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Subject 5th. Aust. Division, 29th. Battalion. ¹⁰18-7-16 to ²¹~~28~~-7-16.

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Honors + Rewards.

3rd Australian Machine Gun Coy

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THE PALM LINEN

29th. Australian Infantry Battalion.

SUPER-STRONG





C O N F I D E N T I A L.

STATEMENT BY A REPATRIATED PRISONER OF WAR.

Administrative Headquarters,
Australian Imperial Force,
London.S.W.1.

June.19.1918.

Reg.No. 222.
Rank. Sergeant.
Name. Donovan.P.C.
Platoon. No.3.
Company. "A" Coy.
Battalion. 29th Battalion.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

- (a) Date. July 20.1916.
(b) Place. Fleubaix.
(c) What happened immediately before Capture.

During the big operation near Fleubaix on July 19, 1916 my Battalion, the 29th, was the Divisional Reserve Battalion. Consequently we did not "hop over" with the rest at 20 minutes to 6 o'clock on the evening of the 19th July. We went over at about 7 pm. My Platoon travelled across No Man's Land along what was understood to be a communication sap, but which seemed to me to be more like a succession of funk holes. We put in the night digging in and consolidating the position that had been taken from the Germans and carrying up ammunition. The enemy bombed us out of his first line that night and I was hit in the back by a bomb.

Next morning at daylight a German fired at me with a rifle, hitting me in the left hip. I dragged Sam Farlowe into a dip in the ground. He had already been wounded and I made a sort of barricade of sand-bags around him.

Sgt. Harland went back for ammunition and I never saw him again. I saw a shell land near L/Cpl Haslam and I did not see him again.

Officers Seen During Engagement.

Captain Mortimer.- He was our O.C. and went forward with the rest of us. I saw him both in the communication trench and in the enemy first line.
Lieut.N.L. Johnstone.- He was in charge of No.2 Platoon. I saw him ~~and~~ in front of the line before we went over.
2/Lieut. Miles. - Of No.4 Platoon. I also saw him in the front line.

I saw our C.O., the Adjutant and the R.S.M. on the main road before we went up "Dead Dog Avenue" to our own front line.

I was picked up next morning by the Germans from off their own parapet. I had also been wounded in the right arm, in addition to my previous hurts, and was completely out of action. I practi-

C O N F I D E N T I A L

STATEMENT MADE BY REPATRIATED PRISONER OF WAR.
Original Manuscript filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
 Australian Imperial Force,
 "B" Records Section.

Reg.No. 1107. 13th. December. 1918.
Rank. Sergeant.
Name. ELLISON. Norman. G.
Platoon. No. 13.
Company. "D" Company.
Unit. 29th. Battalion.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

- (a). Date. 20th. July. 1916.
- (b). Place. Fleurbaix.

The 5th. Australian Division attacked the German lines at Fleurbaix. There was no strong enemy resistance, and we had many casualties. The enemy counter-attacked, I was wounded.

OFFICERS SEEN DURING ENGAGEMENT

The O.C. Company was Major. Murdock. He didn't come across with the company, but remained in our own lines. None of my company Officers came across, so far as I know. I only saw one Officer, Lieut. Harris. 54th. Battalion, in the new line during the night and he gave the order to retire back to our own lines. It was then that I was wounded.

What happened immediately after capture.

I was taken to a dressing station at the German Brigade Headquarters and received some slight treatment there.

Life as a prisoner of war in Germany.

My movements were:-

Lille. Hospital.	21.7.17.	to	31.7.16.
Douai Hospital.	1.8.16.	to	6.9.16.
Aachen Hospital.	7.9.16.	to	11.9.16.
Roln 6. Hosp.	12.9.16	to	7.10.16.
Stendal Lager.	8.10.16.	to	5.10.17.
Werben on Elbe.	6.10.17	to	9.6.18.

The medical attention was good but there was a great scarcity of bandages etc, and insufficient food. At Stendal Lager the quarters were bad, food was insufficient and the treatment was bad.

Werben on Elbe. In general the treatment was fair, but not sufficient food.

Signature.....

Witness. Signature.....

barracks and we had already procured a map and compass. We left the barracks at about 8.a.m. on November 2nd. and we were across the Dutch border by the following morning. Once clear of the barracks we made direct for the Railway station at Bauer. Bayes speaks German pretty well and he bought three tickets to Borken, a small town some 12 kilometres from the Dutch border. On arraival at the station we hopped off the train on the side opposite the platform, dodged under another train that was standing by, and made off to a neighbouring wood. Here we hid till nightfall. As soon as it was dark enough to travel we hit off in a N.W. direction towards the Holland frontier. We reached the actual frontier line at a quarter to 4' o'clock the next morning, and dodging the German sentries took off our boots and crawled into Holland. We walked to the Dutch town of Winterswik and reported to the Dutch Authorities, after having first been challenged and advised to report by a Dutch Sentry.

We spent 14 days in quarantine at Didamant eventually reached Hull by the S.S. "Archangel" on Nov. 17th. 1918. We had a splendid reception at Hull and were then forwarded into distribution camp at Ripon. At Ripon we also received an excellent reception.

Signature.....¹⁰⁵⁴ *E. Army*.....

Witness.....(¹⁰¹³) *J. Bellilligan Sgt*.....

South Camp. Ripon. 18.11.18.

C O N F I D E N T I A L.

Statement made by Repatriated Prisoner of War.
Taken at RIPON (Yorkshire) 8.12.18.
Original Manuscript filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
 Australian Imperial Force,
 "B" Records Section.

Regl. No. 1969.
Rank. Private.
Name. ANTROBUS, H.
Platoon. No. 15.
Company. "D" Company.
Battalion. 29th Battalion.

Circumstances of Capture.

(a) Date. 20.7.16.
 (b) Place. FLEURBAIX.

My Battalion was in the Divisional attack on 19.7.16. Sergeant COLE was in charge of my Platoon. We reached the enemy's front line. I was in the front line until 6 a.m. on 20.7.16. The enemy had surrounded us. Captain MILLS was in the trench with me. I tried to get back and got into a dummy trench with about four others when the Germans rushed us and we were taken. I was taken to LILLE, and to DOUAI and then on to DULMEN. I was sent "on commando" to REKEN, felling timber for five months. I was then sent "on commando" to DORENTHE unloading coal from barges. I was working there when the Armistice was signed. I then went to MUNSTER and entrained for Holland, reaching ENSCHEDE on 1.12.18 and ROTTERDAM on 3.12.18. I embarked on the "HUNTSGREEN" and reached HULL on 7.12.18. My general treatment was fair.

(Signed) H. ANTROBUS.

Witness. R. SOLLING, S/Sgt.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Statement made by Repatriated Prisoner of War.
Taken at Ripon. (Yorkshire) 29.11.18.
Original Manuscript filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
Australian Imperial Force,
"B" Records Section.

