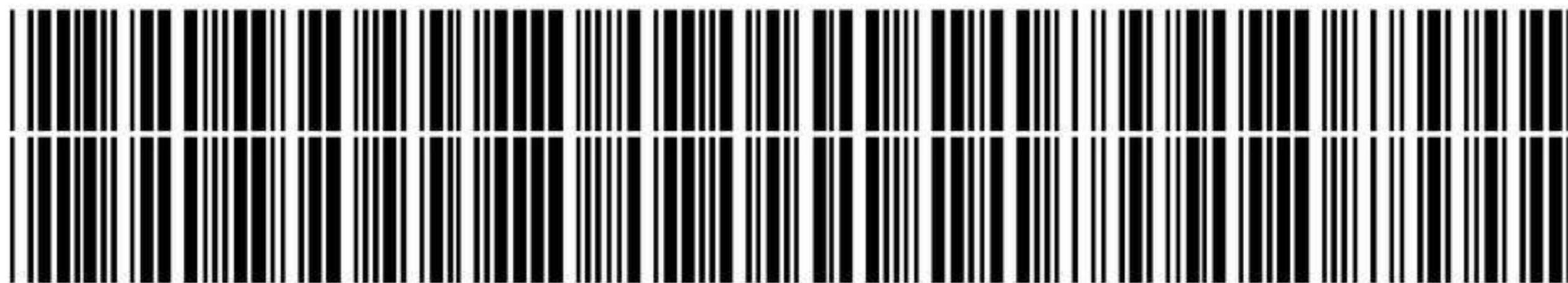


**AWM38**  
**Official History,**  
**1914-18 War: Records of C E W Bean,**  
**Official Historian.**

Diaries and Notebooks

**Item number:** 3DRL606/193/1

**Title:** Notebook, August - November 1918  
Includes diary entries for Nov 1918 and  
references to the 2nd Battalion, Proyart,  
Hargicourt and Georges Clemenceau.



AWM38-3DRL606/193/1

*Original*

DIARY NO. 193.

AWM38

30RL 606 ITEM 193 [1]

DIARIES AND NOTES OF C. E. W. BEAN  
CONCERNING THE WAR OF 1914 - 1918

THE use of these diaries and notes is subject to conditions laid down in the terms of gift to the Australian War Memorial. But, apart from those terms, I wish the following circumstances and considerations to be brought to the notice of every reader and writer who may use them.

These writings represent only what at the moment of making them I believed to be true. The diaries were jotted down almost daily with the object of recording what was then in the writer's mind. Often he wrote them when very tired and half asleep; also, not infrequently, what he believed to be true was not so — but it does not follow that he always discovered this, or remembered to correct the mistakes when discovered. Indeed, he could not always remember that he had written them.

These records should, therefore, be used with great caution, as relating only what their author, at the time of writing, believed. Further, he cannot, of course, vouch for the accuracy of statements made to him by others and here recorded. But he did try to ensure such accuracy by consulting, as far as possible, those who had seen or otherwise taken part in the events. The constant falsity of second-hand evidence (on which a large proportion of war stories are founded) was impressed upon him by the second or third day of the Gallipoli campaign, notwithstanding that those who passed on such stories usually themselves believed them to be true. All second-hand evidence herein should be read with this in mind.

16 Sept., 1946.

C. E. W. BEAN.

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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193

2 BN. 1st 1000  
9 Hang  
1 Aug 8.

① Aug 8.

2nd Bn. (with 1st Bde acting as reserve Bde of 4<sup>th</sup> Divn) moved 2 hrs after zero fully 48 Bn. The Bn was to exploit 48 Bns success. 2nd Bn was to follow them to Royart.

In P 17 Bn was waiting (its rôle as support to 48 Bn being cancelled) for further orders. At 4 pm. orders were recd to form an outpost line facing the Somme opposite Chipilly - from E of Morcourt to E edge of Chipilly, all S. of river. Bn marched down valley towards Cerisy & then across country past Thin wood & look up outpost line at dusk. There was no observed fire.

②

2 BN. 1st Bde  
& Harbournieres  
1 Aug 8.

The 2nd Bn held this outpost line till the Americans & British took the Chipilly spur on Aug 9. On after of Aug 9 our arty put down a heavy bomb after wh Americans & British advanced from N of Chipilly along the ridge almost ESE or E. They seemed to come under inf. fire as they reached top. Some were going forward, some back. It became too dark to see clearly - some men seemed to go forward, others waver & go back. Reports were conflicting from N of river for 24 hrs afterwards, ~~but~~ even on Aug 10. By fully day the ridge was consolidated. 1st Bn patrols went thro villages on 1st day.

14<sup>th</sup> Bn held 2nd Bn there on night of 10<sup>th</sup> when 1st Bde went to Harbournieres.  
(Check these dates by diary).

A patrol was sent out later same day (2nd day of town) & found post & shot the two sentries but did not get in as flanking posts were too heavy. They got to a road 10 yds away but on 9. This down this road prevented them crossing 15th & 46th Bns village.

2nd Bn. Shows.  
The German seem to be sparring for time to remove stores.  
2nd Bn had abt 50 Casualties here.

