

Diary of war

Day 1 1916 December 1st

Well here I go, my first diary. I'm recruiting up for the army. Thought it would be a good idea to note my experience. Travelling around the world, drinking everyday and seeing beautiful women from around the world. I'm off to the drill hall to sign up. I read some poem called who's for the game and I ain't being no coward! I feel so excited, serving my country and protecting it in a man now. Well not really a man in 17 tomorrow you suppose to be 18 but that's alright I'd say I had the physique of one. Well I'm off wish me luck!

Yes I'm in. I leave in a couple of days to the borders of Jerry's home land. Who do they think they are. I mean really us Brits might be a small island but we can pack a punch or two! All of my mates are going. John, Terry, Big Glen and me going to have the best times of our lives. It probably won't even last for a while but I'm going to treasure every day of it.

My mums so proud of me if only my dad could see me now. Serving my country and showing that nobody messes with us Brits. Anyway I'm going to dinner write soon

Day 7

Dear diary I have just finished my basic training. They taught me how to use the rifle and certain command orders. The weight of my kit is horrendous! the boots don't fit me but the officer said ill get used to it after a while. The helmet seems to be pressing down on my head like a brick they said ill get used to that as well and I can't complain. The boat ride across the English channel did not agree with my stomach and I was sick over the side. When we got there it was such a rush to get off the boat we did not even have anytime to look around the village there. It aint turning out like I thought. Im sure it will get better..... I hope.

Day 8

Cor blimey! spent half the day in a gritty truck with another 11 men! John is with me he is loving all this commotion he just can't wait until we get to the proper stuff. Duno really if im up for the proper stuff anymore all these weapons it sounds a bit well dangerous! I knew it was going to be dangerous but well suppose it wont be too bad with the conditions of this camp it can't be getting any worse. Im so hungry. I had a meal, actually it wasn't really a meal so much. Bit of meat and veg and some biscuits! What I would give to have one of my mums dinners..... I miss her.

Day 13

When I said it couldn't get any worse we got introduced into our new homes today. A muddy, sloppy stretch of dirt they call it a trench. Defended by a thick case of barbed wire. A prison is more of the appearance of it. A vast stretch of land filled with an eerie feel to it. Glad I won't be out there! Something like no man's land they call it. As I toured this bleak river of mud I noticed a hole sort of dug out in the trench wall. Curious I ventured in and observed a type of sleeping quarters for two. A sharp scream was hurled at me by an officer of my platoon. He told me that curiosity killed the cat and with my curiosity I seemed to be the cat. Another dug out was formed. With a quick glance I noted this seemed five star in comparison with my previous encounter. The officer explained that this was for higher ranks for them to dine and sleep all of a sudden I felt insignificant.

Day 17

The darkness has consumed my post and this was the night we would encounter our first 'proper action.' An adrenaline rush surged through my body like electricity. This was it my chance to prove I was a man. I whispered to John and asked him if he was scared. With a confident laugh he shook his head and said "the only place where I would be scared is if I was in the Jerry's trench!" Looking into his dark blue eyes I could see that really he was not scared but terrified. So was I.

This fear of war had never really possessed me until. I was nervous, I didn't want to die I was 17 not even classed as an adult and to be wiped of the face of this world without..... I hate to say it but without a reason. Before it seemed like I was serving my country but now it seems more like suicide for my country. I might not even get to kill anyone dying without an achievement. The fear seemed to be covering me with a dark daunting mist. I could see or breath. Sweat ran down my face like a violent river angered and enraged with a strong wind. Panicking for my life I felt I needed to go. I asked an officer for leave but with a laugh he dismissed me back to my post.

