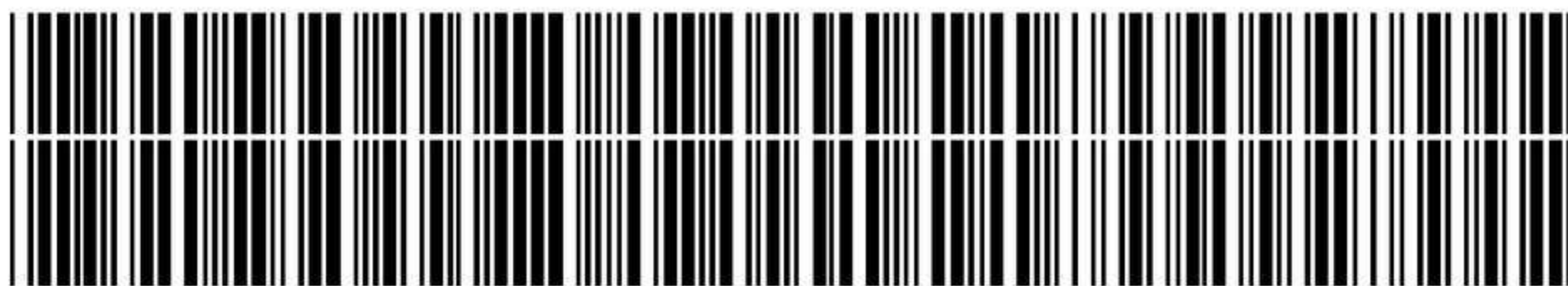


AWM38
Official History,
1914-18 War: Records of C E W Bean,
Official Historian.

Diaries and Notebooks

Item number: 3DRL606/127/1

Title: Folder, Notebook
Includes references to the 9th and 12th
Battalions and Pozieres.



AWM38-3DRL606/127/1

10.

Original

DIARY NO. 127.

AWM38

30RL 606 ITEM 127 [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.

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

C. E. W. BEAN.

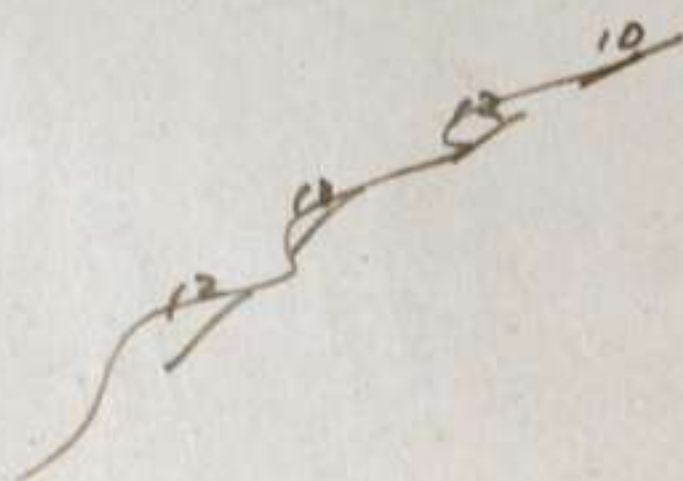
ACCESS STATUS

OPEN /

127

12th Row. 9th Row

Pogueris.



4

12 Bn.

Margella Vowles
 A → D were 2 coys for ^(8/12 ground) objective.

From Samsay valley past Caswell corner into Black watch alley.

10/12 to be in there 1st.

2.10 reserve
 2.12
 12
 A D order of going in.

12/12 to go in behind 11/12. 10/12 behind 9/12.

(Vowles met his objective where the relay line crossed Road.

