

The diary of Samuel Weingott

8 April – 3 June 1915

Thursday 8th April

Mail arrives from Australia dated 1.3.1915. Still in mid-stream. Load more horses and mules. Company rows ashore and supplies night picket in Alexandria.

Friday 9th April

Staff arrive on board including several generals. More mail from Australia 8.3.1915. Tug comes alongside. Steam up and prepared to leave at any moment.

Saturday 10th April

Leave Alexandria at 7 o'clock am, amidst great excitement. All is the number of the ship, owing to being the flag-ship, we are the last to leave. Battalion paid after being broke for three weeks.

Sunday 11th April

Fairly rough weather. Pass numerous small islands during the day. NCO lectured by the General. Disembarkment. Holy Communion held. Heavy rain during night.

Monday 12th April

Land in Lemnos Bay 5 o'clock am. 5 English, 3 French, 1 Russian Cruisers there besides numerous troopships. Lemnos Island belongs to Greece and is under British protection.

Tuesday 13th April

Numerous villages dotted around the shore. Beautiful cultivated country. Company climbs down rope ladders onto boats ships practising disembarkation. Generals leave in warship to inspect a suitable landing place.

Wednesday 14th April

Company go ashore on a route march through one of the villages. Spotlessly clean. More cruisers and French transports arrive in the bay. Rumours of Greece joining the Allies.

Thursday 15th April

Pontoons lowered into the water in case we move off at any moment. Batt. again practice disembarkation. Slight showers.



Friday 16th April

Company go ashore intending to stay for 24 hours, but return in two hours owing to rumours of leaving.

Saturday 17th April

Engineers and AMC leave the Minnewaska for another transport A33 carrying 13th Batt. Arrive in Lemnos Bay and anchor alongside our ship.

Sunday 18th April

I go on a picnic with D Company and tour a portion of the island. Numerous French soldiers under canvas. Also Congolese. Had a fine swim whilst ashore.

Monday 19th April

Went aboard the A33 to have a look at Alick. Showed him several of my old letters from home. He gave me a good supply of tobacco. Came back with an officer in the boat.

Tuesday 20th April

Heavy rains. Bay very choppy. Mail from Australia dated 17.3.1915. Sent several letters home but doubt if they ever will be received. Witness on a Court Martial.

Wednesday 21st April

Troopship and big stack in bottom. Fail to remove Chem Company paid. Heavy rain continues during the day. Submarine sighted also several minesweepers.

Thursday 22nd April

General muster of troops 1st Batt and Inf badges taken away from us. All small boats hoisted into their davits as we are prepared to leave at any moment.

Friday 23rd April

Flight commander Sampson "The man with £1000 on his head", gives us exhibition of flying on his waterplane. A23 (a captive German steamer) steams out of the Bay with N. Z. aboard. Receive a message from Alick. "God speed and Good Luck".

Saturday 24th April

Left Lemnos Bay at 5 o'clock am. Followed the coast line till 10 o'clock when we anchored with three other transports. Passed a beautiful snow capped mountain emerging on its own out of the sea. All prepared; each soldier carrying 200 ctu (?).

Sunday 25th April

Arrived at the Gallipoli Peninsular at 5 o'clock am when the battleships opened heavy fire on the enemy. Engaged the Turks from 12 o'clock noon Sun. till daybreak Monday. Elbow grazed by shrapnel. Our fellows suffer heavy casualties.

Monday 26th April

Reinforced by the 4th Brigade. Separated from my battalion and detached myself to the 5th Batt. Engage the enemy the whole day. Their guns do awful damage. The biggest majority of our chaps seem to be wiped out.

Tuesday 27th April

Had news that Alec was wounded. Heavy fire continues during the day and night. Had many narrow shaves. Queen Elizabeth does good work. German snipers dressed in our clothes.

Wednesday 28th April

3rd brigade relieved for 24 hours and sent down to the beach, having been with them. I went too. Had good tucker and a fine rest. Nearly killed through a falling cliff. Could see the battleships engaging the enemy.