Day 19

The battle has finished. Im alive. As I looked around me I saw blood gashing, tears shedding and men shivering with the monstrosity of this violent place. My face was covered in blood as a bullet had ripped past, striking the surface of my skin and like a volcano exploded into a cascade of blood. I meaningless inch to the right and I would not have been sitting here. Shaking from the fear of our next encounter sometimes I wish that gunman had a better aim. Out here there weren't humans but blood thirsty animals with weaponry. The twisted minds of those who blast the bullets against their own species sickens me. When your out there fighting against those who have caused no wrong you don't feel guilt, fear as the adrenalin pumping round the bodies of men powering them to run like a hare and scream like a fog horn, nothing

matters but you. Ignorance combined with pure stupidity can be a dangerous asset to us humans.

Day 23

Christmas draws near with thoughts of family and friends. What I would give to be at a fireplace watching the flames dance for me with warmth and comfort. A drink to revive the juices and taste buds of my mouth. What I would give to embrace the ones that I love. Instead I watch the life taking bullets dance above my head like a cloud of death. Instead I drink brandy to calm myself from the horror of war. Instead I embrace a cold metallic rifle that acts as my love and existence. My life slowly collapses in front of my death observing eyes.

Instead of happy presents that bring me love and joy I receive a trench. Should I end it now? Should I just give up hope of returning to my home? The answer is no. I will fight on no matter how many obstacles block my way I will carry on.

Day 25

A miracle blessed us. Today all went quiet. Silent night was sung by us and with joyful response the jerries replied with singing back to us. Slowly but with great caution we raised our heads above the trench. Risking our life we stepped into no mans land. Like a mirror image the opposition did the same. Either side surrendered their guns and walked towards us. Could this be a trick? I did not question it. With warmth of

friendship and love we met them. A mass tension was in the air.

These humans which we had been killing with no thoughts were no further then 10 yards from me. For the first time in weeks I felt happy. I was the first to step forward and greet these alien like figures. "sorry" what I thing to say. Sorry for wiping out your comrades, sorry for making you live a nightmare of hell on earth. I felt so embarrassed but in a way grateful for what im sure was a acceptance of it. The German nodded his head in forgiveness. I offered my hand as a gesture of greeting towards him. As did the other men. I didn't feel like an animal anymore but like a civilised human being. The silence was broken by conversation between the two. Names and family information was shared with no uncertainties. I was crying! The happiness that filled my dull unwilling heart was like a thousand pounds! No traitors were muttered by anyone.

We commenced a game of football. As I slipped over a jerrie offered his hand and I glad fully took it. Laughter and enjoyment was to be heard for miles around. The thing that surprised me the most was that these jerries weren't too bad at this game. We lost 9-8 but nobody cared everyone was drunk with happiness to even notice the score. It has been the gayest and queerest day of my life.

We had to move locations. We couldn't carry on killing..... our newly made friends. I knew that somewhere there was Stefan a man with a child and by

the looks of his photographs a beautiful wife out there.
After hours of protesting we were moved.

Day 33 1917 January 3rd

On the way to our next position I wrote a poem

under all the layers of clothing skin and muscle,
under all the hate anger and courage,
under all the training and preparation,
All I see is a load of gods creation,

under all the bravery and heroics,
under all the determination and motivation,
under all the words of lies and tales,
All I see is a load of boys skinny and pale.

I just wanted people to know that however big or
brave someone is there is always something else less on
the inside.

Day 36

I've been told to be part of the front offensive I fear
the worst as not many people make it back. I gaze up
on the parapet wondering how far over or if I will a
make. I can feel the adrenalin start to possess my body
once again. It doesn't make me feel better though. Its
like my mind screams no but my body pleads for it.
Stuck between two worlds my mind gives up to the
body. This could be my last entry to you diary. I wish
to say how much I feared that my mum would outlive

me but however it seems I have to face them. I shed a tear which slowly runs down my face not like a raging river but with grace in its movement. I would love to say I had led a happy life but a lie would be sin to end with. At young age of 17 I sign not my diary but my death certificate

Signed lovingly

Alfred Holmes

Ps live your life to the full with ignorance from your country as serving it will serve you death