

Edith Elizabeth Appleton Diaries - Volume 3 (8 May to 15 November 1916)

July 1916

[July] 1st. Not much time for diary this morning - I "slept in" & Collins called me at 6. to go for a bathe - now it is nearly 7. The water was A.I. cold - strong tide, but low - even so one is out of one's depth very quickly - not like Hunstanton - where at low tide it is impossible to get in water deeper than 2 ft - Our English patients left yesterday - leaving the work light. Five Sisters arrived from England. 2 stripes 3 staffs. They had been travelling a long time & were weary people. Letter from you last night - you seem to have had a happy time on the Moor. Received a little silver paper knife from Thomas last night - a memento of her illness - very kind of her.

[July] 2. The last 8 days - guns have been firing the whole time - fine big ones they need to be for us to hear them so distinctly - & how the china must be rattling at the Clearing Stations. The Germans have been giving themselves up & coming across in dazed groups - which is fine - How absolutely glorious if we knock them right out & level them flat - & our Infantry & Cavalry - have a walk over - such as shall make good reading in history. We had a quiet day yesterday - sent more patients to England - Took the 1/2 day - & went to Gonnevillle with Matron & Toby. We walked there - along the Havre Rd. 9.Ks. had tea at the famous old inn - I must have told you about - found a couple of Padres at tea before us - so we all came back in their car, along the valley - by Criquetot. Parry Evans - & Mr. Girdlestone. There was a wonderful sunset last night - the sea like a mill pond - & the reflection on it like molten gold - too bright to look at - & as it changed - through every colour in the paint box - it became more & more beautiful. I must dress for church now - it is past 6 - Wonder if the others will bathe.

[July] 3. Our much longed for advance has begun after many days of heavy bombardment - we launched an attack at 7.30 - on Saturday morning. They went over in waves - The second one so many minutes after the first & so on. Where one man came from the first wave was wiped out, so was the second - which gave the Germans time to adjust their machine guns to receive the rest. After the second - they began to make headway, and had them fairly on the run. We took the front line trenches for a distance of 25 miles - we actually took the four front lines but had to retire to the first because - they had the range of the other three & started shelling them. We had a couple of train loads of wounded down - 1100, in all - 153 officers - very dirty - the London Scottish kilts were a sight to behold. I don't know how many we took in the Annexes - I remembered up to 140 - then lost count - The first lot were all fed - more or less washed - & not all dressed - when the second lot came - at 6 p.m. At 9.30 we sent off 360 - from the whole hospital - at 2 a.m. - more were to go - & at 7 the next train of wounded is expected - I hear the calling bell - going & must be up - betimes - so no more now. I don't know if there were any letters for me - forgot to look, so may get an agreeable surprise this morning. Miss Wilton Smith is a fine Matron - & Major Martyn a fine M.O. - in a rush. 3 of our M.O.s were sent to the front yesterday.

[July] 4. Wounded! hundreds upon hundreds on stretchers, being carried, walking - covered from head to foot in well caked mud. The rush & buzz of ambulances & motor busses is the only thing I can remember of yesterday - of outside my wards - Inside it took us longer than the day - to anything like cope with the work of changing - feeding - & dressing the wounds of our share of them. I can't tell you much about them. We had - in numbers - horribly bad wounds - some crawling with maggots, some stinking & tense with gangrene. One poor lad had both eyes shot through & there they were lying smashed & all mixed up with the eye lashes. He was quite calm - & very tired. He said "shall I need an operation, I can't see anything?" Poor boy - he never will. 3 men died in the train & 2 only just reached hospital & went again - West. They say we are serving the Division that has acted as "draw" - to save the other divisions - if any are left they deserve all honour. Three were dumb.

[July] 5th. Ditto of day before - no time.