Thursday 29th April

1st Brigade relieved. Crawled back to the firing line for equipment and had a narrow shave of being shot. Did picket along the beach the whole night. Frightened of snipers. Ships keep up a strong fire during the night.

Friday 30th April

Still in rest camp. Keep up heavy fire during the day. Snipers still keep going and bag a lot of chaps on the beach. An Indian caught one and cut his head off. New Brigadier and Brigade M. appointed.

Saturday 1st May 1915

Left camp at 6 o'clock pm for the firing line. Had to climb a rope 150 ft long. Put in the support trench and dug all night without a rest. Heavy firing going on the whole time.

Sunday 2nd May

Relieved at 8 o'clock am and took up our position immediately behind the firing line. Went in the firing line at 7 o'clock pm and came out at 2 o'clock am. Had a tough time. The Turks advance on us but we drive them back sustaining slight loss.

Monday 3rd May

Rested until 1 o'clock pm when we went into the firing line again. Enemy keep up heavy shrapnel and rifle fire, but our machine guns do a great deal of damage. Came out of trenches at 7 o'clock pm.

Tuesday 4th May

Went in the trench at 7 o'clock am and came out at 1 o'clock pm. Enemy fairly quiet. Our machine guns do good work. Warships keep up strong bombardment. Mail arrives but not distributed until Batt. relieved.

Wednesday 5th May

Went into the firing line at 7 o'clock am, and came out at 1 o'clock pm. Had a merry time with the enemy and fired close on 250 shots myself. Enemy do heavy damage with shrapnel and I narrowly miss getting hit with the cap of a shell.

Thursday 6th May

Heavy shrapnel fire continues during the day. Turks have a good range. Went into the trenches at 2 am. Kept going all the time. Dead bodies outside the trench begin to smell.

Friday 7th May

Very nearly blown to pieces by the enemy's heavy gun fire. Went into the trenches at 7 pm and was relieved 7 am Saturday. Turks make a desperate attack upon our trenches, but were repulsed. A bomb thrown by the enemy lands along side me.

Saturday 8th May

Turks bombard our positions doing heavy damage. 3rd Batt. Serg. Major has his head blown off whilst shaving. Snipers still do good work and account for many of our chaps.

Sunday 9th May

Went into the trenches at 1 o'clock pm and out at 7 o'clock pm. Turks kept up a heavy shrapnel fire. And during the night our chaps charged a trench but could not hold it and returned with fairly heavy loss.

Monday 10th May

Had a fairly quite (sic) time with the enemy but their snipers still account for many lives. Our chaps suffer 400 casualties from the charge the previous night. Sent a cable home.

Tuesday 11th May

My birthday passed quietly. Went into the firing line at 7 am out at 1 pm. In again at 7 pm and came out at 7 am. Very miserable owing to the continual rain. Turks are very busy and keep us on the alert.

Wednesday 12th May

Light horse arrives to relieve the marines. Fairly quiet day for us owing to artillery engagement. Snipers not so bad. Rain still continues.

Thursday 13th May

Occupied trenches from 7 am to 1 pm. Enemy artillery do brilliant firing and lob two shells into our trench. One buried itself in the parapet alongside me going 7 feet but did not explode. The other blew one man to pieces, wounded one.

Friday 14th May

Did 18 hours in the trenches at a stretch. The beggars still have the range of us and pepper us with gun fire throughout the day. During the night they kept up a continual reflex fire which we returned.

Saturday 15th May

Relieved for six hours when we go in a 24 hour shift. 1 pm to 1 pm Sunday. Our artillery keep up a strong a (sic) blow up a portion of the enemy's trench. I begin to feel the strain and am very weak.

Sunday 16th May

Fairly quiet day owing to artillery engagement. Many of our wounded arrive from Alexandria. Sent a letter and P C home. Armoury Serg.¹ has his brains blown out by shrapnel whilst inspecting trenches.

Monday 17th May

Enemy keeps up heavy gun fire and the aim is very accurate. Mate of mine shot through the heart whilst asleep. We begin to undermine the enemy's trenches. Shell explodes in our trench, killing or seriously wounding Captain Hill.

