mu

## **Sabia** 15 June, 1944

A town East of Pompeii and to the South of Naples.

## **Senegallia** 15 September, 1944

A village on the Adriatic Coast North of Ancona.

## **Shrivenham** (Introduction)

An army camp near Swindon in England where Dad did some of his basic training.

## **Siena** 2 August, 1944

Postcards of Siena purchased during the war.



Siena -  
La Cattedrale



Siena - Fontana con palazzo S. Provenza

## **St. Angelo** 15 March, 1944

A town near Monte Cassino. Dad was based here during the assault.



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

Taranto 9 October, 1943

A seaport on the heel of Italy South of Bari . Here are a selection of postcards showing Taranto purchased during the war.





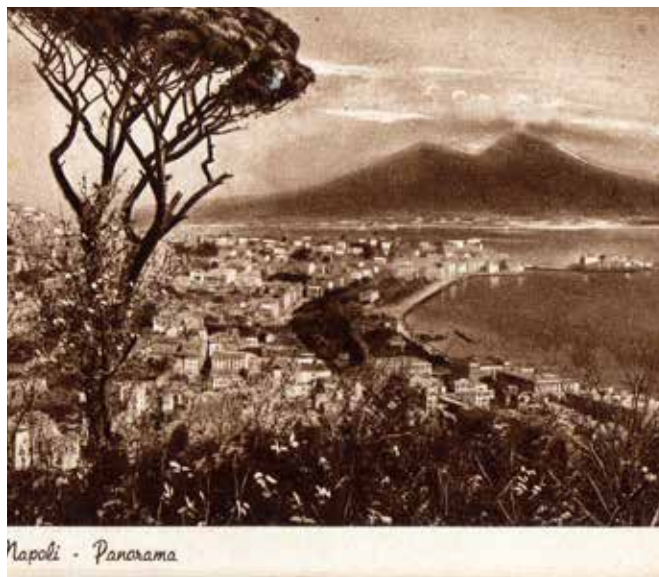
# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign



*Napoli - Museo Nazionale*



*Bari - Via L'Aquila vista da Piazza Giordano Bruno*



*Napoli - Panorama*

**Termoli** 12 March, 1944



# Diary of a D-Day Dodger

**Udine** 15 May, 1945

Postcards of Udine purchased during the war.



*Udine - Angolo della Loggia Municipale*



*Udine - Il Castello - Costruito nel 1017 - Fu ribattezzato in onore del Gran Statista - Gerardo  
D'Adda - Ma se il Duca austriaco e l'Impero e l'Impero - Per il Museo, allora Pinacoteca*



*Udine - Torre del Torrone*



*Udine - Piazza Vittorio Emanuele e salita al Castello*

**Vasto** 26 January, 1944

**Venice** 24 April, 1945

**Vesuvius** 10 January, 1944

A wartime postcard of Vesuvius showing Vesuvius erupting.



*Napoli - Il Vesuvio visto dalla Litoranea*



# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

**Vienna** *8 May, 1945*

**Vinchiaturio** *12 March, 1945*

**Warrington** *(Introduction)*

**Whalley Range** *24 August, 1943*

An area of Manchester, England about 2 miles (3.2 km) southwest of the city centre.

**Woolwich** *(Introduction)*

## **100 General Hospital**

This was built by the 706 Artisan Works Company Royal Engineers. The work carried out at Philippeville was at the 100 General Hospital in the construction of Nissan Huts, operating theatre, cookhouses, wards and the construction of a 30,000 gallon reinforced concrete water storage tank. At an RASC Camp at Cork Forest it was in the construction of cookhouses, latrines and ablutions. At Stora Road it was improvement of the hill road above Stora to enable passage of 3.7 Anti Aircraft guns to the top of the cliff. At a Commands.o Camp it was the provision of a water supply, erection of cookhouses, ablutions, latrines and a boathouse. In March 1943 there was an air raid on Phillippeville Docks and some of the men were sent to repair the damage and fill in the bomb craters. Other work undertaken in Algeria during 1943 was the construction of Petrol Storage Tanks, a POW camp and two POW hospital

# Signalman Lewis Roworth's Italian Campaign

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