

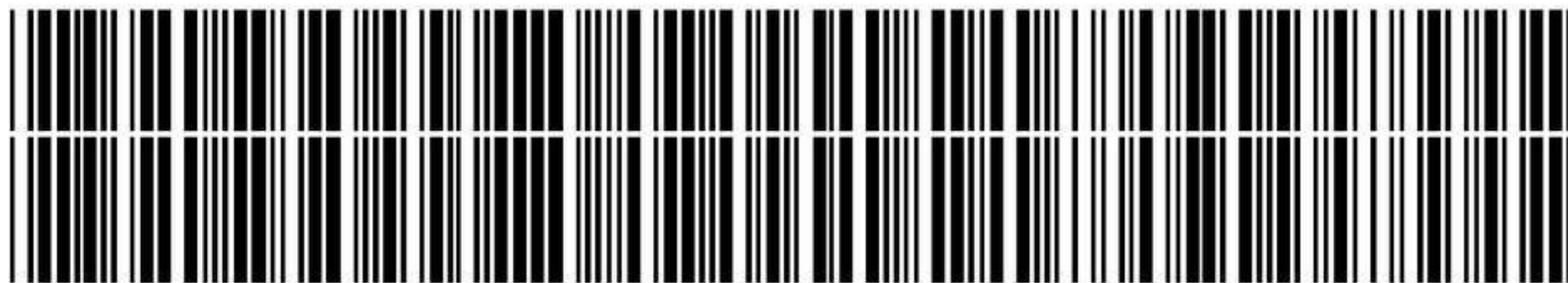
**AWM38**  
**Official History,**  
**1914-18 War: Records of C E W Bean,**  
**Official Historian.**

Diaries and Notebooks

**Item number:** 3DRL606/251/1

**Title:** Folder, 1915 - 1936

Comprises various papers on the German offensive of March-April 1918, including notes by Bean and letters by Lt Col G F G Wieck and Brig Gen R L Leane.



AWM38-3DRL606/251/1

1st SET.

No. 251.

AWM38

302L 606 ITEM 251 [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

*Sunderland*

VILLERS BRETONNEUX.

26/4/38

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.

Sir,—I was greatly interested in Mr. F. M. Cutlack's article, but I think there is an error in the reference to the 36th Battalion as Col. Goddard's last reserves carrying out the counter-attack on April 4-5. Actually, this counter-attack was made by C and D Companies of the 34th Battalion, without the aid of artillery barrage, D Company being commanded by Captain Cecil Bennett, and C Company by myself. The two companies attacked on either side of the Villers Bretonneux-Marcelcave railway line, and the operation resulted in the capture of 13 machine-guns and 26 prisoners, including one young officer. One German officer and several other ranks were killed.

When these two companies of the 34th Battalion counter-attacked at midnight, the three other battalions of the brigade were already in the line, and had been offering stout resistance to the enemy all that day. I believe that the 36th Battalion had counter-attacked during the afternoon. They, however, were not Col. Goddard's last reserves; the 34th Battalion were in that position.

I have always contended that this operation did not receive the proper recognition to which it was entitled, as a very vital one for the Allies, because had the 9th Australian Brigade not been able to stem the German tide, as they did, by means of the counter-attack on the night of April 4-5, Amiens would have fallen, and subsequent results might have been altogether different. The counter-attack referred to was the culmination of a hard day's fighting, in which the 33rd, 35th, and 36th Battalions all took part, and heroically withstood the enemy in hand-to-hand fighting. It was shortly after this operation that the 36th Battalion lost its identity, and was absorbed by the other three battalions.

I am, etc.,

A. J. FELL.

Reserve of Officers, formerly lieutenant,  
34th Battalion, A.I.F.  
Lane Cove, July 25.



9th Division was H M  
kpsat alt 35 div.

Silly as not to move in  
about without giving  
men blpt - to rel. at  
out. To move till  
reached fl. & rel. But.  
who were to fall back  
at out.

(581128)

to ; Black to ; Rank  
 Feist to Mount Kekeby, W. Aust.; Hedge to  
 Reneu to Cannington, W. Aust.; Addison to Hobart; Livesey ;  
 to ; Cook to ; Norman to  
 Albany, W. Aust.; and McQuaid to .

(?kilts)

some bombers with a supply of grenades, he had about ninety  
 men - parts of three companies. The Germans broke in on his  
 left and were in turn driven out. They next appeared 100  
 yards in front, and he was ~~strongly~~ strongly urged by Captain  
 Fortescue of the 49th to attack them; but, having already to  
 defend over 200 yards of trench, he decided against this pro-  
 posal. The position indeed was threatening, and the troops  
 tired and - as the hours wore on without help arriving -  
 increasingly depressed. At 3.25, however, the 52nd's bombers  
 again came up with a supply of bombs. Five minutes later  
 across the open in rear there was seen approaching a wave of  
 men in kilts, and into the trench there jumped a full company  
 of 250 men of the 13th Canadian battalion, under Captain Levett.<sup>139</sup>  
 They had been sent forward by Glasgow up the sunken road in  
 "Sud V",<sup>140</sup> and by extraordinarily good luck - since Maxwell's  
 position was not where it was supposed to be,<sup>141</sup> reached almost  
 without loss its extreme flank post. The 13th were Scottish  
 Canadians,<sup>142</sup> and the Australians could not have been reinforced  
 by better troops.<sup>143</sup> Captain Levett, though much senior to

<sup>139</sup>Capt. J.H. Levett (of \_\_\_\_\_). Levett  
 himself had preceded his troops and was in the trench  
 when they arrived.

<sup>140</sup>This was one of the two Canadian companies which had  
 replaced the 50th in park lane about 1 p.m. This company  
 also was guided to the sunken road by "Big" Maxwell.

<sup>141</sup>See p. \_\_\_\_\_ (forward)

<sup>142</sup>Their title was "The Royal Highlanders of Canada".

<sup>143</sup>An Australian, who was at General Glasgow's H.Q. when  
 Major MacPherson (commanding the second company of these  
 Canadian reserves) was being directed by Glasgow to the  
 front, wrote: "He (MacPherson) was a man nearing middle  
 age, erect, tough as wire, with lines on his face such as  
 hard fighting and responsibility leave on the face of every  
 soldier. An Australian (Glasgow) explained to him quietly  
 where he wished him to take his men.....it meant plunging  
 straight into the thick of the Somme battle with all its  
 unknown horrors - everyone there knew that. But the

8258.

18 September 1933.

**Brig.-General C.H. Jess, C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O.,  
Victoria Barracks,  
Melbourne.**

Dear Jess,

The war history has arrived at the point at which the 3rd and 4th Divisions moved down from Flanders to the Third Army. The occurrences of March 26 can be gathered from various sources, including some of the messages which you sent, but it is a little difficult to link them up. I believe that you came down from Blaringhem with the divisional commander, and your first subsequent message to the brigades was sent from Couturelle during the afternoon. I am not clear whether General Monash came with you to Couturelle before going to see MacLagan, or whether you went separately to Couturelle while he drove to Basseux.

If you could spare the time to let me have a few notes on the occurrences of that day, I should be grateful.

With kind regards,  
Yours sincerely,

УЕД' НИСЛОБА' СНУБ'ХАНН' БОЛК

MED. HISTORY. CHAP.XVIII. FOUR

✓ 4,829 casualties passed through No. 1 General Hospital and the "auxiliary convalescent hospitals," 1,278 through No. 2.

The precarious equilibrium of beds in Egypt and Malta, obtained in August by direct evacuation to England from Mudros, was at the end of September again upset by the effect of the sick wave. Passage of sick—such as cases of enteric and dysentery—through the hospital system was slow; severely sick could be sent to England only in hospital ships. In spite of increased clearance overseas, the ratio of output to intake again diminished. On September 26th the P.D.M.S. reported only 3,880 beds available in Egypt. At the beginning of October Egypt was again "full." The circumstances of this second crisis have already been described. Again the Atlantic liners came to the rescue and the situation was relieved.

The campaign was now entering on its final stage, which was to culminate in the evacuation of Gallipoli and close the first act in the war drama of the A.I.F. Medical activities in Egypt from this time centred on the treatment of sick from the Dardanelles, and on closer and more exact organisation at the base for the disposal of convalescents and recovered casualties; the latter reflected in the East important developments taking place in the West. Alexandria became a centre of scientific activities, as the headquarters of the clinical and scientific specialists working under the P.D.M.S. and of the Medical Advisory Committee and Entomological Commission. "Central" laboratories were established at Alexandria and Cairo and their work was supplemented by research in the hospitals.<sup>6</sup> Most of the cultural work for the Australian hospitals was done at the central laboratory, but in the laboratory of No. 1 Australian General Hospital, under adverse conditions, very useful work was done in routine investigations.

For the Australian Army Medical Corps the last quarter of 1915 was a cardinal period. Developments were in no small degree influenced by the affairs of No. 1 General Hospital, and some details of the reorganisation of this

<sup>6</sup>At No. 17 British General Hospital, for example, R.A.M.C. officers (British and Australian) were associated in important researches on dysentery. See *The Lancet* of 17 August, 1918—"On the differential diagnosis of the dysenteries: the diagnostic value of the cell-exudate in the stools of acute amoebic and bacillary dysentery," by J. G. Willmore, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., and Cyril H. Sherman.

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8321.

12 October 1933.

Captain E.O. Williams, M.C.,  
Forth,  
Tasmania.

Dear Captain Williams,

The writing of the Official History has now come to the point at which the 12th Brigade took up the line in front of Albert and Dernancourt in March 1918. I have very little detailed information concerning the march forward from Henencourt, but such as I have indicates that the outline of events was as follows.

The battalion is said to have advanced from Henencourt, according to one account, at 11 a.m.; according to another, at 12.30 p.m. About when crossing the Amiens road, troops were seen coming towards it on the right. The 47th stopped, and a patrol sent across found that these were part of the 9th Division. This was apparently reported to brigade, and meanwhile the battalion with these British troops on the right advanced to near the edge of the slope, and stopped. This would be about 1.30 to 2 p.m. Colonel Imlay personally went forward down the Amiens road towards Albert, and was fired on by a machine-gun. As the 48th was not yet up on the left, he placed here one or two posts. At 2.30 a message was received from brigade ordering the 47th and 48th to go over the crest and dig in in a position some way down the slope. Imlay ordered his two front companies, yours and Symons', to advance, and going over the slope they were heavily shelled, losing 30 or 40 men, and were also machine-gunned by one of our 'planes, which hit a few men (two were thus killed in the 47th). The company commanders, however, now managed to dribble their troops forward towards the sunken road which ran across the slope, and held on here till nightfall, when orders arrived to go on to the railway and relieve the 9th Division. The 48th had now come up on the left.

The outline is very sketchy, and I should be grateful for any assistance that your recollection can give me in correcting or adding to it. Your help in the compilation of Volume IV was much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

C.E.W. Bean

Official Historian.

12 October 1933.

Dear Leane,

The Official History has now reached the point at which the 12th Brigade took over in front of Albert and Dernancourt in March 1918. The diaries are very sketchy, but, as far as I can make out, the outline of events was as follows.

At 12 o'clock on March 27 Gellibrand came across to Henencourt and issued verbal orders for the 47th and 48th Battalions to advance and take over a line on the crest above Albert and Dernancourt (or, rather, some way down the slope) in support of the 9th Division, which was understood to be holding the railway. As far as I can make out, Gellibrand's order must have been brought to you verbally by a staff officer of the 9th Division without credentials, who said he had been sent to guide the 48th. There was a question as to his identity which is said to have delayed the start of the 48th Battalion until 1.30. The 47th state that they had gone on alone and about 1.30 had come into position behind the edge of the crest, but were unable to find the 48th on their left. Inlay went down the Albert road for 1,000 yards, until fired on, and then stationed temporarily one or two posts there in the 48th's sector. At 2.30, the 48th still not being up, he was ordered to push on over the crest and part of the way down the slope. He did so with his two leading companies, and lost 30 or 40 men in the heavy shell-fire which resulted, and one or two by machine-gun fire from a British 'plane. Meanwhile the 48th appear to have come up on the left of the original position of the 47th, and you personally went forward around the forward slope, in order to ascertain whether British or German troops were ahead of you, and, if British, what they were. About 5 o'clock you reported your battalion in position, and at the same hour Inlay records that you gained touch with him on the left. From subsequent messages from yourself I gather that the posts placed this night by the 48th were about the crest of the hill, as you represented that it was better to have them there and to trust to counter-attack than to expose them unduly.

All this is very vague, but it is the best that I can make out at present from the diary. I should be most grateful for any help that you can give me from your own recollection.

With kind regards,  
Yours sincerely,

C.E.W. Bean.

Brig.-General R.L. Leane, CB, CMG, DSO, MC, VD.,  
Chief Commissioner of Police,  
Adelaide, S.Aust.

~~Reichstag~~ Reports of the Reichstag Inquiry  
into the Loss of the War & commentaries  
written on the evidence by General von Kuhl  
Colonel Schwertfeger & Prof Delbruck

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See

L'Offensive Allemande de 1918

Commandant Koeltz

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& Gen. Palat's volumes

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Graf Schlieffen und der Weltkrieg  
by Lt Col. Wolfgang Foerster

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La Strategie Allemande pendant  
la Guerre de 1914-1918

Translated by Commandant Koeltz  
is a translation of

Foerster's work above mentioned

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A.N.I.

Charteris:

AT 9th Chart p 311

May 30 1918 May 30 Hay thinks war can  
be ended this year p 311

July 15 1918. July 15. Herds Rawl to prep.  
plans of all.

H.N.

Note for March 26 - Apr 4 1918

See "A Fatalist at War" 205-219.

Esp. 219 "The only embarkment".

General von Kuhl's books

"Die deutsche Artillerie in den  
Durchbruchschlachten"

by Colonel Buchenmüller

(Ludendorff's artillery report)

"particularly valuable"

"Die Ursachen des Deutschen

Zusammenbruch im Jahre 1918.

"the many-volumed report of the Commission  
of the Reichstag, which was appointed to  
inquire into the loss of the war & discover  
who was to blame"

This has been translated by the Carnegie  
Endowment?

see Jungers "Storm of Steel"

For Allouville disaster ..

see Col<sup>HA.</sup> Crowther 14<sup>th</sup> Br

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Note General Rosenthal's private  
diary is in Mitchell Library

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German Offensive 1918

Books to be studied

La Bataille de France

21 Mars - 5 Avril 1918

By Commandant L. Koeltz

(but see also Times Literary Supp. Reviews. 19/4/28.)

Entstehung, Durchführung und Zusammenbruch  
der Offensive von 1918 by General von Kuhl

&

The AEF in Battle by Dale van Every

# German offensive 1918

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see Nineteenth Century magazine

April 1918

Oct 1920

National Review Oct 1920 + Aug 1922

Corahill Mag. Dec 1920

Reprinters "First World War"

Capt. P.E. Wright's book.

Gen Maurice "The last Four Months"

Army Quarterly Vol IX Article by  
— Lt Col Piggott

The Fifth Army in March 1918 by W Shaw Sparrow

containing diary or letters of Lt,  
also a book by Braun (? son of the Socialist leader in Germany)  
who was killed at V/Bret. An English translation has been published



March 1918

See Hachwoods Magazine, or his book

"Comments + Criticisms" by the Rt Hon Sir John Simon

for a description of Amiens in the furest  
days of March 1918.

also

Lord Bickenhead's

"Turning Points in History"

re Gough + 7th Army

~~April~~ March-April, 1918

Position on the Italian front:

see Barlow-Kavan's article in

The Army Quarterly, Vol I, p. 13 seq.

American Exped Force

July 1918

+ Gessare Wood

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see

The A.E.F. in Battle

by Dale VanBovery

(Appletons)

Hamel

see Royal Tank Coy Journal

March 1932

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The Times Literary Supplement  
14/8/1924

### M. HANOTAUX'S WAR HISTORY.

HISTOIRE ILLUSTRÉE DE LA GUERRE DE 1914.  
Par GABRIEL HANOTAUX, de l'Académie Française. Tomes quinzième et seizième.  
(Paris : Gounouilhou. 25f. each.)

The fifteenth and sixteenth volumes of M. Hanotaux's history of the war—of which the fourteenth was reviewed on June 28, 1923—cover some eighteen months, from the close of the battle of the Somme in 1916 to the German offensive against the Chemin des Dames in May, 1918. They give a general rather than a military account, but are of considerable interest, in that the opinions expressed undoubtedly represent the views of a large majority of educated Frenchmen. The two books as a whole, except perhaps in their treatment of Mr. Lloyd George and the occasional hint that the British were not making the maximum effort of which they were capable, contain a remarkably fair narrative of the stormy and difficult period with which they deal.

M. Hanotaux regards the Somme as an "interrupted battle," and regrets that Marshal Joffre was displaced and no attempt made to continue the operations in February, 1917, as proposed, when, as it is pointed out, the Allied advance would have coincided with the German retirement to the Hindenburg line, and the withdrawal could hardly have ended there. He condemns the campaign against the Marshal, labels the criticisms of his command as "contradictory and unjust," and asserts that M. Briand threw the soldier over to save his Ministry. Nevertheless the French Government recognized the far-reaching results of the battles of the Somme, and were anxious to exploit them to the full. They therefore gave a ready ear to Nivelle's plan for the gamble of a rapid break-through, which naturally appealed to civilians more than did a mere continuance of the costly Somme operations, although these were certain in the end to lead to a general disintegration of the German armies. To avoid having to face such a contingency Ludendorff drew his forces back, abandoning a large amount of territory. M. Hanotaux takes the view that the German authorities fully understood the seriousness of the situation which the Somme had brought about and the impossibility of remedying it by force of arms on land. They therefore set about to do so by intrigue, by peace manoeuvres in order to gain time for the submarine campaign to take effect, by pacifist agitation in order to disunite the Allies, and by definite revolutionary propaganda. He ascribes the

troubles in the French Army after the failure of Nivelle's offensive to intrigues behind the front, financed by Germany, although he admits there was much discontent among the fighting troops on account of the disparity between the pay of the soldier and the munition worker.

The British successes of 1917—Vimy, Messines, and Cambrai—are duly recorded, though the significance of Passchendaele is overlooked. But we have only ourselves to blame for this: we advertised the sufferings of the troops and said nothing about its strategic importance and the real reasons for which it was continued. The author is inclined to see in our offensive the definite purpose of Mr. Lloyd George to get control of the Allied operations—an intention which, if it ever existed, was killed by his agreeing to take over more of the French front. Sir Douglas Haig would have been asked to be responsible for even more, we are told, had not the French Government disliked the idea of having British troops covering Paris. M. Hanotaux gives the British Prime Minister credit for being favourable to unity of command, but he adds the following remarkable comment:—

What he seemed to be after most of all was a means of degrading Haig, whom he detested. A species of calculated contempt emanated incessantly from the Premier in respect to the Commander-in-Chief, which created an atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust. Further, this feeling was translated into facts by a decision of profound importance—that is to say, the determination to keep in England a considerable number of idle divisions, leaving Haig with a deficit of 200,000. . . . This error of Lloyd George in the winter was the origin of the defeat of March 21.

The delay of Pétain in coming to the assistance of the British is admitted, and it is confessed that the French commander at the Compiègne council on March 25 "made a very black picture of the situation and the manner in which he proposed to employ his reserves." Lord Milner's account of the Doullens conference is given nearly in full. M. Hanotaux accepts the view, supporting it by extracts from the ex-Crown Prince's book, that Hutier's army was given a defensive rôle in the March 21 offensive, and that only after Marwitz and Below had failed to break the British Third and First Armies did Ludendorff concur in the Prince's idea that Hutier should be allowed to follow up Gough. "Nothing is clearer. These lines [of the Crown Prince] prove that Ludendorff had two successive plans." The illustrations and sketch maps are a great improvement on those in the earlier volumes, though a view of a German submarine base in the Scilly Isles seems to be rather an effort of the imagination.

CLEMENCEAU'S MINISTRY

LE MINISTÈRE CLEMENCEAU. Journal d'un témoin. Par le GÉNÉRAL MORDACQ. Three volumes. (Paris: Plon. 45f.)

These three volumes give a full account, in diary form, of the doings and sayings of Monsieur Clemenceau during his Ministry, from November, 1917, to June, 1919, when he was not only Président du Conseil but Minister of War. The writer of them was chief of his Cabinet in his capacity of Minister of War, and is an ardent partisan; he was a well-known writer on strategy before the War, commanded a Zouave brigade alongside the British at the Second Battle of Ypres, and had been commanding a division for two years when Clemenceau summoned him to his assistance.

General Mordacq presents the picture of a man of astonishing mental and physical energy. How Clemenceau at once tackled the traitors and defeatists, arresting even M. Caillaux and having Bolo shot, is common knowledge; but it is less well known that one of the first acts of this man of seventy-six was to set about "le rajeunissement des cadres." His circular of December, 1917, ordered that "all divisional commanders, brigadiers and colonels who were, respectively, sixty, fifty-eight and fifty-six years of age and did not possess, in the opinion of their chiefs, all the physical and intellectual vigour necessary, should be placed at the disposal of the Minister to be employed 'in the interior.'" He re-organized the Ministry of War and the services behind the front supplying men, material and munitions, and in the minor theatres of war and the colonies put "the right men in the right places." He stopped temporary rank and decorations being given to officers not employed at the front, and insisted that special promotion should go to the fighting commanders rather than to staff officers with a Staff College brevet: "Tout pour le front" and "Je fais le guerre" were his watchwords. He combed out "indispensables" and "embusqués," of whom no fewer than 110,000 were discovered and sent to the front in 1918. And he saw to it that those who were employed "in the interior" were still capable of work. Perhaps he interfered more than he should have done with purely military matters, but the Constitution provided him with several advisers; the commander of the French armies, the Chief of the Staff and the Chief of his Military Cabinet; and they did not agree, Foch and Pétain, before the Doullens Conference, holding completely opposite views as regards both strategy and tactics. The Minister of War therefore felt it his business to conduct the War. He actually made visits to the whole front, British as well as French, in order to see for himself which were the weak parts.

One of Clemenceau's normal days is described. He rose early, between 5 and 6 a.m., and got to work at once. About 7.30 he did physical exercises, which he never neglected. At 8.45 a.m., or earlier, he arrived at the Ministry of War; in the course of the morning he held a meeting of the Cabinet or attended the War Committee or conferences, returning to the Ministry about noon. He generally lunched about 1, received visits from 2 to 3, and then went to the Chamber or the Senate. Towards 5.30 or 6 he signed papers and received more visits. At 8 p.m. he saw his immediate subordinates and the Ministers, and representatives of the Press. He dined at 9 and went to bed early. He never slept very well. The second volume is full of clear-cut opinions on the conduct of operations and the strategic conceptions of both belligerents. Clemenceau's remarks on the surprise at the Chemin des Dames, May 27, 1918, are very lengthy. He has excuses for Foch: there were no strategic dangers from such an attack; he has no reproaches in general for the fighting troops, but "cannot say the same thing for the higher commanders, from the corps commanders to the commander of the Group of Armies, who all had the prime duty of foreseeing (that is the business of command) and had the means of foreseeing." He goes into details as regards the failure to destroy bridges, the absence of counter-preparation fire and the misuse of the divisions in reserve. There was some idea of removing General Pétain, and General Guillaumat was brought home from Salonika to be at hand to replace him. The third volume (November, 1918-June, 1919) is taken up with the peace negotiations.

In reviewing Clemenceau's work the author claims that in a war of such dimensions "la politique commande la stratégie," that he really conducted the war, and that, with justice, he has been called "l'animateur de la victoire."

*The Times*  
Literary  
Supplement  
21 30/7/1931

The Times  
Literary Supplement  
6/3/30

#### GERMAN STRATEGY

LA STRATÉGIE ALLEMANDE PENDANT LA GUERRE DE 1914-1918. Par le LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WOLFGANG FOERSTER. Traduction du COMMANDANT KOELTZ. Préface du GÉNÉRAL WEYGAND. (Paris: Payot. 50frs.)

The original German work, "Graf Schlieffen und der Weltkrieg," was reviewed in the *Literary Supplement* some eight years ago. The title of the French translation gives a better idea of the contents than the German one; for the author, who is now Chief Archivist of the War records in the Reichsarchiv, merely uses the teaching of Field-Marshal Graf Schlieffen as the guide by which to criticize the strategy of the War as conducted by the three successive Chiefs of the General Staff of the Field Army, Moltke, Falkenhayn and Ludendorff. It was Colonel Foerster's book which first divulged the plan for the great offensive of March 21, 1918, with its "Michaels I, II. and III.," "St. George I. and II.," "Archangel," &c.; and the review of 1921 was devoted almost entirely to a summary of this. General Weygand recommends the book to French readers as

une œuvre de grand valeur par le niveau élevé auquel il se place, l'ampleur des questions étudiées, la liberté d'esprit avec laquelle il les aborde.

He adds, however, that "Commandant Koeltz nous procure . . . l'occasion de mieux pénétrer la pensée des Chefs allemands." And therein, indeed, lies the value of the book.

In general, Colonel Foerster finds that Schlieffen's strategy of envelopment and annihilation, with Hannibal's Cannae as model, was right; and if it was not crowned with success, that was solely because the Chiefs of the General Staff who were entrusted with the conduct of operations did not know how to apply it, or were not able to do so. Ludendorff, a "true child of Schlieffen," did his best to follow his master's line of thought. Much has been divulged in Germany in the last eight years, since Foerster wrote, as readers of the *Literary Supplement* know—there have been the reports of the Reichstag Inquiry into the Loss of the War, and the commentaries written on the evidence by General von Kuhl, Colonel Schwertfeger and Professor Delbrück. Among other things we have learnt that Colonel Wetzell, Ludendorff's strategic adviser, proposed for March, 1918, a better plan than the one which the First Quartermaster-General adopted; it was in two separate acts, not an attempt at one act with a series of hurriedly improvised scenes when this had failed. We know, too, that Schlieffen meant to abandon East Prussia to the enemy, and to march through Holland. In the light of this new knowledge, Schlieffen and Ludendorff do not seem to deserve the eulogies showered upon them by the author, and to be exponents of the use of overwhelming numbers and brute force rather than strategists.

The Times Literary Supplement

17/4/1931

### CLEMENCEAU'S APOLOGIA

GRANDEUR AND MISERY OF VICTORY. By  
GEORGES CLEMENCEAU. (Harrap. 21s.  
net.)

It was not until after Foch's death that his criticism of Clemenceau saw the light of day. Fate has willed it that Clemenceau's reply should also be published posthumously. There is a real pathos in the fact that two men whose collaboration once meant so much to the world should raise angry voices against one another from their graves. Clemenceau feels it, and in one passage near the end of his book questions his wisdom in writing it. But something stronger than the need of answering Foch drove him on. He is satisfied not merely that what he did during the War and at the Peace Conference was well done, but that much of the best of it has since been most wrongly undone, not only by Foch but by many others, Poincaré at their head. His book is therefore a justification of his whole policy, and if the thrust of his reply is directed against Foch it is because Foch gave the lead in breaking up the unity of Frenchmen formed to meet a danger which will certainly recur.

The enemy was there to make us friends. Foch, the enemy is still there. And that is why I bear you a grudge for laying your belated petard at the gates of history to wound me in the back—an insult to the days that are gone.

For Clemenceau Germany is still the Germany of Bernhardt; and the greatest pathos of all is that the old man could never see that the world had moved beyond 1919, that he should work again and again round the circle of thoughts no longer cogent, that he should labour almost to the last at his manuscript in order to rally his countrymen once more against the Boche.

The book has little fresh light to throw on the preliminaries to Foch's appointment to the Supreme Command, though it notes that Lord Milner favoured Sir Henry Wilson's idea that Clemenceau himself should be given general powers of co-ordination with Foch as his chief of staff—a position which, he adds in a footnote, he would not have accepted had it been offered him. He agrees that when the crisis came Foch was the only man; that he had already shown at the Marne and the Yser his power to effect such "miracles of resistance" as the situation demanded; and that by his dauntless bearing at the Doullens Conference he had really laid hold of control before it was formally bestowed on him. But he doubts whether Foch was wholly successful as Generalissimo. He suggests that his faulty strategy was ultimately responsible for the German break-through on the Chemin des Dames; that he was not sufficiently resolute in imposing his conceptions on Haig and Pétain; and, above all, that he ought to have insisted on Pershing giving him whatever support he could, instead of waiting till an American army could go into battle as a whole.

It was, however, after the Armistice that disagreements became acute. In Clemenceau's view Foch was an insubordinate officer. Foch's claim was that, as Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces, he was entitled to advise the Allied Governments directly. Clemenceau held that, whatever his position, he remained a French general and, as such, was under the orders of the French Government.

When the Marshal asked me to assign to him an official from the Quai d'Orsay to enable him to discuss the question of peace direct with the Germans, I could only take this request as an invitation to relinquish in his favour the authority vested in my office, which would then have been reduced to communicating to the Allies (who, by the way, would certainly not have put up with it) the decisions of the soldier put into proper terms by a diplomat subordinate to him. Not for one moment was I disposed to submit to being thus despoiled of my prerogatives.

Moreover, Foch was not simply disobedient; he was wrongheaded. Clemenceau's main contention is that for Foch's peace of force he himself substituted a peace of justice. He is satisfied that such a peace was actually brought into being by the Treaty of Versailles. Under its terms the nations of Europe were indeed set free; their aggressor was rendered incapable of further mischief; and the new order found its guarantee in the French alliance with Britain and America. Here was security infinitely greater than any strategic annexation could give, and it had been achieved without exposing France to the charge of herself violating her cardinal principle of national freedom.

Clemenceau takes it very hard that the provisions of this treaty have been whittled away. For him Locarno is but another scrap of paper to be torn up when occasion serves. What is real is that Germany is again arming, and that her undertaking to make reparations has been scaled down at successive conferences culminating in those Hague meetings "to which Mr. Snowden knows how to impart a tone of such peculiar courtesy." It irks Clemenceau that he should have lived to see Germany a Great Power again and America turning her back on the Europe for which she had once fought. His tribute to Wilson is wholehearted; he found in him his own desire to build up the peace on the eternal principles of justice and liberty. But he cannot forgive him the stiff-necked refusal of concessions which might have saved a treaty lost in the Senate by only six votes, and as he broods over all the subsequent evil developments he rounds on the American people.

You are still in the bloom and heyday of a young civilization. You make us act the part of those graybeards that are the laughing-stocks of the stage, but who had their great days—without which you would never have been what you are. Do not despise Europe. Your judgments might prove double-edged. Do not treat us too badly. No one knows what fate history has in store for you. A weaker brother is often useful in time of need.

That the time of need will come, possibly to America, certainly to France, is Clemenceau's deepest conviction.

The Times Literary Supplement

21/5/1931

## THE BIDASSOA AND NIVELLE

WELLINGTON: THE BIDASSOA AND NIVELLE.  
By MAJOR-GENERAL F. C. BEATSON.  
(Edward Arnold. 15s. net.)

General Beatson, once the instructor at the Staff College, Camberley, of Field-Marshal Lord Haig and many of the higher commanders and Staff officers of the War, is already known to the reading public as the author of three monographs on Wellington's operations in the Pyrenean area. His latest volume, dealing with the forcing of the Bidassoa and the Nivelle, is of more than usual interest. First, because the fighting described took place within easy reach of St. Jean de Luz, and his work, handy to carry in the pocket, will be of interest to British visitors to that part of the world. Secondly, Wellington's problem, in face of Soult's positions covering the passages of the two rivers, was similar, on a small scale, to that which confronted the Allies in Palestine and on the sea flank on the Western front; and we are shown how he tackled his problem, on one occasion turning and on the other breaking the enemy's front. Surprise, dawn attacks, and engagement of the enemy along the whole line, but more strongly at some places than others, were the Duke's main weapons; artillery fire is only mentioned to be called "slight."

In September, 1813, the Allied Army, commanded by Wellington—both Spain and Portugal had confided their troops to him and there was "unity of command"—stood on the frontier of France. It was the desire of the British Government that he should advance into France in the hope that such a move would spur the other Allied Powers in Central Europe to greater activity, prevent Napoleon from sending reinforcements against them from the large force of veteran soldiers still in Southern France, and bring a large and wealthy area under British control. The Government were good enough to forward to the Duke extracts from a scheme for the proposed advance prepared by a French *émigré* officer, probably General Dumouriez. In acknowledging receipt of this Wellington commented:—

It is like all those I have received from French officers, and might answer well enough if I could afford, or the British Government or nation would allow my being as prodigal of men as every French general is.

The forcing of the Bidassoa is curiously like Lord Allenby's opening operations in Palestine. Wellington began by showing troops to persuade Soult that he meant to attack the French left, and then threw his own left across the Lower Bidassoa and turned the enemy's right. He did not, however, trust to the flank attack alone, assailing simultaneously, but not uniformly,

every sector of the French front, sending overwhelming force against certain points and little against others. By this method several breaches were made in the twelve-mile long French line, and the successful troops were in a position to render flanking assistance to others who were in need of it. The surprise was complete, and the French first position broken; all that the French reserves could do was to hold rallying points, and they managed to do this only because Wellington ceased to advance: he had forced the gateway, but was unwilling to make any further forward movement until the surrender of Pamplona, behind him, had taken place.

For a month the two armies faced each other and dug themselves in, the French front covering a line of redoubts, batteries, defended houses and trenches already constructed. From lack of men Soult, at any rate in Reille's sector, decided to make the main defence in the rear line, turning this into the "battle zone," as it was called in France in 1918, the two in front being held as the "forward zone" by outposts only. After constant reconnaissances made personally and by his Staff, and the regular receipt of information of enemy movements from the divisions, Wellington felt certain that he knew the strong and weak points of the Nivelle position. The weakest point was the gap of Amots, in the centre, five miles inland of St. Jean de Luz; it was weak in its physical features, and was moreover the point of junction of the commands of Clausel and d'Erlon. By his plan Wellington concentrated on this gap; but, as before, he attacked all important points; and he put every available man into the battle, keeping only a Portuguese brigade as general reserve. The whole of the enemy's position attacked by the centre corps under Beresford was in British possession by 10.30 a.m., and the Light Division on the left, under Hope, and the 6th Division and Hill's corps on the right, carried their points of attack shortly after, so that by noon the enemy was everywhere completely beaten and in full retreat. Wellington himself considered the battle of the Nivelle his "best work."

Who shall say, after reading only the outlines of the operations, that there is nothing to be learnt from the study of military history? In relating the fighting General Beatson has used both French and English sources and quotes the stories of eye-witnesses; for military readers he adds operation orders and orders of battle. He also provides a number of panorama photographs, so that those who study the campaign at home may have a good idea of the country. The two maps (one general and the other of the two Rhones) are thoughtfully printed on tough paper; but to make this excellent little book quite perfect the two battle plans given by Napier, or something like them, should have been added.



The Times Literary Supplement

20/3/1924

## DIARY OF OTTO BRAUN.

THE DIARY OF OTTO BRAUN. With selections from his letters and poems. Edited by JULIE VOGELSTEIN. With an introduction by HAVELOCK ELLIS. (Heinemann. 10s. 6d. net.)