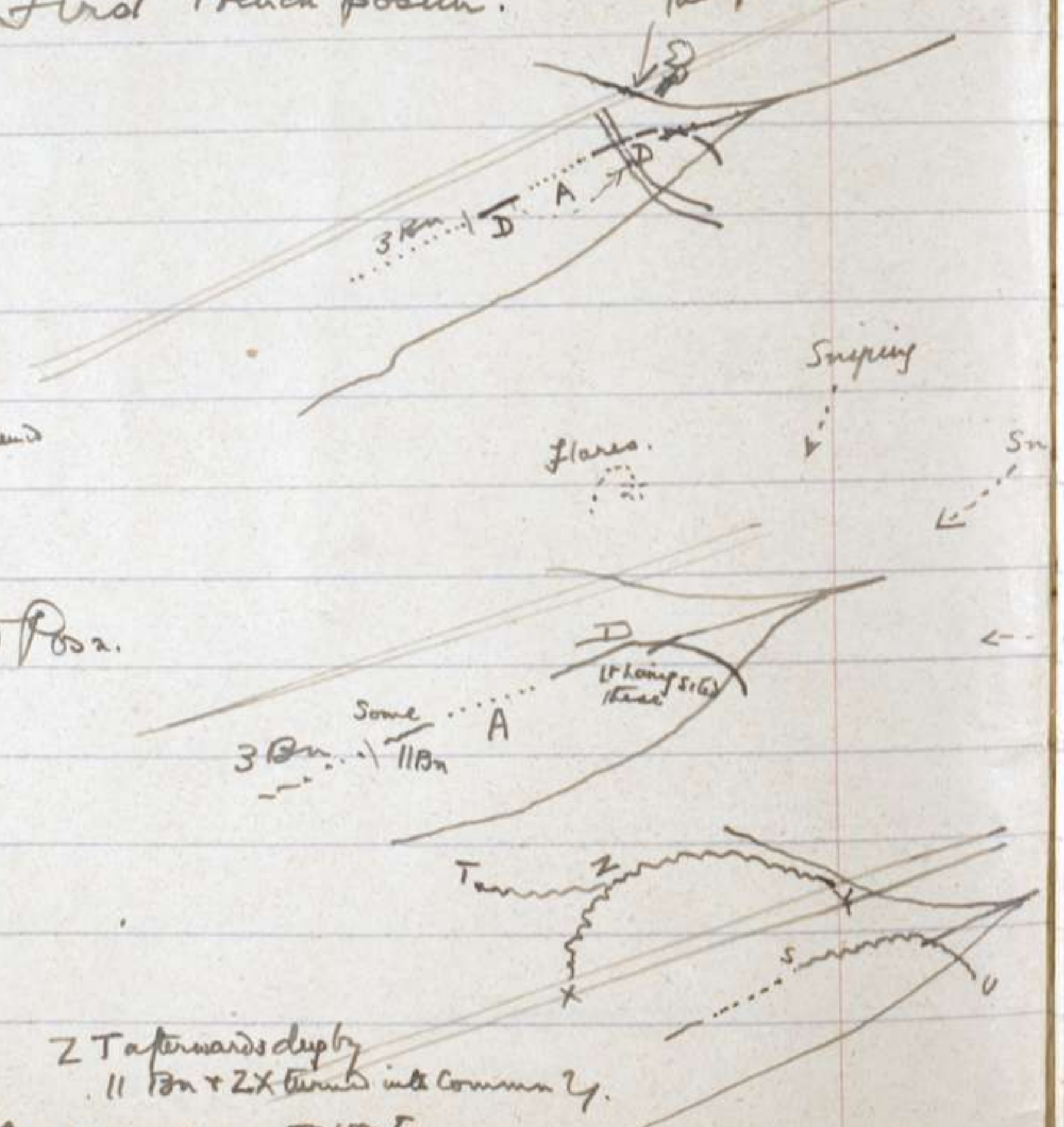
12 Bn. shd have been at 11 central by 10 pm. but only passed there by 12 pm.

10 Bn left Samsay valley by 10.30 to be in position at 12 pm. They had to be ahead of 12 Bn.

12 Bn. coys. were in Black watch alley when 1st Bombt started, getting into position. Start position was in B. watch alley were not in position till long after barrage lifted.

The two coys of 12 Bn were together. ~~two coys of~~ 10 Bn. ahead in B.W. alley. Two Coy Commanders as soon as

First trench position. This pt Vowles went for.



During dark
2 men saw someone digging
N of Rd & went over to see.
Didn't return. Poinsie &
I went to see what happened

Brigade went out &
went into village
Newer heard
again. 2nd Pos.

3rd.

X, Z, Y 1st built
Sided ZY by Vowles
XZ by Marsello. Marsello k. before take Company back to dig this Y.
Z T afterwards dug by
11 Bn & ZX turned into Comm Y.

Cops were in position (Marsello reported at Bn H.Q.) Col. Elliott told him to go sit on. Col went past 10 Bn. Rifles etc getting caught in telephone lines.

[Signal corporal patrolled lines from 12 Bn HQ for 6 hrs and mended 14 breaks]

First thing saw was Pozieres 2y. There was some slight shrapnel. Black stuff by the sound.