Took over from 10th & 12th Bns. The German was by then on defensive but shelling Crepy & Auger woods heavily. He did not c-attack. The 3rd Bde had reported heavy attacks on 1 day on wh 2 Bn relieved them. But the 2 Bn therefore expected a lively time when they went in at night. None happened. But patrols met heavy opposition whenever they pushed out. Lt Binns was out w a patrol. He followed two Germans thro a <sup>small</sup> wood 400-500 yds ahead of outpost line. There a German post saw him & fired at him & killed him <sup>almost</sup> on the parapet of German post. Two men were w him. One threw bomb into the <sup>by</sup> while the other got his papers but his body was never recovered.

## 2nd Bn Aug 28.

(4)

Bn was in reserve. Dug in on edge of Cheignolle valley just looking down into the gully - from St Martin's wood. ~~Worked~~ along gully side towards Cheignolle.

Here, on night of Aug 24 they were very heavily gassed - Dug the 8th Coy on the flat in the gully. Possibly German concentrated on the woods (it was 1 wood & he shelled) knowing it we must have troops there. The 2nd Bde in St Martin's wood lost most of a bn. The gas floated down onto the flats & 8 Coy 2nd Bn

5)

After 3rd Bn went thro' Robert Wood it was noticed that men were being sniped from here. Lt Connor, Int. Offr. 2 Bn, organised a party & went thro' wood. The Germans were in a dugout with one or two men on top. The men on top ran down - Connor dropped a Mills Bomb down one entrance & they came out & 1 other - Connor did this off his own bat with 3 or 4 batmen, Cooks etc.

They took 8 prisoners & 2 TMs - it was evidently a German TM Bty sleeping with its rifles. (Connor got M.C.)

6

had 50 casualties out of 95 men, including 30 offrs.

It was 1 next day that 4th Bn patrols got into Lapin Wood - so it looks as if 1 German was looking for targets to throw away his gas at.

Orders were recd that 2nd Bn wd be taking over 1 front line, but they were ~~rel~~ cancelled & the 2nd Bn was held by 5th & 4th Divns.

Bde went out from here to Vaux sur Somme. After Peronne was taken

it was brought up again  
 & came in ~~W front~~ of  
 Jeancourt relieving 37 Bn.  
 2nd Bn on relief went  
 straight thro 37 Bn to the  
 edge of Jeancourt village.  
 Within 1 next 3 days  
 they took the trench  
 system E of Jeancourt &  
 village itself by strong fighting  
 patrols.

In the Y system these  
 patrol fights were in the  
 form of organised platoon  
 attacks under a banage  
 of Stokes mortars & No 36  
 grenades (cup grenade).

8

In these little fights Lt Parle & Sgt Dransfield did especially well in the fighting w/ two posts S of 1 village. Parle was working up a trench. He went round a traverse first & found a fern. Offr looking at him over a barricade. The German told him to surrender but Parle shot first, hit the offr, slipped back & organised his pln & attacked 1 post over the top & took the garrison behind the barricade prisoners.

Dransfield in attack on the other post advanced over 1 open firing line Li G. from 1 hip. There were 8 ferns found dead in 1 post & 7 others were taken prisoners. Dransfield was badly wd. by mis. fire from levergun ridge <sup>at</sup> 1 edge of the post.

9

The ferns were apparently holding 1st system on 1 same lines as our platoon post system - posts of abt 30 men. We wd tackle one of these at a time. On the S. of the village 2 posts were attacked - 15 prisoners taken, abt 30 k; & a certain number were seen getting away. There were two separate operations. The Germans were in old British trenches. The method we f. work up a trench till you found a post; then go back & set a pln

& knock it out. 2 sections of 1st ALTM Bty were attached (4 guns).

The village was not strongly held. <sup>The first night (after relief)</sup> ~~The night~~ a patrol was a L.G. (sharp) struck abt 20 Germans in 4s marching into the village at the far end. The patrol lay up beside the road & turned a L.G. onto them. When they took 1 village they found several new graves, a very bloodstained road, & 18 rifles lying there. The trenches NE of Jean court were apptly practically unoccupied; but were covered by inf. fire from the high



Ground in front of Le Verguier.  
The trench (circular) at 27A 3.7  
was occupied by Germans with  
a p. — one man of ours  
patrolling was k here.

On the left ~~to~~ E of  
Hesbecourt (Germans  
seemed to be close, but on  
1st they were further back.  
The <sup>long</sup> German line W of  
Le Verguier was mostly  
only a few inches deep —  
& pretty old — certainly  
some months old at least.

One of these German lines  
E of Jean court was to  
be occupied by one of our  
Coys. But on the night going

(12)

It was at the same time  
when 2nd Bn was working  
at Trancourt that 4th Bn  
was shelled out ~~in front~~  
from the hill in 8 Central  
after the last attempt at  
peaceful penetration.

(13)

• in they walked right  
• over it. (Similar  
Experiences occurred  
around Dougnies &  
Hermies in April 1917).

The 2nd Bn was  
relieved here by 8th T  
50th Bns. 49th Bn had  
been on right while  
2nd Bn was in line.

2nd Bn moved back  
to some old German stables  
by Bouchy. They were  
there 3 days & then moved  
in further N. - East of  
Hesbecourt. The tapes ran  
across 14A & C Central. The

\* 2 Bn went in 316 strong to this attack - the prisoners were over 200 - 26 mips... 2 TMs & a field gun.