Otto Braun was born in Berlin on June 27, 1897. His father, Dr. Heinrich Braun, was a Socialist of distinction, an Austrian by birth who had become domiciled in Prussia. Dr. Braun's sister was the wife of Victor Adler, the Austrian Socialist leader, whose son murdered Herr Stürgh in 1916. Otto's mother, herself a feminist of European celebrity, was the daughter of a general officer in the Prussian service whose grandmother was the daughter of Jerome Bonaparte, King of Westphalia, by an Alsatian countess said to have been both witty and beautiful. Thus Otto Braun's unusual attributes may well have been the satisfaction of an hereditary claim. Mr. Havelock Ellis denies that he was a prodigy, and says that he was "the natural and normal child of some titanic race the world has never known." But none can deny his precocity; and one may doubt whether he had at any time a normal period of childhood in which simple pleasures and an induced belief in fairies had a part. At the age of nine he wrote in his diary ". . . I feel I am not made to follow. I am made to lead." A few months later he had learnt Middle High German in order to read the Nibelungen in the original. He was, apparently, preparing a History of Literature, and for that purpose was reading extensively early German works. His letters would have been proper for a man of mature age, and he is solemn in his philosophic outlook. Shortly before his eleventh birthday he said in a letter to his mother:—

. . . The great difference between a youth and a man is that the man has to go through all the struggle while the youth enjoys its fruits. Oh, if only I could take part in the battle, if only I could make my living. I should build you golden palaces in gratitude to you for bearing me and bringing me up; I should lay the world at your feet for you to mould according to your will and God's. Work is my delight, my seventh heaven.

He did not believe himself to be a prodigy and resented the accusation apparently made by a contemporary of equal age, to whom he wrote in 1910 (at the age of thirteen):—

. . . You seem to assume as axiomatic that we are prodigies. That is not at all true. Prodigies are creatures brought up in the unnatural air of hot-houses, who spring up quickly, decay more quickly still, and then are justly forgotten.

He reads incessantly, and at twelve years of age is at one time studying Hoffmann, *Zarathustra*, *The Complaint of the Virgin*—of which he says, "This play with the *Ten Virgins* and *Theophilus* (only in the Turin manuscript) seem to be the most significant dramatic poems of the Middle Ages"—van Gogh's letters (these with deep admiration) and Jacob Burckhardt's "Renaissance Civilization." And one notes without wonder a phrase in his diary in April, 1911, "Youth!! It seems to me the 'old' people are much younger." He went to Florence, and there visited all the places which the tourists and the learned alike make their own. To the

historic buildings, pictures, and books he referred with a wealth of allusion and a judgment which sounds oddly experienced. One searches a little regretfully for a childish break, one thought which would show his ideas to be in keeping with his age; but in vain. The note is sustained throughout.

Thus in a swift widening of interest and of experience—none however based on the facts of life itself—writing, be it said, strangely beautiful things, his life passed until the beginning of the war changed all things. His parents' political views and his own manner of life had not served to kill in him the soldierly and patriotic spirit of his ancestors. He was no pacifist. On August 2, 1914, he enrolled himself as a volunteer, and on August 18 wrote in his diary:—"I believe this war has come in our time and to every individual as a fiery test to make men of us all, men prepared for the terrific events of the years to come." A little later he joined the army. "I am gradually learning what a marvellous educational institution the Prussian Army is!" He was enthusiastic about it all, and was uncomplaining even when unpleasant incident came to try him. But the trials and sacrifices of war did not alter greatly the course of his self-education. He continued to read with undiminished fervour. At the front he read Hölderlin's poems, *Faust*, and Merejkovsky's *Peter the Great*, dreamt of reading the *Iliad* again, and felt that "being able to say the names Hölderlin and Nietzsche amidst the dirt of these villages is like looking at the sun." His search for beauty continued, and he had something of the Greek perception of things worthy to be seen. On June 9, 1915, he

. . . rode along by the Bzura to bathe. At the old bullet-ridden mill we suddenly came upon a gleaming medley of naked, glittering bodies of men and horses; there were shouts and cries, a gorgeous game of mirth and laughter. Quickly we undressed and rode our horses into the water. A glorious blue sky, a thronging mass of naked people, all around munching cows and champing horses, the beautiful stream flowing between willows and birches, opposite us the ruined walls of Krepitulum—you can imagine how wonderful it was.

A few days later he showed that war had attraction for him. "I shall now get to know all there is to know of the war, the danger and the terror it had to be. My dreams this morning were glorious, glowing; may the gods to whom I pray, the spirit of my forefathers that floats over me, my strength that I feel within me, grant I be successful." He was awarded the Iron Cross in August for a gallant action. After a period of service in the Foreign Office at Berlin while he was recovering from a severe wound, he was posted to the Western Front, and in April, 1918, was in the Villers-Bretonneux sector. On the 28th of the month he wrote his last letter in a deep cellar at Marcelaève. In

it towards the end he said, "That feeling I had when I came out to the front this time—of a great change awaiting me—thrills me again now. It is a wonderful feeling; the future lying ahead, impenetrable; and I weave into it brilliant colours, landscapes of magic, enchantment. . . ." He was killed on the following morning. "We laid him on a bed of blossoming flowers till the carriage came for the funeral. His face was peaceful and unharmed."

*The Times Literary Supplement*

26/6/1924

### CONRAD VON HÖTZENDORF'S SUCCESSOR.

ZUR GESCHICHTE DES GROSSEN KRIEGES 1914-1918. Aufzeichnungen von GENERAL-OBERST ARZ. (Vienna: Rikola Verlag. 8 gold marks.)

The reminiscences of General Baron Arz, who from February, 1917, to the end of the war was Chief of the General Staff of the Austro-Hungarian Army, are a striking contrast to those of his predecessor in that office. While Field-Marshal Conrad von Hötzendorf in four stout volumes has only reached September, 1914, Arz, in a plain, soldierly narrative that certainly will not lead to any diminution of his reputation, tells us practically all that is essential in 380 pages.

The account of his early career shows him as by no means the courtier soldier that his selection to be Chief of the General Staff by his young Sovereign caused many people to imagine. A Staff College graduate, he had in peace-time held numerous staff appointments, had commanded both a brigade and a division, and at the outbreak of war was in charge of the most important department of the Ministry of War, that which dealt with organization, preparation for war, and mobilization. His work in this accomplished, he was on August 29, 1914, given command of his old division in the Sixth Corps of the Fourth Army. This Army defeated the Russians at Komarow, helped to rescue the southern Armies after Lemberg, and, with great honour to itself, covered the flank of the retreat to the San. Arz was quickly promoted to the command of the Sixth Corps, and retained it for over two years. With Plettenberg's and François's German corps, Arz's men formed Mackensen's Eleventh Army, the spearhead in the breakthrough at Gorlice-Tarnow and following operations, in May-August, 1915. In August, 1916, when war with Rumania began to threaten, Arz was sent to organize the defence of Transylvania; and with only two divisions and three infantry brigades he skilfully delayed the advance of three Rumanian Armies until German and other assistance could be sent. For his services he was promoted to the command of the Austrian First Army, and took part with it in the further operations against Rumania in the group of armies under the Archduke Karl, who a few weeks later became Emperor. Thus the appointment of Arz to be his chief adviser seems on military grounds to be a sound one; and it was in consonance with Karl's expressed policy to clear out the old gang who clung to G.H.Q. and replace them by men of experience at the front.

Part of the book, after the author became Chief of the General Staff, deals with politics, the Polish question, the internal condition of the Empire, lack of food supplies, the Brest-Litovsk peace, the occupation of the Ukraine, Germany's failure to keep her word about the division of the spoil, and Karl's unfortunate manifesto to his peoples; but it contributes little not already known. The military sections on the other hand are of considerable interest, and Arz tells the real story of the initiation of the Caporetto offensive. When he proposed the operation to the Germans and asked for the loan of six divisions, Ludendorff (who in his book takes credit for the whole affair) was

inclined to use any forces available for an offensive in Moldavia, between the Sereth and the Pruth, to finish off the Rumanians and the Russians supporting them; but he finally promised what was asked for if the attack on Riga was successful, as it proved to be. The pursuit of the Italians after the break-through was perforce stopped at the Piave, as the roads were in a hopeless state and many bridges destroyed, and the Austrians could not therefore get up guns to cover the forcing of a passage. The Emperor Karl ordered a continuation of the operations; but it was found that the preparations would take a long time, and the Germans then gradually withdrew their contingent.

During the German offensive of 1918 the Austrians were merely asked to lend a number of heavy batteries and to hold the enemy on their front and prevent him from sending assistance to France. Arz conceived that the best way to carry this out was by attack. His plan was to make a frontal attack on the central section of the Piave front, and at the same time to advance from the mountain sector between the Piave and the Brenta, so as to come down in the rear of the Piave defences. Conrad, now commanding the forces in Tirol, was for a wider operation, and persuaded the Emperor to let him attack west of the Brenta on the Asiago plateau, so as to aim well in rear of the Italians. This offensive, unfortunately for Conrad, struck the British 14th Corps and failed. On the Piave front some ground was won on the western bank, but was subsequently relinquished. The effect of the failure on the Austrian troops and nation, who expected another Caporetto, was far-reaching, and, coupled with the defeats of the Germans in August and their request for help, made Karl determined to have peace at any price.

General Arz says nothing directly about his official relations with the Emperor, but the text shows that the military suggestions made by Karl were generally rejected as impracticable; he emphatically states that the Empress did not interfere with military matters. He describes at considerable length the pitiable scenes with Karl, and the long delays when the Italian conditions for an armistice were referred to him. The Emperor would not take the responsibility of accepting them and summoned an Austrian State Council, which told him plainly that, as the Emperor had declared war, so he must bring it to an end. He then allowed Arz to telegraph a notification of the cessation of hostilities to the troops, counter-ordered the telegrams when they had already reached half the armies, telling Arz to get Parliamentary

authority for acceptance next day. Finally, at three in the morning, he came to Arz's room and handed him a scrap of paper appointing him Commander-in-Chief, so that he should make the surrender.

The author expresses the opinion that, had the Hungarians remained in the line, an orderly retirement could have been made. But in Austria's misfortunes they tried to assert their complete independence. The Hungarian Minister of War demanded first that half the staff appointments should go to his nationals; then that the Hungarian divisions should be grouped together as a separate army; and during the armistice negotiations he ordered them to leave the line and return home, and finally to lay down their arms.

7/11/1929

## MARSHAL FOCH

THE BIOGRAPHY OF THE LATE MARSHAL FOCH.  
By MAJOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE ASTON,  
K.C.B. (Hutchinson. 24s. net.)

MARSHAL FOCH: HIS OWN WORDS ON MANY  
SUBJECTS. By RAYMOND RECOULY.  
Translated by JOYCE DAVIS. Butter-  
worth. 12s. 6d. net.)

Will the world in general ever grasp the secret of Marshal Foch? It is doubtful. In his character and ideas there is a great deal that is perplexing. His own explanations are often striking and memorable, but on many occasions they do not appear to plumb the depths of his thought. Books like that of Commandant Bugnet and that now before us by M. Recouly are useful, because we can set ourselves to search among the Marshal's own phrases for the basis of his philosophy; but the task requires some knowledge of military affairs and military history, and perhaps even some metaphysical training. It seems that one great principle, bed-rock of all, can be discovered. It is neither the love of attack nor the oft-quoted theory that a beaten army is an army which believes itself to be beaten, though these may both be said to be founded upon it. It is that the plan is worthless without the execution. Reduced to this nudity, the statement appears to be a truism; but when retained in the mind as the gauge by which every individual problem is to be tested it is of immense value. Again and again we find Foch returning to this idea: Gallipoli, Nivelle's Champagne offensive of 1917, the conduct of the German High Command during the march on Paris after the frontier battles of August, 1914, all these are submitted to this philosophical test, and all fail. Sometimes he even suggests that the execution is far more than the plan, in which he follows Napoleon. If one were to seek for a very great modern soldier of the opposite school, that is to say, in whose conceptions plan seems to outweigh execution, one would find him in Moltke. There are, of course, among great soldiers only shades of difference in their outlook upon these two sides of the question, and, as we have suggested, the whole theory may seem to be more nearly related to philosophy than to warfare; but it is worth the soldier's consideration.

The conversations recorded by M. Recouly are extremely interesting. They contain short summaries of all the great problems with which Foch was faced, short accounts of certain critical situations, as the Battle of the Marne, and the views of the Marshal on Joffre and Ludendorff in the late War and on Napoleon and Gambetta in former wars. One of the most important chapters concerns the granting of the Armistice. Foch defends himself without difficulty against criticism directed against him in France for not having secured more from the Armistice, and also for not having routed, as well as decisively defeated, the German armies before he granted it. He points out that an armistice is a purely military affair, and that he ensured Germany's being in such a situation that it was absolutely impossible for her to renew activities. That

was all he, as a soldier, could do; nor would the sacrifice of some thousands more lives, though it would have turned the German armies into a mob, have given the victors anything more. The chapters concerning the discussions prior to the Peace Treaty, which give information not before published upon the attitude of Foch and his differences with Clemenceau, are also well worth reading. It is perhaps salutary that we in this country should learn from the mouth of the best friend we had in France how our laying hands upon the German fleet and the German colonies, while refusing France's suggestions for her own security, appeared to French critics.

Sir George Aston's book is a complete biography of Foch. It is written with imagination and insight, and though a popular work would be a valuable one had it been done more carefully. As it is, it has the air of having been "slung together." There are, for example, four sketches at the end taken from the official history of the Western Front. They all belong to the year 1914, which is of less interest where Foch is concerned than 1918. It was perhaps a temptation to put in these excellent sketches because they were ready-made and authoritative, whereas considerable research would have been required to produce others for the Somme and 1918 of anything like equal detail and accuracy; but something should have been attempted, even if the result were inferior. There are also far too many minor errors and misprints. General Aston forgets that there were French Colonial as well as French Territorial troops on the British left during the first gas attack at Ypres. He speaks of the fighting at Hangard as if it were part of the Battle of the Lys. He represents Foch as suggesting in April, 1918, that the British divisions should be reduced from twelve to nine battalions, whereas the reduction had been completed in February before the German offensive. He makes extraordinary mistakes in the spelling of French names for persons and places. Even British names are not exempt from error, the worst coming at the most solemn moment, when Field-Marshal Sir George Milner appears as a pall-bearer at Foch's funeral.

General Aston brings out very well the qualities of greatness of intellect and spirit which were the Marshal's contribution to victory in 1918. Haig thought himself ill used because of the terrible burden that was placed upon his troops on the Lys; but Foch was as niggardly of reserves when his own countrymen were attacked. He resolutely refused to bow to the enemy's will by completely absorbing these reserves. If he had, many troops would have been saved from an almost unbearable experience, but the Allies would almost certainly have lost the War. Unfortunately, General Aston nowhere gives a clear sketch

of the strategical plan, but on the personal side at least he gives us a very good picture of the man, especially in the last furious weeks when he was crying "Tout le monde à la bataille!" We can only trust that if this book goes to a second edition it will be thoroughly revised, for at least as a portrait for the general public of the great soldier it is worth it.

to the French and a desire to exhibit M. Clemenceau in an unfavourable light.

It is necessary to go into some detail in order to show the character of the memoirs. The first chapter, concerned with his command of the XX. Corps, is a bald military précis, and, no map having been provided, it is, as it stands, most unintelligible. By the aid of the excellent French and Bavarian Official Histories, we can, however, follow what happened. Deceived by the planned German withdrawal, the XX. Corps on the northern flank of the Second Army (Castelnau) was hurried forward by its commander into the trap of Morhange; held in front and attacked heavily on its carelessly guarded flank, its divisions retired with precipitance. The Marshal is inclined most unfairly to lay the blame for the disaster on the Army commander, but also on the Germans for having marked the ranges by putting up posts!

The account of the share of his command, the Ninth Army, in the Battle of the Marne is a remarkable exposure of his failure, both at the time and afterwards, to realize the situation. His conception of the way to carry out Joffre's instruction "to cover the right of the Fifth Army [Franchet d'Esperey, the flank of the offensive left wing]" was to advance. He was, as at Morhange, surprised; as he puts it, the enemy

succeeded in massing his infantry only a few hundred yards from our position . . . suddenly . . . without any artillery preparation, these masses were launched to the attack. . . . I asked for aid from the armies on my flanks.

So vehement were his appeals for help that Franchet d'Esperey, whom he should have protected, lent him a whole corps. Thus the French Fifth Army was crippled, and stretched to the east instead of the west; this probably accounted for its not getting in touch with the B.E.F. on its left. It had at any rate the consequence that Sir John French, his right flank thereby exposed, went forward across the Marne with hesitation—and Kluck escaped. Further, Foch missed the chance of smashing Bülow, who was trying to wheel to face Paris. There is the wheel reported in Foch's own words although he could not see it:—"The [French] left . . . had broken up the enemy's advance [Bülow had swung his right back]; the centre had held its own; the right had again given way." Foch's reply was not to fall on the flank of the German Second Army which was being presented to him, but only to fill a gap in the centre and order a general advance. Although the German retirement, due to the British having pushed across the Marne, began at 2 p.m., Foch describes the battle as still raging on his front at 6 p.m., when he hoped that "by spending the last drop of our energy we might break the unstable nervous equilibrium and incline the balance in our favour." He then relates the advance to the attack of the 42nd Division and the IX. Corps. The commanders of these formations, Generals Grossetti and Dubois, years ago destroyed this legend: the 42nd Division arrived too late to do more than fire a few shells at the retiring enemy, and the IX. Corps did not advance. The Germans, too, have told us that they retired unhindered, their rearguards of the right holding the causeways of the St. Gond marshes until 7 a.m. next day.

The account of the fighting in Flanders has been given in full in the British Official History. Foch, who was sent to the north as the representative of General Joffre to co-ordinate the operation of the Allies, appears to know even less about the battles of the Yser, and of the First and Second Battles of Ypres, than he did of the Marne. The

Belgians may be left to discuss the Yser. What he says of First Ypres, October 31, 1914, cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged. He states that the British were "unable to hold Gheluvelt . . . the line was broken and in the middle of the afternoon flowed back upon the woods of Hooge and Vedhoek [sic., it is elsewhere spelt Velehoek; perhaps this and other mistakes are the fault of the editor]," and that when Sir John French met him at Elverdinghe in the afternoon they discussed "the proposed decision to retreat, which was on the point of being executed . . . the troops were in full retreat towards Ypres . . . it was the beginning of a defeat." To put it shortly, Gheluvelt was certainly lost, and a small gap made in the British front for a time; the rest of the front held, the 1st South Wales Borderers still hanging on to Gheluvelt Château and grounds. The local counter-attacks of portions of four battalions of the 1st Division, under General Landon, and of the 2nd Worcestershire recovered Gheluvelt and filled the gap again. This had all happened

and Sir John French had been informed of it before he saw Foch. Yet the latter claims that orders he issued during the visit restored the situation. The fact is that on this occasion, as on others, the Marshal issued orders after the fact—"pour l'histoire" as a French general said of one of his own; at no time was much attention paid to him or them by the fighting commanders near Ypres, least of all by the French commanders.

This was notoriously the case at Second Ypres, when in spite of Foch's promises to retake the half of the Salient which the French had lost, and his orders to that effect, no serious attempt was made to do so. Again in this battle he has to admit that his troops were surprised, but he omits to mention that this was due to his own neglect to take notice of the three separate warnings—also ignored by G.H.Q.—of the impending gas attack which the French Intelligence received. It is mere untruth to state that when the French fled before the gas attack "the British left (Canadian Division) retreated to St. Julien," and ludicrous to claim that General Putz, with "aid furnished by the British and Belgian," saved Ypres.

The two years of trench warfare, 1914-16, with the two battles of Artois and the Somme, so uncongenial to his offensive spirit, are passed over very quickly without much comment; in fact, it would appear from the "Note" at the beginning of the book that, as for events in 1917, the text is only the "recital" of his staff; the Marshal, we are told, "was able to finish only the account of events in which he participated during 1914 and 1918." There is no explanation of his insistence on there being one French corps north of the Somme in July, 1916, which not only embarrassed Sir Douglas Haig by its presence, but refused on more than one critical occasion to cooperate. Foch was blamed for his methods of attack in 1916 by the French Government, and superseded. Powers then passed to the heroes of Verdun.

The account of 1918 does not add much which is new to our knowledge of that period, about which so much has been written, except as regards the personal movements of the Marshal. We learn that it was Sir Douglas Haig who first proposed—to the C.I.G.S. and before the Doullens conference—that Foch should be made Commander-in-Chief. The Field-Marshal himself, in referring to this, said that he did so because Foch would fight and Pétain would not. The share of the British commander in modifying Foch's plans is generously admitted. Foch judged that Haig was wrong in suggesting that easy terms should be offered to Germany, overlooking that the best German divisions, and the largest number of them, were concentrated in front of the British. The important new item is a superbly patriotic letter from M. Clemenceau to Foch, dated October 21, 1918, on the situation, with special reference to the "marking time" of the American Army. In this the President of the Council says: "Nobody can maintain that those fine troops are unusable; they are merely unused." Foch's comment is that the letter "had in view nothing less than to effect a change in the Chief Command of the American Army." It seems almost possible that the appreciation of Marshal Foch by his contemporary at the Ecole Polytechnique, the military publicist, Colonel Mayer, is not very wide of the mark. The chief command suited him because he was not precise and it only required the formulation of general ideas, of which after his experience as a professor at the Staff College he had plenty. He could not work out plans in detail, any more than he could finish his sentences. Foch was in his right place as commander at the close, just as Joffre was at the beginning.

Colonel Mott, who was American liaison officer at Foch's headquarters, has made a somewhat free translation, which does not always do justice to the original French; he does not seem to know the exact equivalent of French military terms and his footnotes are not always accurate. We learn that Sir John Robertson was our C.I.G.S., and Foch at the end of 1917 "Chief of the War Department Staff." The book, except for its binding, is not so well got up as the French original. The photographs are fewer and not so well selected; the maps fewer and less well reproduced (the French version contains a Morhange map, of the absence of which in the English translation we have complained); and the descriptive page headlines of the original are missing.

## FOCH'S MEMOIRS

MARÉCHAL FOCH. Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de la Guerre de 1914-1918. Two volumes. (Paris: Plon. 60f.)

THE MEMOIRS OF MARSHAL FOCH. Translated by COLONEL T. BENTLEY MOTT. (Heinemann. 25s. net.)

Fifty years ago the nephews of Field-Marshal Graf Moltke suggested to him that he should write a true account of the Franco-German War of 1870-71. He raised objections; the nephews, who were his heirs, were persistent; at last the old man said "Put the Official History on my table." Thenceforward nearly every morning he was seen writing; but he locked up the manuscript carefully in his desk. On his death his nephews found that he had merely compiled a careful précis—now long forgotten—of the official work.

M. le Maréchal Foch was not so wise. A note tells us:—

In the course of the year 1920 Marshal Foch, yielding to the insistence of those about him, decided to write his reminiscences of the War. He directed his staff officers to collect the necessary documents and to draw up a strictly objective recital of the events in which he had taken part.

Between 1921 and 1928 the Marshal used this recital "as a framework, which he considerably altered and enlarged," for his narrative, adding his personal reflections and recollections; and we are informed that the reader has before him "the thoughts of the War's great victor exactly as he set them down." The insistence of those about the Marshal has at any rate resulted in his composing a foreword of nineteen pages summarizing his life and education, and a shorter preface dealing with the outbreak of War and the fallacies of the French General Staff doctrine, "limited . . . for all ranks to one magnificent formula: the offensive." Both foreword and preface are deserving of close attention. The body of the book is not, however, the memorial one would like to see of this great French soldier. He was obviously little interested in, perhaps would gladly have forgotten, the earlier part of the War, before he received the strategic command; for his share in it was far from brilliant. The narrative of it is in many places inaccurate and remarkable for what it leaves out. The account even of the later period, which properly takes up more than half the book, betrays an old man's vanity, an inclination to attribute too large a share of the final success

The Times  
Literary  
Supplement  
19/3/1931

### 1915 THROUGH GERMAN EYES

DER WELTKRIEG 1914 BIS 1918. Bearbeitet im Reichsarchiv. Die militärische Operationen zu Lande. Siebenter Band. Die Operationen des Jahres 1915. Die Ereignisse im Winter und Frühjahr. (Berlin: Mittler. 30 r.m.)

The sight of this large and heavy volume of the German Official History of the War on land, and the thought (as the book is the seventh of the series and reaches only April, 1915) of the long row of successors it must inevitably have, did not encourage us to open it. The period, too, which it covers, January to April, 1915, is in our recollection a dull and unimportant one—except for the initiation of the Dardanelles expedition and the beginning of the Second Battle of Ypres, matters not dealt with in the volume. There remain only the incidents of the French being pushed off the old British position across the Aisne, the featureless winter battle in Champagne, the costly little fight of Neuve Chapelle; and, on the Eastern Front, the sweeping up of a few Russians in the winter battle in Masuria, the failure of the Austrians, even with a German spear-point, to dislodge the Russians from their holding in the Carpathians, and the fall of Przemysl.

Those, however, who have the strength of mind to read the volume will be amply rewarded by finding much new and highly interesting matter, and a story very different from that in Falkenhayn's smooth narrative "The Supreme Command and Its Critical Decisions." We learn for the first time that all through the early part of 1915 until April Falkenhayn was determined to make the offensive of the year on the Western Front, and was forced only by circumstances to abandon this programme. When the operations of 1914 died down Falkenhayn's first care was the assembly of some sort of reserve. The formation of four-and-a-half new-so-called reserve corps was nearly complete; he hoped to be able to increase this total by one-and-a-half more. The question was where to employ this striking force of six corps to obtain a success as decisive as possible. Conrad von Hötzendorf, the Austrian, and Hindenburg-Ludendorff ("Obost," short for "Commander-in-Chief East") clamoured for them, each promising success, at his end of the line. Bethmann-Hollweg, the Chancellor, wanted a startling victory, somewhere, in order to impress Italy and Rumania and at least keep

them neutral, and he thought that it could be most easily obtained in Russia. In spite of this heavy pressure Falkenhayn decided to employ his reserve in the West. But on January 7 Hindenburg confronted the C.G.S. with the "astonishing fact" that, in response to Conrad's entreaties, "Obost" was lending to the Austrians for the Carpathian front two-and-a-half divisions and a cavalry division. His own forces, he said, would still be strong enough to resist attack. His message ended, "I have issued the necessary orders." Thus, with a few Austrian divisions added, was formed the German "Südarree," which remained long in the centre of the Austro-Hungarian line.

Falkenhayn at once went to the Eastern Front in person, and held a conference with Hindenburg, Ludendorff and Hoffmann, who promised him great results from a double offensive; their forces from the north, Conrad's across the Carpathians from the south. The C.G.S. rightly pointed out that the twin operations would be too far apart to produce a strategic result, and he was not disposed to approve. The Chancellor and Hindenburg then both proposed to the Kaiser that he should be removed from his post. Finally, on January 20, the Supreme War Lord ordered that the new formations available, four corps, should be sent to the East. Thus the German Tenth Army came into existence and was placed at Hindenburg's disposal. The official historians feel it necessary to say that the failure of Falkenhayn

to get his way in the important question of the employment of the reserves and in the conduct of the war in the East, whilst he was nevertheless retained in his appointment of Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army, had fatal significance for his further activities.

It was certainly a turning-point in the War, and the course taken proved at least of immeasurable assistance to the British, giving them time to organize troops and manufacture munitions. At the same time the employment of the four corps in the East brought little profit except 90,000 prisoners in Masuria—including dead, wounded and overcoats, say the Russians—a tactical but not a strategic success, more than counter-balanced by the surrender of Przemysl with 115,000 Austrian prisoners, the Carpathian offensive failing to relieve the fortress. In spite of his judgment having been overruled, Falkenhayn stuck to his plan for a great blow in the West; the problem was where to find a striking force for the purpose. On February 22, however, Colonel von Wrisburg, the head of the organizing department of the Ministry of War, came to his assistance and laid before him a proposal for the building up of a new reserve. New nine-battalion divisions were to be formed by taking three battalions from each of the divisions on the Western Front, providing them in compensation with 2,400 trained recruits and six machine-guns. The divisional troops required were to be obtained by reducing the number of guns in a battery from six to four, and so on. It was suggested that the greater part of the transformation could be carried out in one-and-a-half to two months. The scheme should have provided twenty-four divisions, but from lack of equipment and other causes it actually produced only fourteen by the beginning of April. Falkenhayn directed that an Eleventh Army should be formed from them, and appointed Colonel von Seeckt its Chief of the Staff—the commander did not matter. Then he set von Seeckt, von Kuhl (then still Chief of the Staff of the First Army) and the head of the Operations Section, Colonel Tappen, to work, allotting them

different parts of the line, to consider where best the blow could be struck. He had already before him proposals made by his deputy, later War Minister, Major-General Wild von Hohenborn, and Crown Prince Rupprecht's Chief of the Staff, Krafft von Dellmensingen. Both these strategists selected as objective "the northern wing of the enemy front in the first place, that is the British Forces, which should be broken and crushed." The method to be pursued was practically identical with Ludendorff's plan for March 21, 1918, and had better chance of success, as the front line was in 1915 much nearer the coast than in 1918. The right flank of the British, then near Arras, was to be struck, and they were to be pushed north-westwards towards Boulogne and Calais, while the French were held off and prevented from rendering assistance. A diversion attack was simultaneously to be made near Kemmel. The advantage of attacking farther south, so as to have the Somme as flank protection, as was done in 1918, was pointed out; but the flank guard was first to get the line Albert-Doullens-course

of the Authie, as it was anticipated that it would be difficult to reach the Semme line. Von Kuhl, in the First Army area, considered there were good chances of success east of Soissons—Ludendorff struck here in the Chemin des Dames offensive of May, 1918. Tappen appears to have agreed with von Kuhl. Von Seeckt selected the front Arras (exclusive)-Somme, as Ludendorff did later. All the schemes put forward went into details of time and space and the number of divisions, guns, and so on required.

Troubles on the Eastern Front and the political situation prevented any of them from being put into execution: we do not even know which would have been selected. The disturbing factors were the attack on the Dardanelles and the attitude of Italy. On February 19 the first bombardment of the Dardanelles outer defences took place. A successful defence "was a question of munitions," and on March 10 Admiral von Usedom telegraphed:—

In spite of the relatively slender success of the enemy, the overwhelming of all the Dardanelles works cannot be prevented indefinitely, unless the munitions and mines, now on order for months, arrive soon or the defence is supported by submarines from home waters.

The Turkish winter offensive in the Caucasus under Enver himself had collapsed with immense losses; the attack on the Suez Canal, long and carefully planned under German leadership, had failed dismally "owing to British watchfulness." Something had to be done or Turkey would be out of the War, and there would be no chance of Bulgaria coming in. King Ferdinand had actually declined to admit Field-Marshal von der Goltz to his presence. Rumania, still undecided, refused to allow the passage of munitions through her territory to Turkey. Falkenhayn came to the conclusion after the Allied attack on the Gallipoli Narrows on March 18, that he must "carry out the Serbian campaign with all available forces, and, further, before the great offensive planned in the west," so as to get munitions through to Turkey. On March 22 Przemysl fell, releasing large Russian forces for the Carpathian front, and Conrad not only declined to provide any troops for the Serbian campaign, but begged for assistance.

The demands of Italy for territorial concessions as the price of her neutrality at first had been vague, but they had gradually become definite. Austria actually offered South Tirol with Trent, but Baron Sonnino declared this "very insufficient" and asked for more, including Pola and part of the Dalmatian coast. In vain Bethmann-Hollweg wrote to Vienna that the terms should be accepted—"they are at any rate somewhat less fatal than the otherwise unavoidable collapse of the Monarchy." Vienna, however, declared it would rather make a separate peace with Russia at the price of ceding Galicia, and Conrad demanded from the Germans seven divisions to take the place of those he must now detach against Italy. The German Government were in a difficult position: if they did not do something to help Austria to continue resistance, she would rather make terms with Russia than yield territory to Italy; if they did promise help, then Austria would be stiffened to refuse Sonnino's demands, and Italy, having promise of what she wanted from the Allies, would enter the War on their side.

As Russia was by far the more formidable antagonist,

Falkenhayn, after a long inward struggle, clearly recognizing the desperate military and political situation of the Danube Monarchy, came to the final resolve to employ in the East the reserves at the disposal of the Supreme Command, in order to obtain a decisive success against the Russians on the Carpathian front, if possible before Italy entered the War.

This decision meant abandoning for a time the great offensive in the West and also the operations against Serbia. On April 10 Falkenhayn laid before the Kaiser for the first time the plan for the new operation since known as Gorlice-Tarnow. It was founded on the fact that, although the Russians in the Carpathians were strong, their line at the angle where it turned north between the western extremity of that front and the Vistula was weak and thinly held. A breakthrough there would bring the Germans in rear of the Russian armies in the Carpathians and force them to withdraw. The volume closes with an account of this most successful operation, which began on May 2, leaving the abortive poison gas attack at Ypres, although eleven days earlier in point of date, to be described no doubt in the next volume.

*The Times Literary Supplement*  
10/4/1930

## THE CHEMIN DES DAMES

SCHLACHTEN DES WELTKRIEGES. Herausgegeben im Auftrage des Reichsarchivs: (1) DEUTSCHE SIEGE, 1918. Das Vordringen der 7. Armee über Ailette, Aisne, Vesle und Ourcq bis zur Marne 27 Mai bis 13 Juni. (2) WACHSENDE SCHWIERIGKEITEN, 1918. Vergebliches Ringen vor Compiègne, Villers-Cotterets und Reims. (Oldenburg: Stalling, 4.50 and 3.50 marks.)

These two German official monographs tell the story of the third, and last, successful German offensive of 1918, known to us as the Chemin des Dames offensive. It resulted in the formation of the great Château Thierry salient, forty-five miles across the base and thirty miles from base to apex. Three weeks before it took place there had been sent for rest by Marshal Foch to the right sector of the front attacked four tired British divisions. They were told by a French commander from whom they took over that they were "rats in a trap," and this proved to be the case; for the French position was on the front slope of the Chemin des Dames, with the Ailette stream and great woods, untouched almost by the war, in front, and the Aisne, with its canal, and the Vesle behind it. The foliage of the woods in the month of May allowed the German preparations to be made unseen and unnoticed from the air or the ground, while the marshy bottom of the Ailette in No Man's Land prevented probing raids from being made to ascertain if anything was afoot. As the Allied defences were good and elaborate, all, says the German account, depended on surprise. The minute precautions ordered to ensure secrecy are given at length, and are interesting as summing up four years' war experience. Special area officers were appointed to watch, and balloons sent up to observe, whether the measures ordered were sufficient and were obeyed. No fires or smoke were allowed during the assembly period, no parades or parking of vehicles in the open, no crowding at issue of stores, rations and postal matter; no lights, noise, singing or bands. Wheels were muffled, horses' hoofs, chains and similar parts of vehicles were wrapped in straw and rags. Troops marched only at night, and then only in small columns at intervals; a special watch was kept on conversation in messes and institutes, and for spies. No fewer than 1,023 batteries, besides hundreds of trench mortars, were brought up in nine days, hidden in the woods, villages and gardens, and got into their positions by man-handling at night. Six days' supply of gun ammunition was dumped near them, also by night. The twenty attacking divisions were brought up in seven days. They came in fighting kit without heavy baggage, and not until three days before the attack did they begin to move forward to their assembly positions behind the front line.

The German precautions were successful. Not a hint of these immense preparations

reached the French Army commander, General Duchêne, until May 26, the day before the assault, when two prisoners were taken. After lengthy interrogation about 4 p.m. they divulged that a great attack would take place next morning. The information was too late to be of much value, for orders could not reach the troops for several hours. As the front had been quiet for a year, the French had no plan ready which could be notified to the troops by telephoning a couple of words like "Case Havrincourt," as the Germans had done the night before the Tank attack at Cambrai. The best course was obviously to retire to a second position behind the Aisne, but General Duchêne could not bring himself to adopt this, and the eight French and three British divisions in the front line merely stood to arms to meet the attack.