11 Bn were in Poz. 2y. I saw Capt Metcalf. 9 Bn were there too. Asked Metcalf where 11 were & stopped men there a bit - to organize. Shouted for 12 Bn men to go on. 9 Bn kept shouting (men) "go to right!" 3 Platoons bore rather to right. Other kept Vowles.

Went over tramway.

Found 1st Pos (3rd 1 Bns)

Saw a few Germans running away thro' village.

B & C were in Y E of post 8856

Digging in S U before daylight (good 2y by mid day.)

At dawn arty was firing into village - shrap.

After daylight Germans counter att. Someone sd Germans are coming out of Y (O.G. 1 near tramway).

Haltack from rt. men in ZX were to fill gap between S & U (abt 200-250 yds)

a shell hit him

They didn't seem to be in formation. Vowles
saw 50 to 100. One Lewis gun was
already in curved trench
Another was brought along - No Vickers could
be found. Our men would fire at all
at first. V. Picked up a rifle himself -
was strafed by private. The Germans were
turned & ran back across tramway -
strapping out of it not running
towards NE of village.

Laird reported that they were massing
amongst ruins. ~~Some went~~
arty message was sent on to
Bde & arty fire was put on them.
Some seem to have got into trench.
Men were not allowed to go out or aft of
sniping which was heavy here. Bomb
helped to ease it. No German shelling yet.
The R.F.C. reported village empty but
they could see men under overhead cover.

All 1st day improved trench.
No touch yet w 10th. Could see anyone
there. H White was up there w 11th Bn.

Towards evg. C.O. sent up message
from R.F.C. Order from Bde to push thro village
"NE corner of village must be occupied."
waited till dusk to carry this out. McStrath
was too done.

Hallahan of 11 was there w abt 30 men.

After dusk sent 2 platoons to clear NE corner & mark line. They killed 6 Germans - one sniping from an old hospital cart - it was there all 6 dead men inside & 2 horses k. all some time ago. Others in dugouts.

Margella & Vowles went across & sited line. (There had been 5 guns looking like 4.5 hows (or scrap iron) in copse by tramway. There were bits of trench in one or 2 places & hospital dug out - near road - deep dug out.

The 1st party threw bombs down every dug out they saw. When digging line ~~saw~~ V. nearly tumbled into dug out. Told man to throw down.

Threw Mills no 5. It was quiet - & sent 2 men down. They got $\frac{1}{2}$ way down & heard talking - & came back.

V. shouted Parlez vous F.? Oui. German poked his head round corner - Beckoned to come up. He & some wounded came up. V. told them to wait. Laying ed sp. German. They told him there was a Capt. there.

V. told Capt was to come up. He sd he was Capt. Lyons - (sd his grandfather was Ponsonby Lyons) He sd: I am commander of Pozieres. V. told him to tell him he was Count. He saw the joke.

They sd 18 were down there. Sent down to C. Coy for escort (in old trench)

Night of July 24 had orders to put a line
between str posts at ^{abt} 5 a 3.6. N of Rd
& in O.G. 1 N. of tramway & towards
Cemetery in front of NE of village -

Enpro got out there & 12 Bn
put screen round, but were very
heavily shelled & m.g.

Edut maintain position.

9 & 10 were to take up to windmill
at night. Men ^{of 12} out abt 1/2 hr.

On 25 Back ^{This filled dug out w. wd.}
in trench. ^{One m.g. was bombed}
^{from O.G. 1 looking}
^{for wounded.}
(and on Lany)

Shelled all day
Relieved by 19 Bn on July 25/6.

There was a doctor there. Lany & U. went down
& found an acetylene lamp, cylinder of gas.
(prob. oxygen). There was a dying man
down there - ~~the~~

We used this as dressing str (it
was full of bandages etc).

(11 Bn had got some prisoners at afternoon)

German capt sd he wanted to get out
before Germans fired. But no shellfire
at night.

July 24. Trenches were quickly dug & not
bad - & comm 2/2 to near rd.

No sniping now.

Not much shelling morning of 24th.

11 Bn went in early on 24th to

dig their bit of 2/2 across Rd

Shelling further back at day.
Comm all time w. H.Q. by runners.
Digging all day.

July 25. Gun opened abt 5 am. & shelled till
6 pm. all sizes of shells in.