These results are extraordinary all thro. There was a heavy percentage of Germans killed also. It is quite on 1 cards that 1 Bn accounted for 316 Germans k.w. or prisoners.

crest of the hill in 8 Cent  
was just beyond. The tape  
was abt 10 yds behind  
the part of the Sunken Rd (the  
part in 14 A & C to 14 A Central)

\* The Bn was having some  
tea in Hesbecourt abt  
1.45 am. When the rain  
came down. Abt 1/2 hr  
later the Bn started for the  
tape line in soaking rain.  
The rain did not delay  
them - they were on 1  
tapes to time (The Engps  
had laid a tape line  
from Hamel - the best  
line & route the Bn ever  
went in on - partly  
along rd - (as far as

16  
Sgt. Jones was going forward  
w/ telephone with B Coy Hqs  
& got hung up in some barbed  
wire beyond Hargist Switch  
on left of ~~the~~ 2 Bn sector  
SW. of Hargist. When he got  
free he had lost 1 Coy & was  
on expecting to pick them up.  
He went away to the left to  
the Fosses beyond Templeux.  
He ran into a germ. post & was  
capt'd. They took his kit & rifle  
abt 6 germs were taking  
him away when some Tommies  
appeared. While 1 germ. attention  
was on the Tommies he bolted &  
got back to 1 Tommie, got a  
rifle, & these germs & others  
later there abto were later capt'd.  
He returned to the Bn with 2 <sup>germs</sup> officers &  
50 Hums.

17  
Roiselle; then across  
country to the Hervilly  
Hesbecourt Rd; then  
along road thro Hesbec  
to 14 C. where the  
tape line crossed the  
assembly track. The tape  
was laid along the embankment  
& grass at 1 side of  
road. Across country  
it was on screw pickets  
abt 18 in above ground.  
(you didnt have to feel down  
on grass-). The consequence  
was they were on 1 tapes  
1/2 hrs before Zero. They  
had a travelling kitchen  
in 1 shape of an old farmer

18  
Capt Miller who was w/ Tommies as liaison officer says that 1 Bde Staff of the British were congratulating themselves on getting hot tea to 1 men on the 4th night. He was not impressed with their staff work.

Our lessons were 1 advantage of tanks for supplies; 1 advantage of mounted orderlies (L.H. Section att'd. - 4 men). Only one horse was w'd by a shell. —

19  
Cooker & two salvaged mules. This cooker made ev' tea for 1 whole Bn (more than ours wd - splendid for tea - after the fight the cooker used to go round 1 outposts (support troops) in daylight.

The rain continued till zero but eased off at 4 am.

There was no shelling before 1 start. The left was troubled by a gun which shelled short two out.

The first trouble was on left from Harpcount Switch - a batch of

prisoners we sent down  
 from there & reached Pt  
 Hbrs 20 mins after zero  
 - abt 12 of them. This  
 switch was occupied in  
 very few places - (where  
 dug it was v. full of water).  
 One officer & several men  
 were casualties at this  
 place - Lt Granville wd.  
 Lt Ryan was k. by a shell  
 (~~and~~ a scattered German  
 shelling was now occurring).

The rd met us opposite  
 from Harpist Switch in  
 15 B. & again at Cote  
 Wood. It was very foggy  
 & dark & smoke  
 made it difficult to

keep direction. The  
 Pffs were working by  
 Compass & known  
 objects (Quarries etc).  
 The chief opposite  
 was met from a  
 ridge just E. of the  
 Sunken Rd from 11 A 2.0  
 to 11 A 4.7. From one  
 post there 3 heavy &  
 3 light m.g.s. were capt'd,  
 the crews being killed.  
 The fighting there was  
 heavy. The flanks  
 worked round - while the  
 L.G. engaged from the front  
 the bombers worked  
 round & the guns were  
 settled with bombs.

Lt Hillman who was leading the attack at this point was killed by inf. fire as his pln came over 1 ridge. The first burst of fire k. him. Sers Armstrong took his place & organized 1 attack. The brown line just SE of Starpoint was then reached along 2 Bn front & it consolidated there.

A field gun was capt'd in 1 ledge at 11 A.M. It seemed to be an anti-tank gun - it was not seen firing direct on the troops. There the 2nd Bn dug in and



1st Bn went through.  
In one post on 1 objic  
there were men of 1st 2, 3,  
4<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> + Tommies  
— but all heading east.

When Bn got on 1  
objic a body of abt  
400 ferns were seen  
coming towards us & were  
taken by a pln as  
approaching. They were  
fired on by the pln &  
turned & ran back.  
It was then noticed &  
they had no arms nor  
kit & so presumably  
were coming in to surrender.  
This was before 1st Bn  
went through, but after

(24)

\* Under Capt Collingwood.  
Collingwood, who had to move  
up after 1 attack had begun,  
drilled his men through a  
heavy barrage w/ greatest skill  
a few at a time & so saved  
them losses to a very great extent.  
It wd be easy to lose  $\frac{1}{2}$  the Coy in  
such a barrage. (This is undoubtedly  
far better work than cd have been  
done w our want of experience  
at Pozieres time.)

(25)

2 Bn reached Objive.

late in the day  
the Germans shelled Harjict  
heavily & trenches around  
Coloyne Fin where 2 Bn  
moved a Coy up to  
support 3 Bn.