Reg.No. 1059. 9th. December. 1918.
Rank. Private.
Name. BROWN. Joseph.
Platoon. No.16.
Company. "D" Company.
Battalion. 29th. Battalion.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

- (a). Date. 20th. July. 1916.
(b). Place. Fleurbaix.
(c). What happened immediately before capture.

On the evening of July 19th. 1916 we came up from reserves and went over the top at about 7.p.m. During that night I was in a communication trench. We found it impossible to get messages along or to get any of our officers up. I repeatedly passed messages along from Officers in the enemy second line (then held by our men) for officers to be sent up. But none came. At about 5.o'clock next morning I found the old enemy front line of trench had been abandoned by our fellows and the Germans were rapidly reoccupying it. It was there that I became a prisoner of War along with scores of others. I was unwounded. A squad of fully 100 Australians together with a number of Warwicks were marched to Lille where we were quartered for three days in Fort MacDonald. In Germany I was at Dulmen, Schmeidemuhl, Freidrichsfeld Lagers. I was out on commando first at a sugar factory at Kruswitz in Poland and then in a co^omine near Essen. Although I became ill and was in hospital at Essen for a week and at Freidrichsfeld for three months I was again sent on command this time to do farm work at a place called Stockum. I crossed from Holland to Hull in the S.S. 'Huntsgreen' on 28.11.18.

(Signed). 1059, J. Brown.

Witness. (Sgd). 559a. A.J. Angel. Sgt.

Ripon. 29.11.18.

C O N F I D E N T I A L.

STATEMENT MADE BY REPATRIATED PRISONERS OF WAR
Taken at RIPON (Yorkshire) 3.12.18
Original Manuscript filed with Records

Administrative Headquarters,
 Australian Imperial Force,
 "B" Records. Section.

<u>REG NO.</u>	1269	1094	2043	4186
<u>RANK</u>	Pte	Pte	Pte	Pte
<u>NAME</u>	✓ WILKIN H. J.	CHILDS E.	✓ HARDING T. W.	✓ DUNLOP E. R.
<u>PLATOON</u>	<i>No 15</i>	<i>No 15</i>	<i>No 15</i>	<i>No 3</i>
<u>COMPANY</u>	<i>"D" Coy</i>	<i>"D" Coy</i>	<i>"D" Coy</i>	<i>"A" Coy</i>
<u>BATTALION</u>	29th Bn.	29th Bn	29th Bn	54th Bn

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE

(a) DATE 20.7.16. (b) PLACE Levantie (Fleurbaix)

The 29th Battalion was supporting the 32nd Battalion in an attack on the night of 19.7.16.. We reached what was supposed to be the enemy's second line and held it until about 9 a.m. on the 20th July 1916. In some way the Germans got back into their original front line and cut us off. We had no ammunition at all. We, Wilkin, Childs and Harding saw Lt Sheridan and Capt. Mortimer early in the morning. The Germans surrounded us and we had to surrender-about a dozen of us I (Dunlop), was captured with Lt Lovejoy and about six others. We were all marched to Lille and then to Dulmen Lager No.3. We were inoculated there 5 times and vaccinated once during the 6 weeks we were there. From there we were sent "on commando" to Erkrath near Dusseldorf where we worked in a factory for foundry requirements. We worked there for 26 months until the Armistice was signed. Then the four of us went to Munster where we entrained for Enschede (Holland) and thence on to Rotterdam which we reached on 28.11.18 and arrived at Hull on 2.12.18 by the Londonderry.

(Sgd) No.1269 H. J. Wilkin Pte
 4186 Dunlop Pte
 1094 E. CHILDS Pte
 2043 T. W. Harding Pte.

(Witness) 7251 R. Solling S/Sgt.

C O N F I D E N T I A L.

Statement made by Repatriated Prisoner of War.
Taken at Ripon, (Yorkshire) 8.12.1918.
Original Manuscript filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
 Australian Imperial Force,
 "B" Records Section.

28th December, 1918.

REG.NO. 1163.
RANK. Private.
NAME. LAMONT. F.H.
PLATOON. No.15.
COMPANY. "D" Company.
BATTALION. 29th Battalion.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

- (a) Date. 20.7.16.
 (b) Place. FLEURBAIX.

On the evening of 19th July, at 6-o'clock, our Company under Major. Murdock formed part of the second wave of an attack. Our objective was the German second line. We reached our objective with light casualties, the distance being about 500 yards. We dug in and our platoon was in charge of Sergeant. Stanton. I was stationed with about 7 others (of different Units) at a dead end on the right flank, and at daybreak next morning discovered that we were cut off and that most of our chaps had left the trench to attempt to make their way back. Shortly afterwards we attempted to get out of the trench to avoid the enemy's bombing and got into a bog from which we could not move, some of the others being shot while in the bog. The rest of us (about five) were then taken prisoners by the Germans and were taken to Fort MacDonald in Lille where we were subjected to extremely bad treatment for two days. We were then sent by rail to Dulmen where I remained for nearly three months, being extremely badly fed. I went "on commando" No.28 attached to Munster II, to Homburg, Westphalia, where I worked in coal mines for about four months, treatment being very rough and food bad. From there I went into Hospital at Munster II with a poisoned foot and was treated pretty well while in hospital. I remained for three months in the Lager after leaving hospital, doing no work. I next went "on commando", No.9 to Horde, Westphalia where I worked in an iron factory for a month, after which I went to Munster II, where I was for a month. I then went "on commando" No.153 to Delstern, Westphalia, where I was for about nine months, then went back to Munster II and again I went "on commando" 49, Hostel, Westphalia, attached Munster I, from Hostel I returned to Munster I. I was afterwards on a farm commando in Westphalia-at Drenskinfurt-remaining there until the signing of the Armistice, when I was sent via Munster I to Rotterdam, embarked on 4.12.18 aboard

C O N F I D E N T I A L .

Statement Made by Repatriated Prisoner of War.
Statement Taken at Ripon (Yorkshire) 8-12-18.
Original Manuscript Filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters.
 Australian Imperial Force.
 "B" Records Section.

30th December 1918.

Reg. No. 2546.
Rank. Private.
Name. Langmead L.R.
Platoon No.13.
Company. "D" Company.
Battalion. 29th Battalion.

Circumstances of Capture

(a) Date. 20th July 1916.
 (b) Place. FLEURBAIX.

At 8 p.m. on July 19, 1916 my Battalion attacked the enemy trenches about 300 yards distant. Sergeant Stanton acted as our platoon officer and went over with us. We reached our objective and were holding the communication trench. We ran out of bombs and ammunition and prior to daylight we discovered we were surrounded. We attacked the trench in our rear but ~~we~~ ~~un~~ successfully. I was wounded. A party of five of us were made prisoners and taken back as far as LILLE. We were questioned by German officers but we gave no information.

We were then sent to different lagers and "on commando" at two places in coal and sugar factories.

I saw Captain Sheridan when we reached our objective but have not seen him since. I did not see any officers in GERMAN. My treatment was harsh. I saw a "Tommy" knocked with the butt of a rifle. He had to be carried in. The work was hard and the food was bad, but the Red Cross parcels were good. Medical treatment was practically nil.