[July] 6th. I give up description – It beats me. In ordinary times we get a telegram from Abbeville saying a train with so many – on board – has left – coming to us. Then they stopped giving numbers – just said “full train” Now – not even a telegram comes, but the full trains do. Yesterday in addition to our 1300 beds we took the lounge of a large Restaurant, the Orderlies barracks the Ambulance garage - & the Casino front - & part of the Officers Mess - & used all except the Garage – which is ready for today. We were not able to send any on as the boats were full. So if full trains continue to pour in today – we shall have to start on private people’s houses. I have 41 German prisoners amongst my lot. How many English I don’t know. I hadn’t time to make lists they just sent in as many as they liked – it is just a case of all houses over full. The Restaurant lounge – & Officers mess belong to me too. Some of the men are terribly wounded – 8 have died & more will. One thing to be grateful for – very few officers came down with the last lot. It is wonderful how sufficient work – makes one not mind certain things . Unpleasant insect companions are the terror of my life. Many came down with the Tommies - & some have transferred their affections to us. & we hadn’t a quarter of a second to hunt them so just forgot all about them until bed time which came late. It is a mercy to have had dry weather – for the men we have out in the open. My Germans see very little of me or of my V.A.D.s. Some must do without a woman’s care & be left chiefly to Orderlies so with pleasure they may. Some of them are Prussians and very bitter, so they can just get on with their bitterness. Yesterday I had to close the shutters of their room – the French people were treating us like a peep show - Now I must get up – What is before us today I only think – for the moment & dress & go to breakfast – which is not difficult or unpleasant.

[July] 8th. (7th – the limit - & no time) It is to be hoped our attacking is doing useful work for the War – we are paying a tall price! Every day now we have trainfuls down – the place is thick & threefold with them. The Surgeons are amputating limbs - & boring through skulls at the rate of 30 a day - & not a day passes without Death taking his toll. My German prisoners have gone to England - & yesterday one came in the attic with 3 Englishmen – One thing we all get up early & work late & feel a bit “done” sometimes which gives us the satisfaction of feeling that now at least we are giving our full strength to the War. What the weather has been like & other odd bits of news I can’t tell you because all I know for certain is that it was pouring when I came along to Qrs. yesterday.

This is the sort of last straw! Yesterday afternoon we were doing dressings etc. as fast as we could – In came major Martyn - & said – “If you can find 12 stretcher cases – who could sit as far as Havre – get them quick & I can put them on full cars going now. I then had to rush like a lunatic through all the houses to find 12 (and only did 8) who could sit for 1 1/2 hrs. Rig them up – in any clothes - & get them carried to the Ambulances as they passed. The Batman has just rung the call bell - & has not thumped on the door & said “Convoy Sister please”. I am so thankful – Must get up for first breakfast all the same. They took one of my Orderlies yesterday for up the line leaving me – I V.A.D. (a good one) & 3 Orderlies for ? patients – One house has 100 in – the other 3 not so many – but more stretcher cases – However we can only do our best – now ooo-aah – the day must begin.

[July] 9th. Yesterday – was a big scramble 600 were evacuated from all parts of the hospital – chiefly to England – but also to Con-Camp - & 1 to Havre – I don’t know how many we sent – but all our stretcher cases & English walking cases – You have no idea Mother dear what it is like! To begin with & all through – to be the person – to answer everyone’s inquiries – about my own place only of course but there seem to be so many questions. All dressings to be done – all patients to be fed once or twice - & all got ready – off or on a stretcher, & moving these painful people takes it out of me [one] – To get all away when there was room on the floor of a car I looked round for a stretcher case who could sit for a short time & shot him in. I think they would rather be strapped to the roof than be left behind. I have just come back from 6:30 service - & am going to second breakfast for the first time for 8 days. It is like meeting an old friend to look at the sea - & to be able to spend long enough to enjoy its colourings & doings. I have not written to you for ages but you will guess why.

[July] 10th. We evacuated all day yesterday & cleared most of the hospital. I have only 8 patients left. Spent the afternoon in Casino 5. where the cases too bad to travel are – and was

OFF DUTY in the evening. Went to church with Matron – had a good sermon. The Padre asked me to play the organ – I said “yes” failing a better – thank Goodness – the better soon came – the Presbyterian Padre plays beautifully & he arrived in the nick of time. It is like old times – very old they seem – to be sitting up in bed & writing before getting up – instead of being as quick as a lunatic from 6 a.m. to midnight. Oh – the sea looks lovely & jumpy & clean & thirst quenching – By the way – I wonder if any one – short of a wounded man really knows what thirst is. If you were to stand at the door of any ward you would hear – one continuous plead from all sides for water, a drink – anything to drink - & all of us are giving drink as much as we possibly can as well as doing the other jobs. One man in 5. died while I was there - & at least three will be the happier when they manage it too – one with his brain out – another his intestines - & a third wounded all over and wildly off his head. Some drink deep – vomit it anywhere - & plead for more water. Many men have told me that after our men have attacked – the Germans sweep the ground low – with a machine gun – to kill our wounded – I should think that is an act best left to God to reward. He will do it thoroughly.