It began at 1 a.m. with ten minutes' gas shelling at the highest possible rate. Then, leaving the trapped divisions to contend with gas and darkness, for sixty-five minutes all guns and trench mortars turned to the destruction of defences and important centres in rear. Under cover of their fire the German engineers crept forward to throw foot-bridges over the Ailette stream. Then came eighty-five minutes more gun fire on the Allied batteries and defences, and at 3.35 a.m., following a barrage with gas at the head of it, the German infantry advanced. Some few French and British parties put up a good fight, but in general they were swept away, and the Germans rushed on without much opposition or loss of time. They found most of the bridges over the three watercourses intact, passed beyond the first objective, the heights between the Aisne and Vesle, and arrived at the Vesle; some even crossed it. During the next three days they reached the Marne.

Now, according to the second monograph, the German troubles began. The offensive was only intended to draw the Allied reserves from Flanders, and, as Foch had ordered twelve divisions down, it had accomplished its purpose. The surprising success, however, of a thirty-mile advance had created a narrow salient with two long weak flanks. Orders were therefore given to flatten it out by gain of ground on the east towards Rheims, and on the west between Château Thierry and Noyon. "The success attained was far below expectation." On the Rheims side the attempt entirely failed. On the western side a slice of ground, some eight to nine miles wide on a forty-mile front, was gained. But security had not been attained; for the salient was left with the Rheims pocket in it on the east and a very weak western flank, which Mangin was soon to assail (July 18). Worse than this, the Germans had lost 4,581 officers and 125,789 men; the Allies had certainly suffered heavier casualties, 5,046 officers and 167,373 men, it is claimed, but American troops were beginning to arrive to replace them, and the German losses could not be made good. "Thus," say the concluding words of the second monograph, "in the victory of the Chemin des Dames the seeds of our later defeats lay hidden."

Soldiers + Statesmen  
Robertson Vol I 270-271

① Franco-Brit. Offve not definitely app'd by Cabinet until <sup>after</sup> March 27 (Conf in Paris)

In spite of Cabinet being warned to object of Somme was ① Relief of Verdun ② Relief of heavy losses on former aims - it was abt July 29 showing sensitiveness at the loss (wh was wrongly calculated by Haig i.e. excess over normal).

They asked R whether he thought a loss of, say, 300,000 men would lead to really great results, because if not we ought to be content w something less than what we are now doing.

Asked why Fr weren't fighting  
B (Warney) (report on its morale by Brit staff)

L. George was never whole-hearted on W Front but had to be silenced by R's assurances. He wd accept them

49476

Aug 29 Key approves of the go slow + get ready policy (271-2)

Aug. Rumania joins - L.G. wants to expand campaign in Macedonia France wants it. Brit Div from Fr + some troops of (40 000) in ally seat.

Nov. weather bit Somme to close: All 3 objects attained.

Third wk  
of Nov. 1916 L.G. asks Rob. whether we may expect  
to win the war by a knock out blow - if  
not the advisability of continuing war to the bitter  
end wd call for reconsideration.

R. thinking a party in 1 Cab. might be wanting  
to consider an early peace by negotiation  
hit straight out - & sd - if measures were  
taken "I am satisfied that the K.O. blow can  
+ will be delivered".

At end of year Asquith ministry fell -  
"Throughout 1916 the General Staff were  
accorded suitable freedom of action" (286)

R. was of opinion that Brit. gave way to her  
allies too much (287)

## Man Power.

Jan 1916 - all single men & widowers <sup>ages between</sup> 18-41 to attest.  
after a specified date if not voluntarily before (293)  
(In consequence of Derby pledge - all single  
men had to go before the married)

~~Do. do.~~ ? May 1916 Military Service Act incl  
married men. (Not Ireland).

Aug 1916 man-power distribution board  
to supply labour for essential industries - but don't  
for Dept to agree.

IV  
June 1916 L.G. min for war. (302) Dec. 1916 P.M.

But he failed to increase <sup>supply of men</sup>  
as desired by R. L.G. held to Labour wd not  
stand any more  
compulsion



# Robertson

Man Power

p. 308.

In winter 1916-17 R thought Gy wd make her maximum effort in summer 1917.

R had to tell Cabinet in Feb th Army cost be kept up to strength during 1917. & now too late for reasons  
Cabinet asks Army Council to  
consider reducing brig per divn from 12 to 9.  
Gy had made the change & Fi.

Measures of 1916 brought strength of army to climax in 1917. Thereafter it declined. (309)

24 Nov 1917 Cin C info. Army Council th he wd be 250,000 short in July by end of Mar 1918.

Haij, present in War Cab. on Jan 7 1918, makes a statement wh leaves in W. Cab. the impression th fs won't att. on W. front. ~~th~~  
Rob. & Derby both think this will be effect on W. Cab. Haij doesn't. (Haij was inarticulate & possibly nervous - Curzon asked him qns designed to give him a chance of bringing out his need for men - & he had assured W. Cab th if fs were wise they wdnt att. a subsequent letter from Haij was tossed aside by P. O. <sup>later</sup> W. Cab as being inconsistent w his verbal statement). (324)

Forecast of Americans (328)

Smithers

2/3/1928

# THE GERMAN ATTACK.

## Great Drama of 1918.

### FIFTH ARMY'S ORDEAL.

(BY F. M. OUTLACK.)

Ten years ago to-day began the great German offensive in France—Ludendorff's "gambler's throw." Those times seem very far off; yet it is safe to say that, in city and country, thousands of Australians will recall without reminder the war-time crisis of which to-day is an anniversary, and probably will debate the old question of the moral of the Fifth Army. The debate lives, though the real question has long been settled. The truth is that the Fifth Army, overwhelmingly outnumbered, with no supports, and reeling under the heaviest attack the Germany Army could deliver, fought one of the bravest soldiers' battles in the record of the British Army.

It requires no effort of the imagination in anyone who survives those great days on the Western Front to live again the intensity of the drama which opened on the 21st of March. The German Army, heavily punished in the preceding year by one offensive after another along the whole British front, was, early in 1918, reinforced by a great strength of fresh divisions brought back from Russia, where the revolution had broken down opposition. By February a grand enemy attack was known to be imminent. The Australian Corps was in Flanders on the Messines Ridge and Hill 60, confident for a time that the assault would come upon that northern portion of the British lines. The central bastion, the Arras position, was held by the British Third Army. To the south of it lay the Third Army. To the south of it lay the Fifth Army, weakest of all on its extended line. When surmise of the German plans in the Cambrai-St. Quentin sector settled into a certainty—as evidence grew pointing to that locality as the chief scene of enormous German labour in mounting battle preliminaries—the strain became painful. Everything that could be done was done in the organisation of depth in defence. This was the rule along the whole British line. As each new morning dawned in March there was only one question on everybody's lips: Has it come yet?

### THE AUSTRALIANS.

While many training divisions were held in England, the bulk of the British force in the field lay in the north and about Arras. For days before March 21, every Australian soldier could have told you that orders were ready for a march south to the Somme again. No division in the army would escape the fight that was coming. The period of waiting became almost intolerable. When the first news came on the great day, the half of the Australian Corps in the line at Messines itched to be relieved. The other half, at rest behind the lines, was already packing up. Some officers went and packed as soon as they read the first news bulletin. Divisional staffs began cornering lorries. They knew what the coming orders would be as well as if they had written them themselves. And none who lived through that electric time will ever forget the high enthusiasm of the Australian march south by rail and road and on foot, or the singing Digger columns, decked with dust, and answering cheer for cheer with the inhabitants of a dozen familiar French villages on the old rolling down country of the Somme, known to them like home. To those veteran battalions, made veterans in this place, the very sight of the landscape sent their moral soaring; and the villagers' cries of "Vive les Australiens!" fired the spirits of the weariest. The arrival in advance of the 4th and 3rd Australian Divisions in the farmlands behind Herbuterne and Albert seemed less the approach of reinforcements into a doubtful battle than a triumph after great victory. French civilians preparing to move, unloaded their carts and stayed. "Fight the Boche, Madame?" said one Australian officer. "We are going to eat him!"

### THE FIFTH ARMY'S TASK.

The diggers' indomitable confidence was borne out in many a stiff fight thereafter, but at the time it led to occasional reflections upon the fight of the Fifth Army during the five or six days before the Australians arrived on the scene. Because here and there some of that prejudice lingers, it is only right to say that the first hasty judgment was cruelly unjust to a number of heroic British divisions, and a South African brigade, that fought to the limit of human endeavour. Under the blow they sustained the thinly-held front at Cambrai and St. Quentin had eventually either to break or to bend. Some stigma was attached to General Gough, who commanded the Fifth Army; but his dispositions and his directions in that week of fate have been since weighed in the balance and found not

wanting, and what judgment of the army he suffered was based chiefly upon earlier criticism of his conduct of operations in the Ypres salient of 1917. The acid question to be put to Australian critics of the Fifth Army in March, 1918 is—"What would the Australian Corps have done if it had had to hold that St. Quentin sector as the British had to hold it?"

The Fifth Army's defence has been contrasted with that of Byng's Third Army at Arras, which on March 28 and 29 withstood the shock of a full-dress German assault of great ferocity and budged not an inch. Yet here again criticism fails before the facts. On March 21 the Fifth Army, holding 41 miles of front with only 14 infantry divisions and 3 cavalry divisions (which together about equalled another division of infantry), had to meet the onslaught of 46 massed German divisions. The Third Army on March 28 held 26 miles of front with 19 divisions, and was opposed by 24 enemy divisions. Gough held a front more than half as long again as Byng's, and was outnumbered more than three to one by an enemy confident of success. Byng was attacked by a force only a little greater than his own, and by an enemy already aware that his blow was being parried.

### WHY NO RESERVES?

Why was the Fifth Army left without help for so long, without reserves? Why, when the place and finally the date of the attack had been read by Intelligence with complete accuracy, was there no arrangement for supporting the weak defending force against repeated blows? Was the Fifth Army meant to be sacrificed? These questions, bewildering at the time, or immediately after the German blow had spent itself, have been answered since. Colonel Boraston, of British G.H.Q., has written ("Nineteenth Century," October, 1920):—

The British Commander-in-Chief and his General Staff had formed the opinion that the most likely front against which the blow would be directed was the point of junction of the French and British armies, and with this conviction uppermost in his mind the Commander-in-Chief paid more than one visit to the French Grand Quartier General at Compeigne during the winter months of 1917-18.

It can hardly be suggested, then, that the attack was not expected by the British, or that its front was not known with a very considerable degree of accuracy. . . . The discussions with the French had led to definite arrangements for mutual assistance in the case of attack. These arrangements provided specifically for the action to be taken by the French in the event of an attack such as that which was actually delivered on the British on March 21. Plans for mutual assistance between Allied commanders may be excellent, but it is their execution at the right moment that always presents the real difficulty. If the French command could have been convinced of the accuracy of the British forecast of events, a detachment of six French divisions should have been ready on March 21 to take over instantly the right wing of the British army. The warning had been ample. Had these divisions been there, or even in the neighbourhood, there would have been every chance that with their help the Fifth Army front would have sustained the German attack as successfully as did that of the Third Army.

Unfortunately the French Higher Command were persuaded that a great attack was imminent on the Laon-Rheims front, and that the anticipated assault upon the British, if it took place, would prove to be a diversion. They persisted in this belief even after the attack had begun. . . . In consequence the plan for moving up the French reserve group of divisions was not carried out as agreed. When the French reserves did begin to arrive, they came in, many of them, without their guns, without their cookers, and short of ammunition.

Does not this convey a picture of the Fifth Army's fight as a tragedy rather than a defeat? And does not imagination seize an impression of the bitter trial of Gough and of Haig before so dreadful a misunderstanding in an hour of fate? No wonder that on Sunday, March 24, Haig urgently represented the necessity for one supreme command for the Allied armies!

As for the Fifth Army's fight in the fog (which probably helped them) the record stands for all to read of how in Maxse's 18th Corps eight battalions fought to the last in the front zone of the battle and of their numbers only 50 men returned; how the 36th (Ulster) Division repulsed several attacks on their redoubts, and the Inniskilling Fusiliers and the Royal Irish Rifles stood their ground till they were annihilated, save for two tiny parties which cut their way back; how of the 14th Division, when, at length, retreat was ordered, only three battalions could muster more than a hundred each; how the 58th Division, outnumbered, outflanked, and decimated by four German divisions, fought its gallant rearguard action towards the French supports, which seemed never to be going to arrive; and the epic defence of the left flank and part of Byng's right against the assault of Marwitz's army at Cambrai. The retreat of the Fifth Army after the first day was by order; it was directed to fight a rearguard action to avoid a break through until newly-arranged reinforcements could arrive. The Australians about a week later saw only the shattered remnants of an army, which the event proved to have sacrificed itself not in vain.

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## CRISIS OF 1918.

### March Anniversary.

#### HAIG DENIED HIS DUE.

(BY F.M.C.)

"They fought. In those dark and fateful days of March and April, in 1918, the men of Gough's Army fought as a British Army has seldom fought or been called upon to fight. And when the German avalanche bore down upon them they fell back, fighting still, and their dead remain as their memorial. Day followed day, each one a sleepless nightmare, and men knew not the meaning of respite. But the line held. Such breaks as occurred were patched up again by men long exhausted, who called upon themselves for yet another miracle of endurance, and the Germans never broke through. Students of the war are still asking why.

"And because brave men did all this, because at the cost of their lives they redeemed the folly of a politician, that same politician repaid his debt by saying, in effect: 'They ran away.' The Germans, and they should know, did not support this calumny either at the time or afterwards. On the contrary, they paid their tribute to the resistance offered them, and Hindenburg himself even went out of his way to assure a bunch of dejected British officers gathered in front of St. Quentin on the morning of March 21 that they had no cause for feeling ashamed of themselves. He called them 'gentlemen,' too, a courtesy omitted by the gallant politician."

So Mr. Charles R. Benstead in his recent story called "Retreat" of the epic struggle of the Fifth Army. The closing 10 days of March and the opening days of April of 1918 marked for one fortnight the most intensely dramatic period of the war. Nothing is more certain that in the years to come British literature will be enriched by the efforts of poets and dramatists, understanding at last, to record the heroic colours of that great drama.

For long during the war concerted propaganda in France, subsidised from Germany, sought to belittle the efforts of the British Army. The censorship of the time made it impossible for truth to overtake the innuendos, the misrepresentations, the injustices done to British soldiers, even by their own Prime Minister. The chief of those soldiers so to suffer was their Commander-in-Chief, Sir Douglas Haig. Earl Haig went to his grave in silence on these facts. He was ever a silent man. But he left in trust with the British Museum, sealed for a long term of years, his personal papers and records. Gradually some of the truth is being revealed beyond the limited circle of Haig's immediate staff, and the truth is not to be mistaken. Mr. Lloyd George, so far from winning the war, went perilously near to ruining the British Army in the field by compromising Haig's direction of operations. The late Marshal Foch has enjoyed a reputation a little enhanced because Haig's was shorn of the recognition due to him.

General Charteris, till the last few months of the war Chief of Intelligence on Haig's staff, has lately written a record of Haig's military career, most of which was intimately wrapped up with his own. Charteris amply reinforces all that Dewar and Boraston wrote in their detailed study of "Sir Douglas Haig's Command" some year ago, and the diaries and memoirs of Sir Henry Wilson and Sir William Robertson provide confirmatory evidence. Former restraint in references to the political interference which nearly broke the Allies has been gradually disappearing, and Charteris is most outspoken. He shows that in February, 1917, at the Calais Conference, Haig was deprived by Lloyd George of a voice in Allied strategy, Lloyd George preferring Nivelle; and when Nivelle failed and mutiny put the French Army out of action (offensive action) for the remainder of 1917, the Allies relied on Haig and Haig alone to retrieve the position. Haig's Passchendaele offensive was thus delayed; it had to be maintained in order to save the French; and the price in blood paid by the British Army was anybody's fault but Haig's.

#### THE GERMAN ATTACK.

Again in January and February, 1918, Haig warned the French and Lloyd George of the blow that was about to fall on the British. Reinforcements were denied him. "Much of the loss and anxiety in March, 1918," writes Charteris, "can be directly and fairly attributed to the decision of the British Prime Minister to retain in Britain troops destined

for Palestine while so desperately needed in France." Haig defined the exact time, place, and weight of the German attack on March 21. He was right, but once more he was overruled by the politicians. Lloyd George refused to send reserves from Britain. Haig could only urge the Fifth Army on its thinly-held front to do its utmost, and arrange with the French Commander-in-Chief, Petain, for mutual aid against the German blow accordingly as it should fall (this to meet Petain's objection) on the British side of the Allied junction or the French. For Petain also would not believe that the Germans would attack at St. Quentin; he held that the blow would come near Reims.

Ludendorff's plan, with the assault of 90 German divisions which he threw in against the Third and Fifth British Armies, was—(1) to seize the Somme crossings below Peronne; (2) to extend the attack, to open up elbow room, in order to bring his right flank for deployment opposite a line between Amiens and Albert; and (3) to maintain then a defensive flank against the south (the French side), and to continue the main attack northward between Amiens and Lens. This included the frontal attack on Arras. Haig correctly judged this. He ordered the Australians and the New Zealand division to Doullens, with the object of concentrating for a counter attack. The Fifth Army, yielding ground as it had to, was still well in hand on March 23, and on that day Haig sent to the French to request French participation, according to the arrangement. How did the French act?

#### FAILURE OF THE FRENCH.

Three French divisions came up on March 23 to relieve the exhausted British divisions, which had fought without reserves against overwhelming numbers for three days. These French divisions took till the following day to deploy, they carried only 50 rounds of ammunition per man, and they had no artillery. Other French troops arrived on March 24, the local French army commander took over command of the sector (including the right wing troops of the Fifth French Army), and on that same day the French ordered a retreat of these troops, both British and French, towards Paris, thus opening the gap between the Allied armies. To their eternal credit, two decimated British divisions, the 20th and the 30th, refused to obey the French orders, and fell back, not south-westward, but westward, in order to maintain touch with their own people. It was this alarming order of Petain's which moved Haig as soon as he heard of it to request the British Chief of Staff at the War Office to come to France at once to secure appointment as Allied Generalissimo of Foch, the one Frenchman who, as Haig knew, agreed with him that the Allied armies must not be separated, whatever the feelings about Paris. The ragged Fifth Army, sleepless for a week, without succour or even temporary relief, held its line somehow unbroken until the interposition of two Australian divisions astride the Somme enabled it to be withdrawn.

It is clear that the behaviour of the French on March 24 played Ludendorff's game for him completely. He was, however, defeated by the doggedness of the remnants of the Fifth Army even in the disaster that overwhelmed that army, by the fine defence of the Third Army on its left, and by the repulse with great slaughter by Horne's First Army of the German attack on Arras on March 28. The men who wrecked the Fifth Army were not Haig and Gough, but Lloyd George and his Supreme War Council in Paris. They interfered no more after that date.

#### FOCH'S DEBTS TO HAIG.

Foch's local counter-attack near Soissons on July 17 marked the beginning of the end, but the real blow, and the plan, was Haig's, when the Australians and Canadians attacked at Villers Bretonneux on August 8. Foch, delighted with that victory, urged Haig to press on with that effort, but Haig declined. In a stormy interview with Foch he insisted on his own strategy to extend the attack north of Bapaume, and thereby cut in behind the old Somme battlefield. Events proved him entirely right. Even at the end of August Foch proposed only to prepare for a final Allied offensive in 1919. The Lloyd George War Cabinet believed that the Germans could not be broken till 1919 or even 1920. The strategic nature of the German front required the vital attacks upon their communications to be laid in the north (i.e., on the British front). Haig declared that the Hindenburg line could be broken immediately and peace obtained in 1918. With the British Cabinet against him, warned from London that he was "ridiculously optimistic," he took the whole responsibility and won the victory. For this final Allied effort, which drove the Germans to an armistice, Haig persuaded Foch to alter his plans for the whole western front, and Foch later admitted his indebtedness to the British Commander-in-Chief.

But Mr. Lloyd George? Sir George Arthur records that a proposal after the Armistice of the British Prime Minister, to relegate Haig to a subordinate position in the London welcome to Marshal Foch, was frustrated by the intervention of the King, and it was then arranged that Haig should have a separate reception.

Sm Herald  
22/3/30.

TELEPHONE Nos.  
F 2597.  
F 2598.

*H.N. March Young 1918*  
**COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.**

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS  
"AUSWARMUSE."

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO  
"THE DIRECTOR."

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE  
12/4/10.  
No. ....

"They gave their lives. For that public gift they received a praise which never ages and a tomb most glorious—not so much the tomb in which they lie, but that in which their fame survives, to be remembered for ever when occasion comes for word or deed . . . . ."

**AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL.**

POST OFFICE BOX 214 D,  
EXHIBITION BUILDINGS, MELBOURNE.

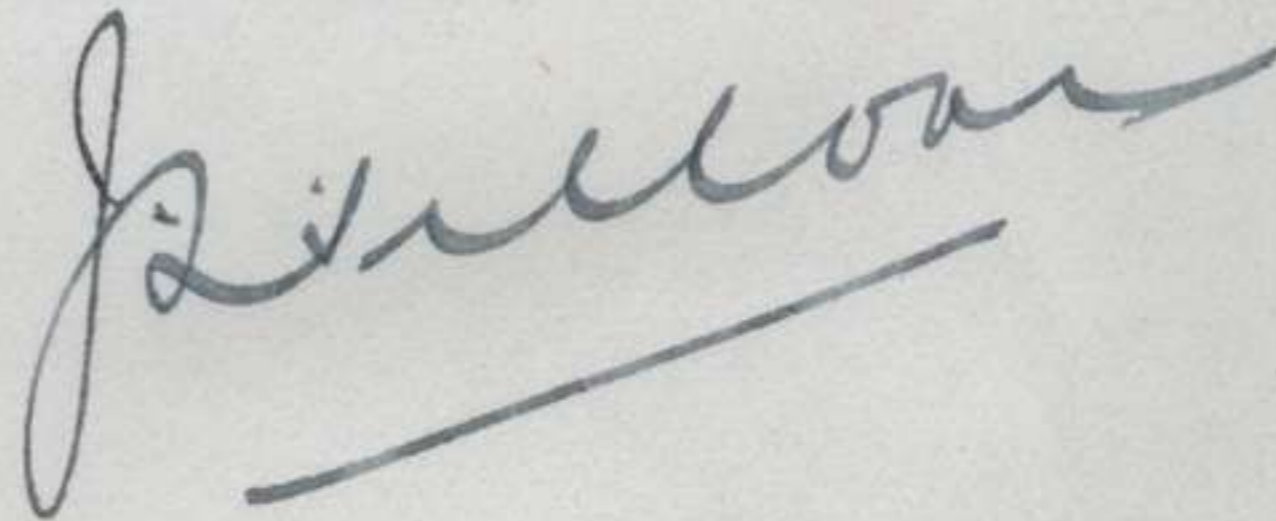
24th May, 1930.

Dear Mr. Bazley,

"Who won the War".

You will be interested in the attached photostat copies of cuttings from the London "Evening Standard" of the 21st March and 5th April 1929, together with copy of correspondence between General Monash and Sir Granville Ryrie. These copies may be retained if you so desire.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. A. W. Bazley,  
c/o Official Historian,  
Victoria Barracks,  
PADDINGTON, NSW.

C o p y.

8th April, 1929.

PERSONAL

My dear Ryrie,

A cablegram appeared in this morning's "Argus", dated London April 6th, giving extracts from an article published in the London "Evening Standard", probably on April 6th or a day or two preceding that date, by Colonel Lionel James, war correspondent, in which he attributes to Marshal Foch some very interesting, pregnant and significant statements made by him to Earl Haig, regarding the concluding battles of the war.

As the Australian Army Corps in France took a paramount part in these very battles, I should esteem it a favour if you could procure for me and let me have a copy of the "Evening Standard" in question, giving the full text of Colonel James' article.

If further confirmation of the statements attributed to Marshal Foch can be obtained from other sources, such information would afford very valuable material for the Australian War History, as it would tend definitely to establish the predominant share which the Australians took in bringing the war to a conclusion in 1918.

This matter seems, therefore, one in which I am justified in enlisting your kind co-operation.

Trusting all is well with you, and with kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

(sgd.) JOHN MONASH.

---

13th May, 1929.

Dear Mr. Dixon,

In a letter to the High Commissioner received this morning General Sir John Monash refers to an article that appeared in the "Evening Standard" at the beginning of April by Colonel Lionel James, a war correspondent, in which he attributes to Marshal Foch, some interesting statements made by him to Earl Haig regarding the concluding battles of the war. I do not remember seeing this article but I will obtain a copy from the "Evening Standard's" offices.

My reason for writing you is that General Monash is anxious to know if further confirmation of the statements attributed to Marshal Foch can be obtained from other sources. If you can enlighten me in this regard I shall be very grateful.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd.-) R. MAXWELL.

---

2. (Copy)

14th May, 1929.

Dear Maxwell,

Your letter RM/SD of 13th May reference articles in "Evening Standard". I have looked at them. I asked General Edmonds who has read the late Earl Haig's Diaries which however stop at 31st October 1918. We have no confirmation of the statements in our records here.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd.) E.A. DIXON.

---

16th May, 1929.

My dear Monash,

I received your letter of the 8th April and as requested I am sending you herewith the article from the "Evening Standard" by Colonel Lionel James, which appeared in the "Evening Standard" on the same subject.

I have been in touch with the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence and the Secretary informed me that they have no confirmation of the statements in their records. Should I come across anything further on the subject I will let you know.

With kind regard,

Yours sincerely,

(sgd.) GRANVILLE RYRIE.

---

17th May, 1929.

Dear Maxwell,

Further to your RM/SD of 13th May and my reply. General Edmonds asked Sir H.A. Lawrence, whom you will remember was Chief of the General Staff in 1918. Please see his reply attached.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd.) E. A. DIXON.

---

Extract from letter received from General Hon.  
Sir H. A. Lawrence, dated 16th May, 1929.

---

I have no note of anything that took place at our first meeting with Foch after the Armistice. All I remember is that Foch was extremely cordial and used some such expression in reply to D.H.'s congratulations as "Well I owe you and your armies more than I can say".

---

3. (Copy)

21st May, 1929.

Dear Dixon,

Thanks for your letter of the 14th and 17th instant in regard to the Statements made by Colonel Lionel James in the article in the "Evening Standard". I have passed on the information to General Monash. The extract from the letter from General Lawrence is interesting and General Monash, I am sure, will be glad to have it.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd.) R. MAXWELL.

---

21st May, 1929.

My dear Monash,

Further to my letter of the 16th instant, I have just received from the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence the enclosed extract from a letter received by General Edmonds from General the Hon. H. A. Lawrence which may be of interest to you.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) GRANVILLE  
RYRIE.

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# HOW FOCH FOUGHT PRIVATE JEALOUSIES.

By COL. LIONEL JAMES, C.B.E., D.S.O.

**F**IELD-MARSHAL FOCH, Marshal of France, was the great Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in France in 1918, when they overthrew the remaining energy of the German Empire.

Seventy-eight years ago there was born to a superior bourgeois family in a drab little house, in a drab little square, in the drab little provincial town of Tarbes, in the Pyrenees, an infant who was destined to rank with the long list of distinguished Marshals of France and to command armies in the field the like of which neither they nor any of the makers of France's glorious military history had ever dreamed. Three million men, of whom close upon a million were of the British race. It was enough to make the Emperor Napoleon turn in his grave!

The curious part of this great development of the "Wheel of Chance" is that, beyond being a studious youth, the great Marshal showed little promise for the wonderful career that was to be his. He was educated at Metz. It was fortunate that his parents selected the Alsatian Province, for it had much to do in the shaping

every ounce of his energy to create the Expeditionary Force that his friend Foch had convinced him was essential.

We have it from Wilson's diary how, responsive to Foch's inspirations, he worked at "conversations" before the two General Staffs, and how, avoiding the suspicion of the politicals, a British Expeditionary Force was fashioned that would be instantly mobile, and also a *liaison* between the directing soldiers of each radius was placed upon the only possible basis that could be developed into successful co-operation. We owe this to the little-known Foch's influence upon the Operations Section of our own War Department.

Then the blow fell almost exactly as Foch had foretold it. It found Foch in command of the 13th French Division, but he was, of course, destined for higher things. We now know that, although Foch's strategical teachings were right, the tactical handling of the modern battle adopted by the French *Etat-Major* was wrong.

The battle of Charleroi and the Meuse might well have lost the war in the prodigality with which the flower of France's manhood was hurled into the charnel house. In this Foch was only a subordinate. But doubtless his preconceived tactical convictions were modified, and his conduct of his portion of the subsequent battle of the Marne on the immediate right of the B.E.F. was masterly.

## The Victim of "Personal Influences."

France is a difficult country in which to be a man of the moment, unless everything is moving rapidly to a successful issue. Political and personal influences rend and warp directive judgment. Private jealousies pervert altruistic decisions. Foch succumbed to a series of these stresses. Politicians whose perspective was that which their mediocrity described saw other Alexanders amongst the French generals.

Joffre, who had completed, if he had not entirely designed, the great battle of the Marne, which really enabled the Allies to win the war, was thrown over and replaced by Nivelle, the latter to be succeeded by Pétain. But Foch's influence was not dead, and through these trying experiments in High Command the *liaison* with the British held firm. This was the marvel of the war.

Then came the momentous crisis in the spring of 1918. The French Army was exhausted. It had been wrung with the tribulations of the three years of struggle. Charleroi, Notre Dame de Lorette, Verdun, and the Chemin-des-Dames had bled it white. It had mutinied to an alarming degree. Then came the great German effort in March. The British Fifth Army was bent back fifty miles and was in dire distress.

Pétain had promised in this event a counter attack with six French Divisions. Not a single French soldier was moved. Lord Haig was in despair. He reported to the Prime Minister that the war was lost unless there were a unified Command of the Allied Armies. He suggested Foch, who at the time was employed in that curious development of an independent War Council at Versailles.

## Not in Agreement with Haig's Design.

The Allied situation was desperate when Foch accepted this responsibility. The enemy was knocking at the door at Amiens, and was developing another massed attack upon the British on the Lys. The American reinforcements were arriving: but were as yet raw as soldiers and inexperienced in staff duties. But Foch, in the château where he had established his H.Q., was unperturbed. He viewed the situation calmly.

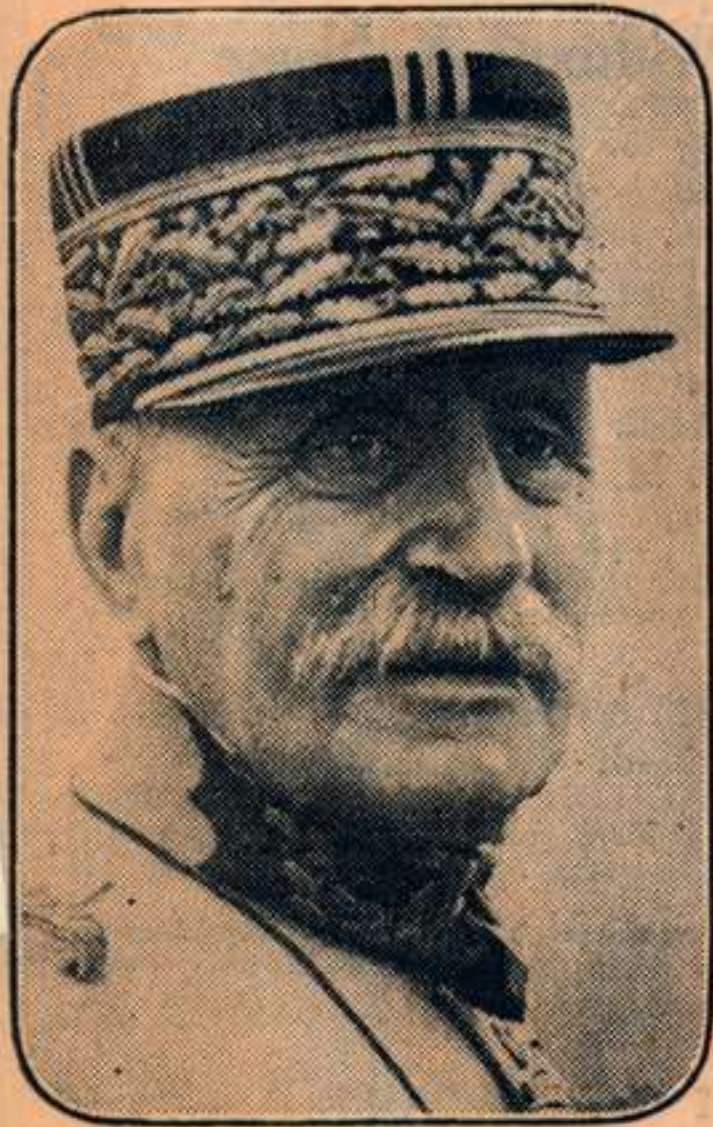
He chose, with infinite taste considering the delicacy of his supreme powers, to control by what he called "directives." These were orders issued in the form of advice. The scheme worked well, and Foch was able within a week of taking up his new office to say of the enemy: "Villers Bretonneux, oui—Amiens, jamais."

Then followed the stupendous battling in the north—the epic struggle for Mont Kemell. Fresh French divisions marched up from the South, tired British divisions trained down to the Chemin-des-Dames. The Allied Armies for the first time were *one* Army. In May the Germans' efforts were spent. They had played their last card, but Foch, as the supreme director of the defence, had "trumped it," and the "rubber" was won.

It remained now to win "the game." The Americans were coming in their thousands, and the first arrivals had been trained into efficient soldiers. Foch issued his "directives," but there was no arrogance in his sway. He consulted his Allied Commanders as *confères* rather than as their superior. He set them their own portions to develop as they opined their own troops would do them best!

With the design of the great battles with which the British Commander-in-Chief finished the war it is only fair to say that Foch and the French *Etat-Major* were not in agreement, but Foch was wise enough to realise that there were two points of view. His admiration for Haig's genius governed his decision, and when that decision proved right, Foch, the *generosissimo*, was the first to congratulate his British *confère*, and to say that "his conception and development of the final operations would go down to history, in all time, as classics of how a modern victory was conceived and gained!"

[Mr. Compton Mackenzie's article in the Eternal Punishment series will appear to-morrow.]



MARSHAL

of his mind for the future. Foch was just too young to bear arms in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, but he was old enough to appreciate the humiliation of France, and this appreciation influenced the whole of his military career.

From the day he entered the Military Academy the art of war, in view of its many and increasing developments, engrossed the whole of his time. His actual regimental service was normal, but his military knowledge and his philosophical application of this knowledge brought him into the front rank of thinking officers of the French army, and he was in due course appointed Commandant of the French equivalent of our Staff College. He had given to the world two military treatises, one "The Principles of War," the other "The Conduct of War." Both these works are of outstanding merit, and were usually placed on the bookshelf of the military student beside those of Clausewitz and Jomini.

Foch was a British Field-Marshal, and our interest in his life must take a personal touch. It was while Foch was Commandant of the *Ecole Supérieure de la Guerre* that he first came into touch with the late Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson.

## Preparations for "The Day."

Wilson had read Foch's works and Staff College appreciations and lectures, and largely through them was possessed of the view that Germany was developing her naval and military strength with one object—and one object only.

During one of his many visits to the Franco-German frontier Wilson came into personal touch with Foch, and then, as the heads of the same educational establishments in their respective countries, official acquaintance ripened into a close admiration and friendship.