I arrived at ROTTERDAM on December 3, 1918 and embarked on the "Huntsgreen" for ENGLAND arriving at HULL on December 7, 1918

(Sgd) 2546. L.R. Langmead.

Witness. (Sgd) (1613) J.C. Milligan Sgt,

C O N F I D E N T I A L.

STATEMENT BY REPATRIATED PRISONER OF WAR.

Administrative Headquarters,
Australian Imperial Force,
"B" Records Section.
2nd February, 1918.

No. 2081
Rank. Private.
Name. Mayston R.S.
Platoon. 2.
Company. A.
Battalion. 29th.

Circumstances of Capture.

- (a) Date of Capture 20th July, 1916.
- (b) Place. Fleur Baix.
- (c) What happened before Capture.

On the night of the 19th "A" Coy had to reinforce the enemy 1st line of trenches. We remained there the night. Early next morning Fritz counter attacked. We were trapped on account of having a blockade on our left flank, and enemy bombers attacking on the right. On account of being practically without bombs we were forced to leave the trench. We hopped over, and attempted to attack the bombers, in which attack I was wounded. A bomb shattering my right arm. I walked back to their first line and lay there.

What happened immediately after Capture

I was there until the evening, when stretcher bearers came and removed me to their 1st Dressing Station. They put my arm in splints, and bandaged it. I was passed on from there and entrained for Douhai. About 24 hours journey. I was taken to St. Clotilde Hospital. Next day I was operated upon and my arm amputated, my consent being obtained. The treatment was as well as could be expected, but ^{the} food ^{was} insufficient. I remained ^{here} until the 18th November 1916. We were then transferred to a Hospital in Ingolstadt, Bavaria. The treatment received was alright. We left on the 2nd January for Aachen, the English exchange, remaining ^{here} 10 weeks.

Account of Life as a Prisoner of War.

On account of being in occupied territory and moving frequently, I was unfortunate in not receiving my Red Cross parcels. We could have done with them, but much to our relief Aachen supplied better food. I went before a Board with a view to repatriation and passed successfully on 5th February, 1917. At the end of 10 weeks, when hopes of repatriation were high, we were told there was no exchange at present and were returned to Camp. I was here until October 1917, when we were sent to Konstanz for internment in Switzerland, but failed to pass the board. However, we were returned to Aachen where we remained for a week. We were then sent to a camp at Friedrichsfeld and remained until exchange on the 7th January, 1918. Eventually we were entrained for Rotterdam. We received great kindness and hospitality from the Dutch people. After a good voyage of 2 days we arrived at Boston on the 20th.

R.S. Mayston

I was sent back to the camp where I received attention from my fellow prisoners.

Later, while still unfit, I was sent out on the Vistula River - reed-cutting. I was here three weeks, then returned to the camp and was sent to a lime quarry.

The work here was very severe on the food we received. We had to use 16-lbs hammers and the sentry brutally assaulted us when we slackened our speed.

Once I was knocked down three times by the sentries with their rifles for absolutely no reason. For this I was returned to the camp for "punishment". I was in a cell for the first night. The condition was indescribable. A Russian prisoner was in charge of this clink. He permitted it to remain in a filthy state. I was taken out to the Camp to await further instructions. However, men were wanted for farm work and I was one of those sent out, so I escaped further punishment. While on the farm one man, a Scot, was bayoneted.

I had an attack of "Grippe" on the farm, also got smoke poisoning, but was refused any medical attention.

We refused to work when we learned of the Armistice. We were locked in all day in the barrack for this. However, we got released and were taken to Copenhagen in cattle trucks - a seven hours journey with snow falling.

There were 60 prisoners in the party and every one got either pneumonia or some other illness from this journey.

Eventually we got back to Schneidemuhl. The camp was overcrowded and two out of every three were sick.

We received no medical attention, there were no medicines, and men died off in dozens daily.

On November 26, 1918 I left for Danzig, where I embarked on the S.S. "Russ" and landed at Leith on December 1, 1918.

I was sent into Hospital - the 2nd Scottish General - with pneumonia and influenza. I was transferred to Dartford and discharged from there on January 27, 1919.

At Schneidemuhl I was once brutally flogged with a whip, having a long lash by Feldwebel Hugo Kuntz. He is the owner of the land on which the camp is built. I have seen him whip other prisoners of war. He is absolutely brutal in his treatment of the prisoners and seems to do as he likes, without any interference of the Camp Commandatur.

(Sgd) E.H. NOLL.

WITNESS.

(Sgd) 517. A.O. PAUL. Cpl.

C O N F I D E N T I A L.

STATEMENT BY REPATRIATED PRISONER OF WAR.



Administrative Headquarters,
Australian Imperial Force,
"B" Records Section,
16th. March, 1918.

No. 3890
Rank. Private.
Name. ROSS, B.
Company. B.
Battalion. 29th.

Circumstances of Capture.

- (a) Date of Capture. 20th. July, 1916.
(b) Place. Fleurbaix.
(c) What happened before Capture.

The 32nd. Battalion were holding the enemy 2nd. line of trenches. On the night of the 19th. our Company moved up to reinforce them. Just at daybreak "Fritz" counter attacked. During the night they moved up all round us and for the greater part of the night he was shelling us. Their machine gun fire was very heavy and this increased as the day was breaking. Our party was very short of ammunition. The Firing was too heavy to get back and we did our best to retaliate. About 9 a.m. I received my packet - shrapnel in both thighs, and small wound in the head. The rest of the men kept together as long as they could. There were no officers to be seen, and we had heard that Major Hughes had been knocked. Confusion set in and each did what he thought best and we "beat it" in all directions. I had a couple of smokes to keep my "pecker" up but must have swooned. The Germans were all around me, when I came to. This must have been about 4 o'clock on the 20th.

What happened immediately after Capture.

Our own Artillery was shelling these trenches, and Germans were running all over the place. About midnight they found me, and carried me about 4 Kilometres to the rear in an oilsheet. They put me into a Motor Ambulance, which conveyed me to a dressing station. Coffee was given to us there, but I could not drink it. After about an hour's stop we were taken to a Red Cross Hospital (unknown). This was early on the morning of the 22nd. I had received no attention.

Account of Life as a Prisoner of War.

At 10 a.m. we were entrained for Douai. We were put into cattle trucks, given straw bedding and only a drink of water. About 8 p.m. we arrived at Douai and we were put into a shed. German Nurses came round, and gave us Cognac. We were then taken by electric train to Douai Hospital. They performed an operation upon me immediately. Medical attention was all

C O N F I D E N T I A L.

Statement made by Repatriated Prisoner of War.
Taken at Ripon, (Yorkshire) 25.11.18.
Original Manuscript filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
Australian Imperial Force,
"B" Records Section.

5th December, 1918.

REG.NO. 1213.
RANK. Private.
NAME. RUSSELL. H.T.
PLATOON. No.16.
COMPANY. "D" Company.
BATTALION. 29th Battalion.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

- (a) Date. 20th July, 1916.
(b) Place. Fleurbaix.
(c) What happened immediately before Capture.