2 Bn stayed there &  
B Coy supported 1st Bn  
in attack of Sept 21.  
This Coy\* took up position  
in Minnow Trench when  
1st Bn moved. They were  
heavily shelled there but  
were not called on to  
reinforce front line.  
This was further S. than  
where the line on left

2<sup>nd</sup> Bn  
 Came back. They were  
 relieved night of 22/23 by  
 8<sup>th</sup> Bn.

Casualties

K. 3 offrs <sup>or</sup> 19

W. 1 offr. 63<sup>or</sup>

1<sup>st</sup> Sheen was k. by shellfire  
 while Bn was in support  
 at Harfécourt just before  
 relief.

This was the heaviest of  
 the 2 fights for 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn but  
 their casualties were heaviest  
 at Royart in support (125  
 casualties - going thro Royart  
 in advance, & by gas two days  
 later).

\* The S/Bs did v. good work in  
 this barrage.

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
Bullecourt was the heaviest  
fight 2nd Bn has had in  
France - The Germans fought  
very hard. The Bn had to  
fight for every inch of ground  
won & then had to fight  
to hold it. The Germans there  
fought probly better than they  
ever fought ayt this Bn.

29

Oct 31. 1918.

At Eu - 3 miles from Treport,  
~~The news arrived today~~

I found poor old cutlack, only just back from his broken arm, was down with the 'flu, & in No 3 (British) Genl Hospital at Treport. [Thirty four men died of pneumonia, following influenza, in one day, at Abbeville in our No 3 Aust. Gen. Hoopl - including ward orderlies. It is raging amongst the German prisoners here.

The news arrived today that Turkey is out of the war - an armistice at noon today. Exactly 4 years, (is it not?) since she entered it.  
The Corps is going back to the front,

30

- probably into the line, as one expected. Monash today told me that, in the question of the employment of the Corps, Hughes stood alone on one side & all the ~~was~~ <sup>authorities</sup> on the other - Wilson, Lt. George & all of them. They urged that for Australia herself it was important that another Divn should be put in again. ~~There~~ There is to be a big push on a wide front <sup>of 80 miles?</sup> on Nov 4<sup>th</sup>? & they are to be put in immediately after: 1st & 4<sup>th</sup> first; then the others one at a time.

Nov 1<sup>st</sup>. To 1st Bde Hqs to get the story before of Sept 18 & Aug 23 before they go into the fight again. Their B.M. (Hutchins) is just moving to A.I.F. Hqs, a general of 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn taking his place.

The news came in while I was at 1st Div. Coy - that Austria is out of the war. An armistice with Italy was arranged <sup>to begin</sup> at noon today. The Italians (with British 14<sup>th</sup> Corps & French) had taken 50,000 prisoners of war.

Mackay told me 1 story of the <sup>(31)</sup>  
meeting of 1st Bn. The Bn of the  
2 Bde - its advanced parties -  
were already in the line, he sd,  
when 1st Bn was told to make its  
attack. Mackay was with Glasgow  
up the line when Glasgow had word  
from Corps that the attack was to be  
made. This was on the aftern of  
~~Sept 19~~ Sept 20. Glasgow gave  
him the word - the detailed order  
wd follow.

The men were tried for  
"joining in a mutiny." Most of  
them got from 3 to 10 yrs. I don't  
know to what number - abt 12 I  
fancy (or else 12 got off).

Nov 2. Sat. The troops are all discussing  
the chances of going into 1 line  
again before Xmas. The offrs Every  
pair one passes on 1 road is  
talking of it, dispassionately -  
arguing one side or 1 other. They  
have a sort of idea that 3 months  
rest had been promised to them - not  
definitely - by Hughes. The offrs  
are beginning to realise that there

(32)

will be a move in a few days  
- & are taking it very well -  
w a joke or a laugh.

They know that Allied terms  
are being discussed & settled - (last  
two days; 1 idea (coming from  
Rawlinson) is that Germans wd  
accept 1 land terms but not 1  
British naval terms.

I visited 3rd & 2nd Bns.

Sund: Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> Austria has sent in her  
white flag for an armistice but  
but no definite published news  
yet of her accepting terms. Bitterly  
cold grey day today - I watched 1st Bde  
football & visited 4th & 1st Bns.

Mon: Nov 4. Austria has accepted  
our terms - Italy's terms perhaps.  
Italians are in Trieste & Trente.  
The armistice starts at 3pm  
today. The move of our 2nd Bde  
into 1 line has been postponed  
24 hrs. One wonders if this is  
because of a chance of Germany  
accepting her terms also or  
because of some connection with

The offensive which I believe  
 was to have started today. A beautiful  
 clear sunny day.  
 Our 2 Bde (with I am now  
 sleeping) was to leave tomorrow  
 night. The great discussion  
 among the men is whether the  
 move is into a rear area for  
 moral support — or into the line.  
 They are disappointed but not  
 taking it at all badly so far as  
 I can see. Some think it a  
 shame that they are not getting  
 a full 3 months rest & all  
 of us say our strengths are  
 very low. ~~A beautiful~~

They hope to be out again  
 by Xmas. I visited 6 & 7 Bns.  
 Nov 5th. Tuesday Today  
 News tonight that we  
 had taken 13,000 prisoners &  
 250 guns in the big attack  
 which started yesterday.