In 1911 Sir Henry showed the writer a memorandum he had adapted from one of Foch's appreciations which forecast the actual German plan of invasion of France with an accuracy that was complete in nearly every detail.

Foch saw the necessity of British co-operation when Germany should select the day. His fear was that, though Britain might be navally prepared, yet her military effort might be too late. Although Foch did not anticipate, or hope for, an early British contribution to the campaign in deciding strength, yet he knew the moral value that a British Expeditionary Force, fighting on French soil, would bring to his own country: and he justly appreciated that the British Navy was an essential to France's success.

Wilson went from Camberley to be Sub-Chief of the Operations Section of the War Office, and from the moment he took charge of that department he devoted every hour of his time and



Evening Standard

6/11/29

## 'The British Army Saved Us All.'

From COLONEL  
LIONEL JAMES  
C.B.E., D.S.O.

### WHAT FOCH TOLD HAIG AFTER THE ARMISTICE.

To the Editor of the "Evening Standard."  
SIR,—Mr. Robert Duché takes me to task with regard to the statement made under my signature in my appreciation of Marshal Foch in the "Evening Standard" concerning Petain's failure to carry out his engagement to counter-attack the German left flank with six divisions between the dates of March 21 and March 26, 1918.

Mr. Duché contends that 42 French divisions were *massed* to our assistance between March 21 and April 3. I do not profess to know what he means by the expression "*were massed*." But the promised counter-attack by six French divisions in a given area within a given period did not materialise, and this failure went within a hair's breadth of losing the whole war for the Allies. Good, however, came out of evil.

This breach of faith on the part of Petain was the real reason of Foch's appointment to the Supreme Command.

It was not because the British Fifth Army had failed. It was because the French Chief Command failed. At British G.H.Q. it was known that the Germans would attack on the Somme. It was also known, approximately, in what strength this attack would be made; it was just as well known that the Fifth Army, in face of it, must give ground. Hence the arrangement with Petain that, when we were forced back, he should counter-attack the German exposed flank with the promised six divisions.

Did the French move? Not an inch: not a man.

Lord Haig saw the impending disaster that the failure of this guaranteed co-operation implied, and he sent that famous message to the British Prime Minister that unless a Generalissimo were appointed we were about to lose the war. It was only after Foch assumed the chief direction that the French were induced to move from wherever or in what numbers their divisions "*were massed*."

These are historical facts, and do not admit of argument. But as they were at the time General Staff secrets, their true purport was not available for publication.

There are other facts concerning the war which were at the time obscured, but which it would be well at this moment to place before the public. At the beginning of August, 1918, the French Army was almost completely exhausted as a fighting force. The Americans were a vigorous rabble. *The British Army was the only force on the Western Front that was a real fighting instrument.* Foch was generous in his spontaneous praise of Haig's armies. At the first meeting between Foch and Haig after the Armistice, Foch's salute was:—

"My dear Marshal, your wonderful army has saved France, saved all of us; without you we were beaten."

A few days later when the details were better known, Foch said at the luncheon table at British G.H.Q.:—"The battles of your British Army will live through all time as classics of how great military operations should be conducted. Nothing has ever been seen like them in the history of all wars!"

Yours, etc., LIONEL JAMES.

## LORD MILNER AND THE UNIFIED COMMAND.

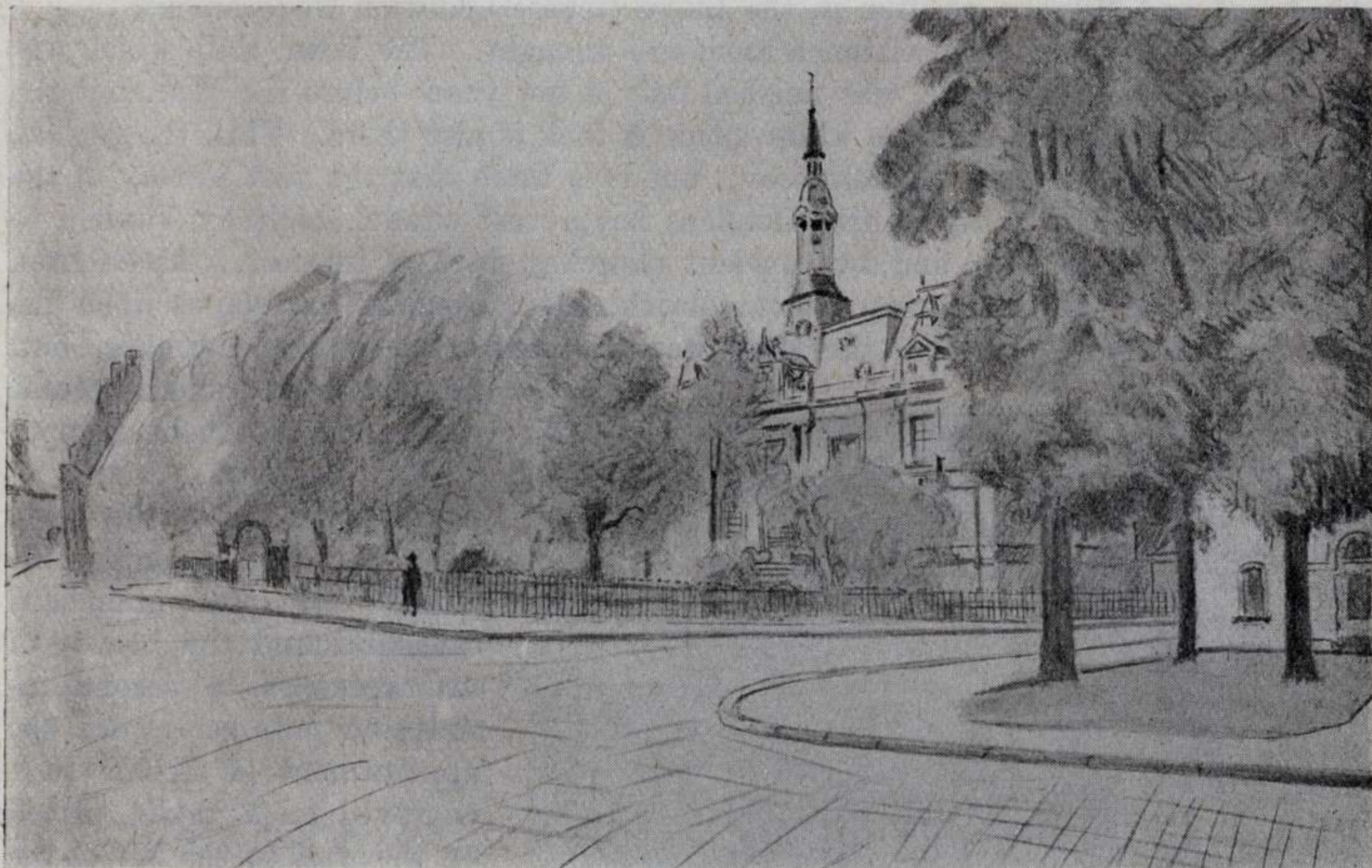
A Chapter in the History of the Great War.

By W. BASIL WORSFOLD.

. . . . a man prepared to take upon himself responsibility.

(*Goschen of Milner.*)

THE little town of Doullens lies some 20 miles north of Amiens, whence it can be reached by two hours of leisurely travel by rail. To all but a very few of even seasoned visitors to France it remains unknown. And yet it might well have won a place in the note-books of travellers before the Great War, by reason of the ancient buildings which recall its long and adventurous history, and the natural beauty of its site. But whatever caused it to be slighted in the past, to-day all excuse for further neglect has been removed by the accident which made it the scene of the determining decision of the War, and thereby of the greatest of the many services rendered by Alfred, Viscount Milner, to England and the Allied Cause. The true character of this decision is proclaimed with startling directness on the two unobtrusive tablets affixed to the iron gates of the Hôtel de Ville: but of Milner's part in it no hint is given.



*The Hôtel de Ville, Doullens.*

The contrast between the littleness of the iron tablets and the vast claim of the twin French and English inscriptions which they bear, is arresting. That on the right is in French:—

“ Dans cet Hôtel de Ville le 26 Mars 1918 les ALLIÉS ont confié le commandement unique du Front Occidental au GENERAL FOCH. Cette décision sauva la France et la liberté du monde.”

The English inscription, on the left, reads:—

“ In this town-hall, on the 26th of March, 1918, the ‘ Allies ’ entrusted General Foch with the supreme command on the Western Front. This decision saved France and the liberty of the world.”

It is necessary to have both before us; because the translator of the French inscription evaded the need of correcting a historically inexact term by quoting instead of translating the word "Alliés." In point of fact the only government represented at the Doullens Conference was the French. There were only two signatures to the document which put Foch then and there in supreme control of the Allied armies from the North Sea to Switzerland—those of Clemenceau and Milner. The former as Prime Minister (with the President of the Republic, Poincaré, in the chair) was fully empowered to act for France. Milner had no specific authority to represent the British Government. In his assumption of this authority lies the greatness of his action. Where another man would have referred home for instructions, and lost what was in all probability the one opportunity of retrieving the disaster of the German break-through, he took the responsibility of immediately committing his government, and thereby, within the narrow margin of a few hours, saved the Allies from incalculable disasters.

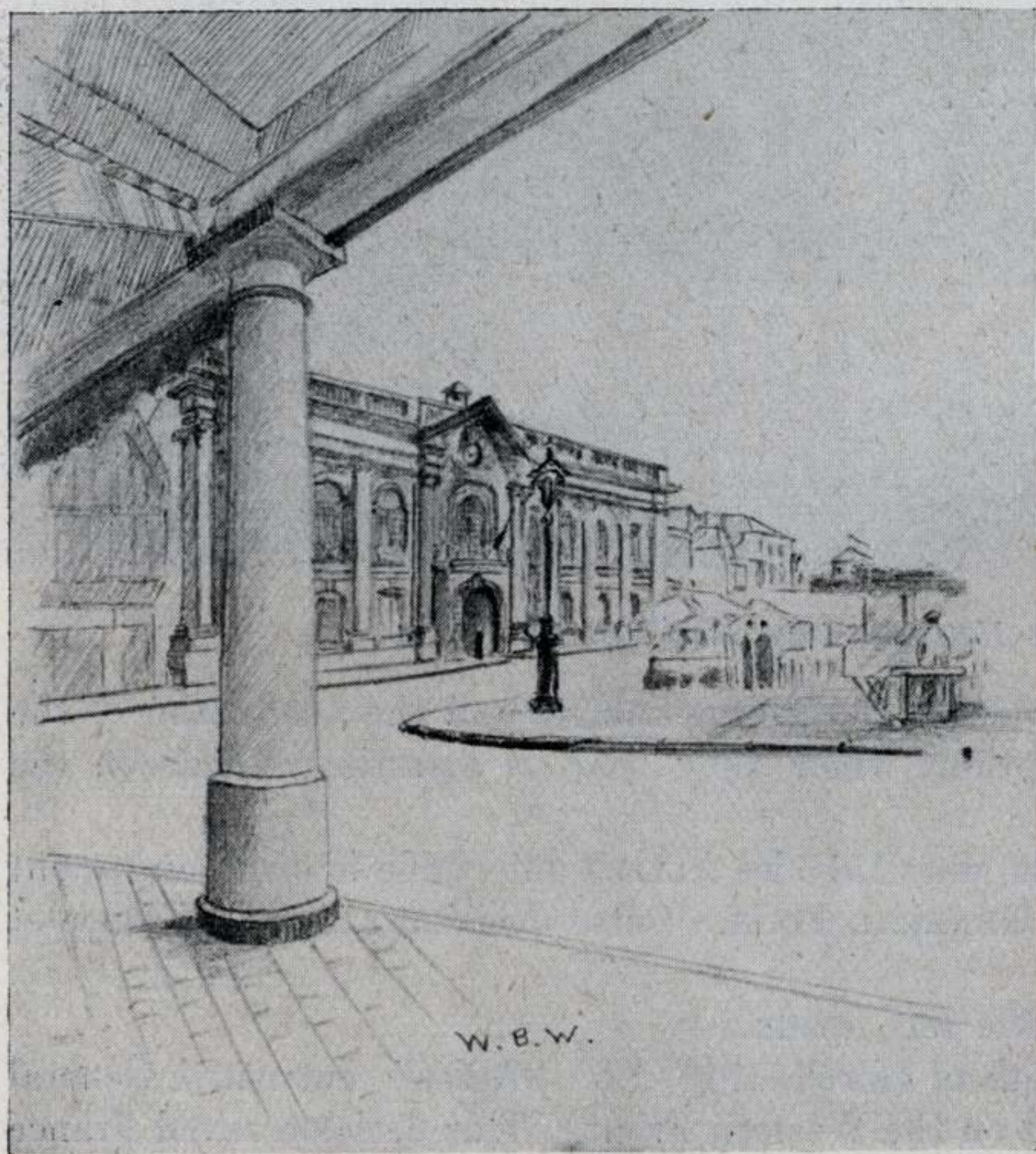
How one man's resolution saved England, the British Empire, and Western civilization, is the modern story of Doullens. To tell it, we must go back to the closing months of 1917, and recall both the military situation of the Allies as it had then developed and Milner's position in the Lloyd George Coalition Government.

But first, Doullens itself claims a moment's thought. The Town Hall, which was the scene of the Conference, was finished only a few years before the War, but the venerable and historic building whose place it took is also there. This, the *Beffroi*, is now dedicated to more humble uses; but it is there that the past history of the town centres. Besides its *Beffroi* Doullens has a vast citadel, built by Vauban to the order of Louis XIV, and two ancient churches, both of interest. Apart from the memory of the Conference of 26th March, 1918, Doullens has claims upon the traveller. In the Great War the town was occupied twice by the Germans, but, happily, both it and its people escaped from serious injury.

At Beauvais, south of Amiens, and known the world over for the incomparable Gothic of its unfinished cathedral and the beauty of its tapestries, a second inscription puts on record the appointment of Foch. It is engraved on a tablet placed on the wall to the left of the principal staircase of the fine 18th century Town Hall:—

"Le 3 avril 1918 Les Représentants des Gouvernements Américain, Britannique et Français, Général Bliss, Mr. Lloyd George et Mr. Clemenceau, ont, dans cet Hôtel de Ville, confié au Général Foch le commandement suprême des Armées Alliés.

A cette réunion assistaient



*The Hôtel de Ville, Beauvais.*

les commandants en chef des Armées, Général J. Pershing, Maréchal Sir D. Haig et le Général Pétain ainsi que le Lieutenant Général Sir H. Wilson, chef d'état-major général Impérial de l'armée Britannique, le Général Mordacq, chef de cabinet militaire du Président du Conseil Français, Ministre de la guerre, et le Général Weygand, chef d'état-major du Général Foch."

#### PART I.—THE PROBLEM.

In a cartoon in *Punch* of 13th March, 1918, TOMMY (off to the Front) says to a shipyard hand, "Well, so long, mate; we'll win the war all right, if you'll see that we don't lose it." And, in speaking, he points to a poster on which is printed: "The only thing that can rob us of VICTORY is a shortage of ships." The date was eight days before the German offensive began (21st March), and the cartoon, no doubt, faithfully reflected the belief of the great majority of the British people at the time in question. The War Cabinet and the War Office knew that the issue was not quite so simple; but their anxieties were hidden successfully from the Press and the public.

The position of the Allies on the Western Front at the beginning of 1918 was this. It was known, of course, that the Germans, heavily reinforced by the troops released from the Eastern Front by the collapse of Russia, were about to launch a great offensive, but precisely where, and when, the thrust of the spear-head would point could not be determined with equal certainty. For the first time since the combatant armies on this front had settled down into trench-warfare there was a numerical preponderance on the German side; and the only source—short of abandoning the campaigns of Salonika and Palestine—from which the adverse balance could be redressed was America. From its entry into the War in April of the preceding year the United States had set to work to build up from its civilian population a great army for service in Europe. But the process was necessarily lengthy, and although by that time many thousands of Americans had come to France for their final training and equipment, when the German offensive actually began there were only three divisions of American troops, with not a single aeroplane, in the fighting line.

In the face of the threatened offensive the French and British Governments and military staffs had not been idle. The disaster of Caporetto had enforced the recognized need for the concerted direction and control of the Allied armies operating against the Central Powers from the North Sea to the Balkans\*; and at the Rapallo Conference (9th November, 1917), a Supreme War Council (Conseil supérieur de guerre) had been constituted† for the purpose. The Council itself was composed of the Prime Ministers and one other representative of the several Allied Governments directly concerned; and there was attached to it a body of technical advisers, consisting of military representatives of the respective governments, which was to be in continuous session at Versailles. Thus from the end of November, 1917, a common military advisory body, composed of General Foch‡ (France), Sir Henry Wilson (England), General Cadorna (Italy), and General Bliss (U.S.A.) had been installed; and this body had applied itself to the problem of unity of command. In the meantime the Commanders-in-Chief and General Staffs of each Power remained, as before, separately responsible to their respective governments.

\* Since the summer of 1917 Mr. Lloyd George had been seeking a means of establishing the unified command on the Western Front, and a Cabinet Committee, set up for the purpose, had noted the significance in this connection of the relative failure of the separate British advance in Flanders with the heavy losses of Passchendaele. More than this, it had been recognized that if, as seemed inevitable, the holder of the unified command must be a Frenchman, the British Government must claim the right to select this Frenchman, in order that he might be a soldier acceptable to the British Army and its commanders.

† More accurately, the Council was constituted *in theory* at Rapallo. Nobody did anything until Sir Henry Wilson went over to Paris later in November, and by his own determination brought the decision into operation. Then a (second) session of the Council was held at Versailles on 1st December, 1917.

‡ Theoretically again, Foch was not on the military staff of Versailles, because it was not composed of Chiefs of Staff. But General Weygand (who was) was so intimately associated with Foch that it came to the same thing

On 30th January, 1918, the Supreme War Council again met at Versailles. At the end of four days' deliberations it had worked up to a decision, which, while not providing a unified command of the Armies in the field, did provide—what was next in importance to it—a unified control of the reserves. The authority set up to give effect to this decision was a Committee, of which Foch had been unanimously appointed President. Its duties were (1) after consultation with the several Commanders-in-Chief to form a general reserve available for reinforcing the French, Italian, or Balkan Fronts; and (2) to allocate the stations, and control the movements, of the divisions comprising it. For these purposes the several Commanders-in-Chief were to be required to put certain of their reserves under the control of the Committee, but any of the divisions thus detached were, on entering the fighting line, to pass back to the control of the Commander-in-Chief to whom they might be assigned.

This advance on the path of unity, achieved at the Versailles meeting, was due mainly to Sir Henry Wilson, who, as the organization of the Council proceeded, had changed his style from "British Military Adviser to the Supreme War Council," to "Permanent Military Representative, British Section, Supreme Council." In the course of the proceedings he showed that the Allied line could be held against the Germans, provided that the French and British reserves were treated as one. His contention was demonstrated to the British delegates by *Kriegspiel* and in two lectures, illustrated with diagrams,\* all of which greatly impressed Mr. Lloyd George. For reasons which he gave, the spear-head of the German offensive must be directed against one of two points. If the British were to be attacked, the thrust would come at a point on the Somme Front; if the French, at a point on the Champagne Front. In the event the calculations made by him and the British staff at Versailles proved to be astonishingly accurate.† Wilson's forecast of the divisions which Ludendorf could concentrate, was within one of the number—nearly a hundred—actually launched, and the place he predicted was within a mile of the point on the Somme Front at which the German spear-head was, in fact, thrust. The date, however, which he assigned for the offensive was considerably later than that at which it actually took place. In this respect the forecast of the British Headquarters Staff at Montreuil was the more accurate: since on 18th March—three days before the offensive began—the Director of Military Intelligence thought it certain that the attack would come before the end of the month.

It is a melancholy and disquieting fact that the advance towards unity of command, thus achieved mainly through one British soldier, Sir H. Wilson, was destined to be frustrated—again mainly and on perfectly intelligible, if not equally valid, grounds—by another British soldier, and this the British Commander-in-Chief, Sir Douglas Haig. Nor was Haig alone in his opposition to the Versailles plan. On 18th February, largely as a protest against an arrangement which did not give him a voice in the control of the reserves, Sir W. R. Robertson resigned his position as Chief of the Imperial General Staff. On the following day Mr. Lloyd George appointed Sir H. Wilson to succeed him. At the same time General (now Lord) Rawlinson took Wilson's place as the British Permanent Military Representative at Versailles.

The British forces held 125 miles of hotly engaged front, and in Haig's opinion they were barely sufficient in numbers adequately to defend it. On his return from the Versailles meeting of the Supreme Council he decided that to detach six or seven divisions from these inadequate forces, and hand them over to the Foch Committee, would not be consistent with his responsibility for the British Front. From the first

\* The problem was stated in one from the German point of view by Sir H. Wake and in the other from the Allied, by General Studd.

† So also were those of the G.H.Q., near Montreuil, where Gen. Sir Herbert Lawrence was Haig's Chief of Staff.

he made no secret of his inability to contribute to the general reserve, but he did not refuse officially to comply with the requirements of the Foch Committee until the end of February.\*

During the weeks that Haig was in this mind, Pétain, the French Commander-in-Chief, while professing to carry out the decision of the Supreme Council, did nothing. At the same time he suggested to Clemenceau—the French Prime Minister—with whom naturally he had much influence, that the whole scheme was impracticable. More than this, Pétain expressed the same views to Haig; and the two came to an understanding. They agreed that they could, and would, support each other in an emergency, and that this arrangement was much better than the Versailles scheme, under which they would be subject to the interference of Foch and his committee.

On the 14th and 15th March the Supreme Council met in London. Haig's attitude towards the Foch Committee had been viewed with anxiety by the War Cabinet, and the question of enforcing the authority of the Council, with a resultant change in the British command, had not been overlooked. At the same time the Cabinet had received the disturbing intelligence that under Pétain's influence M. Clemenceau, the French Prime Minister† and Minister for War, was withdrawing his support from the plan of a general reserve under the control of the Foch Committee. In these circumstances the British War Cabinet and their military adviser, Sir Henry Wilson, awaited the meeting of the Supreme War Council with grave concern; and from the account of it given in Wilson's diary we learn how completely these apprehensions were justified.‡ On 13th March, Milner, Wilson and Amery met and agreed that if Lloyd George, who was to see Haig at 10 a.m. on the following morning, "could not persuade Douglas Haig to contribute divisions to the General Reserve," then "the General Reserve and the Executive Board ought for the present to remain in abeyance."§ On the 14th (Lloyd George having failed meanwhile to persuade Haig) the Supreme Council met at 11.30 a.m. at 10, Downing Street. "Two hours talk of General Reserve, and no decision. Then adjournment for lunch," Wilson wrote. It was revealed, however, not only that Haig (who was there) and Pétain (who was in France) were in complete agreement in holding that everything necessary to counter the German offensive could be done by mutual arrangement between themselves, and the Versailles plan unnecessary, but that Clemenceau supported Pétain and the Haig-Pétain understanding.

To meet this situation the British representatives, seeing that it was hopeless in the face of Clemenceau's support of the two Commanders-in-Chief to attempt to enforce the authority of the Foch Committee, brought forward in the afternoon session a resolution embodying the conclusion reached by Milner, Wilson and Amery on the preceding day. "I lunched with Lloyd George and Hankey (Wilson continued), and, at lunch we drafted a resolution, afterwards adopted, to the effect that, to begin with, no divisions in France should be put in the General Reserve, but our five and the French six with a quota of Italians, all in Italy, should form the nucleus. Of course, in a sense this is nonsense, as it does not give us any General Reserve; but it does keep the main idea alive and it does save the position of the Executive Board. So

\* The account given in "Sir Douglas Haig's Command" (by G. A. B. Dewar and Lt.-Col. J. K. Boraston, 1922, Vol. II, page 56), of Haig's action and its effects is perfectly frank. "Could he feel confidence that such a committee would act and act quickly, its French and British and Italian and American members at complete accord, on an emergency? He could not, so he was unable to contribute to this general reserve. As a result, *the proposal perished.*" The "proposal," be it remembered, was the plan by which the Supreme War Council of the Allies proposed to counter the German offensive.

† *I.e.*, President of the Council of Ministers.

‡ "Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, Bart., G.C.B., D.S.O., His Life and Letters." By Major-General Sir C. E. Callwell, 2 vols., Cassell, 1927.

§ Vol. 2, page 69.

that on the whole I think it is our best course. Foch protested against this arrangement, but Clemenceau accepted it in the name of France.”\*

By this misbegotten resolution the opposition of Haig and Pétain was condoned, and the Foch Committee deprived of all authority to act in France : that is, to create and control the common reserve which Wilson and Foch held, and the British War Cabinet believed, to be the sole means by which the impending German offensive could be countered with success. Thus, within a week of the German offensive the Supreme War Council of the Allies had dissolved in impotency.

Here it must be noted that the attribution of the main responsibility for this deplorable result to Clemenceau's change of front on the general reserve question has been challenged by Marshal Foch. With reference to an article on the Doullens Conference published in *The Times* of 26th March, 1926, in which I had advanced the same view of M. Clemenceau's attitude at the London meeting of the Supreme Council, Marshal Foch was reported by *The Times* Paris correspondent (30th March, 1926) to have said : “ Marshal Pétain was not there, and it was not M. Clemenceau who supported him, but the British Government. ‘ M. Clemenceau,’ said Marshal Foch, ‘ simply accepted the British position.’ ” As the resolution in question was drafted and moved by the British representation, and only accepted by Clemenceau on behalf of the French Government, the official record of the proceedings of the London meeting of the Supreme Council (if, and when, made public) would probably support Marshal Foch in his contention. Whereas in fact it was Clemenceau's support of Pétain as against Foch, coming on the top of Haig's refusal to part with any of his divisions, that led the British representation to move the resolution as a device for saving something out of the wreck of the Versailles plan of a unified reserve. Foch, who was present, was, naturally, deeply chagrined ; but, when on the following day he presented a full and reasoned statement of his objections to the resolution, in which, as he asserted, the Supreme Council had reversed its own previous decision and thereby stultified itself, his protest was merely recorded and the discussion was not re-opened.

Returned to Paris, Foch, like Achilles, nursed his wrongs in moody silence. Clemenceau ceased to consult him. While remaining Chief of the French General Staff, and not removed officially from his presidency of what was intended to be the strategic executive of the defence, the foremost soldier of France in this all-important issue counted for nothing when Ludendorf launched his concentrated legions against the Allied lines.†

On this side the Channel, the British Government remained in its inconclusive conclusion that, in view of the imminence of the German offensive it could not insist upon the enforcement of the Versailles plan, since such action might, and probably would, involve a change in the British Command.

When—on 21st March—the German offensive came, and the British line was shattered where it joined the French, what Foch had told the Supreme Council at the London meeting would happen, did happen. The alternative plan, the understanding between Haig and Pétain, broke down. Pétain for two and a half days refused to believe that the attack on the Somme Front was the real thrust of the German spear-head. The great attack, he was convinced, was to come on the French Front in Champagne. Therefore, he would not move his reserves—except three very inferior divisions from the Vosges. And in the event the Germans reached the detraining stations of these three divisions before the divisions.

\* *Ibid.*, page 70.

† “ Marshal Foch at that moment had been practically eliminated from the direction of military affairs, in consequence of his disagreement with M. Clemenceau at the London meeting of the Supreme Council just before.” L.S.A. (Mr. Amery) in *The Times* of May 16th, 1925. And Mr. Amery, be it remembered, was *liaison* officer between the permanent staff of the Supreme War Council at Versailles and the British War Cabinet in London.

has Petain order to retire for as /  
 Suffer of his foot.?

NATIONALITY.	CAPTURED IN -					TOTAL.
	WESTERN FRONT.	INDIA.	CHINA.	AFRICA.	OTHER.	
GERMAN	3986	284	322	342	2	4936
AUSTRIAN	1012	26	16	16	1	1071
HUNGARIAN	23	-	-	-	-	23
SLAV	13	-	-	-	-	13
CHINA	10	-	-	-	-	10
TURK	2	1	-	2	-	5
SWISS	2	-	-	-	-	2
AMERICAN	4	2	-	-	-	6
RUSSIAN	4	-	-	-	-	4
CZECH	4	-	-	-	-	4
DUTCH	3	-	-	-	-	3
DANISH	3	-	-	-	-	3
BELGIAN	3	-	-	-	-	3
DAINAVIAN	2	-	-	-	-	2
POLISH	2	-	-	-	-	2
ALBANIAN	1	-	-	-	-	1
SCOTCH	1	-	-	-	-	1
NORWEGIAN	1	-	-	-	-	1
ITALIAN	1	-	-	-	-	1
UNKNOWN	2	-	-	-	-	2
BRITISH SUBJECTS -						
GERMAN	347	-	1	1	-	352
HUNGARIAN	108	-	-	-	-	108
AUSTRIAN	22	-	-	-	-	22



LIST SHOWING NUMBERS OF PRISONERS OF WAR INTERNED IN AUSTRALIA.

(a) MEN -

*1 no of interred was interred in  
S. Aust. and N. Aust.*

NATIONALITY.	CAPTURED IN -						TOTAL.
	AUSTRALIA; FORMER GERMAN POSSESSIONS IN PACIFIC; AND PACIFIC ISLANDS.	SINGA- PORE.	HONG KONG.	CEY- LON.	BOR- NEO.	FIJI.	
GERMAN	3986	284	322	342	9	9	4952
AUSTRIAN	1012	26	16	16	1	1	1072
HUNGARIAN	23	2	-	-	-	-	25
SLAV	13	-	-	-	-	-	13
CROAT	10	-	-	-	-	-	10
TURK	9	1	-	2	-	-	12
SWISS	5	-	-	-	-	-	5
AMERICAN	4	2	-	-	-	-	6
RUSSIAN	4	-	-	-	-	-	4
CZECH	4	-	-	-	-	-	4
DUTCH	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
DANISH	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
BELGIAN	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
DALMATIAN	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
POLISH	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
ALSACE LORRAINE	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
SCOTCH	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
NORWEGIAN	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
ITALIAN	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
UNKNOWN	5	-	-	-	-	-	5
NATURALIZED BRITISH SUBJECTS -							
GERMAN	347	-	-	1	1	16	365
BULGARIAN	108	-	-	-	-	-	108
AUSTRIAN	27	-	-	-	-	-	27

This was the monstrous tangle that Milner, suddenly, unexpectedly, and with no specific instructions to guide him, was sent to France to unravel. He did unravel it. When Pétain and Haig, each with a scrupulous regard to his own separate responsibilities, as nearly as possible lost the War, Milner saved it.

To understand his doings during his three days in France (24th–26th March), something must be said of his position in the Lloyd George Coalition Government, which had been formed in December, 1916, and was then in office. Milner was a member of the War Cabinet of Six, and for various reasons he, more perhaps than any other member of this virtual directorate of the British Empire, had been drawn into close contact with those soldiers and others who were especially concerned with the need for a better organization of the Allied forces and with the creation of the Supreme Council and its staff at Versailles. Of these, three in particular were intimate friends and associates; Sir Henry Wilson, since 19th February, Chief of the Imperial General Staff; Sir Maurice Hankey, the Secretary of the War Cabinet; and Mr. (Lt.-Col.) Amery, Assistant-Secretary of the War Cabinet. The last, after the Supreme War Council had been constituted in the previous November (1917), had been placed on the personal staff of the Secretary for War, and on the permanent staff of the Supreme Council at Versailles\* to act as a *liaison* between that body and the War Cabinet. To this must be added the circumstances that, directly after the outbreak of the War, Milner had handed over his country house, Sturry Court, near Canterbury, to the military authorities; and that later in the same year (1914) he had moved from the chambers at 47, Duke Street, St. James', which for so many years had been his London home,† to 17, Great College Street—a house under the shadow of Westminster Abbey, within a stone's throw from Downing Street and Whitehall.

Disquieting accounts of the German attack on the British Front, which was launched at 4.30 a.m. on Thursday, 21st March (1918), reached the Cabinet the same day; and still graver news followed on Friday. On Saturday, Milner was sixty-four; but on this 23rd of March he had scanty opportunities for birthday memories. First, his (official) secretary came from the War Cabinet offices in Whitehall Gardens with an ominous telegram from the Front, and warned him to be ready for an emergency Cabinet. Then, either at Whitehall Gardens or at Great College Street, he was "rung up" from Versailles by Mr. Amery. (The French were badly "rattled": could he come over?) After lunch he was called to 10, Downing Street, where he took part in an anxious discussion of the situation with the Prime Minister, Bonar Law, Sir Henry Wilson, Churchill and Smuts.‡ From Downing Street he crossed to the War Office with Wilson; and there from 5 to 6.30 the War Cabinet met. When the Cabinet was over Mr. Lloyd George left London for his house at Walton Heath, and Milner returned to Great College Street. Here, "after a late tea," he was rung up by the Prime Minister at Walton Heath. (Someone must go over, and find out what the position was. Would he go to Versailles to-morrow?) Milner at once agreed to go. He dined alone at Brooks'; and on his return to Great College Street heard the latest news from the Front by 'phone from Wilson. As Minister without portfolio, he was deeply engaged in the special work of the War Cabinet, and the re-arrangements which this sudden absence required kept him up until 2 o'clock (Summer-time, which came into force that morning).

The 24th was Palm Sunday. In London the joyous associations of the day were lost in the gloom of a military disaster, as overwhelming as it was unexpected and,

\* Since the War Mr. Amery has been successively Under-Secretary for the Colonies, First Lord of the Admiralty, and (as now) Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs and for the Colonies.

† He took his title (in part) from them—Milner of St. James' and Cape Town.

‡ For the measures immediately taken by Wilson and the Cabinet to meet the military crisis, see "Sir Henry Wilson, &c.," ii, page 74.

as yet, unintelligible. For the first time England felt the menace of a broken Front. Yet the churches were filled: for on that day many infrequent worshippers sought within their walls a respite from the harassing images which beset their minds. Some found hope, as well as rest. A Just God would not suffer the unjust to prevail. It was moments of peril like this that evoked the highest qualities of statesmen and captains of war. There might be such men, somewhere, even now emerging.

At the time the church-goers were dispersing, Milner, with Major Shawe of the Rifle Brigade in attendance, was taking his seat in the train for Folkestone. The hurried preparations in which he had spent the morning had been interrupted by conversations on the telephone with Mr. Lloyd George and by visitors—among the latter being General Smuts, a colleague in the War Cabinet of Six. But he had managed to catch the 12.50 at Charing Cross. There was some delay at Folkestone in arranging for his passage across the Channel, and it was half past six when he reached Boulogne. Here he found Mr. Amery (who had come from Versailles) waiting for him with two cars. They went straight to the (advanced) British Headquarters at Haig's House, Beaurepaire, near Montreuil. The Commander-in-Chief was away, but Milner saw General (J. H.) Davidson there, and they took on with them Brigadier-General Wake, who was on the staff of General Rawlinson, the permanent British military representative on the Supreme War Council,\* and bound like themselves for Versailles. From Wake, Milner learnt more of the immediate situation at the Front, and of the (as yet) unexplained break-down of the (British) Fifth Army.

At Abbeville, the Headquarters of the British Lines of Communication, the party stopped to dine. Then they resumed their journey. It was a moonlight night, but the driver lost his way after passing Pontoise, with the result that General Rawlinson's house at Versailles was not reached until half past two in the morning. Here Milner found a telegram from G.H.Q., dated 11.30 p.m., which said that the general situation had somewhat improved. He then went "dog-tired" to bed; but he was down again before eight the same morning (Monday, 25th March). He began the day by hearing all that Rawlinson and Wake could tell him of the military position. Then at 10, in response to a message from Clemenceau, he motored to Paris, taking Mr. Amery with him.