Know We went over at about 8 oclock on the evening of July 19, 1916. I can't say whether we reached the enemy second line. So far as I there were no officers with us. Sgt Downey was with us and also Sgt. Stanton of No.15 Platoon. I was actually captured at about 7 oclock on the morning of July 20. It was during the enemy counter-attack. I was unwounded and was captured along with one of our lads named Brown. I was taken to Lille and was then successively at Dulmen, Schneidemuhl and Friedrichsfeld. I got into Holland on Nov 18, 1918 and came across to Hull by the S.S. "Arbroath", on 23.11.18. At Friedrichsfeld Pte Ballanger of the 29th Bn died of meningitis. He had been wounded in the private part of the body.

(Sgd) No.1213 Pte. H.T.Russell,
29th Battalion, A.I.F.

Witness. (Sgd) No.559a. A.J.Angel, Sgt.

Ripon, 25.11.18.

Statement. Contd.

as a disabled Prisoner of War.

About March 10, I was removed to the prisoners of war camp at Ingoldstadt, Sergeant Ridley was with me. The conditions of this camp were bad. The building was dirty and the bunks verminous, whilst the food was very poor. Fortunately, Ridley was then receiving his Red Cross parcels and we lived on them. About April my Red Cross parcels began to arrive and we fared better. I was told that my parcels had been sent to the wrong camp. The only decent thing about this camp was the weekly bath we were allowed. I was in this camp till May when I was sent to work on a farm. Besides Ridley and myself, the only other Australians I saw in Ingoldstadt camp were Pte. Henry 32nd Bn., Pte. Roach, 31st Bn., and Pte. Black, 31st Battalion. I heard that after my departure conditions in this camp became much worse. For about five days I worked on a farm near the town of Maubeuge; the place was filthy.

My parcels did not reach me at this farm. This was just at the time when there was some trouble about these Red Cross parcels - it was when the Germans insisted on opening and examining all parcels.

I went on to another farm where things were worse and I became sick and reported. At first the sentry said there was no doctor, but as I refused to work any longer, he took me before the doctor. I was returned to the camp and from there sent back to the hospital. Here I found some parcels of food which had not reached me on the farm, so I did fairly well. I was in hospital for two months, after which I was sent out to another farm.

Here I got my parcels regularly and did pretty well. My hours of work were from 6 a.m. till 6 p.m., but I was left pretty much to myself. I remained on this farm for about 12 months. Then a piece of shrapnel commenced to work out of my arm and I went to Nurnberg Hospital.

There were so many cases of Grippe coming in that at the end of 10 days I was sent to Bayreuth camp. Here I met Pte. Mahan, Royal Irish Fusiliers, Pte. Walsh, London Rifles, Pte. Beck, 10th Battalion, A.I.F. and Pte. Townsend, 51st Battalion, A.I.F. The five of us made up our minds to escape. This was about a fortnight after my getting to Bayreuth. We had heard of the armistice with Austria and on Nov. 5th 1918, we decided to make for the frontier of that country. Mahan and Townsend had been warned to move next day for work in the coal mines. So we decided to 'break' that night. We got through the mine enclosure at about 7 p.m. after some difficulty and lay in the shade of a shed for about two hours, waiting a favourable opportunity to get past the outermost sentry. This we succeeded in doing and as the camp was on the outskirts of Bayreuth we were then practically in the open country.

We had as guides a rough sketch of the lay of the country which had been drawn for us by another prisoner, and a compass, also given us by a fellow unfortunate. We travelled north that night, going as fast and as far as we could and hid in some woods at about daybreak. Next night we moved north-east and again hid through the day. We repeated this programme the next night and then reached the Black Forest. Passing through the Forest we travelled both by day and night as our supply of food was scanty and we had been slightly misled, having been told that we ought to reach the borders of Bohemia in three days. On the second night out we had a narrow escape from capture. We had lighted a fire to have a hot drink when a German villager came up and asked who we were and what we were doing. We told him that we

Statement.Contd.

through to Le Havre. It landed us at Cherbourg instead. We reported to an Officer there, who arranged to send us across to England. We arrived at Southampton on December, 7, 1918. From Southampton we were put on a train leaving for Dover, so we were told, but at Waterloo Station a Red Cross lady took charge of us and brought us to Horseferry Road.

Other Australians at Bayreuth whose names I remember were Privates White and Haig, ^{and} an Officer of the Flying Corps who was in hospital, but whose name I cannot now recollect.

Whilst in Douai Hospital, I frequently saw a German under-officer named Marks (I forget whether he was a corporal or sergeant) ill-treat the men. I was in what they called the 'arm' ward which had about 25 beds. These were all occupied by Australians during my stay and Marks was in charge. He gave them all a very rough handling and when any of the boys would cry out with pain he made things worse for them. He was brutal in his handling of the patients and seemed to delight in causing as much pain and agony as possible.

At Ingoldstadt camp an under-officer named Schwartz who had charge of the distribution of our parcels was particularly offensive. He almost invariably cut the parcels up when opening them so that the contents were cut, slashed, or torn. Otherwise, there was nothing particular to complain of at this camp as regards the officials.

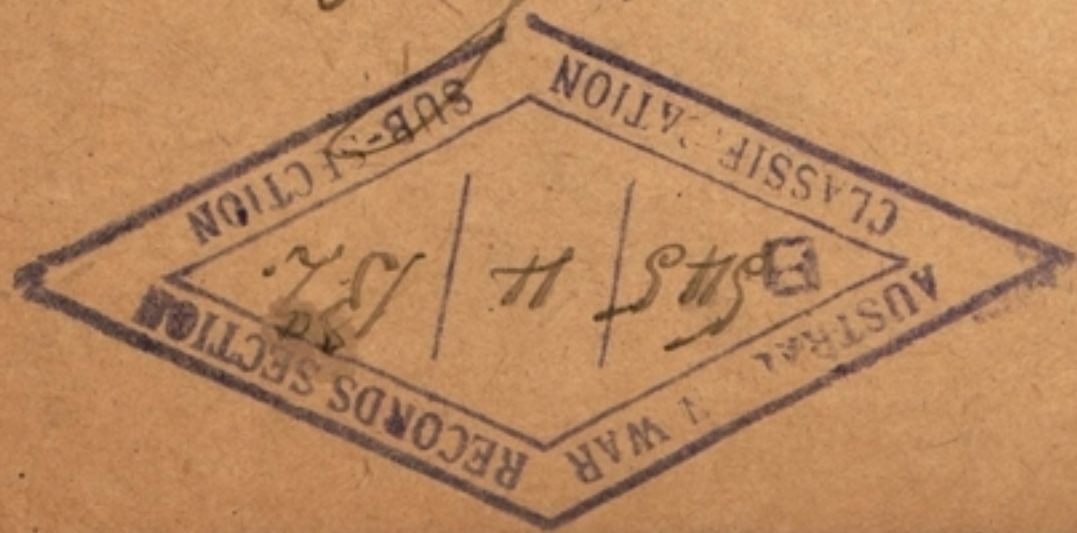
(Sgd) E. Wait.