34 Today is a ~~wet~~ <sup>wet</sup> day - dull  
& drizzling. I visited 8<sup>th</sup> &  
then 5<sup>th</sup> Bns. It is curious  
to see the difference. The 8<sup>th</sup> has  
a young Colonel, Mitchell - a  
youngster with sporting tastes who  
keeps a young sporting mess - a  
brave chap who always goes round  
& sees for himself the moment it  
is possible to do so, in battle; as  
<sup>young</sup> Howell Price did - a very  
religious boy, he was, with high &  
conscientious motives.  
The 5<sup>th</sup> Bn has a very courtly  
formal mess. Hastie is now their  
2<sup>nd</sup> in C but is going to Aust. on  
leave and will make little Lillie  
2<sup>nd</sup> in C. Trail of 8<sup>th</sup> Bn has command  
- a very brave but not a pushing  
man. Herod of 7<sup>th</sup> Bn - a  
NSW youngster (as young as

Mitchell) is a different sort  
again; very quiet, & shy <sup>35</sup>  
(Mitchell is shy of me, but in another  
way) - & with a quiet meso -  
living out of his Bn rather than  
in it; a great man for training.  
His direction of 1 battle of Aug 9  
from 1 roof of a house in 1 firing  
line was a fine bit of work, it  
seems to me.

I finished 2nd Bde; & as  
they are leaving tomorrow I  
came back late to Corps at Eu.

Nov 6. Wednesday. Came up with  
Cutlack to hill to the Census  
leaving Crawford to go with the  
Corp & our gear to 1st Div  
Hqs tomorrow - wherever  
it may be. We will meet them  
there.

The battles have been going

36

well. The British are not far  
from Avesnes - 13000 prisoners  
& 350 guns captured; and 1  
Americans who attd on Nov 3  
are within 12 miles of Sedan;  
& 1 French got on 12 kilometres  
to day.

Dypton tells us that in  
~~the~~ the battle of Nov 4 the  
NZ Division did extraordinarily  
well. They attacked Guesnoy  
& got the outer defences. The  
place is an old French fortified  
town w outer & inner defences.  
The Germans in 1 inner ramparts  
held out. The NZs went a bde  
round one side of town & a  
br round 1 other & then  
summoned it to surrender.  
The Boche refused. We then

sent aeroplanes over it <sup>37</sup>  
dropping notes telling them  
to give up; and <sup>the</sup> Boches  
came in but their offrs still  
refused. a N.3. offr accompanied  
by 2 German offrs & a white  
flag again summoned them to  
surrender, but they refused.

The N.3s then attached  
ladders & scaled the walls (so Lytton says).  
They got it to surrender at  
last & took 100 prisoners  
there. Around 1 town & just  
S of it they got in all 600  
prisoners & 80 guns - one  
battery of Germans driving  
its own guns back as prisoners  
into our line.

Tonight ~~comes~~

as I was sitting with Phillip Gibbs & Percival Phillips, there came up a French officer, attached to the British Press, who said the German wireless (so French <sup>at Nauen</sup> ~~had~~ head office announced) had sent out a message saying that they were sending in a party to the allied lines to ask for 1 (one) or 1 armistice.

This looks as if it maybe - maybe - at least the end. It is not 3 months since Aug 8 - ~~only~~ <sup>only</sup> 3½ since July 18 - & it has changed so. The French officer thinks of the German civil population

is frightened - frightened of  
war coming into Germany  
& of bombing of Berlin.  
The Czechs will probably  
get quickly into S. Germany  
unless something is done.

The soldiers - the army -  
is not yet beaten so as to be  
broken; it is still fighting,  
as White sd tonight when I  
saw him. But the civilians  
behind it are giving, according  
to all appearances.

The terms are sd to be:  
The retreat of German <sup>army</sup> out of  
Belgium France Alsace Lorraine  
& to a point 30 miles E  
of Rhine - leaving its guns  
behind it; we to bring our

troops up to Rhine to  
occupy bridgeheads. (40)

The German submarines  
to come into two British  
S. Coast ports from Atlantic  
& N Sea; & German fleet  
to anchor in the Bay of  
Heligoland under the guns  
of British fleet.

[The Austrians have had  
to give up half their army  
& half their ~~battle~~ fleet.]

The reason why our  
move was delayed 24 hrs  
was the blowing up of a delayed  
German mine on 1 July.  
This has been happening  
everywhere & causing  
a lot of trouble - it is

41

one reason why 1 troops  
cant get ~~beyond~~ further  
than they are, & quietest  
on the 4th army front.  
They are 40 miles ahead  
o 1 rlyps (Cadu says) owing  
to these mines, & 1 rlyps  
are neccy in order to keep  
rationis up to 1 men. There  
is very little arty fire  
now on 1 front exc. on  
our side (so Cadu says).

Nov 7th Thurs. Left Lille today  
for the 9th Corps Hqrs. It was  
most interesting to come ~~across~~  
through 1 country where 1 earliest  
battle in 1 war were fought  
- outside of Lille on 1 Douai



road ~~was~~ <sup>we noticed at</sup> a number of 142  
houses had been destroyed long  
ago - a percentage of them;  
+ yet there were no obvious  
shellholes around them or  
around the part of country.  
It must have been in 1 day  
when guns were brought up  
to fire direct on this house or  
that. It was like looking

~~at the flag.~~ on the sacred relics  
~~White & Hughes~~ of some incident  
of the dim past.