\* Rawlinson had succeeded Wilson, when on 19th February the latter became C.I.G.S. Montreuil, the British G.H.Q., was half-way between Boulogne and Abbeville.

*(To be concluded.)*

#### **MATERIAL FOR EMPIRE TALKS : A SUGGESTION.**

It has struck me that much might be done to popularize Empire travel and to encourage the purchase by Britons at home of Empire products, if Fellows living in the outlying parts of the Empire would endeavour to collect material for a talk (if possible, illustrated by a few lantern slides) on the habits and customs of the people, trade conditions, produce, scenery, travel conditions, &c., of the country they live in.

I venture to make this suggestion because of an experience which befell me during my last leave. It was my privilege to become a member of a literary society near my home, and I was invited to contribute a paper on the Colony in which I live—Ceylon. Fortunately, I had collected a lot of odds and ends of more or less interesting information and, through the courtesy of a friend, I was able to illustrate my talk with some photographic views in the shape of lantern slides. It must often happen that opportunities occur for such a talk as I have outlined. Most men who have lived for any time outside the British Isles could give an interesting account of their own particular corner of the Empire, and I think it extremely likely that many of the large number of Fellows who annually arrive home on leave would find opportunities for a bit of Empire propaganda on the lines I have indicated.

Ceylon.

L. A. A. HAYTER.

One of the conditions of the foundation of the colony was that it was not to suffer from the taint of the convict system, and unquestionably that condition was an important factor in inducing many settlers with wives and families to go there. The difficulties arising from the scarcity of labour and other circumstances gradually brought about a change of opinion and finally a petition from the colonists, who then numbered some 6,000, that convicts be sent to the country was granted. The first convicts arrived in 1850. They were employed on public works and in other ways and their presence meant the expenditure of money to the advantage of the general community. There was a cessation of transportation to Western Australia in 1868 when the population had grown to 22,700. The fears that the presence of convicts would have tainted the community have proved utterly groundless. To-day no part of the Empire is more moral or law abiding.

The discovery of gold at Coolgardie, in 1892, and the opening up later at Kalgoorlie of the wealth of the Golden Mile, ushered in an era of progress and prosperity. The population, which in 1891 was 53,000, rose quickly, and in 1900 it was 180,000, whilst in the same period the yearly revenue of the Government advanced from £500,000 to nearly £3,000,000.

The immense capabilities of Western Australia as one of the world's great wheat producing countries, were only realized some ten or eleven years ago. In 1908 the acreage under wheat was only 279,000 acres, but to-day it is almost 3,000,000 acres, and vast areas remain to be opened up. It is expected that next season's crop will be in the neighbourhood of 50,000,000 bushels. The wool produced amounts to some 50,000,000 lbs. annually and the number of sheep is increasing. Fruit growing is rapidly creating a large export market and other industries are also advancing. To-day the annual revenue amounts to some £10,000,000 apart from what is collected by the Federal authorities, and the population is over 405,000. There is, perhaps, no more progressive or prosperous part of the Empire.

A contrast may well be made between the prospects of migrants who went to Western Australia 100 years ago and those who go there to-day. The new arrival nowadays would find the harbour at Fremantle crowded with shipping. Perth, with a population of 190,000, is one of the most picturesque and up-to-date cities of the Empire. Where there were not even tracks a century ago, there are now no less than 4,000 miles of railways open for traffic. There is one motor vehicle for every 15 of the population and there is an excellent airways service between Perth in the south and Wyndham in the north. An east-west aviation service across the continent is just being inaugurated. Roads and bridges have been made even in the most remote and least populated areas; forests have been felled and bush lands cleared, though many millions of acres yet remain to be cultivated; the Agricultural Bank lends money to new settlers to tide them over the initial years of struggle; agriculturists have the assistance of expert scientists who are paid by the Government; schools exist everywhere and in some districts where the children are scattered over wide areas they are driven to and from school at the expense of the State; education is free and no fees are charged even at the University of Western Australia. The path has been made smooth indeed for fresh arrivals, and it has been made so by the courage and labours of those pioneers who left England 100 years ago to establish a colony in an unknown wilderness.

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MR. ERIC LOUW, the new High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa, was welcomed at luncheon by the Council of the Royal Empire Society, on May 8th, when Colonel Weston Jarvis, in the absence of Sir John Sandeman Allen, took the Chair.

## LORD MILNER AND THE UNIFIED COMMAND.

### A Chapter in the History of the Great War.

By W. BASIL WORSFOLD.

#### PART II.—THE SOLUTION.

AT the Ministry of War, Clemenceau, hurrying into the ante-room with hands outstretched, and a look of joy upon his face, greeted Milner warmly. (My dear Friend, how relieved I am to see you.) Then for half an hour, or longer, the tall and rather stately Englishman and the thick-set Frenchman were closeted together. Of the interview itself Milner reported\* to the War Cabinet, that the French Prime Minister "was in great form and very full of fight, and, while realizing the gravity of the situation, showed not the slightest sign either of despondency or confusion." He expressed the view that Haig and Pétain must throw in at once their reserves to stop the breach between the British and French lines; and "evidently hoped that Haig would be able to bring down more reserves from the north." He said "it would be necessary to bring pressure to bear upon Pétain to do more in that direction. He was most anxious to meet the British and French Commanders-in-Chief. He (Clemenceau) heard that Sir Henry Wilson was arriving at Abbeville to meet Haig, and he was trying to get them to come on to Compiègne, Pétain's Headquarters, where he could join them in the course of the afternoon. He told me to hold myself in readiness to start at a moment's notice on a message from him after 2 o'clock."

The Report tells us nothing, however, of what is perhaps of even greater interest—what Milner himself said to Clemenceau. Happily, Mr. Amery's recollection can make good the omission. On leaving the Ministry Milner told Amery that he had impressed upon Clemenceau that he (Milner) would not feel justified in entrusting the unified control of the two Armies to Pétain: for *that* Foch would be necessary. And he added, "I suppose you and Henry [Wilson] are right about Foch." For, as yet, Milner had no personal conviction of the outstanding capacity of the great French captain of war. In the afternoon, as will be seen, he got the direct evidence on this point, which in the morning was wanting.

The arrival of Sir H. Wilson in France, announced by Clemenceau, was unexpected by Milner: since the circumstances which brought it about (to be related in the sequel) had occurred after Milner had left London. But on returning to Versailles Milner found a message from Wilson, asking him to meet him (Wilson) at Abbeville at three o'clock. It was already, however, half past twelve, and impossible to reach Abbeville by three. Moreover, Clemenceau was trying to get both Wilson and Haig to come to Compiègne, and Milner was pledged to go wherever Clemenceau might arrange that the conference should be held. He decided, therefore, not to change his plans;

\* The Report is dated "2, Whitehall Gardens, 27th March, 1918" (the offices of the War Cabinet). He began it on the morning after his return to London, and finished it on the following day (March 28th). He then showed it to Sir H. Wilson, who had no additions or amendments to suggest, and gave it to the Cabinet. It contains an hour-to-hour record of his three days' absence in France. The document was absolutely secret, and from a historical point of view it is one of the most vitally important of all the War-time records. From the moment it passed into the archives of the War Cabinet, Milner heard nothing more about it, until in the early part of 1921 the substance of it was published in the London Press and afterwards the complete text appeared as a supplement to *The New Statesman* of 23rd April, 1921. The manner in which so confidential a document came into the hands of the Press remains a mystery. The quotations given here are taken from *The New Statesman* text, after comparison with Milner's own typewritten copy. But valuable as the Cabinet Report is as a record of the facts, it does not do justice to Milner in two respects: (1) the selection of Foch in spite of the estrangement between Foch and Clemenceau, and (2) the moral greatness of Milner's assumption of personal responsibility. In addition to oral and other evidence which I have embodied in the text, it can now be supplemented by the entries in Milner's Diary for the four days March 23—26, 1918, copies of which, deposited by Lady Milner in May, 1928, at the Record Office, are available for students; and by Sir Henry Wilson's Diary (published in 1927). This latter gives details of Wilson's doings on March 23—26, but, naturally, his account of those in which he was directly associated with Milner in France, being written from his own personal point of view, give an interpretation of the parts respectively played by the two men, which is sometimes at variance with the narrative of the Cabinet Report. Milner's own copy of the Report and the actual document signed by Clemenceau and Milner at Doullens were also deposited at the Record Office by Lady Milner.

and after lunch, and a further talk with Rawlinson, he motored to the British Embassy in Paris. Here he received the expected message from Clemenceau, which asked him to be at the Ministry of War at three. At that hour, accordingly, President Poincaré, Clemenceau, M. Loucheur (Minister of Munitions), Foch, and Milner (accompanied by Major Shawe) all motored down in their several cars to Pétain's Headquarters at Compiègne.

And now, in the tragedy of this supreme crisis, Comedy chose to play an interlude. Whether the Muse's trickster visited Paris or Versailles is not on record: but, be this as it may, the convoking messages sent the British and French generals in opposite directions—the British to Abbeville and the French to Compiègne. At Abbeville, where Haig and Wilson were awaiting the French, the special train from Paris brought only General Weygand; by whom, however, Haig took opportunity to send back an emphatic statement of his views of the strategic requirements of the situation. At Compiègne there were no British generals at all. Nevertheless, a conference was held at Pétain's Headquarters, which sat from 5 to 7; and it was not without results.

Poincaré took the chair. Pétain, the Report says, "took a very pessimistic view of the condition of the Fifth Army. . . .," now placed by Haig under his (Pétain's) orders. "He was bringing up divisions from the south and west. . . . six, held in near reserve, were engaged. . . . This was all he could do at the moment, though he hoped to do more presently; but he could not neglect the danger of the Germans pushing down the Oise from about Noyon nor a threatened attack in the region of Reims."

Pétain's cautious, almost paralytic, strategy roused Foch to speak his mind. To him the danger of a break-in, between the British and French armies, upon Amiens was so formidable that "risks must be taken in other directions. . . . More divisions could be thrown in, and more quickly, even if in less complete formation," than would, in ordinary circumstances, be desirable. This and much more. The "long and energetic" statement, as the Report calls it, gave Milner just the personal assurance of Foch's qualities that had been wanting in the morning.

Poincaré and Clemenceau (the Report continues) were evidently in sympathy with Foch's view; and Milner was asked for his opinion. What could the British do? To this he replied that, while it was impossible not to agree in principle with the policy of defending Amiens, he could not give any opinion on the precise course to be followed, without having had the opportunity of consulting Haig and Wilson. This, he thought, must be remedied by having another meeting the next day. Clemenceau agreed; and it was arranged to hold a second conference at Dury, five miles south of Amiens, at 11 in the morning. Thereupon, the Conference rose; but before the French Ministers returned to Paris, Milner had a few minutes' private conversation with Clemenceau. In this he impressed upon the latter that (1) the British Third Army, with the reliefs which were being sent to it from the north, was doing all it could, and (2) he had some misgivings as to whether Pétain was prepared to take sufficient risks to bring up all possible French reserves, on which (as it seemed to Milner) "everything depended." Again Clemenceau agreed; but he added that Pétain was doing much more than he had originally contemplated, and might do more still. He also shared Milner's preference for Foch's attitude.

Milner was back at Versailles by 9 o'clock. Here, to his delight, he found Wilson, just arrived from Abbeville. In the meantime a message had come from Haig. He wished the conference to take place at Doullens, north of Amiens, as he had to be there in any case to meet his three Army Commanders; and at 12 instead of 11 o'clock. "This was arranged by telephone with Paris." Later, Milner talked to Wilson, who

spoke of what had passed between him and Haig at Montreuil and Abbeville; and Rawlinson and Amery took part in the discussion. "Everybody seemed to be agreed now," Milner reported to the Cabinet, "that the object of the Germans was to push hard for Amiens through the gap south of the Somme, at the same time directing an attack pointing north-west against the English and south-west against the French, so as to widen the breach between them. Our object must be by all means in our power to keep touch with the French and fill up the gap, while, of course, resisting these attacks. The greatest promptitude in bringing up reserves and complete co-operation between the Armies was necessary. We discussed the personal difficulties of effecting such co-operation, and Wilson made the suggestion" that both Commanders-in-Chief might leave it to Clemenceau to take the decisions necessary to secure these two paramount necessities. He was on the spot, and would, no doubt, be guided by Foch. This seemed a good suggestion to Milner, and at 10.30 p.m. Wilson motored to Paris to put it before Foch. Wilson had not returned, when, at midnight, Milner went to bed. He had not found time for much sleep in the two preceding nights, and to-morrow he had another heavy day—and an early start—before him.

In the meantime, *i.e.*, on the night of Milner's journey to Versailles (24th-25th March) matters between Haig and Pétain had reached a deadlock. Of this the Cabinet Report says nothing. On the contrary, Milner's mention in it\* of his surprise at the readiness shown at Doullens by Haig to accept the appointment of Foch implies that this incident, which in itself would have sufficed to explain Haig's change of attitude, was unknown to him. Such ignorance, in view of the rapidity with which the unified command was accomplished, would not be strange. Between Milner's first meeting with Clemenceau at the Ministry of War in Paris, and the close of the Doullens Conference only twenty-eight hours elapsed. Nor does the Report notice the unexpected character of Wilson's arrival at the Front. Happily, both these omissions can be supplied from facts recorded by the British Headquarters Staff, and by Wilson himself.

After Milner had left London on Sunday (24th), more bad news reached the War Office; and at 5.30 p.m., Wilson was rung up by Foch in Paris, and agreed to come over to see him.† At about 7 p.m., when in conference at 10, Downing Street, he received a message from Haig, sent or 'phoned on from the War Office, also asking him to cross over to France.‡ His reply—probably to the effect that he had already decided to cross to-morrow—would appear not to have reached Haig, because he (Haig) was moving rapidly from place to place behind the British line. And for the same reason Haig knew nothing of Milner's arrival at Montreuil until he got back to G.H.Q. on Monday morning. But on receiving this message Wilson, or his secretary, made the arrangements necessary to enable him to start for the Front the next morning at 6.50, travelling by "special" and destroyer.

On the same Sunday evening at 8 p.m. General Sir Herbert Lawrence, Haig's Chief of Staff, who earlier in the day had seen General Fayolles, Pétain's Chief of Staff, at Villers Bretonneux, met Haig at Third Army Headquarters§ at Beauquesne, some 12 miles north of Amiens. At 11 p.m. Haig and Lawrence met Pétain at Dury (five miles south of Amiens). Here the French Commander-in-Chief informed them that he had issued orders that, in case the enemy continued to press his attacks on Amiens, the French divisions concentrating about Mondidier (to re-inforce the British right) were to fall back south-west and cover Paris. This surprising statement brought the conference between the two Commanders-in-Chief to an abrupt close. And Haig, deeming any further attempt to secure Pétain's co-operation to be hopeless,

\* See forward, page 322.

† "Sir Henry Wilson, &amp;c." ; ii, page 76.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ General Byng (now Lord Byng of Vimy) was in command.

Wilson  
to  
Milner  
- suggest  
Clemenceau  
7 p.m. to it  
to 30th  
90th  
no-

Wilson  
stands  
msg 25th

Haig  
Dury  
11 p.m. 24th

on again reaching Third Army Headquarters, telegraphed to Wilson to come to France. This telegram, although it is included in the G.H.Q. record of 24th March, may have been, and probably was, sent off in the early morning of Monday, the 25th. Wilson made no record of the receipt of it, or of the reply, if any, which he returned. In it, no doubt, Haig, having failed to get an answer to his earlier message, after his rupture with Pétain at Dury repeated his request in more urgent and precise language. Probably Wilson was in bed at 36 Eaton Place when the telegram reached him; and, having arranged already to leave for France a few hours later, he saw no reason for answering it, or indeed for paying any attention to it.\*

The need for such intervention (as we have seen) had been anticipated in Amery's suggestion to Milner on Saturday morning, and by the Prime Minister's action the same evening, which gave effect to it. And when, in the small hours of Monday, Haig's telegram was being despatched, Milner and Amery were nearly at the end of their accidentally prolonged run in the moonlight from Abbeville to the Villa Romaine† at Versailles.

Wilson reached Montreuil that same morning at 10.30, where he saw Haig and Lawrence and suggested that Foch should be appointed to co-ordinate the action of the two Commanders-in-Chief. "In the end Douglas Haig agreed"—having been reminded that on 6th (? 16th) March, Wilson had told him that without a General Reserve he "would be living on the charity of Pétain."‡ Then, believing that he had arranged for Clemenceau and Foch to come to Abbeville at 4 p.m., he and Haig motored there, "only to meet Weygand who told [them] that Clemenceau and Foch and Milner were going to Compiègne at 4 o'clock (sic) to meet Pétain."§

And now, at 8 in the morning of Tuesday, 26th March, we see Milner, with Sir Henry Wilson, climbing quickly into the car which must bring him to Doullens—100 miles by crowflight but much more by road—in time for the conference at noon. The officers in attendance, Major Shawe and Lord Duncannon followed in a second car. They headed for Dury, and then passed through Amiens, which (Wilson records) was "fairly quiet and not being shelled." When once the neighbourhood of Paris was well behind them, the two cars skirted the terrific battle front the whole way northwards. Indeed, so precarious was the hold of the British army upon its lines, that tanks had been stationed on the eastern approaches to Doullens to hold in check any inopportune German intruders, until the assembled statesmen and generals should have made good their retreat. "Though the military traffic was very heavy," Milner reported to the Cabinet, "it was also very orderly, and there was no sign of panic among the population."

Milner had steady nerves. In South Africa he had met the sights and sounds of war. Once the train in which he and Kitchener sat in conference had been held up by a Boer commando. But *this* was different. It was not war, but a monstrous machine working day and night to tear men limb from limb, and strip the tortured landscape into an obscene nakedness. Even the sudden appeal of the shell-torn roads, the shrivelled trees and riven walls, was lost in the consciousness of the enormous, but unseen and immeasurable, violence that pulsed all around and about him.

But Milner's nerves were steady. "On the way," he reported, "we discussed very earnestly the problem before us and the best way of pulling things together, which Wilson strongly thought could only be attained by putting the supreme direction virtually in the hands of Foch." To Milner's question: What had Foch said last

\* Wilson dined at Churchill's that night, and probably got home early. In answer to my enquiry Lady (Henry) Wilson said that she had a vague recollection of a telegram arriving during the night 24-25 March.

† General Rawlinson's house.

‡ *Ibid.*, page 77.

§ *Ibid.*

Mar 25  
10.30 am.  
Suggest  
Wilson's  
(to Haig)

Ts at  
Doullens.

W. Suggs  
Foch to  
Milner  
on way to  
Doullens  
(26<sup>th</sup>)



night to the proposal to make Clemenceau nominally generalissimo with himself to advise him? Wilson replied that he had rejected it, because Clemenceau might be "drawn in opposite directions" by Pétain and Foch; and, if so, there would be "no unity of control." Foch himself "did not wish to command anything. All he wanted was to have the express authority of the two governments to bring about the maximum co-operation between the two Commanders-in-Chief." In fact, to be in the position which he had held once before—at the time of the Ypres battle—when Joffre delegated to him authority to try and get the French and British forces to work more closely together: only now he must be placed in that position by higher authority, *i.e.*, that of the two Allied Governments.

Milner and Wilson agreed that if they "could possibly get this accepted, it was, under the circumstances, the best solution." It was, in fact, a return to the "original idea of the Council at Versailles directing a general reserve, with Foch in the chair," only there would be one man instead of a council, "which appeared better in any case, and absolutely vital under the extremely urgent circumstances of the moment. There was also this in favour of it—that we knew that the British reserves had already been put in, or were on their way to be put in, and that the real question was 'how much in the way of reserves could be got out of the French, and how quickly it could be got.'"

Then Milner gave his own independent judgment. "I was convinced," he reported to the Cabinet, "from what Wilson had often told me," and "from what I had seen myself the previous day" at Compiègne, that "whatever might be his other merits or demerits as a soldier, Foch possessed in a quite exceptional degree the promptitude, energy and resource necessary to get the most done in the time available, the whole question being evidently a race for time."

Milner's mind, working, as always, slowly to sure conclusions, was made up. To put the whole of the Allied power of resistance in the hands of one man was hazardous, but to leave the British and French armies to bear separately the impact of the German advance was to court an almost certain defeat. At this gravest of all the councils of the Allies he was prepared, therefore, to take responsibility for a measure which would bring doom or victory to half the world.\*

The car sped on. Grim reminders of the near realities of the time and place flew past. Among them, and all through his debate with Wilson, one anxiety obtruded. Noon was the hour appointed. Would they be there in time?† Noon came and Doullens was not in sight. Then suddenly, to Milner's infinite relief, the wooded height which hid the massive walls of Vauban's citadel leapt up in front; a sharp turn, and they were racing up the town street past the ancient Beffroi; another, and they drew up among the waiting cars at the *Mairie* gate. In spite of blocks, the driver had averaged forty miles an hour, and at seven minutes past twelve, Milner and Wilson sprang up the entrance steps.

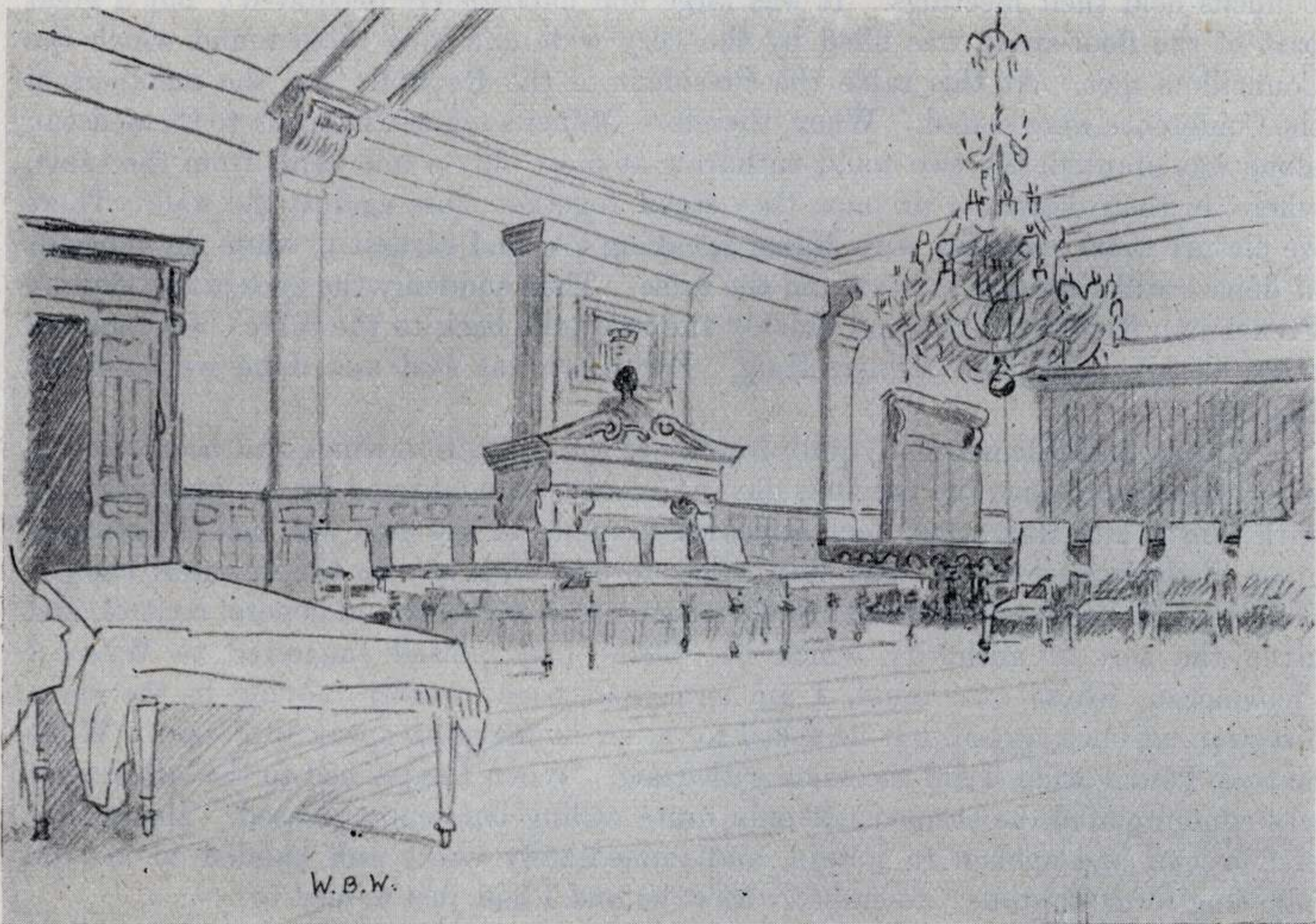
In the Report we have Milner's account of what happened within. On his arrival he was at once seized by Clemenceau, who told him (no doubt with reference to the communication which Weygand had brought from Abbeville) that Haig had said that "he must uncover Amiens and fall back on the Channel Ports." Milner was sure

\* "Four months before this, November 17th, the Prime Minister had in the House of Commons declared himself utterly opposed to the appointment of a generalissimo." ("Sir Henry Wilson, &c.," ii, page 78. *Note*.) And in the text Callwell says that Wilson "convinced Milner" to accept the responsibility for appointing Foch on the drive from Versailles to Doullens. But no one who knew Milner will hesitate to believe the statement in the Report that he accepted the responsibility on his own judgment. Mr. A. J. (now Lord) Balfour found that all the resources of his powerful dialectic, employed for hours (as he stated publicly), failed to shake Milner's determination to forego the honour of succeeding Joseph Chamberlain at the Colonial Office in 1903, when he deemed it his duty to finish his work in South Africa.

† Needless to observe there is no mention of this in the Report. It (and much besides) was told to the writer by Milner himself.

that this was a misunderstanding ; and before the Conference sat, he wished himself to consult with Haig and his Army Commanders. Clemenceau readily agreed. The British generals, Milner wrote, "all bore themselves splendidly, showing coolness, resolution and high courage. I was especially struck by the attitude of General Byng, who, commanding the Third Army, had had to bear the greatest and, indeed, an almost unendurable strain." All Haig had meant to say was that, as he could not, after "skinning" the northern part of his line to the utmost, "hold further than to Bray-sur-Somme, he would, in fact, be outflanked and unable to cover Amiens, unless the French came up to his assistance south of the Somme on the right. I next had a few words with the Field-Marshal alone about Foch, and was delighted to find that, so far from resenting—as I had been led to believe he might do—the thought of Foch's interference, he rather welcomed the idea of working with the latter, about whom his tone was altogether friendly."

The members of the Conference then assembled : President Poincaré (in the chair), Clemenceau, Loucheur, Foch, Pétain, Haig, Wilson, Milner, and (possibly) General



*The Council Chamber of the Doullens Town Hall.*

Lawrence. It was at once agreed (the Report continued) that every effort should be made to save Amiens. Haig made it quite evident that he was doing all he could ; even running some risks to the north in order to strengthen the line from just north of Arras to the Somme. "He could do no more."

"What could the French do ?"

"Pétain then explained his difficulties and the great efforts he was making." He now—was it under pressure of Clemenceau ?—could bring up twenty-four instead of fifteen divisions, of which, however, six or nine were already engaged. But, although advancing, "he was still rather discouraging (perhaps more than he meant

to be) about the pace at which the divisions could come up, and generally gave a certain impression of coldness and caution, as of a man playing for safety. None of his listeners seemed very happy or convinced. Wilson and Haig evidently were not, indeed Wilson made an interjection which almost amounted to a protest. Foch, who had been so eloquent the day before, said not a word. But, looking at his face—he sat just opposite me—I could see that he was still dissatisfied, very impatient, and evidently thinking that things could and must be done more quickly. At this juncture I asked whether I might have a word with Clemenceau alone. I then told him quite frankly. . . .”

This moment of the Conference at Doullens, when for Milner the hour of opportunity had struck, might well engage the painter's brush. Certainly no other scene could seem more central to the hopes and fears of the contesting nations; none more illustrative of the play of Will and Circumstance by which, in the sublimity of battle, the great Antagonism was shaped to Heaven's decree.

The room assigned to the Conference was that in which the Town and District Councils held their meetings. It was large and handsomely decorated; but a great part of the floor-space was filled by the very wide and long table round which the Councillors met. At this table the President of the Republic and the members of the Conference were seated. When, therefore, Milner's request to speak to Clemenceau alone was granted, the two could withdraw at most only a few yards from the table, where, in their desire for privacy, they stood together close against the wall. There we picture them standing, with Milner speaking low and earnestly, while the murmur of debate still rises and falls around the table. Then suddenly the eyes of the veteran Frenchman flash approval, and quickly the two turn back to the table. Clemenceau takes Pétain aside, and Milner, Haig. For what was said and done we have the Report.

“I then told [Clemenceau] quite frankly of the conviction which had been growing in my mind ever since the previous day, and had been confirmed by my conversations with Wilson and Haig, that Foch appeared to me to be the man who had the greatest grasp of the situation, and was most likely to deal with it with the intensest energy. Could not he be placed by both the Governments in a position of general control, and given the sort of authority which he—Foch—had himself suggested to Wilson? Clemenceau, whose own mind, I am sure, had been steadily moving in the same direction, at once agreed, but he asked for a few moments to speak to Pétain. While he took Pétain aside, I did the same with Haig. When I explained to the latter what was contemplated, he seemed not only quite willing but really pleased. Meanwhile, Clemenceau had spoken to Pétain, and immediately wrote and handed to me the following form of words,\* to embody what he and I had just agreed to:—

Le général Foch est chargé par les gouvernements britannique et français de co-ordonner l'action des armées britannique et française sur le front ouest. Il s'entendra à cet effet avec les deux généraux en chef, qui sont invités à lui fournir tous les renseignements nécessaires.

I showed this to Haig, who readily accepted it, but suggested that it should be extended to cover the other armies—Belgian, American, and possibly Italian—that might be employed on the present Franco-British front. To this Clemenceau at once

\* Marshal Foch gives a more complete account of the genesis of the “form of words.” In commenting upon my *Times* article (as mentioned at page 242), he said: “M. Clemenceau's first draft of the agreement reached at Doullens were the words: ‘De co-ordonner l'action des troupes britanniques et françaises autour d'Amiens.’ Field-Marshal Haig protested that this was not general enough, and should be ‘sur tout le front.’” This, as stated above, became finally *l'action des armées alliées sur le front ouest*. An interesting, but somewhat inaccurate, account of the Doullens Conference was furnished by M. Loucheur to *L'Illustration* in March, 1928. In it a version of the genesis of the agreement is given, which is inconsistent with the narrative of the Cabinet Report, and with Marshal Foch's statement (as above). The actual paper, with the signatures, “G. Clemenceau” and “Milner,” is at the Public Record Office (as stated in the note at page 316).

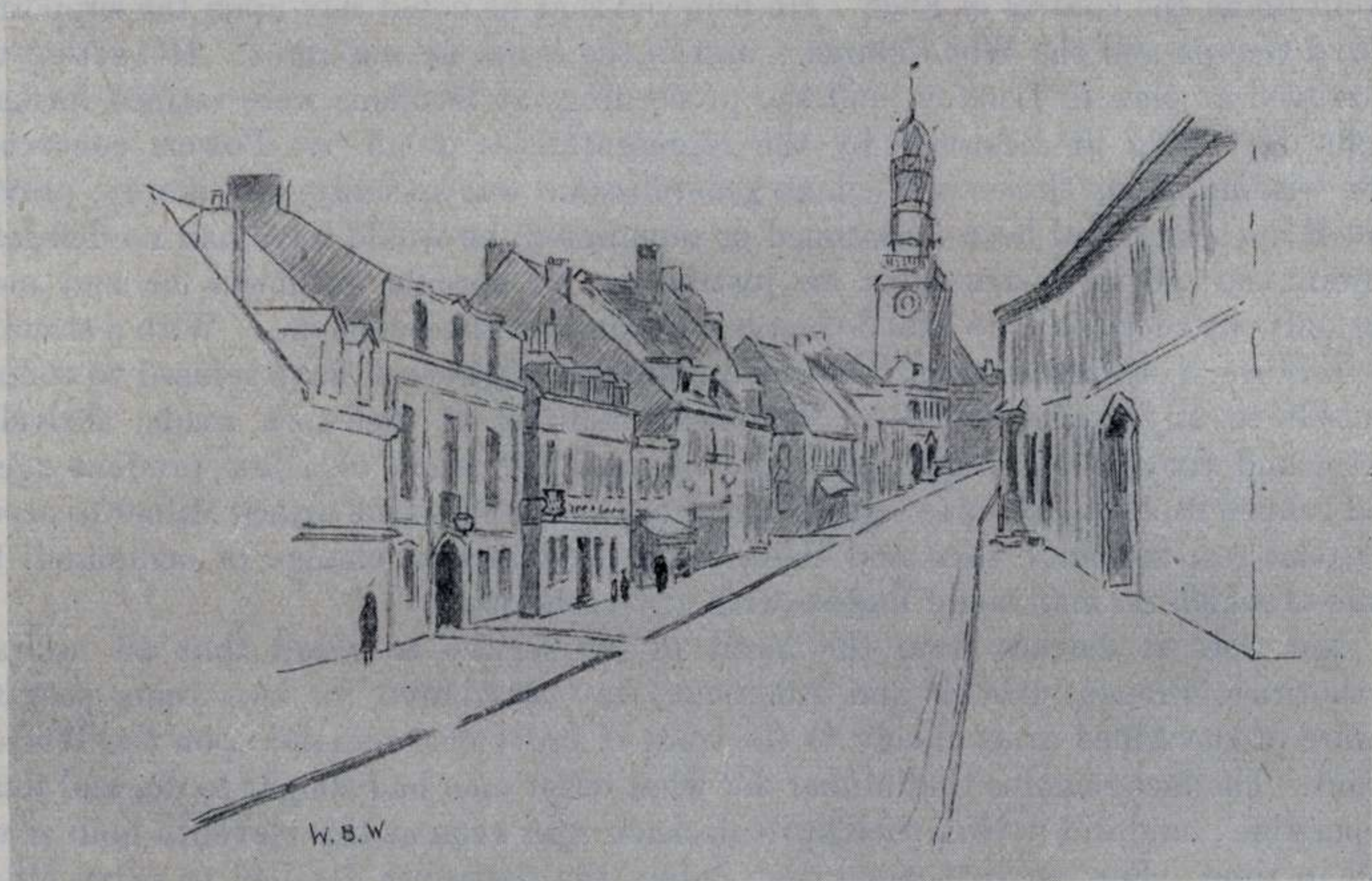
agreed. We then all went back to the table. The amended formula, which was as follows:—

Le général Foch. . . .des armées alliées. . . .

Doullens, le 26 mars., 1918—

was read out, and after a very short discussion, which amounted to nothing more than cordial approval of the principle by all the speakers, the document was signed by Clemenceau and myself, and the Conference immediately rose with every appearance of general satisfaction. Poincaré, Clemenceau, and Loucheur were all delighted, and Haig, I was glad to see, also looked distinctly relieved and much happier than he had seemed earlier in the morning. I did not particularly notice Pétain's attitude, nor did I hear him say anything, but he is always exceedingly cool and self-possessed and never in word or expression betrays his real feelings. I gathered, however, from Clemenceau that Pétain had fallen in with the arrangement without difficulty.