Witness. (Sgd) Vivian V.W. Williams.
Sgt.
s

AWM 30

Officer of Army of New South Wales

Mr. G. J. Smith



C O N F I D E N T I A L.

Statement made by Repatriated Prisoner of War.
Original Manuscript filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
 Australian Imperial Force,
 "B" Records Section.

27th January, 1919.

REG.NO. 1321.
RANK. Sergeant.
NAME. COLE. O.
PLATOON. No.15.
COMPANY. "D" Company.
BATTALION. 29th Battalion.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

(a) Date. 20.7.16.
 (b) Place. Fleurbaix.

My Battalion took part in the Divisional attack on the enemy position at Fleurbaix we went over about 6 p.m. on 19.7.16. Major. Murdoch was O.C. "C" Company and Sergeant. Stanton in command of No.15. platoon. I last saw Major Murdoch in our front line just before we hopped over. I saw Sergeant Stanton in the German trench several times during the night. Other officers seen were:- Captains. Mortimer, Sheriden (29th Bn) and Mills (32nd Bn). We ^{31st} reached our objective after suffering heavy casualties. During the night the enemy was continually attacking. Somehow he got round us and into his original front line. When our ammunition and bombs were expended we were gradually split up into small parties and finally had to surrender.

Wounded prisoners were taken to a dressing station behind the German lines. I saw here Privates, Wilkin, Amy, Noel and Childs of 29th Battalion. I was in the following lagers in Germany: (Dulmen (1 month), Minden (12 months) Soltau (14 days) Hameln - 17-Bohmte (10 months). At Dulmen and Minden the quarters were fairly good but the food poor and insufficient. Both at Soltau and Bohmte the quarters were dirty and we were greatly overcrowded. There were about 300 Australians in Dulmen when I was there and a much lesser number in the other camps.

While at Hameln I worked on the land but received no pay. At first the treatment here was bad in every way but after January 1918 it improved considerably.

(Sgd) 1321. O.S. Cole, Sgt.

Witness (Sgd) 517 A.O. Pane, Cpl.

Note: Original statement written by 1321 Sgt. Cole and attached hereto.

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-cally fell into the enemy trench. I remember them endeavouring to question me, but then I must have fainted, for I can remember no more for some time. Eventually I found that I was last in a long line a prisoners that were being marched away by the enemy. My position in the procession was impressed upon me by a blow from the butt of a German rifle. I hustled further forward along the line.

What happened immediately after Capture.

In a blanket suspended from a pole I was carried to a dressing station near Lille. There I lay on straw for 24 hours. Then I was taken to Douai and I remained there for three months.

I had a long spell at Dulmen in Westfalia. I did not receive my first Red Cross parcel (clothing) till January 1917. I was told that the particulars of our imprisonment had not been sent away by the New Year of 1917 though we were captured in July 1916. For five weeks I was in the lazarette at Dulmen. My arm had developed ugly complications and the doctors eventually extracted a bullet and some splinters of iron from it. An X-Rays plate of my arm had been taken at Douai, but the Germans appear to have got the plates mixed and never seemed too certain that any they had was mine.

A Fatal Attempt to Escape.

I was at Dulmen when Bandsmen Riddell of the Royal Warwicks was shot dead while attempting to escape. He was shot by the sentry. I attended the funeral.

attached to a local working party
Interment in Switzerland.

I left Dulmen for Mannheim on the 8th December 1917. At Mannheim I was passed for internment in Switzerland. I entered Swiss territory on December 28th 1917, and was lodged in the Chateau d'Oex Region. I lived successively at the Hotels Beau Sejours, Torrent and Rianta Chalet. At the first of these the living conditions were very bad, at the second they were good, at the third- the Rianta Chalet - they were ideal. I was the "N.C.O. in charge of establishment" at the Rianta Chalet. We had a band and orchestra constituted from the ranks of the interneés and these livened us up considerably. *of which I was a member.*

Australians still in Switzerland.

Reach/


- Pte. Reach. *is (Reach)* 31st Bn. He is at Chateau d'Oex and suffers from a severe leg wound.
- Cpl. Beazley. This N.C.O. is a married man with a family of eight children. *(according to reports)*

Some Vagrant Memories of Germany.

The Germaná claimed to have secured 1800 Australians prisoners at Bullecourt in April 1917. Some of these men who had been working behind the German lines were brought into Dulmen while I was there. They were in a pitiable condition.

The Help Committee at Dulmen is one of the most thoroughly businesslike concerns of its kind in Germany. C.S.M. Rainey *Renney* of the Gordon Highlanders is very exact and thorough. One great scandal is that the prisoners of war practically have to bribe access to the Red Cross Chests of medical comforts that are sent across to them or else steal their contents. To enable *you* to get at the chests at all you have to wink at the Germaná pilfering something or another from the chests

No 222 J. B. Donovan Sp. A.I.F.
Signature.
Witness. 102970 Pli. P. E. Rawson
25.6.18


C O N F I D E N T I A L

C O P Y

STATEMENT MADE BY ESCAPED PRISONER OF WAR

Statement taken at No.33 South Camp Ripon. 18.11.18. Original manuscript filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
Australian Imperial Force,
"B" Records. Section.

November 19th. 1918.

Reg.No. 1057.
Rank. Private.
Name AMY. E.J.
Platoon. No.15.
Company. "D" Company.
Battalion. 29th.Battalion.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

- (a) Date. July. 20.1916.
(b) Place. Fleurbaix.
(c). What happened immediately before capture.

I was captured in an attack made by the Fifth Australian Division against the German lines near the French village of Fleurbaix. Our attack was made a little before 6 o'clock on the evening of July 19th, and I was captured the next day. I was only slightly wounded.

Life as a Prisoner of War in Germany.

Nearly the whole of my time as a Prisoner of War in Germany I spent at the big Prisoners-of-War camp at Dulmen. From that centre I was sent about to sundry localities 'on commando'. In the main I worked amongst timber,- either felling and squaring timber or in military sawmills.

Escape from Berge - Borbeck.

On November 2nd. 1918., In company with No.1973 Pte. J.F. Bayes, 32nd . Bn. and a Canadian named A. Oliver of the 4th.C.M.R. I escaped from a commando at Berge - Borbeck, a small centre about six kilometres from Essen, where Krupps great armament factory is located. We had no great difficulty in getting away from the

C O N F I D E N T I A L.

Statement made by Repatriated Prisoner of War.
Taken at RIPON (Yorkshire) 8.12.18.
Original Manuscript filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
 Australian Imperial Force,
 "B" Records Section.

Regl. No. 1968.
Rank. Private.
Name. ANTROBUS, A.
Platoon. No. 15.
Company. "D" Company.
Battalion. 29th Battalion.

Circumstances of Capture.

(a) Date. 20.7.16.
 (b) Place. FLEURBAIX.