Abt. 1 am. Lany took screen out in

~~July 24~~ file from NE hedge of village behind
outside hedge. Left them lying down

+ 2 men
 L. went on towards O.C. 1 to reconnoitre
 Got within 50 yds. ~~Found~~ cd hear voices.
 Flares going up. Knew Germans were
 in it. Covering ~~of~~ us under Heritage.
 Lairy went back & rept to Bowls.
 Took engr off. (5th Full Coy) out to
 St. post site 5 a 3.7. at X roads.
 Brought remaining 3 platoons ~~D~~ Coy
 to dig from strong post 150 yds ESE.
 Got them out - digging for $\frac{1}{2}$ hour, Engrs
 working at St. post.

were seen by flares. They put
 up red flares breaking into 3 - right
 into our trench. Arty, Inf. Rifle fire
 fold - all round. Lost most of men
 there. Lairy gave them order to join
 quickly att 4 at a time, saw them in.
 Spring in L. came across Robson, hit in
 leg. Found nearly all of men had
 got back & he sd he had sent out word
 for L. to come in. Went out to get
 Robson abt 50 yds ESE from road.
 4 s. to. Capt. Pretty & L. found him &
 put him on stretcher. Pretty & L.
 went along to see if any others wd.

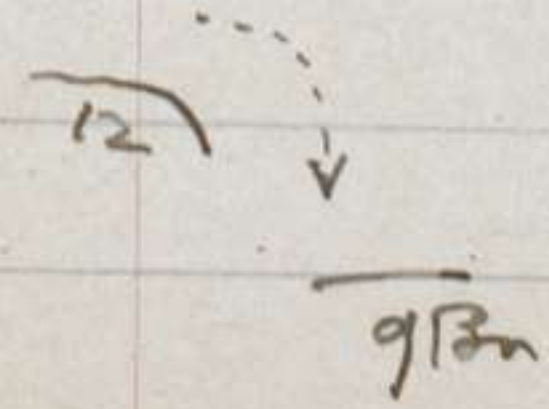
They were all dead - got paybooks etc
They had struck an old German 2y or
~~several~~ dead Germans filled right in &
made a pretty good trench of it, connected
Shell holes.

L. went back. They sd S.G.s had not
come in. Lt Capt. wandered out again
shouting for the men. Could find them at
all. Thought they must have come back
into old trench.

Apparently they lost their heads &
inst. of going to rd they must have lost
direction. Hassan, one of them, who got in
sd they had m.g. & rifle on them. They
got into shell holes. Hassan got in by tramway.
A bomb had hit Hassan.

July 23. After dawn Germans started to come
down abt from Rd where we later
started str. post. They were in single file
trying to get round right of trench.
in open order.

Probably abt 300 seen there & in village.



They reached abt number 151 on map
(15 central) & began to fire on
12 Bn but were met by
9 Bn fire as well.

We had 6 gun from 11 Pm there on rt. It opened but not much, as little ammo. A good many Germans fell. They lay down but not more than 5 mins. Then they ran back taking what cover they could round to back of village.

We could see them there & fired on them. Arty opened a barrage round N.E. end of village & probably got a lot of them.