Tuesday 18th May

Turks give us an awful time. Shift tons of earth. Terrible sights. Men alongside of me blown to pieces. Over 50 shells fired. Great moral effect on the troops. Many lose their nerves. Trenches blown to pieces. Work all night fixing them up.

Wednesday 19th May

The Turks make a general attack at 3 o'clock am lasting 8 solid hours. Heavy work. Enemy come right on top of trenches but repulsed. Hundreds lying dead outside our trench. Our casualties 200. Enemies 500. Heavy 8" gun still does frightful damage.

Thursday 20th May

We give the Turks half an hour to get their wounded in. As the trenches are only 30 yards apart and we all got over the parapet it was easy to converse with the enemy. Our artillery and battle ships keep up an incessant fire during the whole night.

Friday 21st May

Enemy's 8" gun directed on warships but do no damage. Turks artillery keep up an consistent fire and do slight damage amongst our Company. Mail closes. I sent a P C home.

¹ Refers to Armoury Sergeant Edward George TAYLOR, service no. 5

Saturday 22nd May

Incessant rain during the whole day which I do in the firing line. Fairly quiet owing to the elements. 2000 light horse arrive. Aus. Division presented with the bomb thrower by the Japanese Gov. During the night they do brilliant work.

Sunday 23rd May

Working night and day. Am feeling very fatigued. Had narrow escape of being shot clean through the head but bullet strikes a sandbag immediately in front of me. Turks rather quiet.

Monday 24th May

Armistice of 7 hours granted to bury the dead. 400 dead. Turks found in front of 1st Batt. lines. Also 185 rifles. Rain continues throughout the day. 800 Turks found dead in one small trench.

Tuesday 25th May

Austrian submarine sinks the Triumph 11000 tons in sixteen minutes in sight of the Australian troops. 785 souls on board. 150 drowned. I read the burial service. Submarine captured during the night. Enemy rather quiet.

Wednesday 26th May

Reinforcements arrive. Still working night and day been on for the last five days without a rest. Aeroplane drops two bombs into the enemy's trenches thirty yards from us. Enemy keep us very busy. Snipers serving well.

Thursday 27th May

Japanese bomb arrives does some good work. Aeroplane still drops bombs. Enemy fairly quiet but their artillery keep us on the qui vive. Anxiously awaiting to be relieved. Sent PC home.

Friday 28th May

During the day rather quiet but just on dusk the enemy keep up a running fire doing little damage. 15th Batt. trenches under-mined and blown up but they recapture them taking 19 prisoners but lose rather heavily.

Saturday 29th May

Tremendous bombardment by the enemy guns commencing at 3 o'clock am. They fire at point blank doing great damage to our trenches. One shell burst in my face and although unwounded I was knocked out for a few minutes. My rifle was twisted beyond recognition. Put off for the rest of the day.

Sunday 30th May

Heavy bombardment still continues. Enemy reinforced with 6" guns. Our machine gun crew recommended for the DSM. They continue to fire at the enemy under heavy shell fire. Parts of our trenches blown in. Light horse make a charge.

Monday 31st May

Fairly quiet day. Enemy strengthening their trenches by using overhead covering. Still going day and night. I have quite recovered from my awful experience and feel pretty fit once more.

Tuesday 1st June 1915

Artillery kept busy. Engineers blew up a portion of the enemy's trenches. Japanese mortars do a great deal of damage during the night. Appointed Lance Corporal in charge of a section and feel very proud.

Wednesday 2nd June

Overheard Lieutenant Lloyd say that I would make a good N. C. O. as I wasn't at all afraid. Enemy's artillery fairly busy. Jap mortars still busy.

Thursday 3rd June

Warship fires incessantly at Turkish transports laden with ammunition and food-stuffs from Constantinople and blow them to pieces. 600 mules reported to have been killed. Enemy rather quiet owing to supposed shortage of ammunition.

Diary concludes here

Sam Weingott born 1893, died on active service on 5th June 1915.

His brother Alexander born 1888, died on 2nd May 1915.

Their brother Barry born 1896, went to war and returned from war.

Their cousin Abe lived