My Battalion was in a Divisional attack on 19.7.16 We reached the enemy's front line. Sergeant COLE was in charge of my Platoon. We stayed there until early morning. An order was passed down, "Every man for himself". I retired until I got into a dummy trench where I became bogged. There were only two of us. The enemy rushed us and we were taken prisoners. I was taken to LILLE and then to DOUAI Hospital for a week with blistered feet. I was then sent to DULMEN. I was sent to REKEN "on commando" felling timber for about five months, and then to DORENTHE where I worked at unloading coal until the Armistice was signed. I then went to MUNSTER and entrained for Holland, reaching ENSCHEDE on 1.12.18 and ROTTERDAM on 3.12.18. I embarked on the "HUNTSGREEN" and reached HULL on 7.12.18.

(Signed) A. ANTROBUS.

Witness. R. SOLLING, S/Sgt.

Private No. 1074, Bolton, Thomas, The 29th Australian Infantry, makes the following statement:—

My home address is 49, Ormond Road, Elwood, Melbourne, Victoria. My age is 20 years and nine months, and I was an agricultural student before the war.

Capture. July 19, 1916.

I was captured at Fleurbaix on the 19th July 1916, being wounded through the jaw. I saw men shot after they had their hands up, and I think this was done by Bavarian troops.

Douai. July 22—Aug. 22, 1916.

The treatment at the field dressing station was good, and I saw no cruelty. I remained at St. Clothilde Hospital, Douai, for one month and was operated on there without chloroform or any anæsthetic; no reason was given.

At Douai Hospital there were about 200 prisoners, of whom 100 were British.

Journey. Aug. 22-23, 1916.

The doctor's name at Douai was Berthold. The journey into Germany took 18 hours. We travelled in third-class compartments, and the behaviour of the Germans was satisfactory. We received no food.

Bochum Hospital. Aug. 23—Sept. 23, 1916.

I then spent one month in St. Elizabeth Hospital, Bochum, Westphalia.

At Bochum Hospital there were about 350 prisoners, of whom 50 were British.

The name of the doctor here was Vazel.

In both hospitals there were not enough doctors; there was also a shortage of bandages. No nurses were employed, only inexperienced medical orderlies. The food was bad and insufficient.

The sanitary arrangements were fair, and all prisoners were treated alike. I was allowed to write two letters a month and two postcards; these were all sent to my home address in Australia, but all of them did not arrive.

The bedclothing was good, and was changed twice a month.

Sennelager. Sept. 23 — Nov. 1916.

On September 23rd I was removed to Sennelager camp and remained there until the middle of November.

The lodging and heating arrangements here were good, but the washing arrangements were very bad. I was employed in the parcel room; the job was unpaid.

The food was very bad, and I relied entirely on my parcels, which arrived regularly and in good condition. The canteen was very bad; it contained only bad beer and wine, crockery, tinned fruit. If one asked for clothes one was given an English greatcoat taken off some prisoner.

We got plenty of exercise playing football. There was a hall which we used as a gymnasium. Smoking was never stopped while I was in the camp, nor was there any epidemic in the camp while I was there. We had services for all denominations on Sundays. The postal arrangements were good: all parcels were opened in the presence of the English orderlies and only such things as knives, matches, liquor, &c., confiscated.

I saw a Frenchman, shot dead by the guard. He was a member of a working party, and was having a carrot put into his pocket by an Englishman, at whom the guard aimed. This was in October 1916. The camp regulations were posted up on a notice board. Small offences received pretty heavy punishment, long confinement without parcels. The American Ambassador did not visit this camp while I was there.

I was not asked to join the Irish Brigade, and do not know any men who were asked. I was not asked to become a German subject. I have no knowledge of any camp where prisoners are not allowed to write or receive letters.

The ration at Sennelager while I was there was a 4-lb. loaf between five men per day. The guards were either very old or very young men or wounded recovering from their wounds. I did not speak to any of them. The men in training near the camp struck me as being chiefly between the ages of 17 and 20 years.

Chateau d' Oex,
18th April 1917.

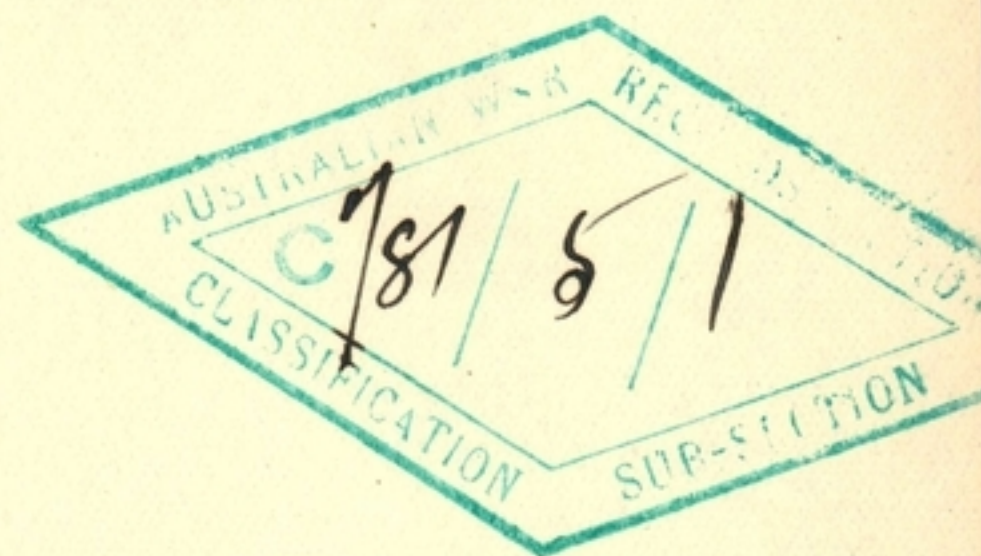
T. D. BOLTON.

Opinion of Examiner.

The witness is intelligent, and his statement, in my opinion, is reliable.

Chateau d' Oex,
18th April 1917.

T. V. SCUDAMORE, Captain,
7th Battalion, Canadians.



C O N F I D E N T I A L

Statement made by repatriated Prisoner of War.
Statement taken at RIPON (YORKSHIRE 1.12.18.)
Original Manuscript filed with Records.

REG NO. 1093.

Administrative Headquarters,
Australian Imperial Force,
"B" B Records. Section.

RANK. Private.

NAME. CARTER O.V.

10th December. 1918.

PLATOON No.15.

COMPANY. "D" Company

BATTALION 29th.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

- (a) Date 20.7.16.
- (b) Place. Fleurbaix.
- (c) What happened immediately before capture.