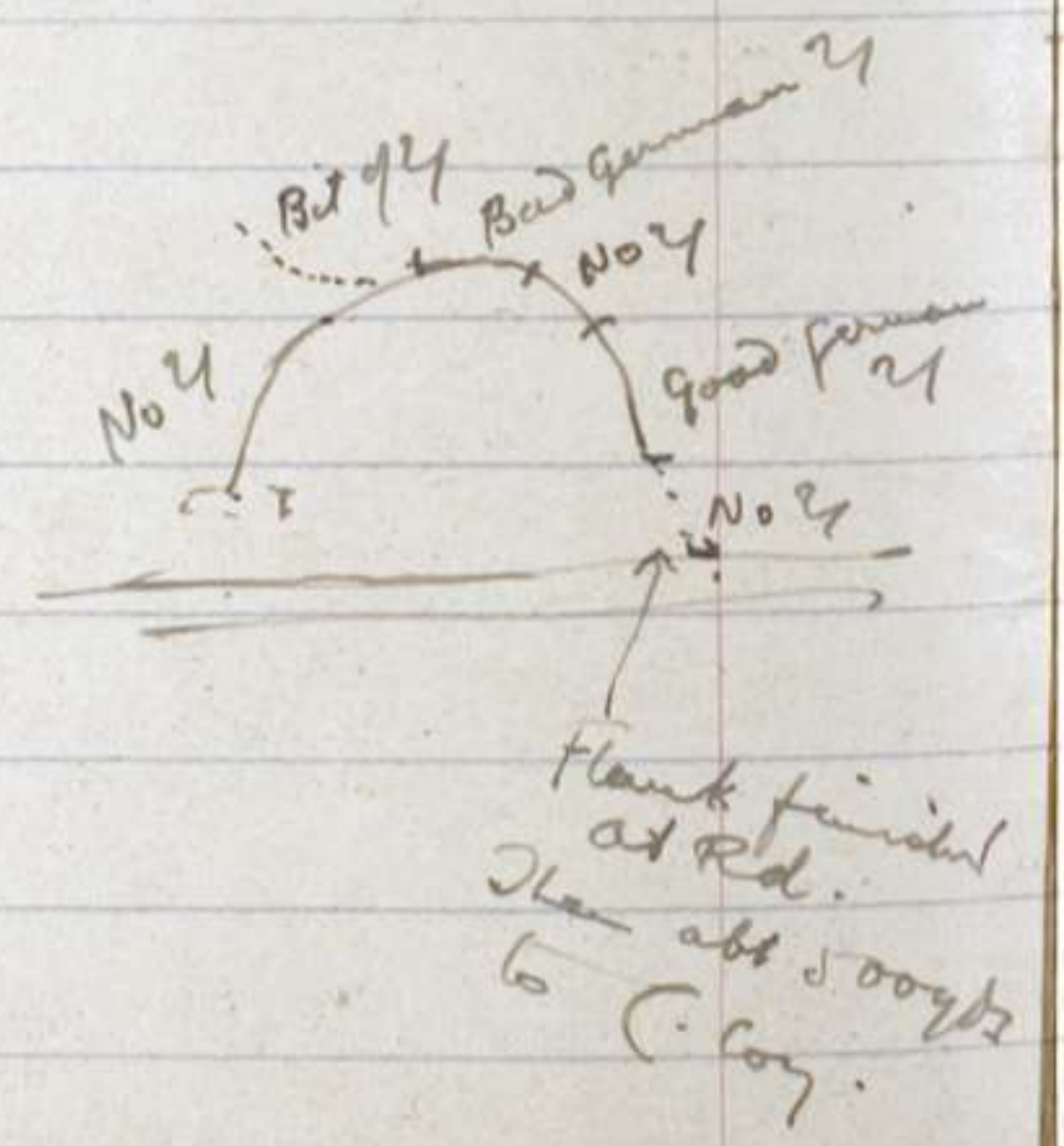
When Loring & 30 men went over to clear N.S. side Snipers were in hedge & debris.

One was in the "wireless station" all sorts of electric appliances (sort of power stu - not in ambulance wh we on 1 road W of tram crossing. One fellow had 3 shots at Loring & missed - got up to get away but one of our men shot him. Screen was put round. There was a deep German trench on the lines n. of Rd wh was 1 line we took. We bombed up it - Threw 3 bombs down the big dug out in the trench & didn't worry abt it any more. (A man sd he saw men sitting down there).

Later Rowles sent & sd he had this dug out w 18 prisoners. There was another dugout in this area.

A Coy had 30 men there too, to left of D Coy. They were recalled.

The German cleared off on by the top rd by Church. 2 men of 12 Pm sent him after him but he got away.



4k from sniper in 1st morning

104 Cas. in D Coy.

On July 25. 11 am. Someone in village sent up a white flare abt from centre of village

Abt 3 p.m. he sent up 2 at 5 min. interval. Could not find him but after that they seemed to fire harder than ever for a short time.

We had instructions to fire no white flares - we had green flares.

In trench N of Rd. ~~most~~ of all men were withdrawn into German dugout. Dugout was hit all to pieces on top & was very thin when bomb finished & sev. shells in entrances - 2 men k. in one entrance, & 1 k & some w in another.

9 Bn. Relieved 68th Bde. Took up

2 posts in O.G. 1. & O.G. 2.

2 Coy of 9 Bn to relieve 2 Coy of Stafford. Rest of night. Staffs had fight on so only B. Coy 9 Bn relieved tonight.

A Coy came in on 20 July.

21 July. Lt Montleath w 51 Or.

attacked X 5 d 45 str. pt.

Lt. Biggs 51 Or. apt X 5 d 7.8. str. pt.

At 1.55 M.T.M. shelled it w 14 bombs (all of which were available. No arty.

2.25 two parties debouched to pt 40 yds. from our 2.

2.29 Both parties in place.

2.33. ordered to advance.