The road to hill  
had taken us thro' lens  
which was completely broken  
up - utterly smashed. ~~to~~  
But it was hard to know  
if the brickheaps & skeletons  
of twisted machinery were

Rly stn of 2<sup>nd</sup>

43

in 1 town or in 1 suburbs.  
The only decently ordered  
~~part~~ thing left was  
one ~~German~~ plank road  
from rly stn to the main  
road — apparently German  
~~was~~ Today we  
struck Douai — Cambrai —  
Le Catelet. After hill I  
was surprised to see how  
much they were all  
knocked about. Cambrai  
Especially seemed to have  
had almost every house  
affected by one shell or  
another. The hard fighting  
wh 1 Canadian had there  
must have ~~affected~~ 1 place.  
done a lot of damage to

place. We expected to find <sup>44</sup>  
civilians here and at  
least a cafe where we  
could get a cup of coffee  
to go with our lunch. But  
there was none; and the  
YMCA at 1 rly stn was  
closed until 2.30 pm.  
Douai was just 1 same. The  
German had done his  
damage to 1 rly exceeding  
well. They tell us that his mine  
at blow up on 1 rly <sup>delayed</sup> with ~~effect~~.  
our <sup>1st Div</sup> move was at Epehy -  
wh 1 German had left 7  
weeks before - so long  
had his mine ~~waited~~ been  
delayed in its action.

In Cambrai the high tower  
of the Church or Hotel de ville

45  
seemed to be intact; & so  
were the ~~high~~ fine old  
Towers of Le Cateau -  
though 1 outskirts of  
town were smashed.  
We began to find 1  
inhabitants again here -  
not so many as at Lille  
~~the~~ and almost all old  
men, women, & little  
children. ~~It~~

We called at Bussigny,  
wh was almost intact, to  
see 9th Corps - Harper is 1  
General - but we saw then  
Col. Farmer, formerly of the  
3rd Aust Divn, who told us th  
our 1st Divn had bn delayed  
another 24 hrs and was  
going to St Souplet. We

46

passed Rawlinsons Itqs  
(looking very snug in a  
fine camouflaged train) and  
went on in dark to  
~~Pass~~ St Souplet where young  
Town major was very decent.  
~~and~~ we found little Norrie  
of U Bn there arranging advanced  
billets w Priestley (Int. Offr.  
1st Aust Divn) now G.S.O (II)

Norrie gave us one little  
house he had. Our lorry  
had not arrived, so while  
Cullack went off to Qlt Corps  
to get some rations I  
stayed at the billet & swept  
& cleaned it.

It had been an officers  
billet in German days,  
and British officers &

Americans had lived there <sup>(47)</sup>  
since.

While I was there Priestly  
looked in. He had been up 1 line.  
The British were very well,  
he sd - The 32nd Div  
apparently was on a one  
battalion front - one bn  
in line, one in support;  
one in reserve; one bde  
in support and one  
resting. The 32nd Div  
were going to sidestep onto  
the 46th Div next them;  
& our 1st Div was going in  
N. of the 32nd.

Priestly sd that German  
White flag came in quite  
close to here today. At  
abt 10 am a car came

[\*] Lates: It was at 10 p.m. — a German labour company was sent out ahead to fill in craters in the roads. The party consisted of 10 — several generals; an admiral; Herr Erzberger; & a naval Captain.]

down 1 road to Guise with a great sheet flying from top of it. It contained 2 generals & 2 admirals.\*  
Cutback ~~was back~~ <sup>this morning</sup>  
~~He told me that 1 German~~ knew ~~Wilson's~~ terms the armistice terms. Wilson had let them know of them — He had informed them that 1 ~~from~~ allied council at Versailles had agreed to his 14 points being taken as 1 basis for negotiation except as to two points: first the freedom of the Seas must be understood in 1 sense given to it by 1 allies (wh means Great Britain's <sup>interests</sup> ~~claims~~ must be safeguarded). Secondly the restoration must include 1

restoration of civilians <sup>50</sup>  
of France & Belgium in their  
occupations. On learning  
this (German Govt seems to  
have decided to send a party  
at once to ask terms of  
armistice. This looks as if

White & Wynter } peace were certain.  
Breakf. }  
German Govt } White & Wynter both  
German delegate } spoke to me of Hughes  
demands } & his attitude. He  
72 broa } is going to make any  
decent arrangement extraordinarily  
difficult. For example - no  
sooner has Hughes (partly as the  
result of my telegram) been allowed  
to stay over here & ~~to be~~ <sup>help to administer</sup> ~~to be~~  
support demobilization than he  
~~has~~ rings up Dodd to know if  
the "cards" are ready. The cards  
are the document issued to



51.  
Every man to fill in with  
his occupation, and all details  
concerning himself, so that the  
authorities may know in what  
category to send him home.  
The A.I.F. military authorities here  
have now leave to issue these.  
Dodds had them printed in  
accordance with instructions from  
Defence. Hughes sd: "Have you  
asked them if they are members  
of a Trades Union?" ~~Hughes sd~~  
Dodds sd: "No - ~~the Minister for~~  
Defence had instructed ~~us~~ us not  
to ask the question." Hughes sd  
that Dodds must insert it. Dodds  
sd he was quite ready to do so but  
he must ~~have~~ ~~to~~ ~~ask~~ ~~the~~ ~~Minister~~ ~~for~~ ~~Defence~~  
to tell him. Hughes sd he wd  
write to the Cabinet — & the cards  
are held up accordingly.