[July] 11th. Many Happy Returns to Elizabeth [*Mary Elizabeth Ledger – daughter of Edie’s older sister, Madge*] - I must write to her today. We were grateful for a calm day yesterday - to put our houses in order. The D.G. Sir Arthur Sloggett- & Col. Black came round, the D.G. asked Matron to accept for herself - & to convey to her staff - his thanks for the way the rush - of the last week - was met & dealt with. It was kind of him to be appreciative. Off in afternoon went for a walk with Constable - & another after supper with Matron. The morning is bright - sea rough. Al—most time to get up.

[July] 12th. Sorry I have slept late this morning & now have been called - with the well known - “Convoy Sister please” so there is no time for anything. Yesterday was a peaceful day - I gardened in our back yard in the morning - crabbed in the afternoon caught quite a lot, but gave them to a woman - who showed us how. I took my shoes & stockings off - the sea was warm. Many varicoloured anemonies - shells & seaweeds made the rocks beautiful. In the evening short walk with Constable - & now - Convoy Sister please. so get up.

[July] 13th. Yesterday was a very busy day. Convoy in first thing - sent one out in the afternoon - to be ready aye ready for the next on - rush (thank Goodness - no “Convoy Sister please - with the call bell”). I had only 63 of yesterday’s convoy - 2 too ill to go on for a time - I fear one boy may not get better. He has pneumonia - caused by a lump of lead in his left lung - I suppose they will not be able to operate - & he is so blue & bad - poor dear. Went for a short walk with Matron along the Fécamp Rd. last night. She is much distressed that the muzzling order is to be enforced here. & Toby has to wear one - or die. We made him a soft little one - & hope he will get used to it. Yesterday’s cases were on the whole not so bad - only about 20 on the D.I. list - We had 5,000 men through this hospital last week.

[July] 14. Calm day. My two ill boys are still one very ill, D.I. the other a little better. If only I knew the creature had no bits of shrapnel in his lungs I should be much happier, but am terribly afraid he has.

One motor V.A.D. told me things last night - that if all true are horrible. She said sometimes on the way to Havre the men on stretchers cried out, with pain caused by the jolting - One man told her - that he would rather stay in France for 20 years than do that journey again. Another started bleeding badly from the jolts - what is to be done - Our poor M.O.s - on the one side have a man ? fit to travel - & on the other - If he is going to die - get him home to see his people - & the D.M.S. & A.D.M.S. - coming & sending to say - “Clear all beds you anyhow can.” One thing - the driver V.A.D.s - are very young - & probably can’t help - thinking a mole hill a mountain -

Yesterday afternoon Marcey - Constable & I crabbed - & caught 8 between us - gave them to old Madame - She will cook them today & tell us if they are “bon pour manger” if so we will get more - if we can. The rocks are a joy at low tide - more beautiful colours - & lovely plants & anemonies - & stones it would be hard to find - If I had the time I would collect seaweed in a book - There is one sort I have never seen before - under water it is a bright blue - out of water just like that valuable old pottery a sort of blackish brown - with a blue glisten on it. We

walked across the fresh water stream & found it strong & cold - The old washerwomen thought we were quite mad - but that we are used to by now - old villians! We saw how it is our clothes come back in holes - each one had a bottle of chloride of lime - & at the least stain pour it lavishly on all the same - coarse or fine clo[th] - In the evening after supper I went for a walk with Matron & Toby - without his muzzle - I made him a new one in the evening that is a muzzle, but he can open his mouth wide in it.

[July] 15th. MANY HAPPY RETURNS OF THE DAY TO YOU - and joy in the coming year - also St. Swithin's Day.