In the affair at Fleurbaix on July 19/20.1916 my Battalion was in reserve. We reached the front line and promptly went over the top at about 7.p.m. on the 19th. We reached the enemy second line and put in that night doing what we could to consolidate the position. Next Morning we found that the Germans had somehow secured possession of their old first line. We were being bombed from both flanks and were practically surrounded by the enemy. The first 29th Battalion Officers I saw in the lines were Captains Sheridan and Mortimer. both of "A" Coy. I learned later that both these officers are posted "missing" they were the only 29th Officers I saw at any time and they did not reach us till somewhere about 2.a.m. on the 20th. At about 6.a.m. on the 20th my right upper arm was smashed by a bullet. Behind the lines when the Germans mustered us, there were about 30 of us almost all wounded men. We marched to Harboudin where our wounds were dressed. Harboudin is practically a suburb of Lille and from there we went by train to Douai where I was for 10 days in hospital. Thence I went to Dulmen but after 10 weeks there was transferred to Schneidemuhl. From Schneidemuhl I was for five weeks working at a sugar factory at Montwy. For refusing work in a blizzard on a night shift the British men were subjected to "Stilly stand" out in the snow. There were about eight Australians in that little lot. From Friedrichsfeld, I was sent to a coal pit in the Bochum district from 21.12.16. till 7.8.18. then I went to St Elizabeth Hospital, Bochum, with a septic foot. When the Armistice was signed I was working on a farm at Fromere in Westfalia. We crossed Hollar by tram to Rotterdam and I came from there across to Hull by the S.S. "Port Lisboa" on 29.11.18.

Signature. 1093. Pte Otway. V. Carter.

Witness. 559a. A.J. Angel.

Sgt

Ripon. 1.12.18.

A statement made by Pte. T.W.HARDING of the 29th.
Battalion is included in one made by Pte E. CHILDS
and is filed under "C" 29th. Battalion.



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"Hunts Queen" reaching Hull on 7.12.18. I saw no Australian officers while in Germany.

(Sgd) 1163. Pte. F.H.Lamont.

Witness. (Sgd) H.E.Flower A/Sgt.
Ripon, 8.12.18.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Statement made by Repatriated Prisoner of War.
Taken at Ripon, (Yorkshire). 29.11.18.
Original Manuscript filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
Australian Imperial Force,
"B" Records Section.

9th. December. 1918.

Reg.No. 1192.
Rank. Private.
Name. MARTIN. ^S S.J.
Platoon. No.15.
Company. "D" Company.
Battalion. 29th. Battalion

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

- (a). Date. 20th. July. 1916.
(b). Place. Fleurbaix.
(c). What Happened immediately before capture.

My Battalion came up from reserves and went over the top at Fleurbaix at about 7.p.m. on 19.7.16 We joined the other Australians who were holding the enemy second line of trench, and remained there all night. I was captured at about 8.a.m. next morning out in the open, endeavouring to reach our own lines. I was only slightly wounded. After sorting out the wounded from the unwounded, those of us who could walk were marched to Lille.

In Germany I was at Dulmen and Munster. I was on only the one commando (No.95) a coalmine at Hamburg. There was only one other Australian with me, C.O. Halloran of the 54th.. I crossed Holland to Rotterdam and reached Hull by the S.S. 'Huntsgreen' on 28.11.18 I saw none of our 29th. Battalion Officers at the Fleurbaix affair.

(Signed). 1192. S.J. Martin. Pte.

Witness. (Sgd). 559a. A.J. Angel. Sgt.

Ripon. 29.11.18.

Statement made by Repatriated Prisoner of War.
Taken in London on 27.1.19.
Original Manuscript Filed With Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
 Australian Imperial Force,
 "B" Records Section.

Reg.No. 1197. 27th January, 1919.
Rank. Private.
Name, NOLL E.H.
Platoon. No.13.
Company. "D" Company.
Battalion. 29th Battalion.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

(a) Date. 20.7.16.
 (b) Place. FLEURBAIX.

This was a Divisional attack on the enemy position at Fleurbaix, launched on the evening of July 19, 1916. "C" and "D" Companies were to support and reinforce the other two companies of the Battalion. We went over soon after them and reached the Germans third line. This really was a ditch, partly filled with water.

We lost heavily crossing "No Man's Land" also in the ditch.

Fritz counter-attacked at least four times during the night, and we were under heavy machine gun fire, whilst snipers were busy on the morning of the 20th. About 8 a.m. on the 20th we found that the Germans besides breaking through had got back to their own front line. Thus we were surrounded. We had run out of ammunition and bombs and our communication was cut off.

There were about 20 in the party I was with, of whom only seven were unwounded. I was captured by myself when Fritz came in to man his trenches again.

I saw Captain Mills of the 32nd Battalion near the barricade we had built. He was wounded. I also saw Captain Sheridan 29th Battalion, in the German lines. He was killed.

After capture I was taken to a village behind the German lines. There were about 50 other Australians there.

We were marched to Lille, one man, (a cook of the 14th ^{N₁} 54th ? Battalion) dying on the way.

We were in Fort Macdonald for some days, suffering from inhuman treatment. Then I was sent to Dulmen in Germany, where I did "fatigues" for three months.

We were in a state of starvation here. We were then moved on to Schneidemuhl. We were three days in the train with only one meal (some macaroni) and a drink of coffee. The food at Schneidemuhl was as bad as at Dulmen. I was here from October 1916 till November 1918.

I was on several working "commandos", in a sugar factory and in the forest where the work was hard and the treatment of the worst. Every day we were knocked about, threats to shoot us were frequent, and we were starved.

I had been receiving Red Cross parcels before going "on commando", but when working in the forest they suddenly ceased to reach me. I could not get any explanation of this from the Germans. I met with an accident here, a tree falling on me.

The Germans refused to bring a doctor to see me, therefore I refused to work. I really could not get out of my bunk.

C O N F I D E N T I A L.

Statement made by Repatriated Prisoner of War.
Taken at London. 4.12.18.
Original manuscript filed with Records.

RegNo. 1211.

Administrative Headquarters,
Australian Imperial Force.
"B" Records Section.

Rank. Private.

Name. Parry, R.

Platoon. No. 15.

Company. "D" Company.

Battalion. 29th Battalion.

Circumstances of Capture.

(a) Date. 20. 7. 16.

(b) Place. Fleurbaix.

(c) What happened immediately before capture.

After having been surrounded on the morning of the 20th July 1916 in the well known affair at Fleurbaix, I made an attempt to crawl away; but crawled right under a machine gun which wounded me, and, the crew of which eventually made me prisoner.

Major Murdoch was O.C Company at the time; Lieut Ainsley was platoon officer. I saw neither during our attack.

"On commando" at Preussen I met Private Powell, Pearce, and Mur-
dock, 32nd Battalion

At Dulmen lager, I met Pte. Amey, Pte. Carter and Pte. Wilkins.

(Sgd) R.Parry.
Witness. Vivian O.W.Williams

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that could be expected. There were a lot of lads in this Hospital. I was again operated on before leaving. I left here about 1st. September, 1916; we entrained in the afternoon for Aachen, and arrived the morning of the next day. My first bath was given me here. I left for Coln on the 2nd. September, Pte. F. Hall, 32nd. Bn. and Sgt. Ellison, 29th. Bn. also with me. We were put into Lazarette 6 upon reaching our destination. My wounds received the best of attention. I was operated on again on February 28th. 1917., being under the anaesthetic 4½ hours. I went before specialists who recommended Electrical massage. I reported every day to a German Imperial Hospital to receive massage, and get on machines which exercised my foot. The treatment given us lasted 3 hours a day. I received this treatment for 6 months. At the end of this period I was again examined by the Professor. The treatment practically being of no use, he marked me for exchange. I received my Red Cross Parcels regularly, which were greatly needed.