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Then Hughes came down on the Education scheme, which the ~~the~~ men are so <sup>(pathetically)</sup> keen about, with all the ~~spout~~ contempt in his ~~was~~ little nature: "Your Education scheme is worthless," he sd. "What ~~can~~ you <sup>can</sup> do in six or seven months is rubbish - you are like a camel trying to break through the Pyramids by piddling against them!"

~~Mr~~ Murdoch got me to add to my telegram from Paris that strong political support as needed to the military scheme for demobilisation. Of course this pointed straight to Hughes. But if Hughes is going to act like this he is justifying the idea one used to have of him as a ~~selfish~~ completely selfish politician. And ~~that~~ cannot be tolerated that he should wreck our demobilisation at this stage. It is still entirely undecided whether Birdwood or

Monash shall carry it out. (53)

Hughes wants Birdie to go over & see him. Birdie thinks Hughes wants to give him his conge' verbally bec. he ~~is~~ fears to put it in writing, & he will not go.

Possibly this is true.  
In the meantime the interests of the A.I.F. go, ~~completely~~ ~~uncared~~ ~~for~~. White got Birdwood, a pt Birdwoods will at time, to approach Defence on this subject in 1916 (Birdie is rather proud of it now). And practically nothing is done yet. White tells me if he had 1 way, when 1 Coar ended he wd abolish 1 Corps staff & bring 1 whole of 1 divisions under J.C. A.I.F. Then use 1 Corps staff largely as 1 demobilisation staff. Men are to be sent back by their trades - not by units. White wd have them organised at

54  
once into 4 proper companies  
w/ 1 right number of officers  
& N.C.Os, according to their  
trades. But White doesn't  
know if Birdwood will be  
asked by Hayes to do 1 job  
& I don't think he will. I told  
White that Hayes didn't think  
Birdwood capable of this ~~task~~  
organisation. "Well, then, 1 thing  
is for him to say so, straight,  
— choose Monash to do this  
& invite Birdie to visit  
Australia" — sd White.

Wynter says that he is convinced  
that White is 1 most capable organisa-  
tor we have — a better administrator  
than Monash.

Nov 8<sup>th</sup> Friday. Cullack <sup>(55)</sup>

I and old Boddy slept last night in this house wh ~~ch~~ I had swept last ~~up~~ evg.

This morn. we found some old military packing cases & a chopper (I found 1 pump last night & food water as far as it looks go). We chopped 1 packing cases, made a fire, boiled some tea & boiled some bacon.

In 1 morning Cullack went round to 4<sup>th</sup> Army in their train near here & learnt that 1 German fleet had mutinied. We have caught a wireless message from Engineer's mate Behrer, at

56/ Berlin to the "3rd Battle Squadron", telling them that a party had gone to Paris to arrange terms of armistice, & urging them to remain loyal on this account. It seems that crews of all submarines in nearer seas (which had come into harbour together) had mutinied; & others were determined not to go out to sea for a fight which they thought their officers were planning for.

This is better than anything we could have hoped for — a gleam of independence in German people. Phillip Libbs told me at Lille that he met at Brussels some of the girls

who kept a restaurant there.  
Brussels was a regular  
headquarters of German  
submarine warfare, & the  
crew & officers used to come in  
there for a few days & go  
off again. The officers were  
the most terrible "thugs" —  
a rough crowd engaged in  
an absolutely desperate business  
— it was regarded as the deadliest  
service in the war, more dangerous  
than air work. The girls  
kept a tally of each of these officers  
who used regularly to visit their  
tent room. When they went out they  
put a mark against their names;  
& if they did not come back  
within a certain time they knew

58  
if they were dead. The list  
of submarines lost  
was a tremendously long  
one, they said. (This is very  
unreliable, but it does show  
what sort of man / submarine  
officer was & what / work was  
like - & it explains something  
or 1 reason for / mutiny).

~~Journal~~  
~~Glasgow~~

Our lorry arrived during  
/ morning with Crawford in  
charge, & Scott & Bennett, &  
Dorrington (Wilkins' half-  
Irish, half-american, half-  
mutinous cook), & plenty of  
rationis. Glasgow arrived this  
afternoon ahead of his HQs;  
& so we had him, and Ross his  
Chief of Staff and Arthur  
Maxwell his A.D.C. in to dinner;  
and what with Yanks cooking.



59

and a first rate supply of crockery found in this little house, and a box of cigars sent me by W.S. Robinson after his visit, and a cake (a beautiful Australian cake) <sup>made &</sup> packed & sent me for Xmas by the little mother, we had a first rate dinner.

Stasgow is a splendid straight chap. He wants / newspapers to give us a clean lead after / war, & / youth of / country to be moulded by schoolmasters of character (rather than of learning) — because (as I too am firmly convinced) you can do anything <sup>with</sup> / young Australian if you give him / right lead — he is capable of / utmost brilliance & devotion.