Had a glorious 1/2 day yesterday. Sister Nicholas looked after my ill boy for me. Matron & I went to Havre by the C.C. car. she had to see the P.M. I watched patients loaded on to the Asturias, meanwhile, & spoke to some of the Sisters whom I knew on her. She is a magnificent boat. The ship's officers were playing tennis on a deck away up in the sky. When Matron came back, we mounted our car again, & after touring round the pretty parts of Havre, came back along the Étretat Rd as far as the turning to St Jouin. Then we alighted & found our way to St Jouin - a charming little seaside place famous for its old Hostess - La Belle Ernestine - & the home she lives in, where one can get tea. We saw the house we thought was it, but would not go in without asking, it looked so exactly like an old chateau, belonging to some high & mighty family. In its beginning, I feel sure it was. Having made sure - we went in - & were introduced to La Belle. She is 75 - a tall fine woman not very pretty now - but such a dear old thing. After tea she showed us some of her treasures - a letter written to her in Indian by an Indian Prince who lived for some time at Étretat & was an admirer of hers, & some queer Indian gods he had given her - The picture of his body being burnt on the shore at Étretat - according to Indian custom - (surely I told you all about him long ago). A little sketch of Queen Elizabeth of Spain - done by an artist while she was staying there. Several poems written to her - many years ago by artists & poets staying there, she read to us - with great feeling. I couldn't understand all but most of them eulogised "her beautiful blue eyes" - "her figure - her spirit - which was so joyful - so kind - that to demand - was to have the thing done." She read them all in a most unconceited way.

There are dozens of pictures of her painted in all sorts of attitudes - one she looks very fine on horseback - another where she is fishing - a charming one - is of her, most fashionably dressed this period ----- frying an omellette over the kitchen fire - done on a little wooden panel.



In another she is "Hostess of the village" - with many smartly dressed men paying homage. The house is full of valuable old china - pewter & copper & brass - & would take days - to really see & know. The garden - a dream - Her granddaughter, her daughter's child whose father was a nobleman - was there - a very pretty aristocratic girl of 18 who spoke English like a well bred Englishwoman.

She was educated in England. N.B....La Belle...has never...been married she has a large ... family. We walked home by the valley - through Bruneval - Le Poteries [*La Poterie-Cap-d'Antifer*] - Le Tilleul & home at 8:30 - late for supper. The view along the valley beat description, the hills on both sides were a blaze of all colours! & we had occasional peeps of the sea - through clefts in the hills on our left. We gathered heather & honeysuckle. The V.A.D. who drove us was a nice woman poor dear - she has lost both brothers in this War. The Elder was a barrister, doing well in China. He died at No 2. C.C.S. at Bailleul 3 months after he joined the Army. The younger was in the Navy & lost his life in that great battle that our muddle headed papers at first gave out as a defeat. Silly fools. He was on board one of the three plucky little cruisers who rushed - like 3 terriers into a pack of mad bulls - An officer

told Miss Douglas all about it afterwards. It was a splendid act of the utmost bravery – These three cruisers went full speed all guns blazing away right in amongst the German fleet & drew all fire on to themselves, for the sake of our Battle Squadron coming up behind & they expected & knew they must all die in the doing of it. Miss Douglas' father retired Admiral - & was given a beautiful all silk Admiral's flag - at the time. She had been longing for a Naval Victory - for an occasion to hoist the flag. When the news of this battle came - she thought "It is not a victory" but she heard the truth later - & hoisted it - on the day of her brother's memorial service - It had only been used once - & that was to cover her Father's coffin. She was very sad about her elder brother's death, because he did not belong - to the Army - & was her advisor & about all she had - The younger one - she said had been in the Service since his school days - & they always knew he might have to give his life.