“Within a few minutes of the end of the Conference, everybody had dispersed. Wilson had a few words with Lawrence, before Haig and Lawrence left, and afterwards told me the latter was exceedingly pleased with the conclusion arrived at.”



*The Hôtel Quatre fils Aymon, at Doullens.*

It was now past 2 o'clock; and Milner, who had taken nothing but a cup of coffee at Versailles, was hungry. Therefore he and Wilson, with Duncannon and Shawe, went down the town-street to the *Hôtel Quatre fils Aymon*, where they lunched gratefully. From this quaint hostelry the party set off at 3 for Boulogne, stopping on the way at the British G.H.Q. to pick up the latest news. Here they “met the Field-Marshal just going out for a ride. . . . He told me again,” Milner wrote, “that he felt sure the new arrangement would work, as he would have to do with ‘a man and not a committee.’”

At 11 that night Milner reached Victoria. In a few minutes he was with Mr. Lloyd George at 10, Downing Street. At midnight he was back at Great College Street; and here, two hours later, the “tremendous” day (as he called it in his diary) was ended.

\* \* \* \* \*

Milner\* himself rather resented the idea that his responsibilities during the great German offensive began and ended with the attainment of the unified command. On 20th April, less than a month after the Doullens Conference, he ceased to be a member of the War Cabinet and was sworn in as Secretary for War. From then to the Armistice, in the words of General Smuts (no incompetent judge of such matters), "his consummate handling of the War Office was undoubtedly one of the factors which contributed materially to the Allied victory." But great and many-sided as were his services in this capacity, and especially those he rendered during the four long months when, from April to the end of July, the fortune of the Allies remained upon the razor-edge of fate, this three days' visit to France, with its ceaseless energy and unhesitating action, stands pre-eminent as an example no less of Milner's self-effacing patriotism, than of his high and courageous statesmanship. In it he took upon himself a burden of responsibility than which none heavier was borne by any man in the World War. For the second and final document, to which he and Clemenceau (at his bidding) set their hands in the *Mairie* of Doullens, placed not only the French and British but the Belgian, American and Italian troops on the Western Front under the control of Foch. He believed that he could rely upon the support of Lloyd George and the War Cabinet; and in the event he was right. His action was approved at once in London, and the proceedings at Doullens were ratified formally eight days later at Beauvais by the representatives of all the Powers concerned. The wisdom of his choice of Foch as generalissimo was speedily, and amply, proved. But if his action had been questioned or repudiated, he would have had no delegated powers, no official instructions, to justify it. Of specific authority he had none. His only instructions were Lloyd George's words over the telephone. With a standing so insecure, a statesman mindful of his reputation might well have refused to commit himself to any hasty decision. The near realities of shell-torn roads, shrivelled trees, and riven walls might well have numbed the brain of a less prudent agent, and robbed it of the power to register the sharp decisions which armed Milner to accept personal responsibility then and there for a fundamental change of command, the issue of which no man could foresee with any certainty.

Nor does it detract from the merit of his service to recall that all military authorities, French, British and American, had attributed for two years past the failure of the Allied arms chiefly to the want of unity of command upon the Western Front. The fact remains that Milner did what other men had sought to do, and found impossible; and did it with such swift decision that even at this eleventh hour it was still in time. For, on that same day, before the destroyer detailed to carry Milner back across the Channel had cleared the harbour of Boulogne, Foch was bringing up the French divisions which stayed the German advance on Amiens by a margin not of days, but of hours. In the fire of instant peril all concerned were malleable to the hammer-stroke of Milner's will. Foch and Clemenceau were reconciled. Haig accepted the change with alacrity; and Pétain stood aside to let Foch step to the front. This at Doullens on Tuesday, 26th March. But a fortnight, a week, even a few days later. . . .? If the enemy had struck no paralyzing blow meantime, who can say that the old dissensions, the endless balancing of political loss against military gain in the councils of the Allies, the national and personal rivalries in the field, would not have revived; that the one golden moment of opportunity would not have passed, never to return?

\* Lord Milner died—unexpectedly, and after a short illness—of *encephalitis lethargica* on 13th May, 1925, in his 71st year.

Le général Foch est  
chargé par les gouvernements  
britanniques et français de  
coordonner l'action des armées  
~~britanniques~~ alliées  
sur  
le front ouest. Il s'entendra  
à cet effet avec les  
général en chef, qui sont  
invités à lui fournir tous les  
renseignements nécessaires.

Doullens, le 26 Mars 1917

Moroney Milner

The Times Photo.

THE DOULLENS AGREEMENT,  
SIGNED BY M. CLEMENCEAU AND LORD MILNER.

# THE NEW STATESMAN

## Special Supplement

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ADDITIONAL PAGES

### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF "UNITY OF COMMAND" A HISTORIC DOCUMENT

Very gradually the inner history of the war is coming to light. It will probably be many years before the public is in possession of anything like the full truth concerning even the main political and military episodes of the struggle. The reasons why information is still withheld are not "reasons of State," but for the most part personal reasons. As a Member of Parliament remarked the other day, if all the facts, as recorded in official documents, are to be made public "some war reputations will be blown sky-high." It would indeed be hardly too much to say that the reputations which would remain unspotted or undiminished would be very few and far between. Most of the people who are in a position to enlighten the public would doubtless be willing to publish some part of the truth, but generally there is some other part which they would prefer kept secret, and thus very naturally arises a sort of official conspiracy of silence which only time will break down.

Meanwhile, the Repingtons and the Peter Wrights and the Filson Youngs give us their inevitably tendentious and partial "revelations." No doubt much of what they tell us is true, but they have their heroes or their enemies, and they write with so manifest a purpose that it is very difficult for the uninformed reader to be sure what fraction or aspect of the truth he is really getting.

We print below a document about which such doubts cannot arise. It blasts no reputation, but it reveals the precise and unchallengeable truth about one of the most crucial events of the war—the final act in the story of the establishment of "Unity of Command." Previous attempts to attain this indispensable condition of victory had broken down, mainly owing to the active or passive resistance of the French and British Commanders-in-Chief, supported by certain politicians and military theorists in London and Paris. The great disaster of March 21st, 1918, however, and the apprehensions which it aroused, broke down all such obstacles. On arriving in France Lord Milner found his task, as he describes, unexpectedly easy, and before he had left French soil on the day of the decision, Foch was moving up the troops which, by a margin of hours, saved Amiens.

#### MEMORANDUM

TO THE CABINET BY LORD MILNER ON HIS VISIT TO FRANCE, INCLUDING THE CONFERENCE AT DOULLENS, MARCH 26TH, 1918.

**T**HE Prime Minister having asked me to run over to France in order to report to the Cabinet personally on the position of affairs there, I left Charing Cross at 12.50 on Sunday, March 24th, accompanied by Major Shawe, of the Rifle Brigade. We were delayed some time at Folkestone, the boat not starting till 4.45, and reached Boulogne about 6.30. Colonel Amery was waiting at Boulogne with two of the Versailles motors, and we went straight on to G.H.Q. at Montreuil. Here I saw General Davidson, who was just communicating on the telephone with the C.G.S. when I came in. He gave me a brief sketch of the situation, which had been developing very rapidly and adversely during the day. From Montreuil I was accompanied by Brig.-General Wake, a member of General Rawlinson's staff at Versailles, who was returning to that place after having spent a day and a half at G.H.Q. On the long journey from Montreuil to Versailles he was able to give me a very full account of all that had happened so far as it was yet known. The great mystery was the breakdown of the Fifth Army, which so far was not explained. Owing to

this Army being so much broken and communications cut in all directions, it was difficult to make out exactly what had happened, and it would take time to place together the reports. Broadly speaking, however, there was no doubt that this Army was shattered and a breach effected in the Allied line between the right flank of the Third Army and the French. This did not mean, of course, that there was no more resistance in that quarter. The retreating troops, who had now been driven from the line of the Somme below Peronne, were apparently still fighting at a number of points and sometimes even counter-attacking, but were no longer anything like an organised barrier to the German advance. The rapidity with which this Army had been driven from its strongly-prepared positions will no doubt be explained in time. It does not appear to have been due to any lack of gallant fighting, and no doubt the German impact at this point was quite tremendous, the attacking forces probably outnumbering the defenders by at least two to one. It was clearly useless to speculate with our present knowledge about the causes or the exact course of events in this quarter, but the effect of what had happened on the general situation was, of course, perfectly clear and did not need to be dwelt upon.

The journey from Montreuil to Versailles took over six hours, including a stop of about three-quarters of

an hour at Abbeville, where we had some dinner, and we did not reach General Rawlinson's house at Versailles till 2.30 a.m. A telegram from G.H.Q., dated 11.30 p.m., which we found on arrival, stated that from the latest reports the general situation was somewhat improved.

I was up at 7 the next morning, March 25th, and after breakfast I saw Rawlinson. Wake gave us both a connected account of what had happened during the time he was at G.H.Q., illustrating it by a large map which he had brought with him from there. This was substantially, with some more detail, what I had learnt from him the previous night. Soon after 9 I had a message from M. Clemenceau, to say that he urgently wished to see me. I motored into Paris at once, accompanied by Colonel Amery, and found Clemenceau at the Ministry of War. He was in great form and very full of fight, and, while fully realising the gravity of the situation, showed not the slightest sign either of despondency or confusion. Our interview was not long, as he had a number of important matters to attend to immediately. He told me that he thought important decisions must be taken at once. His view was that it was necessary at all costs to maintain the connection between the French and British Armies, and that both Haig and Pétain must at once throw in their reserves to stop the breach which was in course of being effected.

He said, among other things, it would be necessary to bring pressure to bear upon Pétain to do more in that direction. He evidently hoped that Haig would be able to bring down more reserves from the north. He was most anxious to go and meet the British and French Commanders-in-Chief that afternoon, taking General Foch and me with him. He heard that General Wilson was arriving at Abbeville to meet Haig, and he was trying to get them to come on to Compiègne, Pétain's headquarters, where we could join them in the course of the afternoon. He told me to hold myself in readiness to start at a moment's notice on a message from him after 2 o'clock. I accordingly returned at once to Versailles, as I was anxious to see Rawlinson again before leaving and learn his views of the situation more fully than I had had time to do in the early morning. While at Versailles I had a message from Wilson at Abbeville asking me to meet him there at 3 o'clock, but as this message did not reach me till 12.30, it was evidently impossible to get to Abbeville by 3. As, moreover, I knew that Clemenceau was trying to get Haig and Wilson to come to Compiègne, and as I was in any case pledged to Clemenceau, I determined not to change my plans.

I accordingly went to the Embassy in Paris at 2, where I saw Lord Bertie, and waited there until just before 3 I got a summons from Clemenceau. The President of the Republic, Clemenceau, who was accompanied by M. Loucheur, General Foch, and I, then all motored to Compiègne, arriving a little before 5. Pétain met us there, but it had unfortunately been impossible, as I had always feared, to get Haig and Wilson to meet us also. A Conference was held at Pétain's headquarters between 5 and 7. The President of the Republic was in the Chair, the others present were Clemenceau, Loucheur, Pétain, Foch and I. Pétain explained very clearly his view of the position. He took a very pessimistic view of the condition of the Fifth Army, which, he said, as an army had ceased to exist and would have to be completely reorganised. It had now been placed by Haig under

his (Pétain's) orders. He was, he said, bringing up from the south and west all the divisions he could possibly spare to support and replace the débris of the Fifth Army. Six divisions, which he had always had in reserve close at hand to reinforce the British right in case of necessity, were already heavily engaged in the neighbourhood of Noyon, Roye and Nesle, and he was bringing round nine more divisions—mostly from the south but some from the north—which would be pushed westward to meet the advancing Germans, from Montdidier and Moreuil. This was all he could possibly spare at the moment, though he hoped to bring more presently, but he could not neglect either the danger of the Germans pushing down the Oise from about Noyon, nor a threatened attack in the region of Reims. While not differing from General Pétain's strategic plans, General Foch evidently took a somewhat different view of the situation. He thought the danger of the great German push to break in between the French and British in the direction of Amiens was so formidable that risks must be taken in other directions. Even more divisions must if possible be thrown in, and, by a great effort, this might be done more quickly than Pétain thought possible—even if the relieving forces were thrown in in less complete formation than under conditions of less extreme urgency would be desirable. This at least was my interpretation of his long and very energetic statement, all the military details of which it was not possible for me to follow. Poincaré and Clemenceau were evidently in sympathy with Foch's view of the necessity of taking extreme measures with all possible rapidity, and the latter now appealed to me to express my opinion and especially to say what more I thought the British on their side could do, in order to re-establish the complete co-operation of the two Armies. I replied that, of course, it was impossible not to agree in principle with the views expressed, but that it would not be justifiable for me to give an opinion as to the exact course to be followed without having been able to consult Haig and Wilson. It was most unfortunate, though it could not be helped, that they were not present, but I thought we must try to remedy this at the earliest possible moment and have another meeting, at which one or, if possible, both of them should be present, next day. Clemenceau agreed with this, and it was accordingly decided that we should try to arrange a meeting at Dury, just south of Amiens, at 11 o'clock on the following morning, to which all those present should come to meet the British generals. Poincaré, Clemenceau, Loucheur, Foch and I then returned to Paris, but before leaving Compiègne I had a few minutes' private conversation with Clemenceau, in which I impressed upon him that, to the best of my belief, the British Third Army, which seemed to have stood magnificently together with the reliefs which were being sent to it from the north, were already doing all they could, and that I had some misgiving whether Pétain on his side was prepared to take sufficient risks in order to bring up all possible French reserves, on which, as it seemed to me, everything depended. He said that he agreed, but that Pétain was already doing much more than he had originally contemplated, and would, he believed, do more still. He also agreed with me in sympathising with the attitude of Foch.

I got back to Versailles at 9 o'clock and was very happy to find that Wilson had just arrived from Abbeville. Meanwhile, a message had arrived from



Haig to say that he wished the meeting next morning to be at Doullens, as he had to be there in any case to meet his three Army Commanders, Horne, Byng and Plumer, and that he desired it should be at 12 o'clock. This was arranged by telephone with Paris. I had some conversation with Wilson, who reported what had passed between him and Haig. Everybody seemed to be agreed now that the object of the Germans was to push hard for Amiens through the gap south of the Somme, at the same time directing an attack pointing north-west against the English and south-west against the French, so as to widen the breach between them. Our object must be by all means in our power to keep touch with the French and fill up the gap, while of course resisting these attacks. The greatest promptitude in bringing up reserves and complete co-operation between the Armies was necessary. We discussed the personal difficulties of effecting such co-operation, and Wilson made the suggestion—which seemed a good one—that both countries might agree to leave it to Clemenceau, in whom the British generals as well as the French had confidence, to take any decisions necessary to bring about the better co-operation of the Armies and the best use of all available reserves. He was on the spot. His country was at stake, and he would no doubt be guided by the military opinion of Foch, who appeared the most likely man to take bold and prompt decisions, and to see the struggle as a whole without taking a specially French view.

Late that night Wilson motored into Paris to see Foch, but he had not returned when I went to bed about midnight.

I was up at 7 on Tuesday, the 26th, and at 8 Wilson and I started for Doullens in a motor, followed by Lord Duncannon and Major Shawe. We were very anxious lest the roads should be congested by military traffic and possibly by refugees, but fortunately, though the military traffic was very heavy, it was also very orderly, and there was no sign of panic among the population, so that, with a few blocks, we got along well, nearly 40 miles an hour on the average, and were at Doullens only five minutes after the appointed hour—12 o'clock. An extremely lucky journey, seeing the distance and the conditions. On the way we discussed very earnestly the problem before us and the best way of pulling things together, which Wilson strongly thought could only be attained by putting the supreme direction virtually in the hands of Foch. I asked Wilson what Foch had said to his idea of making Clemenceau nominally the "generalissimo" with Foch to advise him. He said that Foch had objected to this on the ground that Clemenceau, placed in that position, might be drawn in opposite directions by Pétain and himself, and if he agreed now with one and now with the other, there would be no unity of control. Foch himself did not wish to command anything. All he wanted was to have the express authority of the two Governments to bring about the maximum co-operation between the two Commanders-in-Chief. He wanted, in fact, the same kind of position which he had held once before, at the time of the battle of Ypres, when Field-Marshal Joffre delegated him to try and get the British and French to work more closely together—only he now wanted to be placed in that position with a more distinct and higher authorisation, that of both the Allied Governments. Wilson and I agreed that if we could possibly get this accepted, it was, under the circumstances, the best solution. It was, in fact, something like a return to the original idea of the

Council at Versailles directing a general reserve, with Foch in the chair, only with the substitution of a single man for the Council, which appeared better in any case, and absolutely vital under the extremely urgent circumstances of the moment. There was also this in favour of it—that we knew that the British reserves had already been put in, or were on their way to be put in, and that the real question now was how much in the way of reserves could be got out of the French, and how quickly it could be got. From what General Wilson had often told me, and from what I had seen myself the previous day, I was convinced that, whatever might be his other merits or demerits as a soldier, Foch possessed in a quite exceptional degree the promptitude, energy and resource necessary to get the most done in the time available, the whole question being evidently a race for time.

On arrival at Doullens I was at once seized by Clemenceau, who startled me by the announcement that Haig had just declared that he would be obliged to uncover Amiens and fall back on the Channel ports. I told him I felt sure there must be some misunderstanding about this, and that before the general Conference I thought it was desirable that I should have a short conversation with the Field-Marshal and the Army Commanders, whom I had not yet seen. To this he readily agreed. I accordingly had a little consultation with Haig, Plumer, Horne and Byng. They all bore themselves splendidly, showing coolness, resolution and high courage. I was especially struck by the attitude of General Byng, who, commanding the Third Army, had had to bear the greatest and indeed an almost unendurable strain. As I quite expected, it turned out that the Field-Marshal's view about Amiens had been misunderstood. He had no doubt in his mind as to the supreme importance of Amiens, nor any intention of abandoning it. All he had meant to say was that, as the forces at his disposal, even after he had skinned the northern part of his line to the utmost extent, would not enable him to hold further than to Bray-sur-Somme, he would in fact be outflanked and unable to cover Amiens, unless the French came up to his assistance south of the Somme on the right. Even then it was uncertain whether, with a big German attack impending against the Third Army south of Arras, his line would not be broken, but at any rate he was fully determined to stand his ground as long as he could, and, with some assistance from the French on his right flank, he believed he ought to be able to do so. Byng was also strongly in favour of the British line making every effort to stand where it now did, extending to Bray-sur-Somme, and believed that, though his troops, which had had tremendous fighting, were very tired, they would not be beaten. It was evident that everything was being done by bringing divisions from further north to strengthen the line between Arras and the Somme. I next had a few words with the Field-Marshal alone about Foch, and was delighted to find that, so far from resenting—as I had been led to believe he might do—the thought of Foch's interference, he rather welcomed the idea of working with the latter, about whom his tone was altogether friendly.

The views of the British Commanders having thus been cleared up, the Conference assembled. As on the day before, M. Poincaré was in the chair. The others present were Clemenceau, Loucheur, Foch, Pétain, Haig, Wilson and I. It was at once agreed that every effort should be made to save Amiens.

The idea that Haig was thinking of abandoning this and falling back on the northern ports was cleared away, and it was made quite evident that he was bringing up every division he could possibly spare, and even running some risks on the northern portion of his line in order to strengthen the position from just north of Arras to the Somme, where the most tremendous push was threatened. He could do no more. What could the French do? Pétain then explained his difficulties and the great efforts he was making. He had now, however—probably under pressure from Clemenceau, but of this I cannot be sure—advanced so far from his position of the previous day, that he saw his way to bringing up 24 divisions instead of 15, though it would of course take a longer time and did not mean 24 entirely fresh divisions, as the first six or nine (his original reserve and one or two more) had already been heavily engaged for some days in the Noyon-Roye region. But while he was thus evidently under the pressure of circumstances becoming steadily more ready to take risks and assume heavy responsibilities, he was still rather discouraging (perhaps rather more than he meant to be) about the pace at which the divisions could come up, and generally gave a certain impression of coldness and caution, as of a man playing for safety. None of his listeners seemed very happy or convinced. Wilson and Haig evidently were not, indeed, Wilson made an interjection which almost amounted to a protest. Foch, who had been so eloquent the day before, said not a word. But, looking at his face—he sat just opposite me—I could see that he was still dissatisfied, very impatient, and evidently thinking that things could and must be done more quickly. At this juncture I asked whether I might have a word with Clemenceau alone. I then told him quite frankly of the conviction which had been growing in my mind ever since the previous day, and had been confirmed by my conversations with Wilson and Haig, that Foch appeared to me to be the man who had the greatest grasp of the situation, and was most likely to deal with it with the intensest energy. Could not he be placed by both the Governments in a position of general control, and given the sort of authority which he (Foch) had himself suggested to Wilson? Clemenceau, whose own mind, I am sure, had been steadily moving in the same direction, at once agreed, but he asked for a few minutes to speak to Pétain. While he took Pétain aside, I did the same with Haig. When I explained to the latter what was contemplated, he seemed not only quite willing but really pleased. Meanwhile Clemenceau had spoken to Pétain, and immediately wrote and handed me the following form of words, to embody what he and I had just agreed to :

Le général Foch est chargé par les gouvernements britanniques

et français de coordonner l'action des armées britanniques et françaises sur le front ouest. Il s'entendra à cet effet avec les deux généraux en chef, qui sont invités à lui fournir tous les renseignements nécessaires.

I showed this to Haig, who readily accepted it, but suggested that it should be extended to cover the other armies—Belgian, American and possibly Italian—that might be employed on the present Franco-British front. To this Clemenceau at once agreed. We then all went back to the table. The amended formula, which ran as follows,

Le général Foch est chargé par les gouvernements britanniques et français de coordonner l'action des armées alliées sur le front ouest. Il s'entendra à cet effet avec les généraux en chef, qui sont invités à lui fournir tous les renseignements nécessaires.

Doullens, le 26 mars, 1918.

was read out, and after a very short discussion, which amounted to nothing more than cordial approval of the principle by all the speakers, the document was signed by Clemenceau and myself, and the Conference immediately rose with every appearance of general satisfaction. Poincaré, Clemenceau, and Loucheur were all delighted, and Haig, I was glad to see, also looked distinctly relieved and much happier than he had seemed earlier in the morning. I did not particularly notice Pétain's attitude, nor did I hear him say anything, but he is always exceedingly cool and self-possessed and never in word or expression betrays his real feelings. I gathered, however, from Clemenceau that Pétain had fallen into the arrangement without difficulty.

Within a few minutes of the end of the Conference everybody had dispersed. Wilson had a few words with Lawrence before Haig and Lawrence left, and afterwards told me that the latter was exceedingly pleased with the conclusion arrived at. Wilson and I, with our two companions, had a late lunch at Doullens after the Conference was over, and then motored to Boulogne. On the way we stopped at Haig's house near Montreuil (his G.H.Q.) to pick up the latest news, and met the Field-Marshal just going out for a ride. He certainly looked much less tired and in much better spirits than he had done earlier in the day. He told me again that he felt sure the new arrangement would work, as he would have to do with "a man and not a committee." He also had a few minutes' conversation with Wilson, to whom, as I was informed by the latter, he expressed himself as very well pleased indeed with the day's proceedings.

Wilson, Duncannon, Shawe and I reached Boulogne just before 7. A destroyer was waiting to take us to Folkestone, where we landed at 9, and arrived at Victoria shortly after 11.

(Initialled) M.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W. 27th March, 1918.

was ordered to work round the left of the enemy so as to  
have the defence, but the main attack was directed against  
their right flank. The advance was resumed in this order.  
The German prisoner (my friend) was taken from them.  
At the onset however, Howen was shot by a sniper from  
the rear. He fell first at the entrance to the com-  
manding officer, who was seen to fall, and in shade  
at the side of the road. Hill took over the command and  
continued to attack the trench, making gradual progress.

Melvin's words re

State of Fifth Army

When Hill commenced his advance from Kalsbach, the  
day was windy and hot - so hot that his men on landing  
expelled various insects and objects out of their nostrils  
to lighten the load. As they formed up, Hill took command  
and went on with the right half company, Gilliam following  
with the left half in support. Gunner Yes, to whom Hillier  
had passed on Howen's message for reinforcements, guided  
them to the Biapaka road. About a mile from the shore  
they were fired on either by one of the patrols sent out by  
Wehrmacht earlier in the morning, or by a detachment from  
Hillier's company at Talsbach. Hillier, who knew nothing of  
the location of Howen's party except that it must be fighting  
somewhere ahead of him, therefore decided to send some  
into the bush on each side and to proceed quickly to his  
position.

"The great mystery was / breakdown of 1  
Dive A., which had not so far been explained. . . . Broadly  
speaking, however, there was no doubt to this army  
we shattered"

such as those who were taking their way through the  
narrow jungle and undergrowth could not keep up with men  
advancing on the highway, patrol six men at a time were  
sent along the road ahead of the company; from these fresh  
squadrons deployed as the others were overtake, and the men  
left behind fell in and formed a rear guard under signal-  
postward runner. The reinforcements had advanced in

Done

was ordered to work round the left of the enemy so as to harass the defence, but the main attack was directed against their right flank. The advance was resumed in this order, the German prisoner being forced to march in front. Almost at the outset, however, Bowen was shot by a sniper from the scrub. Buller rendered first aid, and carried his commanding officer, who was seriously wounded, into the shade at the side of the road. Hill took over the command and continued to attack the trench, making gradual progress. Meanwhile he sent back Buller to bring up the reinforcements expected from the *Berrima*; these Buller met about a mile back, at noon.

When Elwell commenced his advance from Kabakaul, the day was windless and hot—so hot that his men on landing emptied rations, blankets, and clothing out of their haversacks to lighten the load. As they formed up, Elwell took command and went on with the right half-company, Gillam following with the left half in support. Gunner Yeo, to whom Buller had passed on Bowen's message for reinforcements, guided them to the Bitapaka road. About a mile from the shore they were fired on, either by one of the patrols sent out by Wuchert earlier in the morning, or by a detachment from Mayer's company at Takubar. Elwell, who knew nothing of the location of Bowen's party except that it must be fighting somewhere ahead of him, thereupon decided to send scouts into the bush on each side, and to proceed quickly with his main body along the road in fours, since reports were coming from the connecting files left by Hill that Bowen was hard pressed. The dust of a long drought was deep under their feet, and rose in fine clouds, choking their nostrils and filling their eyes; but the reinforcements pushed eagerly on. Inasmuch as those who were forcing their way through close-matted jungle and undergrowth could not keep up with men advancing on the highway, patrols of six men at a time were sent along the road ahead of the company; from these fresh scouts deployed as the others were overtaken, and the men left behind fell in and formed a rearguard under Signalboatswain Hunter.<sup>24</sup> The reinforcements had advanced in

<sup>24</sup> Lieut. W. D. Hunter; R.A.N. Of Surrey Hills, Vic.; b. Melbourne, 1 Dec., 1887.

Melbourne "Argus"

1931.

14/10/31

### SIR JOHN MONASH.

#### LEGACY CLUB TRIBUTE.

##### Address by Sir Brudenell White.

Tributes to Sir John Monash, who was a patron of the Legacy Club, were paid at the weekly luncheon of the club yesterday, when Major-General Sir Brudenell White delivered an address on the work of Sir John Monash. In addition to the patron of the club (General Sir Harry Chauvel) and private guests of members there were present many official guests of the club, representing organisations with which Sir John Monash had been associated. The official guests were the Lord Mayor (Councillor Luxton, M.L.A.), Rear-Admiral W. Munro Kerr (representing the Navy), Colonel J. D. Lavarack (representing the Army), Air-Commodore R. Williams (representing the Air Board), Mr. W. S. Littlejohn (representing the University Council and Scotch College), the chief commissioner of police (Major-General T. A. Blamey), the Federal president of the Returned Soldiers' League (Mr. G. J. C. Dyett), and the president of the Victorian branch of the league (Mr. G. W. Holland), Vice-Admiral Sir William Creswell (representing the Naval and Military Club), the chairman of the Repatriation Commission (Colonel J. M. Semmens), the chief engineer of the State Electricity Commission (Mr. H. R. Harper), Mr. M. M. Phillips (representing the Rotary Club), and Dr. Gershon Bennett, Sir John Monash's son-in-law. The president of the club (Mr. Rex Hall) presided.

Sir Brudenell White said that in the death of Sir John Monash the Legacy Club had lost a great patron, and the people of Australia had lost one of their greatest citizens. In his passing Sir John Monash had left the nation a great legacy of example, and the Legacy Club should be among the chief beneficiaries. It would not be inappropriate if the Legacy Club were to add to its creed another vow — a vow to ensure that the youth of Australia understood, and ac-

cepted as a beacon to guide it to high endeavour, the record of service left by Sir John Monash. The special personal qualities upon which the achievements of great men were founded were often sought after their passing. Sometimes their success was attributed to ambition, and sometimes to unusual mental endowment. In neither of these driving forces, he felt certain, lay the secret of Sir John Monash's extraordinary life. The outstanding quality of Sir John Monash's character had been great simplicity.

"If Sir John Monash had been asked what in his daily experiences," Sir Brudenell White continued, "gave him the most pleasure, he would probably have replied, not the plaudits of his country, not rewards for his services, nor honours for his achievements, but the welcome which he received at home each night from a grandchild. Sir John Monash undoubtedly possessed mental capacity far above the ordinary, and he possessed, moreover, the capacity to apply his special gifts in the best possible way, but far more important than those endowments were his simplicity, his integrity, and his even-mindedness. Empty ambition meant nothing to him. His ambition was the greater one, to do thoroughly everything which he was called upon to do, and no work was too hard for him, or no trouble over detail too great if it meant the achievement of his object. That was why he gained such distinction in the war.

"It might be asked, in view of the great capacity which Sir John Monash showed as a war leader, whether someone did not err because his promotion was so long delayed. I should remind you that, even from his University days, Sir John Monash had a great intellectual rival in the late Sir James McCay. It was perhaps singular that Sir James McCay left Australia with the Second Brigade, while Sir John Monash followed him with the Fourth Brigade. Looking back, I doubt whether the command of a brigade was Sir John Monash's proper sphere. He performed his duties to perfection, but he lacked the opportunity to show the special skill with which he was endowed. When he was appointed to form the Third Australian Division he performed this task in a manner which gained admiration from all his seniors. It was thus natural that when the time came to appoint a Dominion officer to replace Sir William Birdwood in command of the Australian troops, the choice should have fallen upon Sir John Monash as the best equipped of five very able divisional commanders."

## Resumé of the Career of the late General Sir John Monash

General Sir John Monash was born in Melbourne in 1865. He was educated at Scotch College, where he was dux in 1881. He graduated in Civil Engineering from the University in 1891, winning the "Argus" Scholarship. He also studied Law, and graduated B.A., and LL.B. in 1895. Later in life he was awarded the Degrees of Doctor of Laws and Doctor of Engineering. His knowledge of German enabled him to study the early history of Reinforced Concrete, and as a specialist in this class of construction he became eminent. He was elected a member of The Institution of Civil Engineers in 1906, and was a Foundation Member of the Institution of Engineers, Australia.

As a soldier he joined the Victorian Military forces in 1887. In 1914 he was Colonel commanding the Australian Intelligence Corps. On war being declared he volunteered for active service, and was appointed to the command of the 4th Australian Infantry Brigade, which served throughout the Gallipoli Campaign. In 1916 he was promoted to Major-General in command of the Third Australian Division. It was, however, as Lieut.-General commanding the Anzac Corps in 1918 that his name became world famous. Tributes from public men and the press the world over are signal evidence of the brilliance of his command. After the signing of the Armistice in 1918 he superintended the repatriation of the Australian Imperial Force.

On his return to Victoria Sir John was given the responsible post of Chairman of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria, and organised the work of developing the brown coal and hydro-electric resources of the State. This position he held to the time of his death. After being promoted to the rank of General in 1930, he was appointed to represent Australia in India at the opening ceremonies of the Capital at Delhi.

He was Vice-Chairman of the National War Memorial Committee in Victoria, where his influence and personality played a great part in bringing the Shrine to fruition.

He was Vice-Chancellor of the Melbourne University, and was granted the honorary degrees of D.C.L. (Oxon.) and LL.D. (Cantab.) in 1919. For military services he was awarded the following orders and decorations:—

Knight Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George.  
Knight Commander of the Bath.  
Grand Officier de L'Ordre de la Couronne (Belg.).  
Grand Officier de la Legion d'Honneur.  
Croix de Guerre (French).  
Croix de Guerre (Belgian).  
American Distinguished Service Medal.  
Victoria Decoration.

He will always be remembered by his outstanding and distinguished services to the Empire during the World War 1914-1918, but those who came in contact with him will treasure his memory for his personal qualities of kindness, tact and courtesy.

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Dr. C. E. W. Bean,  
Official Historian,  
Victoria Barracks,  
SYDNEY. N.S.W.

December 29th 1933.

Dear Doctor Bean,

Recently while convalescing after a serious illness, I met a man who possessed copies of three of the late General Sir John Monash's letters from the Front.

One dealt with a State Banquet, 27-12-1918, another, the Evacuation of Gallipoli, December 1915, the third of most interest to me, and perhaps to you, of that period of confusion in March 1918 when the Australians did so much to save the line.

I enclose herewith a set of copies of the letters, (for I secured permission to copy them) and have added also some notes of my own experiences at that time which were somewhat unusual, perhaps unique.

Scouting was at that time of the utmost importance, and unusual conditions were met daily, my notes relate to scouting and may be useful.

With all good wishes for the New Year.

Sincerely yours,

*Charles H. Peters.*

Charles H. Peters.

Manager

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*Advantage*

(COPY)

Anzac,  
Gallipoli,  
Dec.12th 1915.

Like a thunderbolt from a clear blue sky has come the stupendous and paralyzing news that, after all, the Allied War Council has decided that the best and wisest course is to evacuate the Peninsula, and secret orders to carry out that operation have just reached us here. The secret is known so far to only a small handful of men, but there is no harm in my writing about it today, because it will be very many days before this letter can be posted and where it will be posted I do not yet know. Already we have stopped the further arrival of stores, munitions, reinforcements, etc. It would be impossible later on to remember all the details, so I am going to write a short note in diary form each day, or at a few days interval. The first thing to do is to secure as great a measure of secrecy as possible. This operation of withdrawal is going to be every bit as critical and dangerous an enterprise as the first landing, and if the Turks were to get the slightest inkling of what was intended, it would mean the sacrifice of some men and of vast quantities of munitions and stores. At a conference of the commanders it was decided to put up the bluff that owing to the severe winter conditions it is intended to form a winter rest camp at Imbros, and take the Brigade and Battalions there by turn. In this way we shall be able - in two or three stages - to remove about two-thirds of the total army, leaving the remaining third to man the defences very lightly, and then finally to make a bolt for the beach in the dead of night and into boats which will be in waiting. It is of course, an absolutely critical scheme, which may come off quite successfully, or may end in a frightful disaster. But orders are orders. I need not say I feel very unhappy, being bound to secrecy, I can take none of my staff or C.O.'s into my confidence. I am almost frightened to contemplate the howl of rage and disappointment there will be when the men find out what is afoot and how they have been fooled. And I am wondering what Australia will think of the desertion of her 6,000 dead and her 20,000 other casualties.

December 13th 1915.