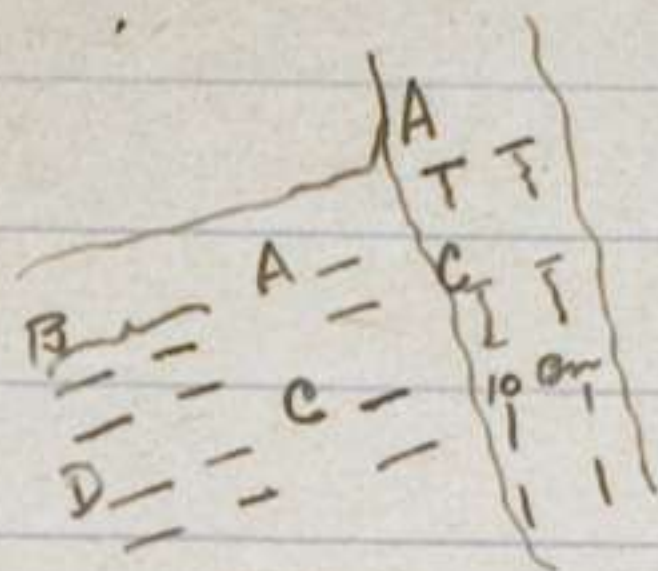
Good moon. Parties met w heavy fire of grenades. ^{and loss.} Fly retired.

As soon as reserves appeared, heavy m.g. fire upon them as soon as showed on parapet.

Loss. Lt Biggs 8 Or. killed.
29 Or. wd.

On 21 July orders issued for 1 and Div to attack Pozieres.

9 Bn objectives. Front line 2 from X 5 b 2.0 to X 5 c. 8.5.; 2nd line 2 ft. X 5 a 8.6 to X 5 a. 4.4. Also - O.G. 1 & 2 to rely line. 1st Coy of 10 Bn at disposal of O.L. 9 Bn to attack O.G. 2



How platoons were disposed.

At 10 the firing line Coy B A

moved out of firing line down B-Watch alley
& then debouched extending to 2 paces & in waves.

Gradual movement then made towards (or parallel
to) 1st Obj. It crept up to within 150yds of obj.

As firing line cleared place of A & B was taken
by C. & D. (may young)
(Capt Ambrose)

Same was happening in O.G. 1 & 2.

O.G. 1. Lt Montlake
Lt Thompson

O.G. 2 Lt Armstrong
Lt Rankema
Lt Flann

Coy reports all ready at 12.15 am.

Neces to push out early as Comms 2
were so full. & so narrow.

The Coy of 10 Bn for support in O.G. 1 & 2 had
not arrived at 12.30 am when attack made.

It did not arrive till 1.30. (delayed by
gas shells etc.)

O.G. 2 was found to be not a trench at all - just craters. Attackers lost way & returned. 3 parties failed to find Z.

In O.G. 1. Moniak found strong Pt 80 yds from us. It was rushed & taken at 12.59.

Attack on Z by enemy's front line had succeeded. 12.45 Capt Lawrence reported he was consolidating. C & D Coy moved over captured Z to position in front of 1st Objec. They had become disorganised. Capt Chambers & Lt White only officers left - Maj Young, Lt Appelt, Wittkopf, Lakin, Ford all hit.

Advance ordered but in dark Coy bore to left & came in ~~right~~ behind right of 11 Bn. Lt White & party alone reached 2nd Objec & held till relieved in afternoon. Men who got to wrong point were ~~in~~ ~~re~~ ~~organised~~ & reorganised in 1st Objec.

O.G. 1 in meantime came to stop. Arty called in. Heavy bomb for 5 mins - then fresh attack. After 6 hrs Germans were pushed back to 2nd strong post. Lt Blackburn, 10 Bn, was in front & but for him the gains would be lost. Casualties heavy, men tired. No C-attack - whole day to consolidate.

10 Bn this day put into O.G. 1; 9 Bn Pozieres trench.

Night July 23/24 New line dug under Capt
Chambers parallel to unaptured part
of O.G. 1. Troops brought from 2 Bde &
frontal attack order to be made by
5 Bn + 2 Coy 7 Bn. at 2 am. on 24 July.

25th July

At 2.10. O.G. 1 taken & troops pushed
to O.G. 2 in great opposition here & men ordered
to fall back into O.G. 1. 3.30 enemy
C. attacked.

B Coy 9 Bn had to help in repelling
C. attack. A Coy sent to support 11 Bn.
Helmets sometimes had to be worn for
 $\frac{1}{2}$ hour owing to gas shells.

July 26. 4 am. ~~25~~ Relieved by 17 Bn.

	k	w	m
Offo.	3	8	2
	54	263	63
	<hr/>		
	Total		393