**Funeral of Colonel Valentine**

*Extract from the diary of Ashton Remble of Birchington on Sea, Kent, during his time in Russia (and later France). Valentine died after surgery connected with suspected dysentry*.

**Aug 8th (Wed)**

Telegram from Kieff [Kiev] this morning that Colonel Valentine died there yesterday afternoon at 4 o/c. Five of us left at 3pm for Kieff to attend the funeral. (Corpl. Tarlington already there). We were in a 3rd class carriage and we reached Kieff at 11 p.m. Street fighting near the station in progress as we arrive. Warned to be careful the way we went. W had an Isvorskie from the station to the Hotel Continental, where the officers were staying, to report to Major Maund. Had orders to report again on Friday morning at 10 o/c. We then went to a café for supper. it was a difficult job to find room, but at 1 a.m. we managed to get them at the Regina Hotel. Mr. Soposnikoff (the interpreter) came with us from Lubina.

**Aug 9th (Thurs)**

Nice room and beds. Three of us in one room, and the two others in different rooms. The charge is 1r 50k each, a night. Have all our meals at a café, cost about 16r a day. Went for a drive in “Tarlys” car, round the town and down to the river in the morning. Most lovely scenery. Visited the Church where the Colonel is lying in state. French Officers on guard round the coffin. Inside the church is wonderful.

Went to the gardens to tea, a fine view of the river and country is seen from here. Two bands play in the gardens every evening. This town [Kiev] is considered the best in Russia. Lovely day, but very hot.

**Aug 10th (Fri)**

We had orders to be at the Church at 10 o/c, to move the coffin to the other side, on account of a wedding being held there. The French Officers on guard would not allow it to be moved. Mr. Soposnikoff took us to a large monastery and the Church there was most lovely.

[...]

**Aug 11th (Sat)**

Posted letter (written on the 5th) could not get any stamps before. At the Church for the Funeral at 10:30. Beautiful singing by the choir (invisible). Service in Russian, every person in the Church holding lighted wax tapers. The service in the Church finished at 12:15. The officers carried the coffin from the Church to the Gun carriage, and then we took it from them and lowered it in position on the Gun carriage and covered it with the flag. In the procession to the cemetery (2 ½ miles) we walked behind the English Officers, (R.F.C. and R.N.A.S.), the British Consul and the ‘Times’ correspondent, followed by the French and Russian Officers, the Band, Russian Infantry (Firing party) and Cossacks on horseback. Awful roads all the way.

At the cemetery we carried the coffin, passing through the Cossacks (while mounted) lined up each side of the path with drawn swords, and lowered it into the grave. Major Maund read the burial service at the grave-side. The service was all over at 2:15. Colonel Valentine’s age was 29. Met two English ladies at the café; had cherry pudding (cherries stoned). Thunderstorm in the afternoon. Tea in the gardens and listened to the bands in the evening. The heat in the morning was unbearable. Cost of food today 18r 50k. Saw some soldiers being marched through the town surrounded by Cossacks. Orders to leave here for Lubina in the morning. Fried steak and onions for supper. Cocoa is 1r a glass.

**Aug 12th (Sun)**

We were to leave here at 9 o/c this morning, but there is no train until 10 o/c to night. Wrote and posted letter home.

Saw a long funeral procession of the victims of the fighting, the night we arrived here. There were 16 coffins, each drawn by a pair of oxen. Hundreds of soldiers.

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