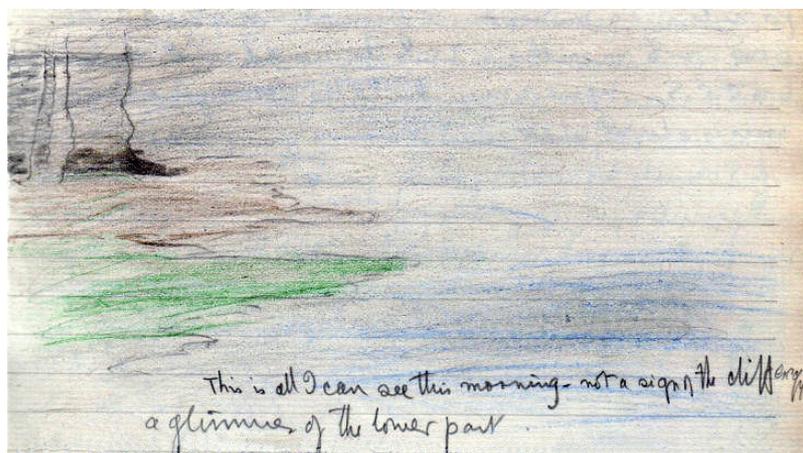
[July] 16. Calm day yesterday - My ill boy is holding his own - & that is all - & if there is a bit of lead near his heart - has he a chance! he may be dead when I got on duty even. Off in afternoon - had the most delightful bathe I remember - sea warm - & absolutely clear - waves smooth topped & lumpy. After our bathe Marcey & I took Toby on to the top of the cliffs & sat for about 1/4 of an hour - to dry our hair. After this I went to the shore - met the baby I know - & enjoyed her for 1/2 an hour - She was much pleased to watch a boy in his bathing suit - dashing about in a canoe - & three huge horses batheing. This morning bids fair to be fine now I must call folk for church.

[July] 17th. Rough - rainy - cold day yesterday. Today bids fair to be the same. Convoy of 300 - odd - arrived at 1.30 p.m. None - Thank God - D.I. or S.I. Where they all went I don't know. I only had 34. 13 stretchers - the rest sitters. They all seemed very comfortable. My poor little chest boy is dying. The lump of lead is in the diaphragm - causing an agony of pain - & a poisonous abscess. He has a general poisoning from it now - T. 104° all the time. I hope he will still be there this morning, so far as I am concerned - but for him - I wish him well away - where he only knows about happy things.

THE BRITISH CAVALRY HAS BEEN IN ACTION - first time since 1914. & we have entered our enemy's 3rd line of defence - oh happy day - when the Blighters start to run!

[July] 18th. There is a thick white haze - Cliffs are out of sight - boats & shore very dim - perhaps it is the fore runner of a gloriously hot day. My ill boy was surprisingly well yesterday, and yet they say there is humanly speaking no hope at all for him. Perhaps he will have quietly slid out through the night - I hope he won't mind going. Sent most of my patients to England yesterday morning - was off - but in & out - in evening. Went for a walk with Matron after supper. No letters.

It was — —'s wedding yesterday - 15th anniversary. He says - he is quite pleased with married life - thinks it infinitely preferable to living single - & advises one - to "take the man - if he loves you" even if you don't love him - it will grow. I said I would bear it in mind, but was afraid it had come a little late for me. News good but not much of it.



[This is all I can see this morning - not a sign of the cliff except a glimmer of the lower part.]

[July] 19th. I hardly dare write down - my dying boy was a shade better yesterday - Perhaps we have yet to learn what the Great Physician can do - or perhaps it was a flash of betterness - I am longing to see this morning.

Yesterday six of us - went down to bathe, but the S.M. said it was too rough for the boat to go out. So much as we should have enjoyed the dip - we could not have it without breaking a very rigid rule - we went to the rocks instead & paddled in the breakers for a bit.