The need is to get their devotion  
turned from their selfish ends to  
the good of their nation, &  
it is the easiest thing in the world,  
to win decent leaders.

They say that a German  
party arrived at Foch's  
meeting place today. The  
party immediately put down  
a list of terms which it said  
it was prepared to accept.  
Foch shook his head ~~and~~  
~~and~~ and told them that it was  
his terms that they had to  
receive; that they could  
accept them or refuse them but  
that only his terms would be  
considered. The German party  
said that it could not possibly  
conclude such an armistice

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without authority. They  
sd that they cd send the  
~~Captain~~ one of their party  
back w 1 terms, & they  
wd be allowed 72 hours  
to accept them or leave them.  
The German ply decided to  
send back 1 terms by 1  
Captain who was with  
them. Today, like yesty  
has been a vile day -  
raining most of time.  
The line went forward  
5000 yds at least, they say;  
& we expect 1 outposts to be  
past Aveones early tomorrow.

Noon. Saty. A beautiful  
day - cold, sunny. I took 1

62  
chance of driving (with  
Cutlack) to Dernancourt  
in order to get 20 photos  
of 1 battlefield before it  
is completely altered. I  
must do 1 same at Fromelles  
(of wh we have not a  
single picture). Then I have  
to go to England to arrange  
for the continuance (if possible)  
of Julliat & Cutlack's  
positions; my passage to  
Australia to establish  
the museum etc; the printing  
of the little book on Reconstructn  
wh White says they will make  
"the bible" of the education scheme,  
& other things.

I noticed that in all

63

1 country we ~~got~~<sup>went</sup> thro' we did not begin to see signs of really heavy artillery fighting till we got nearly to Beausévois. I shd say tht 1 artillery put down a good barrage for 1 Americans when they attacked towards Premont — but tht tht was 1 last stiff fight up to this point. The Hindenburg ~~line~~<sup>ballpark</sup> was of course pilled w new shellfire of Sept 29 & the first few days of October — far heavier ~~than~~ anything since; tht was quite obvious.

On 1 other hand there was certainly heavy fighting at Cambrai — it was heavily knocked all by recent fighting

64

Especially on / outskirts. The  
centre was, in one part,  
blown up by / Germans exactly  
as Bapaume & Peronne were  
in 1917.

~~On~~ Le Cateau has also  
some signs of heavy fighting  
tho' nothing like Cambrai or /  
Hindenburg line - (Nauvion,  
Soay, Beaurevoir, Bellicourt,  
Bellenglise). Possibly it is  
partly / result of original  
battle in 1914. I haven't seen it  
in full daylight.

On our way to Dernancourt  
we called at the Army &  
Herbertson told us that this  
morning our troops had found  
/ German - he had gone in /  
night - cleared right away.

65  
The nearest place our aeroplanes  
had found him in was  
Sivret (or some such name).  
They thought he was off to  
Meuse. He ~~was~~  
delayed us in every way  
possible by his delay  
action mines — just a 5.9  
shell w a clear fuse almost  
impossible to tell from other  
fuses, wh delays its action  
for weeks or days, as required  
by 1 amt of acid put in. (we  
have <sup>an unused</sup> one in our War Museum  
— from Mericourt). He buries  
this under 1 line of rly;  
Sometimes he ~~buries them~~ blows  
a crater in 1 line & then buries  
1 shell at 1 bottom of 1 crater;  
our work party fills 1 crater

in and a day or two later / 66  
shell blows it up again.

On coming back this evening we heard that 1 aeroplanes wh went over today found th they cd not drop their bombs on 1 German because when they went over 1 French towns ~~the~~ there were the French inhabitants out in 1 street waving <sup>the</sup> French tricolor flag, & 1 German soldiers mixing in amongst them.

Gen. Debeney of the 1st French Army (so Arthur Maxwell told us) considers th 1 German soldiers are out of hand & have broken away from their offrs, just as 1 fleet had done. They are ~~of~~ resisting well in parts, accurate;



it is sad; but in other <sup>(67)</sup>  
parts have clean gone.

This is all rumour.  
~~we hear~~ Glasgow hears that our  
4th Divn has had its move  
countermanded. The 1st Divn  
is to go into 1 line about Nov 14  
or 15. The ~~4th~~ 4th army  
is not advancing its line  
much beyond Avesnes for 1  
moment. It has instructed  
its divisions to hold a line  
thro' Avesnes w their  
main body; & will follow 1  
German with mobile columns.  
We met 1 ~~of~~ Scots Greys, w  
their grey horses, on 1 road  
near Vermand today,  
moving up.

Lots of these details of  
fighting etc are inaccurate;

68  
They only represent the current  
talk at Army Headquarters  
or Divl Headquarters on the  
actual day when the things  
are happening — vague rumours  
of the <sup>Armistice</sup> ~~Paris~~ Conference which have  
no doubt come to Rawlinson on  
the telephone from Haig or Lawrence  
- several times repeated to ~~the~~  
Corps & Divl Generals & thro' them to  
their staffs.

Nov 10. Sunday. Another  
glorious cold day. Coal is our  
difficulty here. We are going to see if  
we can get some from old railway  
dumps.  
I suppose there is no armistice yet  
for our planes are flying over.  
Anyway the 72 hours is not over  
till tomorrow.