The move has already commenced. Tonight the whole of my 15th Battalion and about 100 of odds and ends are being taken off in barges. I am sending with them all the invaluable Brigade records and a portion of my own baggage. I am wondering where and when I shall ever see the latter again. Owing to



withdrawals in other parts of the line I have also had to take over an extended length of front, so that I have now three battalions in front line and no brigade reserve at all, yet I feel the utmost confidence in the men sticking it out, no matter what happens. Of course it is my intention, if left a free hand, to be the last man of the Brigade ashore, and to see everybody safely off - but Sir A.H. Russell has told me today that, as I am second-in-command of the Division, he will very likely decide for me to get away with the second last quotas, so that I can supervise the concentration of the Division at whatever place we are going to, which I presume is Imbros - for the time being. It is very gratifying to find how very smoothly the move of the 15th Battalion was carried out. They packed up the whole of their belongings and impedimenta and disappeared into the night, at two hours notice.

December 14th 1915.

About 600 of 14th Brigade with all their impediments got safely away last night - although there was a half moon, I don't think the enemy could suspect any special activities out at sea, because, for months, all our moves - both inwards and outwards, have been at night. Today, we are engaged in making away with all kinds of stores, grenades, bombs, picks, shovels, sandbags, food supplies, ordnance gear and everything else which we shall probably be unable to handle. The great problem will be how to get away our heavy guns - they will have to be left till the last, because we must keep them in action until the last possible moment. I am now engaged in drawing up my plans for the rearguard action of the Brigade, which it will have to fight at the very last. I have selected the 13th and 14th Battalions (i.e. the very pick of them) for this duty. All the rest of my personal baggage and papers are packed ready for removal at short notice.

December 15th 1915.

It is curious and interesting to watch the machine unwind itself as methodically and systematically as it was originally wound up. The supply of fresh meat and bread stopped a couple of days ago, and as reserves of these are being used up, we are all going steadily back to an emergency diet of hard biscuits and bully beef. All inward mails came to an end last week. The outward mail stopped yesterday and all the postal organization has been disbanded. Defaulters and men undergoing field punishment were released and returned to their units yesterday, and today the whole organization of the Provost Marshall will be dissolved,

military policy withdrawn and men will rejoin their battalions. All men on detached duty - such as cooks, clerks, telephonists, etc, loaned to or borrowed from other units are being released and sent back to their commands. From today the regular daily mule train of supplies will stop and the organization will be disbanded - after that it will be a case of fetching and carrying by hand, as we had to do in the first two or three weeks. Already fewer and fewer people can take off their clothes at night, and little by little, news bulletins and other comforts and solaces of our semi-civilization, gathered together after months of effort and planning are disappearing one by one and day by day. My field hospital is packing up and flits today - after that it is goodbye to small medical comforts which a visit of inspection to a hospital always seemed to materialize. Supply of firewood stopped yesterday and with it collective cooking, so the mens' camp mess tins are again in evidence, and each man is again preparing his food for himself. Although the move is still officially a secret, the men would be fools indeed if they have not already fully guessed what is in the wind. Yet if you asked them, not a man would pretend that they suspected anything and all ranks go about their day's work as if we were to stay here till the end of the war.

December 15th, later.

A further long conference of Brigadiers is just over. The actual date of the beginning of the move is not yet settled. It may be tomorrow or not for a week or more, all depends upon the weather and upon the state of the moon. Today there was a boisterous N.E. wind and the sea has come up very rough, making it extremely difficult to load baggage. The loading and landing officers today declared that we must all be prepared for the eventuality that all the remainder of our baggage will have to be abandoned. This means that we shall be able to take away only what we can carry in our hands or on our backs. It may mean the sacrifice of all our clothes and everything else that money can replace; and I am getting to work to make up into small handy parcels such things as my letters, papers, and special articles of value. It was today decided that I am not to go away in advance, at which I am very glad, because I want to be the last man of the Brigade to leave, and I hope it will so turn out. To show how completely all the arrangements are being made, I will instance one detail, which I sincerely hope will not prove necessary. At a suitable place we have established a casualty clearing station to accommodate 1,200 patients - with a full staff of doctors, dressers and hospital gear. In case there is any heavy fighting during the final stages of the re-embarkation, all casualties will, as far as possible, be brought to

this station, and left there. The medical officers and personnel in charge, will of course, have to stay too. So they have been provided with interpreters and with a despatch addressed to the enemy commander calling upon him to carry into effect the provisions of the Geneva Convention, as regards taking over our wounded and Red Cross personnel and administering same. I have every confidence that in such an eventuality, the Turks will play the game.

December 16th, 1915.

The day passed quite uneventfully. We managed to get some baggage off today as the wind has dropped and the sea is calmer. The total strength at Anzac has in the last four days been reduced from 45,000 to 20,000 and we shall continue to hold the lines against at least 170,000 Turks (10 Divisions) until the second last day, and on the very last day we shall have only 10,000. Everything is working out so far most smoothly, it has been tentatively arranged to carry out the two final stages on the 18th and 19th, but a final decision will depend upon the weather prospects. I now have hopes that I shall be able to get away my most valuable belongings. Today for the first time I took my staff and commanding officers into my confidence, and explained to them the outlines of the general scheme and particulars of the particular role each would have to play. The rest of the day I spent in preparing a complete draft of my final orders.

December 17th 1915.

In view of the steadiness of the barometer and the generally favourable conditions, it has now been decided to carry out the operation of re-embarkation tomorrow and Sunday. Today, therefore, we had our final Divisional Conference, and took mutual farewells of each other. General Birdwood himself came over from Imbros and specially picked my lines for a visit. He went along my whole line, and shook hands with all the officers and expressed the hope that many of them would come through alive. I have already sent off about 800 of the Brigade, tomorrow C. Glinn goes with another 800, and on the last night I take the remaining 825. These I have divided into three echelons or groups, the first 400, the second 255, and the last of all 170 - moving respectively at 6pm, 10pm and 2am. The last 170 or "die-hards" have been chosen from the most gallant and capable men in the Brigade. Even these will not all leave the trenches in a bunch but a few of the most daring men, who are good athletes will remain in the front and keep up a fire for another 10 minutes, and then will make for the beach at best possible speed.

I am myself going, as ordered, with the first group of the last 170, as by that time, the die will be cast and I can do no good by waiting for the last small handful. The men, while very sad at having to give up the ground which has cost Australia so dear, are all very keen and I am quite sure that not a man in the Brigade will move from his post, no matter what happens, until the exact moment arranged for him to do so. It has been worrying me to think that, if we get clear away even without much loss, the enemy will nevertheless represent the incident as a great victory for them, even to the extent of alleging that "there has been a great fight and that they have driven us into the sea with heavy losses and many prisoners." Such news would travel to Berlin and then to America and would perhaps slip into Australia via Vancouver. So I made it my special business to explain my apprehensions to General Birdwood and he has promised me that, as soon as possible after the completion of the operation he will himself cable Australia and New Zealand in order to allay public anxiety as to the welfare of the Army Corps. I sincerely hope the Australian public will take no notice of reports from enemy sources, and wait for authentic reports from us.

December 18th 1915.

Everything is going smoothly. The enemy is exceptionally quiet. A final conference today with my staff and C.O.'s. Lt.Col. McGlinn left for the beach at 3.30 to make arrangements in advance for my quota of 800 which is leaving today commencing at 9 o'clock this evening. Corporal Palmer, my best type-writing clerk, was hit in the leg, while I was talking to him outside the Brigade office, by a stray bullet, which passed clean through his calf - missing the bone. This happened only an hour ago. The signal traffic has been exceptionally heavy today - all sorts of communications now being done by field telegraph, instead of by letters carried by messengers. We have worked out a very clever device for firing off a rifle automatically at any predetermined time after the device is started. It is done by allowing a tin to slowly fill with water until it overbalances, falls and jerks a string which fires the rifle. I have had 10 rifles fixed in this way, which will be started by the last man to leave, and will fire off respectively 5, 10, 15 and 20 minutes afterwards. In this way the enemy will think we are still in the trenches after we have got over a mile away.

Midnight.

The last party of the first night has embarked safely.

I have just had a note from McGlinn sent back by one of my police, "All O.K. Dined with M.L.O. (Military Landing Officer) Curried Chicken, washed down with Burgundy. Everybody feeding out of my hand."

The real meaning of this message is that McGlinn has succeeded in getting off the last of our personal baggage and that all troops have so far got away without loss. This now leaves me with just what I stand up in, and only Locke, Firth (my new signal officer) and two signallers and two police at Brigade H.Q. and 800 men holding my front of over a mile. Everything is normal, just the usual sniping and occasional bombs and bursts of machine gun fire. If we get through tonight I feel sure that all will be well. My bed tonight will be a heap of old sandbags - as to the "die-hards" a list has been drawn up of the names of each of the last 170 officers and men, showing for each man the exact time that he has to leave the front trenches, and exactly what he has to do - whether to carry a machine gun, or its tripod or its belts, or to throw a bomb or to start an automatic rifle, or to light a fuse which will blow up a guncotton mine, or to complete a previously prepared barbed wire entanglement on a track which might be used by the enemy. Everyone of these 170 officers and men has been given a card, containing all these particulars, so far as they apply to himself and the exact route by which he is to reach the beach. All this means "organization" and makes all the difference between success and failure. I think, now, I had better try and get a couple of hours sleep, as everything seems normal and not more than the usual noise for this time of night.

December 19th 1915. Noon.

The last day on Gallipoli. Last night's move passed off smoothly and without incident, everything satisfactory and well ahead of time. The weather today is absolutely perfect for our purposes - perfectly calm air and sea, cloudy and foggy and dull, with a very light misty drizzle, so that everything in the distance is dim and blurred. During this morning the Turks treated us to a prolonged and heavy bombardment of the beaches, but it was not intense enough to indicate that they had any suspicions, it is probably only the usual morning hate, but they are a little angrier than usual.

8pm.

Everything is going swimmingly without a hitch. By this time the A parties of tonight will have got off and at this present moment there are not more than 5,000 troops in the whole of Anzac, thinly holding the front line against 170,000 of the enemy. If the Turks only knew!

This afternoon the fleet carried out a most terrific bombardment at Helles in order to suggest the idea that we are contemplating an attack. It is clear, bright moonlight but icy cold. One of our planes is buzzing overhead, mainly to keep any enterprising enemy plane from trying to be curious and see what is going on. The next hour or two will be decisive. The B parties start at 9.30 and then there will be only a small handful left - but we shall have succeeded in withdrawing the great bulk of the Army Corps without any loss - a wonderful piece of organization beyond any doubt. If it succeeds it will be due to splendid preparation on the part of the leaders, and splendid and intelligent obedience on the part of the men.

December 20th, 4 a.m.

The last hours on Gallipoli were tense and exciting in the extreme. About 9, my last patrol came in and reported that they could plainly hear the Turks digging and putting wire out on Hackney Wick and Green Knoll, two points at which my lines have been pushed very close to theirs. This meant that so far they suspected nothing. The last hours passed most wearily. Every crack of a rifle, every burst of rifle fire, every bomb explosion might have been the beginning of a general attack all along the line. By 10 o'clock our final numbers have been reduced to 170 in the Brigade, i.e., 600 in the whole New Zealand and A. Division and about 1,500 in the whole Army Corps - spread along a front of over eight miles.

This meant that if at any point along this great line the Turks had discovered the the withdrawal of the garrison, and if only a few of our men had given way and allowed our lines to be penetrated, the whole of this last 1,500 would have had a very hard night of it and many would have left their bones on Gallipoli. As it was, the final withdrawal commenced at 1-35 - then the balance of the machine guns and 30 men came out, and at 1.45 another 60, and at 1.55 a.m. my last man left his foremost position, leaving only the automatic devices working. All the other Brigades and Divisions were similarly timed according to their distance from the embarkation piers, of which we had four. Down dozens of little gullies leading back from the front lines, came little groups of six to a dozen men, the last in every case an officer, closing the gully with a previously prepared frame of barbed wire, or lighting a fuse which an hour later would fire a mine which would wreck a sap or a tunnel which the enemy could follow. All these little columns of men kept joining up, like so many

rivulets which would flow into the main stream and so at last they coalesced into four continuous lines, one from the S. two from the E. and one (that is ours) from the N. There was no check, no halting, no haste or running, just a steady, silent tramp in single file without lights or smoking - and every yard brought us nearer to safety. The heads of four marching lines reached the Brighton, Anzac, Howetzer and North beaches almost at the same instant, so well had everything been timed, and so well had all kept to the prescribed pace of three miles per hour, and then without check, each line marched like so many ghostly figures in the dim light in single file on to the allotted jetty, the sound of marching feet having been deadened by laying a floor of sandbags, and so into motor barges (beetles we call them) each holding 400 - on to these Generals, staff officers, gunners and privates all packed up promiscuously and quietly. There was a short pause to make sure that no one had been left on shore, not a sound could be heard on the shore except the throb of the beetles' engines and on the distant hills, the spasmodic rifle shots of the enemy discharged at our now empty trenches, then the landing and loading staff chiefly naval officers, stepped aboard. "Let go all over" "Right away" was the last order and slowly we moved out. Just before the barge at Anzac pier cast off the last engineer officer on shore joined the terminals of an electric battery and thereby fired three enormous gun cotton mines which, with a terrific explosion, blew up Russell's Top which was the knoll at the head of the Western branch of Monash Valley, and which, though we could never drive the ~~Russ~~ Turks off it we had succeeded in tunnelling under. With the knoll a couple of hundred Turks must have gone up into the air, but nothing could be seen except a volcano of dust. Instantly a most terrific tornado of rifle and machine gun fire burst forth along the whole length of Sari Bair, showing that the Turks, far from suspecting our real manoeuvre had been actually expecting an attack of which they took the firing of the mine to be the first signal. Thus dramatically with the bullets (aimed at our trenches, high up the slopes and spurs of the range) whistling harmlessly overhead, we drew off in the light of the full moon mercifully screened by a thin mist, and so ended the story of the Anzacs at Gallipoli.

We had succeeded in withdrawing 45,000 men, also mules, guns, stores, provisions and transport to the value of several million pounds, without a single casualty, and without allowing the enemy to entertain the slightest suspicion.

It was a brilliant conception, brilliantly organized and brilliantly executed - and will, I am sure, rank as the greatest joke in the whole range of military history.

Arrived at last on the little transport "Arran" and packing closely on to her two decks and her little cabins, and her little saloon, officers and men of both Army and Navy from upwards of 50 different units who had not seen or heard of each other since the day of the war training in Egypt, or since leaving our homelands foregathered. The strain being over, the reaction came in wild and hilarious greetings, mutual felicitations and hearty handshakes all round. The steamer got under weigh for Lemnos, the sights and sounds of Gallipoli dropped back into the past. Gradually the ship's company, worn out with want of sleep, and the tremendous strain of the closing hours, fell asleep in all sorts of attitudes, on saloon tables, on decks, in alleyways and on hatches. I got a bunk in the pantry-man's cabin but found myself quite unable to sleep, so decided to write down my impressions while they were still fresh. It is now 6,30 a.m. and we are just dropping anchor in the outer anchorage of Undros Harbor and a new day is breaking.

E.Undros, December 20th 1915.

There is little to add to this story - Brigadier-General Johnston (N.Z. Chief of our Artillery) has just landed. He went on board a destroyer to direct naval fire in case we had been attacked. He related that at 9 o'clock this morning and again at 12 o'clock noon, the Turks opened a furious bombardment on our empty trenches, particularly at Lone Pine, the Apex and Hill 60 (the last two being the ends of my portion of the line), so, up till then they had not yet discovered our departure, even though our destroyers had amused themselves all the morning in shelling our beaches and hospitals (which had been left standing) with incendiary shells, so as to burn up the debris of wreckage which we had created and deprive the Turks of anything of possible value to them.

This is the end of the Story of Gallipoli so far as the Army Corps is concerned - And now we turn our energies to gathering up our details from all over the island, to sorting our units, forming camps, refitting and standing by for the next orders. What they will be no one knows, may be Helles, or Salonika, or France, or Cairo, or the Canal.

(Signed) JOHN MONASH.



(COPY)

FRANCE. 2nd April 1918.

Dear Mat,

I seize upon a little interlude of comparative leisure to try and give you a connected account of the very exciting events of the past few days.

When the great German offensive broke out on March 22nd, I was on holiday in the Riviera staying at Menton, intending to remain there until the end of the month. One of my Brigadiers - Brigadier-General Rosenthal - had also come down a day or two before on sick leave, really to recoup after having been slightly gassed and was staying at Lord Michelham's Home for convalescent officers at Cap Martin close to Menton. He and I had spent the whole of Saturday, the 23rd, together in making a very pleasant mountain tour to La Turbie the hill above Monaco and walking thence towards Nice along the Route de la Corniche as far as the little medieval village of Exe, then down to Beaulieu and home by electric tram. We had separated for the day and had planned to make up a motor party next day to go into Italy as far as San Remo, having obtained special passports for a party of four Generals and motor driver for this purpose. The newspapers which arrived that evening at Menton gave us the first news of what was happening and I felt that it was inevitable that we ought to return at once. I had left my Division in a back area (Nielles-les-Blequin) about 20 miles East of Boulogne, resting and training and I was convinced that it would not be a matter of many days before they would be drawn into the fight in some capacity or other. While I was deliberating what I had better do, a telegram arrived from Jess to say that the Division had been ordered to move eastward towards Ypres, and although I could not quite understand why the move should be in that direction the news made me decide definitely to return the next day.

By dint of the influence of my rank and statue, I got the authorities at Cap Martin to make special arrangements to reserve a carriage on the train on Sunday morning, March 24th for myself and General Rosenthal and I wired to Jess (Brigadier-General Jess) to send Paul (Capt. Simonson) with my car to Paris. The railway journey to Paris was uneventful and for a wonder, the train arrived punctually to time at 8-45 on Monday morning the 25th. It was on Sunday the 25th that Paris was heavily shelled for the first time by that wonderful long range gun.

Paul duly met me at the Gare de Lyon with the car and we stayed in Paris only long enough to get a snatch of breakfast and a wash and to pick up some baggage

which I had left there on my way down South. By 10 o'clock we were clear of Paris and bowling at a great rate along splendid roads via Beauvais to Amiens. At Amiens we found everything in a state of frightful confusion. The Bosche had been heavily bombing the town and the civilians were evacuating it rapidly. There was great excitement. The railway square and the streets were full of war-worn mud-bespattered, excited and starved looking troops of all kinds and excited officers and other ranks who had been on leave and were struggling to get back to their units in various parts of the front. Amiens being an important interchange station - all the normal activities of the city seemed to have been arrested. The Railway Transport Officers and the Military authorities in the Town had no news of events at the Front, and had been working for several days with their staffs without sleep and were in a condition almost of mental paralysis. The ordinary supply depots had ceased to function, we could hardly get any petrol or tyres to replenish our needs, and it was with some difficulty we managed to get some lunch. At the railway station I was fortunate enough to pick up letters from Jess which Wieck had brought down that morning telling me that the Division (111) on its march towards Ypres had been intercepted on the road and deflected southward and that it would lie that night at Blaringhem, and that it had been ordered to stand by to entrain during that night and next day for Doullens. Wieck had come down ahead to try and find the 10th Corps Headquarters, as it was understood we should report to the 10th Corps for orders. I thereupon decided to push on to Doullens to get closer and more definite news. Arrived there about 3 o'clock and found a motor omnibus load of my officers and N.C.O's just arrived, they having been sent down from the Division to stand by for billeting duties when it had been determined where the Division was to go. There I got into touch with Captain Pyke and Major Wieck who were out examining the various villages in the vicinity for billeting accommodation, but had no further news. At Doullens, there was still great confusion, and streams of soldier-stragglers pouring in from the east with the most hair-raising stories that the Bosche was almost on top of them. As, again, at Doullens I could find nobody in any authority who knew anything of any value I decided again to push on and get in touch with my own Headquarters. This I did, reaching Blaringhem at about 7 o'clock and found there everything packed up to be ready for a shift next day. All that night my Infantry were entraining at three stations respectively Arques, St. Omer, and Steenbecque. The Artillery and Divisional Ammunition Column were already on the march southwards.

I snatched a few hours sleep at Blaringhem and left early on the morning of the 25th March back for the South, trying to find the 10th Corps. By this time of course, the

trouble was that all Headquarters, both Divisional, Corps and Army, were rapidly on the move backwards and did not remain more than a few hours in any one town. All signal communication by telephone or telegraph was of course cut off, and, as the whole place was full of the wildest and most contradictory rumours, it was very difficult to locate anybody - however, I managed to glean that 10th Corps was moving to Hawtecloque and reaching there learned that the Corps Commander of the 10th Corps was still at Frevant. There I repaired with all haste and learned from him that he was trying to collect a few Divisions with a view to making a stand east of Doullens and generally re-establish a line between Arras and Albert. He could give me no definite orders except to concentrate on my Division to the East of Doullens and there await further orders. We pushed on to Doullens and there tumbled into a scene of almost indescribable confusion. During the 24 hours between my two visits to that town, there had been a great change in the atmosphere. Doullens was full of civilian refugees and many thousands of soldiers who had got detached from their units and who were streaming in from the East. All had the wildest stories and all looked starved and broken down with fatigue and want of sleep. There must have been a great conference between the British and French High Command in the Mairie at Doullens for the Town Square was packed full of motor cars and brilliantly uniformed French and British officers. I had, however, no time for them as I had more important things in hand. Here occurred another piece of good fortune on a par with all that seems to have dogged my footsteps throughout all these exciting times. I arrived at Doullens railway station just at the very moment that the first train bringing some of the troops of my 9th Brigade arrived in the station yard. There was on board the 9th Brigade Headquarters with Brig. General Rosenthal and all his staff and signal personnel, etc., and a portion of the 33rd Battalion. While they were in the act of detraining, an excited officer, who proved to be the Town Major of Doullens, rushed up to say that the report had just come in that a number of German armoured motor cars had broken through at Hubterne, and that the German cavalry were within ten miles of the Town. I may say that these rumours, at this stage were subsequently proved to be without foundation but they were just an example of the condition of chaos which reigned supreme in the whole of this part of the country. I instructed General Rosenthal at once to collect all the troops he could and temporarily take up a position to cover Doullens so that my detraining at that station from the numerous trains subsequently to arrive might be carried out without interference. Knowing that my 10th Brigade was to detrain at Mondicourt, Paul and I motored as fast as possible to that town and again arrived just as General McNicoll's first train

*McNicoll's  
Order*

*Thence to  
Mondicourt*

drew into the station. We rapidly got all the troops out and McNicoll took up with a portion of the 37th Battalion a position to cover the detrainment at Mondicourt. All the roads leading from the S.E. into Mondicourt were simply packed with wild-eyed Tommies, refugees on foot in every conceivable conveyance with their furniture in wheelbarrows, hand-carts, farm-wagons, and the like and every conceivable kind of military vehicle streaming N.W. Everybody that was interrogated appeared to have the ideathat the Bosche was just behind him on his very heels. I put on military policy to establish stragglerposts and we held up hundreds of Tommies with and without rifles and equipment and formed them into bodies suitable for employment if required. I proceeded myself to Courturelle, just N. of Doullens - on the Arras Road, and selected a nice chateau for my Headquarters and established signal communication with the 10th Corps at Frevant. There I learned that there was no confirmation of the report that the Bosche motor cars had broken through at Hubeterne. I also learned that General Maclagan had arrived at Basseux and that the 4th Australian Division was in the act of arriving in the area. I proceeded at once by motor car to Basseux and got into touch with Maclagan. He told me that he had only one Brigade of Infantry in hand and had sent them in the direction of Hubeterne to close what was evidently a gap in the British line. This Brigade was my old 4th Brigade under General Brand. I then rushed back to Mondicourt as quickly as the congested state of the road would allow. Every kind of vehicle in every stage of panic was rushing along this road towards Doullens and that the enemy was not far away was evidenced by the fact that numerous shells fell on and near the road as we passed, scattering the traffic in all directions. The point was that much of this panic proved ultimately to be quite without justification. Again reaching Mondicourt, I there issued orders for the concentration of my three Brigades as follows - 9th Brigade at Pas, 10th Brigade at Authie and 11th Brigade at Couin - although up to that time none of the units of the 11th Brigade had yet arrived by train. I then returned by car to my chateau at Courturelle reaching there about 8pm.

A Despatch Rider arrived from the 10th Corps to say that the 10th Corps was no longer G.H.Q. Reserve but had passed under the command of the Third Army (General Byng.) He was followed within about an hour by a second Despatch Rider with orders that I should personally report at once to the 7th Corps at Corbie as orders had been received that the Division would probably be transferred to the 7th Corps and act under its orders. I was getting ready to proceed there when a further Despatch Rider arrived stating that the 7th Corps at Corbie had had to abandon Corbie as it was being heavily shelled and were

*Thru to  
Courturelle*

*Headquarters  
posts*

*Thru to track.*

transferring to Montigny. I felt sure that the situation was critical and that energetic action would be necessary so I decided to take with me in addition to Paul (Aide-de-campe) an officer of my General Staff, an officer of my Administrative Staff, my D.A.D.M.S. and the Officer Commanding Divisional Signals, also two despatch riders on motor bicycles. We left Mondicourt about 10 pm. and I made the best of my way to Montigny. Luckily it was a moonlight night, but the roads were fearfully congested with refugee traffic, swarms of soldiers pouring westward and thousands of motor lorries, heavy guns and all kinds of military vehicles. Our progress was painfully slow and it was one o'clock in the morning before I reached Montigny and I had considerable difficulty in locating the chateau in which Lieut. General Congreve, Commander of the 7th Corps, was in the act of taking up his quarters. I found that the whole Headquarters had cleared out of Corbie in the late afternoon in a great hurry and I found them in a dark building. The Corps Commander Lt. General Congreve and his Brigadier-General, General Staff, More-Ruthven are both V.C's. They were seated at a little table with their maps spread in front of them examining them by the light of a flickering candle. As I stepped into the room General Congreve said "Thank Heavens - the Australians at last." Our conversation was of the briefest. He said "General, the position is very simple. My Corps at 4 o'clock today was holding the line from Braye to Albert, when the line broke; and what is left of the three Divisions in the line after four days heavy fighting without food or sleep are falling back rapidly. German cavalry have been seen approaching Morlandcourt and Buire. They are making straight for Amiens. What I want you to do is to get into the angle between the Ancre and the Somme as far East as possible and STOP HIM." This constituted the whole of my orders.

I got them to place a small room at my disposal and give me the use of a telephone and from there worked all night to make the necessary arrangements; ringing up General Byng, I got Third Army to arrange for motor buses to bring down my Infantry as quickly as possible, telegraphing Jess at Courturelle what to do. I then prepared the whole of my orders for my dispositions, and despatched my staff officers in various directions to make the necessary arrangements. I sent Paul back with my car to Courturelle to bring along my batman and the rest of my baggage. I got practically no sleep that night.

Shortly after daybreak, Paul arrived with some more staff officers and my baggage, and we proceeded to Franvilliers. It was from this town that I directed operations for the first few hours. From the high ground

*Really British ->*

at Franvilliers, we could plainly see the German cavalry operating on the high ground to the S. of Morlancourt. It was really a question of an hour one way or the other whether we could intercept him or not. You can imagine the state of my mind while waiting there not knowing how long it would take any of my Infantry to arrive - you can imagine my relief when the first bus convoy arrived from the N. into Franvilliers bringing Gen. Cannan and two battalions of the 11th Brigade. This convoy consisted of 60 motor buses, old London motor bus type - all crowded with troops all armed and with plenty of ammunition. It was a miracle of good management. Without a moment's delay we marched them off along the road to Heilly and they deployed rapidly along the line from Mericourt to Saille-le-Sac. At 10 o'clock the first bus convoy with two battalions of the 10th Brigade arrived together with General McNicoll and an hour afterwards some of the 9th Brigade with General Rosenthal. By 2 o'clock I already had over 5,000 troops under my hands and these were all rapidly disposed across the ridge in the angle between the Ancre and the Somme, during the afternoon sending out patrols to get into contact with the enemy.

*But the cavalry & inf. caused Ri.*

With the exception of desultory shelling of the various villages in the neighbourhood, the enemy showed no great activity as he soon discovered that there were troops blocking his path and he evidently pulled up his rush in a spirit of caution to enable him to test our strength.

During that day (27th March) and the following night, the remainder of my Infantry arrived by train at Doullens and embussed direct to Franvilliers and my two Brigades of Artillery with Divisional Ammunition Column, Pioneer Battalion and many other units were well on the way by route march by road. By the early morning of the 28th March, I had had the greater part of my Division billeted in the villages of Ribemont, Heilly, Franvilliers, Laboussoye, etc.

From that time onwards, the position I had taken up grew hourly stronger and during the day of the 28th, two more of McLagan's Brigades arrived and took up positions respectively W. of Albert and S.E. of Lavieville. The tired and beaten troops of the 35th, 21st and 9th Divisions (British) now reduced to a mere handful, took up a rough line along the railway between Mericourt and Albert. We also heard that the New Zealand Division had got forward further N. and that the 2nd Canadians were between us and Arras.

We thus had a sprinkling of stout first class Divisions at various parts of the line and the effect

of their arrival was electric and remarkable. The advent of my own Division at the place named had an astonishing effect in stiffening everybody on both sides, and the tendency to run was checked. People began to regain confidence and measures for reorganization of the whole line were rapidly commenced. During the night of the 28th March, I pushed my line out 2,000 yards eastward until they were in actual contact with the enemy patrols and on the afternoon the expected happened and he attacked me in considerable force - the 3rd German Naval Division on the right or N; the 13th Prussian Division in the centre and the 18th Schleswig-Holstein Division on the left or S. I had overnight got all my Artillery into position behind my line and the battle was a ~~walk-~~ walk-over for us. After an hour the whole attack had petered out and this up to the time of writing is the end of the German attempt to capture Amiens by direct approach. We captured prisoners from all 3 Divisions opposite to us and one of them carried an autograph photograph of the Div. Commander (Gen. Major Bloch von Blittwitz). The whole of the villages in the neighbourhood had of course been hurriedly evacuated by all the inhabitants and I have been at great pains to try and have gathered up all the fowls, pigs, cattle and sheep and have had them driven back to concentration camps. On the night of the 29th March Gen. Maclagan's troops came into the line on my immediate left and had several brushes with the enemy which were all in our favour. The 5th Aust. Div. meanwhile also arrived and came in N. of Maclagan linking up with the New Zealanders; so that we now present a strong united front over a frontage of some 12 miles and the enemy will batter himself against it in vain.

Paul went into Amiens yesterday in search of newspapers and supplies and reports that the great city of Amiens had been practically deserted since I passed through last Monday. This shows how imminent the peril to Amiens was in the minds of the population. Meanwhile events S. of the Somme had a fluctuating career. You must understand that the main disaster to the British Front in this part arose through the failure of the Fifth Army which held the line S. of the Somme. Fifth Army has been practically pulverised into fragments. The French immediately took over the Defence of the Line S. of the Somme but have moved slowly and for several days the ~~Defence of the Somme~~ situation on my right flank was very obscure. I therefore made all preparations to defend the line of the Somme W. of Sailley le Sec as far as Aubigny, in case the enemy tried to get behind me, but since yesterday the position down S. is much more satisfactory, as I sent Rosenthal with the 9th Brigade to Cachy and the mere presence of the Brigade in that locality seemed to stiffen up everybody still forward.

As we Australians have so far lost no prisoners to the enemy and as from conversation with German prisoners I learned that they had had no idea whatever that the Australians were in this part of the world - our Press correspondents are forbidden even to mention the fact that the Australians are in this vicinity and several long cables which I know are ready to to Australia have been held up in consequence - the full story therefore of what the Australians and New Zealanders have done to entirely retrieve the situation will probably not be known to the world at large until the news has become stale.

I am afraid it will be some little time before I can again write by my own hand in any detail as the situation requires my constant attention and I am all day long flying about in my motor car visiting parts of my own line and those of my neighbours, so as to keep in touch with every development of the situation.

Signed.

JOHN MONASH.



(COPY)

54 Victoria Street,  
LONDON. S.W.1.  
28/12/18.

I should like to tell you something of the State Banquet last night at Buckingham Palace, to which I was invited. Apart from the Royal Family, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson and their suite, the members of the King's and Queen's Households, and the Ambassadors, the guests numbered in all, only 68 persons, so that it was a very special privilege to be present, particularly in view of the historic occasion, and of the fact that, as stated to me by such an authority as Earl Shaftesbury (the Queen's Chamberlain), it proved to be the most brilliant Royal function of modern time.

I found that I already knew quite a number of the guests, who consisted of some members of the Peerage, holding high public office, Ministers of the Cabinet, the Ambassadors of France, Italy, United States, Spain and Japan and distinguished Naval and Military officers; of the latter those in uniform were confined to Sir Douglas Haig and Generals Robertson, Henry Wilson, Fielding and Taylor (of Canada); also Admirals Jellicoe, Beatty and Wemyss. There were also two representatives of the Indian Army, Sir Satyendra Sinha and the Maharajah of Bikanou.

I arrived at the Palace when about half the guests had assembled in a spacious corridor leading to the State Rooms and there met for the first time the Marquis of Crewe, Earl Reading (Sir Rufus Isaacs) and Lady Reading (who looked very Jewish), Lord Milner, the Marquis Imperiali (Italian Ambassador) Sir Derek Keppel and the Archbishop of Canterbury. After a wait of some ten minutes, during which the remainder of the guests assembled, we were conducted singly, each by an officer of the Household, with his wand of office, into the White Drawing Room, where the Royal Household, consisting of the King, Queen, Princes Henry and George, Princesses Mary, Christian and Patricia and the Duke of Connaught were assembled. There was no formal announcement of names. Each guest was first welcomed by the King (who knew me instantly) and by him presented to President Wilson, who stood on his right; then welcomed by the Queen and presented to Mrs. Wilson. When each guest had passed he was ushered along a brilliantly lighted corridor, full of beautiful paintings, into the Banquet Hall, which was a blaze of splendour, such as, I imagine, has seldom been seen before. In size it was about as wide and half as long as the Ball Room of our Government House in Melbourne; richly decorated in white and gold, with six

great crystal electroliers spreading a magnificent illumination. At one end was a dais and throne (which remained unoccupied throughout the evening) and at the other end an Organ Gallery, accommodating the band of the Royal Regiment of Artillery. The whole corridor and the whole of the Banquet Hall were lined on all sides with bearded Yeomen of the Guard, in their traditional Tudor black gold and crimson, who stood at attention, with their pikes and halberds throughout the whole banquet. In addition the whole of the table attendants were in the Royal Livery, scarlet and gold, there being one to each guest, standing stiffly at attention behind his chair. The chairs were crimson damask with white and gold frames.

The whole of the Royal gold plate had been brought from Windsor Castle, and made a most amazingly magnificent display. The table appointments, including plates, knife handles, forks, spoons, salt cellars, flower bowls, vases and dishes were all of solid gold, highly polished and brilliantly scintillating. Each flower bowl was a beautiful specimen of delicate modelling and most of them were large and imposing. The flowers, throughout, were scarlet and crimson, comprising chiefly azaleas and ranunculi. In addition, on three sides of the Hall, were displayed great high trophies of the remainder of the Royal gold plate, trays, dishes, vases and salvers, each most exquisitely modelled and chased and each specially illuminated by concealed electric globes, so that their polished surfaces reflected a blaze of golden light in all directions. On the walls were also three of the famous Royal Tapestries.

Except the small handful of Naval and Military Officers the whole of the guests were in evening dress (not Court dress) with white waistcoats, all wearing the Stars and Ribbons of their orders, and miniatures of their Badges. The ladies were in full evening toilette, with diamond coronets and necklaces.