On 17th. November I left Coln for Limburg by train, at 1 a.m. and arrived about 3 p.m., the same day. I was placed in barracks. I paraded for medical examination on the 19th. and a second time was marked for exchange. At Limburg the Germans took all my private belongings and my pay-book. The Red Cross parcels supplied all the clothing I needed as when I first entered Germany, I was naked, except for one thin blanket which was around me. Whilst in Limburg barracks Billy Hamilton walked in. He had just come in from working behind the German lines. He was dressed in Russian clothing. Thinking he was a Russian - he looked that bad - I told him to "get out" he said "I am sorry for coming in here" He then told me he was an Australian. Of course I saw he was in great need of food and I gave him a good feed. He made a rush at it and grabbed it. After he had finished he simply sat down and "cried like a kid". This is only one case which I myself witnessed. It is not an isolated one by any means. He told me if they paraded sick behind the line the Doctor gives an extra hour's work, chopping wood. In Limburg no food is given to prisoners except one small piece of bread. An English relief Committee helped the boys who had not received their parcels.

However, I left on the 7th. January, 1918, for Aachen, arriving on the 8th. I was finally passed for repatriation. The best attention was given us here.

We were then transferred to Rotterdam and embarked for English shores on the 17th., arriving at Boston on the 20th. January, 1918.

No.	3890.
Rank	Private
Name	ROSS, B.
Company	D.
Battalion	29th.

B Ross 3890

*Signed at Monk Video Camp Weymouth
in my presence this twentieth day
of March 1918*

A. J. Purman
Lieut.
Adjutant "A" Sub Depot,
No. 2 Australian Command Depot.

C O N F I D E N T I A L.

Statement made by Repatriated Prisoner of War.
Original Manuscript filed with Records.

Administrative Headquarters,
Australian Imperial Force,
"B" Records Section.

13th December 1918.

Reg.No. 352.
Rank. Private.
Name. WAIT. E.
Platoon. No.2.
Company. "A" Coy.
Battalion. 29th Battalion.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF CAPTURE.

(a) Date. 19.7.16. (b) Place. Fleurbaix.

I went 'over the top' with a bombing section on the night of July 19, 1916, our objective being the enemy's front line. Crossing 'No Man's Land' I was hit twice but managed to get into Jerry's trench, where I was hit with a hand grenade on the right side and lost consciousness. When I recovered my senses I saw men round me, but I was still rather 'fuzzy' and did not realise my position till a German officer kicked me. He asked me if I was badly wounded. I said 'Yes'. He then told the men to put me in a dug-out and explained to me that I could not be moved till the afternoon when some of their own wounded were going out of the line. Later, Cpl. Sergeant, of the 5th Division came into the dug-out, and in the afternoon he assisted me out of the line to a German dressing station, where they bandaged me, (but did not dress my wounds), and put me to bed.

Next day, about noon, I was lifted into a motor ambulance and sent to a railway station; it was a long ride. I was put into a cattle truck on a sack of straw and left there. The train went to Douai where I went into a hospital. It had been the Convent of Saint Clothilde, before the war. The following morning my wounds were dressed and bandaged. That afternoon I received ~~my~~ ^{the} first food I had had since being captured. It was merely weak soup and bread. I was in this hospital till about Dec. 19. The treatment was fair; the Doctor was decent; but the food was bad. About Dec. 19th eight of us including Sergeant Ridley, 30th Bn., and Private Herd, 32nd Bn., (the other six were 'Tommies') were entrained at Douai, and after three days travelling arrived at Ingoldstadt, where we went into another hospital. The food here was worse than at Douai, but the Doctor and Nurses were attentive. I remained here till the second week in March. In February, Private Herd went to Aachen and I believe was to be exchanged

Statement.Contd.

were travellers making some coffee. But he must have had his suspicions (we were still in our prison clothes) and said something about the police. So, after we had swallowed our drink, we hid in a thick wood. We saw them searching for us with torches, but about 2.a.m. the coast was clear and we then made off.

On the afternoon of Nov.9. we struck the frontier and, waiting till the sentries were marching away, from us, we slipped across into Bohemia. We knew we were somewhere near Eger which was the town we were making for. At the first village we struck we asked our way. Here we were fortunate enough to meet a man who could speak English and our main troubles were then over. The villagers treated us splendidly; they could not do enough for us. In fact, they would have given us anything we asked for. We slept in the village that night and next day walked into Eger -distant 12 kilos.

At Eger we went to the railway station intending to 'jump' a train for Vienna. But some Bohemian officers on the platform, hearing us speak English, came over and when they found out who and what we were insisted on us accompanying them. They got off the train at Pilcher, but sent us on to Prague, having given us food, cigarettes etc., and advised us to seek information at Prague before going on to Vienna. At Prague we asked some Czeche soldiers for directions. On their advice we went to a camp of Italian prisoners of war outside Prague. The Italians treated us well and, although they were getting nothing from the Austrians, offered to share with us the food they were receiving from Italy and from local sympathisers. They also told us that it would not yet be safe for us to go through Vienna.

However, we did not like that camp and so decided to risk Vienna. When we got to the station at Prague to get the Vienna train, a man, who spoke English, strongly persuaded us to remain where we were for a while. He gave us the address of a friend who would look after us. The friend provided us with food and lodging and, after making inquiries, said it would not be wise to go to Vienna until later on. He arranged for us to go into the Military Hospital at Prague where we stayed for nine days.

The officials of the hospital and the people generally were very good to us. A guide and interpreter showed us round the city and we found the people very demonstrative. That we were English seemed enough and they were ready to give us anything except food, of which they had a scanty supply. About Nov.21, we were told that a transport train of repatriated Italian Prisoners was leaving for Trieste via Vienna, so we decided to go with it. Three English civilians, who had been interned in Austria, and an English engineer and his wife, who had been in Prague during the war, joined our party. Though the Italians prisoners were in cattle trucks we were put into a carriage, having a compartment to ourselves.

At Trieste we learned that there were some detachments of British A.S.C. and R.A.M.C., so we found their Headquarters and reported to an English Major. He fixed us up for the night and in the morning we were sent to Venice with English civilians, who had been released from Austria. An English officer at Venice, who had charge of returned and released British soldiers and civilians, sent us to a reinforcement camp on the mainland near Venice. Here we got our first change of underclothing - at Prague our own prison underclothing had been washed for us.

It was far too cold for us at this camp near Venice so we hopped on to a 'Leave' train that we heard was going right

A statement made by Pte. H.J.WILKIN of the 29th.
Battalion is included in one made by Pte. E.
CHILDS and is filed under "C" 29th. Battalion.