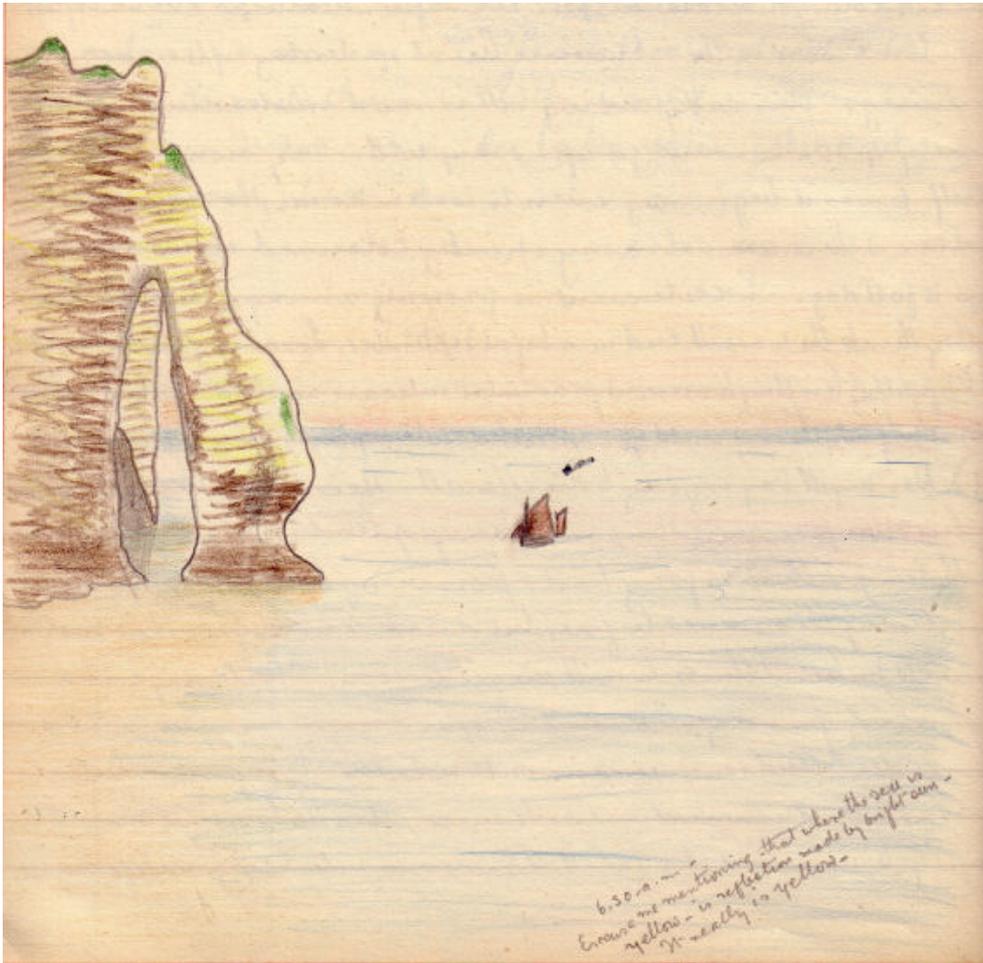
Made lace beside my sick boy in evening - as the other patients were well enough to be looked after by an orderly. This morning is cold but sunny, & the sea & rocks look beautiful - I always want to draw them, but can't for nuts - So au revoir - I have been glued to the Base - for 8 months - wish they would send me back to a C.C.S. Never mind - take your job & don't grizzle. This is a lovely place.



Ill boy still holding his own - but we won't say too much about it. Am longing to know how he is this morning. Lovely summer's day yesterday - the boat was out - & many off duty people bathed. I was not off till evening, then went for a long walk with Matron & Toby. Rested in a hay field on the Cliff top - to enjoy the view - & came back - just a breath late for second supper. Two English airships & some English trawlers were on the submarine hunt yesterday afternoon & evening. This early saving bill is most misleading. It was really 4.30 a.m. when I got up - & very cold - only now - 5, calling itself 6 - is it beginning even to look warm. The sea is dead calm - & there are salmony-pinky coloured clouds warming up to full day. Excitement is growing amongst the people here - & they think the war will end in or before September. Long may they be right! It is frightfully tempting to run out for a dip - but rules are so strict - not to go without a boat! If only the boat would go - It looks so tempting for a swim.

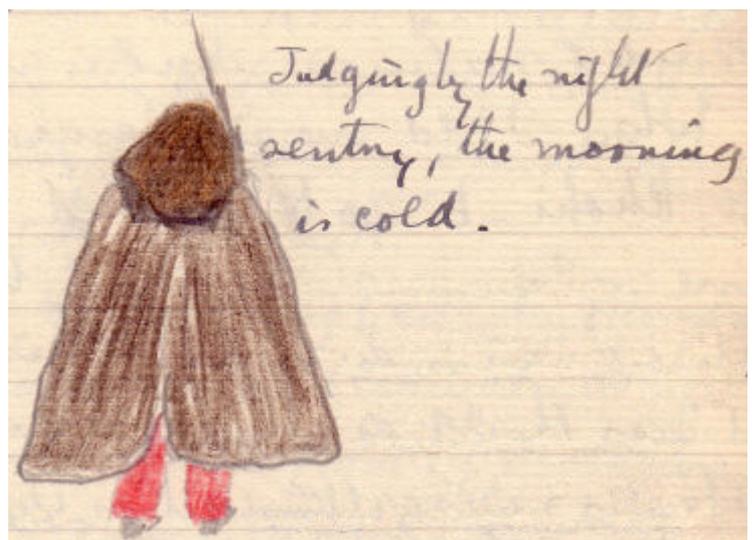
21. No. My ill boy is going to die after all. He is simply being poisoned by his own poison. I suppose the lump of lead is making havoc of the lung - & that is going bad & poisoning him. He talked more yesterday than ever before, but does not look right - & has such a quick pulse. I think he will die quite soon. Yesterday was a gloriously fine day. I was off in afternoon - Many of us bathed, & one Miss Andrew, swam out into the strong currents & was nearly drowned - sank twice, then the boat got her. It is a pity to swim out too far - it only means rules being made for everyone.

After my bathe I sat in a hay field & dried my luxuriant locks. Miss Kaberry (Q.A.) our Ass. Matron left yesterday to be Matron of No 26, Étaples. Went for a short walk after supper with Matron & Toby. This morning - would give an extravagance of francs to be allowed a dip & a swim in the sea.



[6.30 a.m. - Excuse me mentioning that where the sea is yellow - is reflection made by bright sun - It really is yellow-]

Ill boy still alive, but very, very ill indeed. Lovely day - off in afternoon, bathed - the sea was so clear we could see the under sea part of people swimming far away - & could see the bottom easily - in water deeper than ourselves. After bathe, Marcey, Constable & I took tea on to the cliff - watermelon - & rolls - & tea - very good - New Ass. Matron arrived - she has been jumped from Staff Nurse to her present job. Name, Wilson. It is only a little past 5 - perhaps at 6.30 - we shall bathe - if the boat condescends to go out.



[Judging by the night sentry, the morning is cold.]

23rd. I will not give you a bulletin of my ill boy. it might not be true. We will wait & see how he is today. Off last night, Walked to Bénouville with Matron & Toby. Weather unsettled - & very blowy this morning. (Excuse me - I have just inked my sheet & am going for some milk) - then it will be time to get up for church.

24. Many happy returns of the Day to Little Min. A heavy Convoy is coming in this morning, so we must all be up for first breakfast. And it isn't to be wondered at after the fighting there has been the last two or three days. Longueville [*probably La Longueville – East of Bavay*]- we took - & then the Germans got a footing in the North of it again - & another village - before 5.30 yesterday - had changed hands twice. Off yesterday afternoon - slept on my bed. Truslove off night. Wait, on.

25th. Busy day yesterday - Convoy of 450 arrived at 9 a.m. We took in 80 - sent 22 on to England - & 20 to No ... Gen. Poor wretches! one cannot help feeling sorry for them, while they are waiting for their car to take them to their destination - 2 of them added to their troubles by getting away & drinking brandy. They were found drunk - & put in the guard room, where they became violent & smashed all they could. I wonder why they have sunk so low, they may have the kindest natures, and a whole lot of good in them.

When I told one old Sergeant to change back quick to khaki to go to England - He laughed & sobbed & thanked me - all in one. He had been through many "thick of its" & had not been home - to his wife & children. I told him it was the M.O. who was sending him - not me. They so often think it is we, Sisters who send them - & after all - what could we do without the signature of the M.O. in charge - & of the C.O. The sea looks very tempting for a dip - but the boat is sure to be late or not at all - & I am tired of being made a fool of. Ill boy - in statu quo.

26th. Lovely day yesterday - Many of us bathed & enjoyed it very much - the evening - sky & sea - were a picture of beauty & soft shadows. This morning is just right too, but the silly boat will not be out - for sure. Did not do much else in afternoon. The airship was over yesterday very low down & near in - Mahoney - an Irish Sister entirely in sympathy with the Sinn Feiners left on Monday to take a Matron's job in a Civil [?] Hosp. in Dublin. Don't ask me how my ill boy is - I dare not say, in case he is not really. 7.30 - later. I risked it - found the boat was out - & had the bathe of my life. The water was as clear as glass - when farish out of my depth I could see the pebbles - as clearly as in 6 inches of fresh water. Collins came too - & the others will be sorry they did not.

27. My ill boy may be dead by now. He was dying yesterday & knew it. I stayed with him until 11. He implored me "not to leave him the night" but that would be impossible I only hope the poor little creature is happily away. No boat out this morning - so no bathe. The English patients were to go at 4 - so I expect the men were all up then and are too tired. No other news. Epilepsy is very much like being possessed of devils. While I was on duty late - one Epileptic had a succession of about 4 fits -

28th. My poor ill boy did not manage to get away yesterday, but he is terribly feverish & weak & keeps coughing up - stuff from fresh abscesses - as soon as one dies off - another starts. Lena Ashwell's Concert party were here - & gave us a charming selection of songs - & violin & piano - pieces. Yesterday was muggy, everywhere shrouded in white mist - Today bids fair to be the same. The sea is just right for a dip - but I have not the least doubt - the men of the boat will say it is too foggy. Any excuse is better than taking the boat out. I had a pathetic letter from my boy's Mother last night - poor thing, she is suffering far more than he is.

29. Ill boy in statu quo. There was a heavy sea mist yesterday - Bathed in afternoon, went for a walk with Matron & Toby after supper. The lights & shades & various effects were wonderful. From the Golf Course cliff - Étretat showed clear - like a tiny view in a penholder - all the country even close round - was blotted out, the opposite cliff & the church - not to be seen at all - only the little crescent of houses & bathing huts. Out to sea, there was a magnificent sunset in progress but only at the brightest part was it able to glimmer through. The sea - dead calm, managed to get just a few of the sunset rays - to play with - very curious & wonderful. This morning is calm - & if the boat goes out - perhaps I will - but I know it is very cold - The freshwater stream is steaming like it does in winter.

30th. The boat did go out & we had a glorious bathe. a French girl went out too far & got into trouble. A Frenchman in all his clothes dashed after her first - then one of our orderlies went to the rescue - by the time we had floundered up - she was out & had returned what she had taken of the sea - & was feeling better - If only they would bathe nearer our boat! Yesterday was a glorious day. Sunny & summerlike - & there were many people of the Gay Parisienne type to amuse us - they - do - dress - queer! Now I must get up for church.

Off in afternoon went with Marcey to a glorious garden - where we cut flowers to our hearts' content & when we both had a double arms full - asked the old man how much - He - with an appologetic look of "hope it is not too much" - said - 2 francs les deux!! then we did the flowers in both churches - took bundles to the ward - gave some away - & still had some left for our own rooms.

31. Not a glimmer of hope for my poor boy. He is getting a generally poisoned condition, & is daily weaker & worse. He has been good, but now, is so tired I think he will be glad of a rest. Off duty last night, went for a lovely walk with Matron & Toby, over the Golf Links cliff as far as the first Coast Guard Station, climbed down to the shore - & found to our great surprise - Miss Wallen's hut was there, not miles further on, as we thought. The evening was the sunniest & hottest we have had - She was just going for a bathe, & I wished I could - she was undressing like lightning to go out in a little fishing boat, that was starting off. Matron had a brain wave, she said - why not hurry up & have a dip - a boat is a boat - & that is enough to swear by. So I borrowed a gown that was there, & had a delightful bathe, all far from Étretat & everyone - in this wild little bay. Never enjoyed a bathe more in my life. It was twins with one Fred & I had once, on our way from Sandwich to Deal - When we couldn't bear it any longer & bathed in what was next our skin - & loved it - & an old shepherd - thought we were stark mad.

Miss Blakely & 5 or 6 V.A.D.s - came to tea here from Havre yesterday - they like this place. I don't so much on Sundays. It is crowded with smart cars - & ultra smart people - from Paris & thereabout. It is amusing to look at their clothes, they are really quaint in their extremeness, but they made the place so noisy for my poor ill boy.

This morning is cold - & draughty. & I am hoping those fiends will not come & dig me out for a bathe - why can't they quietly go & bathe - if they want to.