As soon as all the guests had taken their appointed places at the table, which was arranged in one great horseshoe, the Royal party entered, ushered in by the officers of the Household walking backwards and waving their wands. The President led in the Queen and the King followed with Mrs. Wilson, and then came the rest of the Royal Family. As the small procession entered the Hall, the band played a fanfare, followed by the "Star Spangled Banner" and "God Save the King." It was a most impressive and historic moment, after which all at once sat down and dinner was promptly served.

I had, on my right, Rudyard Kipling, and beyond him Sir Joseph Thomson (President of the Royal Society) and on my left Lord Burnham (Proprietor of the Daily

Telegraph) whom I had entertained at my headquarters in France last September, and beyond him Sir Henry Wilson. Opposite to me were Louis Botha, J.S. Sargent (the painter) and Winston Churchill. The meal passed amid a loud buzz of conversation and laughter and without restraint of any kind. Contrary to custom the two toasts came on before, and not after the dessert, and before the Port was served. When the King rose to speak the whole company, including the ladies, rose also, and remained standing while the King delivered his oration and until President Wilson had completed his reply. The speeches were brief, but dignified in tone and lofty in sentiment and Wilson's mobile face and hands were a study to watch. Cigars and cigarettes were served at the table, but the ladies did not leave alone, being conducted by their cavaliers straight into the Red Drawing Room, all the guests following. All the men smoked there and coffee was served. Here three groups were formed, respectively around the King, the Queen and Mr. and Mrs. Wilson; most of the guests were presented to each in turn. I had just five minutes with the King and the President, but over ten minutes with the Queen, who talked about her son, now at Aust. Corps H.Q. and was most enthusiastic in praise of Australia and her soldiers, many of whom she had met at Windsor Castle. I was greatly surprised to find that Her Majesty spoke with a very strong foreign accent. I had also a chat with the young and very beautiful Duchess of Sutherland (whom I had already met a couple of weeks ago at the Godleys) and who was "on duty" as Mistress of the Robes. The Queen wore cloth of gold and many magnificent diamonds, especially on the corsage, including the Kohinoor and the great Cullinan. My five minutes with the President were quite formal. He has a smile not unlike Roosevelt.

The company remained together until after midnight no one withdrawing until the Royal Household retired. The Duke of Connaught singled me out for special attention and was very affable. Amongst others whom I met for the first time or renewed acquaintanceship were Lloyd George, Lord Rayleigh, Asquith, Viscount French, Arthur Balfour, and Austin Chamberlain.

The King and Queen withdrew precisely at midnight and then the distinguished company dispersed, with memories of a thrilling function of unsurpassed brilliancy and splendour which yielded not a dull moment.

I enclose a report of the two speeches and a full list of the guests also the Invitation and Menu cards. Note Kipling's autograph. I swapped it for one of my own, which he insisted on my giving him. He entertained me with three good stories about myself related to him by others.

(Signed.) JOHN MONASH.

*March  
1918.*

A CYCLE PATROL AND OPEN WARFARE.

*By Capt. H. Peters  
38<sup>th</sup> Div  
A.I.F.*

I have just finished reading a letter written by the late General Sir John Monash to a friend, describing the retreat of the Fifth Army in March 1918, and the re-establishment of the line of defence by the Australian divisions.

Sir John's account is full, and may be termed the "eagle's-eye" view, my reminiscences the "worm's-eye" view, for in my then capacity of Scout Officer, much of my duty was accomplished in close contact with Mother Earth.

My memories of course include those of marching forward along roads impeded by all the rout of an army in retreat, the fleeing inhabitants; I recall that the sight of "Aussies" going forward gave heart to many of the fugitives, some of the French country folk even turning back towards their deserted homes; was it to guard them? Perish the thought, no, it was confidence in the wearers of the slouch hat engendered by previous contact with the older Divisions of the A.I.F.

But all this may be read elsewhere, why should I write it, rather should I tell of certain individual experiences which I believe to be unique.

One, was the first A.I.F. Cycle Patrol in the face of the enemy, this was undertaken by a

patrol of five 38th Battalion Scouts, under my leadership.

At that time, still Lieutenant, and still 38th Battalion Scouting and Raiding Officer, I, from my long experience of this work, was the trusted Scout for any special work required by Brigade and Divisional Headquarters.

So it was that on March 27th<sup>1918</sup> when the 38th Battalion A.I.F. was halted for the night at Authie, I received orders that made me realize that for me there was no comfortable night's rest upon the straw of the big barn. The day had been a hard one for there is something exhausting about travelling in railway trucks and then we had marched some ten miles since detraining at Mondicourt.

General McNicholl G.O.C. 10th Brigade A.I.F. had sent for me, and his instructions were to get bicycles from somewhere and push on in the general direction of the enemy, and send back and bring back information, and if possible make contact with the enemy. The General confessed himself without reliable information, "Plenty of reports" he said, "but all contradictory" and so he had determined to send out and get all he could by his own scouts.

"How many Peters?" I suggested my five best scouts; signallers were despoiled of six push bicycles and we set out riding always against the

tide of confusion made by retiring troops, formed and unformed, and the panicking French peasants; but as we moved forward towards the enemy, this pressure lessened and military order was found here and there. But still cross-roads of importance were being shelled and there confusion was confounded.

Villages were approached cautiously, then cycles went into the ditch and a detail of ~~the~~ guarded them while three accompanied my careful approach to the village, as the men in the successive villages were identified as "Tommys" so we regained our bicycles and pressed on.

At each village, information was sought, but without securing anything useful and authoritative, even officers, when found, were possessed of only confused and unreliable information.

Perhaps ten such villages and so many barraged cross roads were covered, then when approaching Hebuterne by scouting methods, we saw the silhouette of sentries with wide-brimmed hats, not "Aussie" hats, surely not "Yanks", no, 'twas the New Zealand Rifles, and the sight of these fine soldiers, admittedly the best in France, made me feel that here I was in contact with the front line.

From the sentry I secured the location of the Divisional Headquarters, and found them in a chateau, then from the busy staff got information,

plenty of it, accurate too, though they had only just moved down to that area.

My maps were marked, information recorded and suggestions for a point of junction with their flank made, and then with all speed back in the direction Authie. No difficulty now, we knew the villages were not hostile, we were with the current that set so steadily toward the West.

The return to Authie was made an hour after dawn, but our billets were deserted, Brigade Headquarters had moved, and so down the road in the direction of Franvillers, until we caught up with a bus-column, scores of London busses crowded with Australian soldiers, this was a novelty.

I found General McNicholl, and proffered my maps, notes and reports proudly, feeling that the work had been well done. But there came the rub; while we were away, orders had come for us to move to Franvillers, about fifteen miles to the South, and from there to face east and move till we held up the enemy. And so to my proffering of the results of the night's duty came the answer "No use, sorry, but we are away off that area, and very busy about the place to which we are going."

And so the night's adventure resulted in little except that we had performed the first

A.I.F. Scouting Patrol on Cycles, a romantic and memorable night's work.

*Open-Order Fighting March 1918.*  
HEILLY AND MERICOURT-RIBEMONT.

But the scouts had yet another major part to play in that day's operations which were in the, to us novel, but really the old traditions of Open Warfare.

The 38th Battalion de-bussed at Franvillers on the heights and descended into the valley of the Ancre and passing through Heilly assumed artillery formation, for the approaches to this village were under long distance artillery fire, but these shells were avoided without casualties.

From Heilly the movement was in open order with the scouts, about eighteen in number, as a screen about three quarters of a mile in advance of the main body, with connecting files for message carrying.

Here came the scouts' opportunity to do their part in the spirit of Field Service Regulations, ground and cover ~~was~~ <sup>were</sup> examined and exploited and outside Mericourt was discovered a series of old French trenches revetted with fascines, later a deep valley revealed a barbed-wire enclosure, a Prisoner of War Compound with buildings, all of which merited

Chap VIII p. 30  
 & Chap VII p. ?



what proved to be a useful examination.

On up the hill to Marrett Wood, and through the wood to its Eastern edge, 'twas from that height we first sighted the enemy between one and two miles distant, moving forward in small groups, evidently an advance guard formation, but without a screen of scouts.

This information conveyed to the C.O. 38th brought an order to open fire and demonstrate force as much as possible, then to fall back upon the main body, which was consolidating upon the Old French Trenches.

Rapid fire from constantly changed positions inside the Eastern edge of Marrett Wood had the effect of checking the German advance and later, after we had withdrawn, of concentrating much artillery fire upon the empty wood.

While falling back, the prisoner-of-war compound was visited and several bags of rations were brought back and contributed to the immediate popularity of the Scouts on their rejoining their comrades.

A comic opera touch was provided by the discovery in the compound of a store of costumes, evidently the "props" of an entertainment troupe, and so, arranged as some top-hatted gentlemen - London policemen - ladies in evening dress - others in pyjamas and

and nightdresses, the returning scouts puzzled their comrades who believed the apparitions to be some more fugitive French folk.

The next day saw a race for the elevated position of Marrett Wood, which soon after its occupation by the 38th was strongly attacked by a German force which was repulsed.

March 26th and 27th were red-letter days for the 38th scouts, their first taste of open warfare, but there was much more to be done in the weeks that followed, when the scouts' work assumed an added importance and usefulness compared with the old trench warfare days.

*Robert H. Peters*  
*Capt.*  
*38th Bu A. I. F.*  
*3/1/24.*

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8259.

18 September 1933.

Lieut.-Colonel G.F.G. Wieck, D.S.O.,  
Swan Barracks,  
Francis Street,  
Perth, W.Aust.

Dear Wieck,

The war history has arrived at the point at which the 3rd and 4th Divisions moved down from Flanders to the Third Army. The occurrences of March 26 can be gathered from various sources, including some of the messages which you sent, but it is a little difficult to link them up. I believe that you came down with Pyke on the 25th, the day before the rest of the staff, to Third Army H.Q. Did you go to Couturelle that night, and were you in touch with Third Army or X Corps, or both?

If you could spare the time to let me have a few notes on the occurrences of March 25 and 26, I should be grateful. With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

MED HISTORICAL CHIEF XANT LMO

MED. HISTORY. CHAP. XVIII. TWO

to England, and from this date till the end of the month an average of only 400 per day were sent to Egypt. For these a precarious balance of empty beds could for a time be maintained by expansion of some of the hospitals, by increased evacuation overseas, and by discharge to the dépôts.

During August, in all, some 20,000 casualties, sick and wounded, disembarked at Alexandria and were distributed in nearly equal numbers between Alexandria and Cairo. At Alexandria, where the majority of seriously wounded were retained, medical arrangements were by now thoroughly efficient. The four British general hospitals—"among the best in the British Army"—were well equipped for dealing with large numbers of wounded. The staff had been augmented, and, as in France, their work was supervised by eminent civilian practitioners, who were given army rank as "consultants," working under the P.D.M.S. As at the Landing, disembarkation was well organised and carried out. The staff at the docks was reinforced from the 2nd Australian Division and 4th Light Horse field ambulances, which by reason of the fine physique and keenness of their men, worked with two bearers to a stretcher instead of four and were prominent in the strenuous work done at this, the final "lock" before distribution. Australian and New Zealand motor- and horse-ambulance waggons—the latter found more suitable for serious cases over cobbled roads—again did almost all the local transportation.<sup>3</sup> Six ambulance trains were now running, on which the Australian Red Cross maintained refreshment cars.

The greater number of the beds which the authorities in Egypt had estimated as free for the August offensive were in the Cairo centre, and the Australian medical units in particular were reckoned on to absorb a large proportion of the less serious cases. Unfortunately the crisis of the campaign found the Australian medical service in Egypt in process of local reorganisation and rearrangement. When the wounded arrived, the capacity of these hospitals for dealing with a rush was little greater than at the time of the Landing. Preparations for expansion were slow. The special drafts of medical personnel asked for in May did not arrive till

<sup>3</sup> Ten British motor-ambulance waggons arrived at this time, forty more soon after.

5th Field Troops. Hd. Qrs. } B3147.  
5th Dis. Base Hd Qrs. }  
Chief Ordnance Officer MJ100.  
For other Branches and Drill Halls  
see Dept. of Defence in Telephone  
Directory.

## Australian Military Forces—5th Military District.

Please quote this Number when replying

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Francis Street,  
Perth W.A.  
25/9/33

The Commonwealth of <sup>U</sup>Australia Historian,  
Victoria Barracks, Paddington, N.S.W.

Dear Bean,

With reference to your 8259 of 18inst. I beg to send the following.-

You will remember the day on which the Division was moving to Steenvoorde. On that night the Commander and Staff generally slept at Steenvoorde (I remember it because I slept on the office table a few inches from the telephone). Next morning H.Q. moved to Blaringham. After a few hours there Pyke and I were warned to proceed per car to Frevant and report to a British Corps H.Q. On arrival we were informed that the 3rd Div. was to billet in an area which was called, I think, the Mondicourt-Pas area. If I remember rightly we were sent on to 3rd Army H.Q. at Beauquesne to impart particulars re the Division. Then we had a look around our billet area and incidentally called at our H.Q. billet at the Couturelle chateau. Having decided on division of the area into Brigade areas.etc. we went to Doullens for dinner and billet but unfortunately ran into the conference of C. in Cs. We were fixed up at a neighbouring hotel. Next morning Pyke delivered me at Couturelle and then returned to Blaringham.

At Couturelle I had a motor cyclist and was in touch with the Frevant Corps H.Q. by ~~xx~~telephone. There were no troops in the vicinity. During the late forenoon (I am now hazy regarding actual times) I was rung up by Frevant Corps and asked if I were in touch with 4th Aust. Div. As at that time I was not aware of 4 Div. whereabouts I said "no". I was then told where they were (Basseux I think but am not sure). On locating the Div. On the map I said I would take the message and then send my motor cyclist with it. This was the famous message regarding the break through of German armoured cars at Hebuterne. Later on I received a message from some of the 10th Brigade which had detrained at Doullens to the effect that as our troops arrived from the North some one at Doullens was grabbing them and sending them piecemeal to guard all the roads to Doullens from the East. I could do nothing because I was the sole link between the Frevant Corps H.Q. and all the troops in the vicinity and I dared not leave the telephone. Subsequently I found out that Gen. McNicoll had arrived (Mondicourt I believe) so I sent him a message telling him he was the senior officer in the district and giving him all the latest details. Things settled down and in due course Div. Hq. was built up at Couturelle. Sometime that evening Gen. Monash, with myself and one A.D.C. left for Montigny. There we reported to Gen. Congreves Corps H.Q. After the two generals had had a lengthy conference, Gen.

5th Field Troops. Hd. Qrs. } B3147.  
5th Dis. Base Hd Qrs. }  
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Directory.

## Australian Military Forces—5th Military District.

Please quote this Number when replying

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Monash gave me an outline of what he wanted done. I took this down in the form of rough notes (original now with War Museum). I was told to return and bring the Division into action. Leaving at about 1 a.m. in the General's car (he stayed at Montigny) I made for Doullens expecting to meet a bus column somewhere south of the town. On the high ground south of Beauval I stopped the car and wrote an operation order for the leading Brigade which I understood was to be the 11th. The only light I had was the tiny bulb in the corner of the car. The order completed I went on and found the bus column a mile or so south of Doullens. I inquired for Gen. Cannan but no one seemed to know where he was. Gen. Monash had told me that minutes counted so I decided to be bold. I informed Lt-Col Woolcock that he was the most senior officer I could find and I handed him the order saying that he was to act at once as if he were the Brigadier and that he would be fully responsible for results if he did not act. I told him also that I would find Gen. Cannan and tell him what had happened: having seen the column move I went to look for Gen. Cannan. I found the latter after about half an hour and when I showed him my copy of the order he hurried away after the column. It was then just about daybreak. I went to Couturelle and having had a wash, shave, and breakfast, wrote the order for the balance of the Division to follow. This completed I returned by car to Montigny and picking up Gen Monash we were in time to see the bus column arrive at Franvilliers. At that time only myself and A.D.C. composed the General's staff. We selected a private residence for a H.Q. and from the top story window of this watched the advanced guard of the Brigade move down into the Ancre valley. During the day it was simply amazing how many British units (parts of the retiring troops) reported themselves saying that they were quite ready to fight so long as they could find someone to cooperate with or take orders from. These were mostly gunners and their support at this early stage gave us a most comfortable feeling: without them we would not have had a gun at the start. There were some tanks too but they did not stay with us for long. I think the war diary is fairly detailed from this day onwards so will not add more.

I trust this is what you wanted. With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

*Geo. S. Winst*

8320.

12 October 1933.

Dear Wieck,

Thanks for your very interesting letter and for the valuable information contained in it. One or two small difficulties have arisen in connection with certain details. Colonel Woolcock, with whom I have been in touch, tells me that he cannot remember seeing you on the night of March 26/27, and that the orders given to him were to report to General Cummings at Heilly chateau and act under his orders. It occurs to me that possibly you may have given him this order, failing Cannan's instructing him otherwise, and that you may have handed Monash's order to Cannan. Woolcock tells me that he did not see Cannan until after he (Woolcock) left General Cummings and was instructing his officers to take over the line as Cummings directed. Cannan then came up and took over.

Second, I assume that the order which you wrote by the roadside was the set of instructions which agree with your notes in the War Memorial files - an admirable example of Monash's lucid work. How many copies of this would have been made in your notebook? If only two, and one was given to Unshenk and the second to Cannan, would you have no third copy of the order? The records show that the order was afterwards typed, apparently for record purposes, on March 28.

I don't know if these comments will help your recollection, but, if they do, I should be most grateful if you could help me to solve these small difficulties.

With kind regards to yourself and Mrs. Wieck,

Yours sincerely,

Lieut.-Colonel G.F.G. Wieck, D.S.O.,  
Swan Barracks,  
Francis Street,  
Perth, W.Aust.

Woolcock

MEDICAL HISTORY. CHAP. VII. SIXTEEN

On the same day also the D.A. and Q.M.G. of the Anzac Corps wrote to General Headquarters stating that

as the D.M.S., M.E.F., has now arrived, the necessity for Colonel Manders to act in his stead no longer exists. As Colonel Manders will have to accompany his Division, it will be impossible for him to continue to carry out his duties of D.M.S. (*sic*) with the Army Corps Headquarters in addition to his duties as A.D.M.S., Division.

This matter having been referred to General Birrell, he instructed that in future all orders should be sent to corps headquarters.<sup>13</sup>

On April 23rd the 1st Australian Divisional staff transferred to H.M.S. *Prince of Wales*, corps headquarters being in H.M.S. *Queen* and the transport *Minnewaska*. The A.D.M.S., N.Z. & A. Division, remained with that division's headquarters in the transport *Lützow*, and on that day held a conference of his commanding officers. Sir Ian Hamilton and the General Staff of G.H.Q., M.E.F., transferred to the *Queen Elizabeth*, and left for Helles. The *Arcadian* remained at Mudros.

During the fortnight covered by the foregoing account, special training, as intensive as circumstances permitted, was carried out. Landings were rehearsed in detail, as was also transfer from ships to tows. Meanwhile in the crowded transports the usual transport diseases had been increasing, chiefly measles, influenza, pneumonia, and other respiratory infections.<sup>14</sup> A case of smallpox occurred in the *Arcadian*. Diarrhoea, with clinical features suggestive of infection rather than irritation, is also recorded.

Slight cases were treated in ships' hospitals; serious cases were sent, when transport was available, to No. 1 Australian Stationary Hospital. This unit had, in the teeth of great difficulties, built up a fine hospital, expanding to 400 occupied beds. "Our camp looks most imposing. We have 34 marquees, 2 open tents, and 20 bells; 9 marquees a little apart for isolated cases. Ward tents are pitched, two or

<sup>13</sup> Colonel Manders in his personal diary on this date notes: "With the D.M.S., trying to settle Hospital Ships. . . . It is not really my job, but his." The A.D.M.S., 29th Division, had declined responsibility in connection with transports. Colonel Manders also expressed the opinion that Mudros should be a base for light cases, "being four hours off instead of forty-eight." This suggestion was referred to General Birdwood, who agreed, but "said it was a G.H.Q. job and too late to change."

<sup>14</sup> A peculiar epidemic of "rheumatic influenza" is recorded—sometimes diagnosed as "rheumatic fever"—which persisted on to the Peninsula.



FOR QUICK SERVICE USE  
THE TELEGRAPH.

PLEASE *TURN* OVER.

# RECEIVED TELEGRAM

The first line of this telegram contains the following particulars in the order named.



Office of Origin.

Words.

Time Lodged.

No.

*Perth 19*

*2.44p*

Beh. C.879.—11/1932.

Remarks.

To

*Historian  
Victoria Barracks  
PADDINGTON*

This message has been received subject to the Post and Telegraph Act and Regulations.  
The time received at this Office is shown at the foot of the Form.  
The date stamp indicates the date both of lodgment and of reception unless otherwise shown after the particulars of time lodged.

*Would help greatly if could  
see copy of order written  
by me. Couturelle*

*Recd  
5pm  
23/10/33*

*Wieck*

*4.55p*

**NOTE.**—The standard time for the Eastern States of Australia (Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania) is half an hour in advance of the standard time for South Australia, and two hours in advance of the standard time for Western Australia.

USE THE  
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**REGISTERED POST.**

For a fee of 3d. the Department undertakes to pay compensation up to £2 for entire loss. For mail matter within the Commonwealth, comprehensive insurance may be effected up to an amount of £50 (covering damage, rifling or loss), for a fee ranging from 4d. (for compensation not exceeding £5) up to 1/6 (for compensation up to the sum of £50).

**REGISTER ALL VALUABLE ARTICLES,  
PREFERABLY ON COMPREHENSIVE  
COMPENSATION BASIS.**

8333.

24 October 1933.

Dear Wieck,

Herewith copy of the famous order. Pyke and Cannan are both under the impression that no written order was left with Cannan, but that it was read to him. I think you may have given emergency instructions to Woolcock. He certainly was told to report at Heilly Chateau, for he did

so.

With kind regards and many thanks for your help,

Yours sincerely,

Lieut.-Colonel G.F.G. Wieck, D.S.O.,  
Swan Barracks,  
Francis Street,  
Perth, W.Aust.

on the way at Tanah Djampea,<sup>4</sup> where, according to other rumours, a German warship had stranded earlier in the war and had been towed off by a Dutch ship. Nothing suspicious, however, was to be found there.

At Makassar the *Una* was taken into port to complete her supplies, and was welcomed by the Dutch officials and residents. The flotilla then separated, the *Una* and *Yarra* scouting along the eastern coast of Borneo, and the *Warrego* and *Parramatta* working up the western side of Celebes. When they rejoined company at Sandakan, about the 20th of November, a message from the Board told them that

flotilla should not be absent from Australian waters longer than present duties necessitate,

and asked for an approximate date of return. But "present duties" were more imperative and more continuous than the Board suspected. The China Squadron at once took the Australian ships over for patrol work in the Archipelago, and, when the Commander-in-Chief was asked how long he proposed to keep them, he replied:—

Hope to retain services of Australian Squadron so long as present German schemes constitute a menace. This depends on developments.

His need, indeed, was so urgent that the *Encounter* was also requisitioned for Malaysian work. That ship, as has already been stated, was made ready in July to leave for Fanning Island, and left on the 21st; on the 27th she was at Suva, reached Fanning by the 13th of August, and unfortunately ran aground there. However, she landed a small garrison and supplies for the cable station, and with the help of hasty repairs was able to get back to Suva, from which she sailed on the 5th of November *viâ* Thursday Island for Singapore,

<sup>4</sup>This visit to Tanah Djampea, and the earlier visits to islands near Timor, evoked from the Dutch Government complaints that Australian destroyers had violated Dutch neutrality. The Dutch view, apparently, was that belligerent warships should not at any time pass through neutral waters, unless (a) damage or stress of weather forced them to run to port, (b) they merely wanted to complete their supplies of food or coal. In such cases a twenty-four hours' stay in port was permissible. The British view was that, while the above restrictions certainly applied to visits to Dutch ports, yet the mere passage through neutral waters without commission of any act of war was not a violation of neutrality. It was, however, clear that the actual visits made by the Australian destroyers (which at Tanah Djampea at least included the landing of troops for recreation) were technically violations of neutrality; and orders were issued to prevent their repetition. It should be noted in this connection that the *Emden* (p. 137 above) was ordered out of Dutch waters just when, after coaling, her crew was looking forward to recreation ashore.

6 Dec 1915.

70K, Tel. Park 38

THIRD AUSTRALIAN DIVISION

Divisional Headquarters,  
27th March 1918.

INSTRUCTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE MOVE OF THE  
DIVISION TO THE FRANVILLERS SECTOR.

SITUATION. On the morning of the 26th March the line ran ALBERT-BRAY. Orders were to hold the line but to retire in the face of a serious attack.

At 4-0 p.m. 26th orders were issued to hold the line at all costs. Orders could not be got to the troops in time, and the line was withdrawn to ALBERT and some point West of BRAY. The situation on this line is much confused and the position South of the SOMME is obscure.

ORDERS RECEIVED: Orders have been received by the Division to hold a line of wire and trench roughly conforming to the MERICOURT-SAILLY-le-Sec Road with both ~~m~~ flanks on the rivers - i.e., ANCRE and SOMME. To-night 26/27th, this line is being held by about 2,000 mixed infantry.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN: The Divisional Commander has decided that one Brigade will hold this line south of the CORBIE-BRAY Road, and one Brigade to the North of it.

The Brigade in reserve will be at Heilly. D.H.Q., Pioneer Bn., and Div. Machine Gun Company at Franvillers.

Divisional Artillery to move to BEHENCOURT.

HOW LINE TO BE OCCUPIED: The Battalions of the 11th Brigade will debus at cross-roads south of FRANVILLERS.

The first battalion will cross the river at HEILLY and move by the cart-track across the spur and occupy the line south of the CORBIE-BRAY Road.

The second battalion will move up the gully near MERICOURT and occupy the line north of the CORBIE-BRAY Road.

The River Valley will be actually held and not merely covered, and the position will be organised in depth.

The third battalion will be held in support of the right wing. Brig.-General Cannan will command all troops in the sector and will not allow any to leave until D.H.Q. consents.

READJUSTMENT: On the arrival of the 10th Brigade it will at once take over the line north of the CORBIE-BRAY Road, and the 11th Brigade battalion will be moved to its own brigade area.

GENERAL: All bridges over the SOMME east of BRAY have been destroyed; those further west have been prepared for demolition and will be blown up if the enemy advances.

South of the Somme the position of the left flank of the FIFTH ARMY is obscure, but it is said to be south of BRAY.

NORTH OF THE ANCRE: The 39th Division hold the line - H.Q. at ~~LAIEVILLE~~ LAIEVILLE. The 4th Australian Division has two brigades near BRESLE. H.Q. at BAIZIEUX.

ENEMY METHODS: The Boche attacks up valley and hollows and is quick at finding a gap. He gets his M.G.'s forward and uses them in enfilade. His infantry wait at 600 yards for the M.G.'s to get to work.

The next 48 hours are regarded as critical.

ARTILLERY: There is practically no artillery directly covering our line, but we may have many guns slightly further north, and they can give some help.

The enemy has not many guns.

Our Vickers guns should be mainly on the RIGHT.

MAPS: No 1/40,000 available.

S.A.A.: Sub-Park to carry as much S.A.A. as possible, and to move to the new area quickly.

2.

TRANSPORT AND PACKS: Transport should be sent down as early as possible.

D.H.Q. Divisional Headquarters will close at COUTERELLE at 8-0 a.m. and will move to FRANVILLERS.

(sgd) Geo. F. WIECK,  
Major  
for Lieut.-Colonel G.S.

HAN

Swan Barracks, Perth.  
30.10.33

My dear Bean,

I have just received the typed Instructions dated 27th March 1918, and have perused them with much interest. I will do my best to clear up this matter.

Firstly, the original of the message book Instructions was handed to a battalion commander near the head of the column. Up to now I have always <sup>thought</sup> that officer to be Woolcock. It was dark and confusing and perhaps seeing Woolcock in the vicinity, or soon after, I erred in thinking it was he. I cannot understand not mentioning this in the War Diary.

Secondly, I do not think I made a third copy. It was not usual to do so. I think possibly I read it to Cannan by the light of a head-lamp, and kept the duplicate in my book.

The typed Instructions are the same Instructions in a slightly embellished form. At Montigny we did not know the order in which units would arrive nor even if all would be in the same column: hence they are referred to in order of arrival. In my notes (now in War Museum) no reference is made to frontages &c because these would be marked on my map (I had my old Somme maps with me). Similarly, there was no reference to Woolcock and Cummings because we did not at the time know where Cummings was or whether Woolcock's battalion would be available. Woolcock could not be given any order to report before he arrived at Franvillers. We met the bus column and Monash stood chatting for some time with senior officers: at the same time I had to attend to other duties and if the orders were verbal they were not confirmed in writing unless the A.D.C. (Capt. P. Simonson) did so.

If we could find out which unit led the bus column we would know automatically to whom I handed the Instructions. I suggest also asking Woolcock where and from whom he received his orders to report to Cummings. If I wrote them I have no recollection of it.

As regards the typed Instructions, I certainly wrote a draft just after daylight at Couturelle. This draft may have been for the move of the remainder of the Division or it may have been the reproduced Instructions. I may have written both. While I wrote the draft Instructions on 27/3/18 it may not have been typed until next day and this would account for the date of typing entered above the Instructions. The reason for the reproduction is that other people would require to know what was happening & I was about to return to Montigny with my copy. Further, the original was written under adverse conditions and the copy would not be very brilliant. In drafting the reproduction I suppose I added a few frills etc, but on no account would I alter or vary the orders given. On this draft would be based the order for the move of the remainder of the Division.

I believe if I were close enough to Sydney to be able to go and read the War Diary the whole story would unfold in my mind. <sup>As</sup> I was a somewhat prolific writer in the Diary I feel keenly that I did not cover this part of the ground thoroughly. I was easily the hardest worked man in the Division at the time and any omission is excusable, I think. What I cannot understand is where my message book copy of the Instructions has gone: I would give a lot to see it. If I remember rightly its first sentence dealt with the fact that no 1/40000 maps were available - this comes lower down in the reproduction.

I am sorry I cannot be more exact in chasing the Woolcock "hare" but as I have <sup>no</sup> war papers of any kind I am forced to rely entirely upon memory. The flesh is very willing but 15 years is a long time. I would like to help in every possible way.

Thanks for good wishes which are fully reciprocated,  
Yours sincerely,

*Geo. J. Wieck*

42 Bn Col. Woolcock.

Dunbar <sup>was</sup> <sup>with</sup> Woolcock  
throughout - was to get orders from Belv  
in Heilly. Marched down there <sup>at</sup>  
abt 7 am., saw Cummings in Ban (paring  
his nails). Cummings told him by  
map that he was to take up  
whole front - across to Louane.  
W. asked if there were time for  
breakfast. C. said no - it was urgent.  
(But the men had been told by W. to  
get what they could - and had got some  
bully-beef.)  
Woolcott didn't see Belv  
during <sup>the</sup> night,  
but he had been with Cannon  
when the order to ~~charge~~ <sup>embark</sup> came up)  
Woolcott didn't get on with  
Cummings & told him he wished his  
own beds were there; he left &  
went down to the square & showed  
his officers the map.



Cannan. Pyke was with Wick ~~in~~ when Cannan received Mouash's order. They didn't give C. a copy but read it to him as the Bde was <sup>Embassy</sup>.

~~Woolcock~~ was  
Cannan was impressed with the appearance of the ~~people~~<sup>men</sup> after they had seen the people of Franvillers & Heilly fleeing. They were sitting by the road in Heilly cleaning their rifles & L.Gs. with determined faces — <sup>They knew what they were there for —</sup> they were not going to chance the Gs. coming thro'. Cannan wanted to reb. Cummings force at once as he thought its morale wd not be good for his own men.

(Advent of 3rd Div to Soume - Chap V).

Cannan & Vasey were on foot when they reconnoitred the old French line — they were not sure the line was there & Cummings was ~~vague~~ vague about it. It might not have been there, & so they had to be cautious in putting in the bde. Long distance shots were reaching the trenches when they were there.

3 D W. TREUX W. J. Jan 27 - 2, 1918.

137

According to history of 35 D W

17th 18th and 19th D L. 1. belonged to the 104 Inf Bde of the  
35 D W. J. W. Sandilands  
Commanded 104 Bde

RECEIVED AMBASSADOR ON THE AIR 482

Jan-Mar 1918

17th 18th and 19th D L. 1. belonged to the 104 Inf Bde of the 35 D W. J. W. Sandilands Commanded 104 Bde

4/1/18

first force during the corresponding season of the previous year, is not to be found in any single factor but in the systematic supervision now exercised over all measures for controlling transmissible disease. The camps were spaced out, the troops well fed, and not overcrowded; fly infection was minimised, cleanliness of person promoted. It is, however, probable that, while these direct measures played their part, the most important factor was the provision made for stamping out foci of infection by prompt evacuation of all cases, control of contacts, and search for carriers. A bacteriological laboratory, arranged in a railway carriage by the D.M.S., M.E.F., was the forerunner of even more mobile methods of ensuring prompt diagnosis, a task in which the Australian medical service became very directly concerned.<sup>20</sup> From January onwards routine bacteriological work for the A.I.F. was carried out under the direction of the senior bacteriologist, A.I.F.<sup>21</sup>

As regards inspiratory infections, the place taken in 1914-15 by pneumonia was now largely occupied by cerebrospinal fever, carriers ~~and contacts~~, being for the most part brought by transports from camps in Australia. Mumps took the place of measles. Gastro-intestinal infections were not conspicuous, though enteric was much more prevalent than in the preceding year. The ~~incidence of~~ the endemic insect-borne diseases of Egypt was the subject of strict appropriate procedures and the results were satisfactory. Stringent orders were issued regarding bilharzia<sup>22</sup> and relapsing fever. The force was effectively protected against small-pox. Ophthalmia did not become prevalent.

Of all diseases occurring in camps, with the possible exception of mumps, venereal infections were again the most difficult to prevent, the most troublesome to treat, and the most productive of absence

**Changes in  
disease  
picture**

*of infection*

*menace  
from*

**Venereal  
disease**

637

<sup>20</sup> See p. 485.

<sup>21</sup> Lieut.-Col. A. H. Tebbutt, and later Lieut.-Col. C. J. Martin. Hitherto the great bulk of the work was carried out in the Cairo Central Laboratory under Dr. C. Todd, to whom the Australian medical service was greatly indebted. The Australian Dermatological Hospital (see p. 519) was self-contained in respect of laboratory investigation.

<sup>22</sup> Though bathing in the Nile waters was prohibited, a number of cases that remained infective in Australia till the advent in 1919 of treatment by antimony tartrate were contracted from the infested "sweet-water canal" at Tel el Kebir, chiefly when the troops were watering horses.

Extract from

3rd Div. Order No 62

27/3/18

The 35 Div having reported their Troops  
 pushed forward in Wood in Square J11 to  
 east of Mercourt l'Abbe, the 10th Aust Inf Bde  
 will make necessary arngts to get in touch & if  
 practicable incorporate the ground held by  
 these troops in their line

10th Aust Inf Bde  
 Square J11

27/3/18

① The average period spent

1, 2  
sphere of influence

from duty.<sup>23</sup> The number of cases constantly under treatment in the Abbassia Detention Barracks rose from 183 in October to 607 in January, 1,187 in February, and 1,493 in March, ~~the period of stay~~ in hospital being thirty-five days. These figures represent approximately the number admitted monthly. By far the greater proportion of them were from the training dépôt. In these diseases, contagion being from without, isolation of cases and carriers could not affect their incidence. Of the means taken to abate the violence of attraction toward sources of infection—such as moral suasion, counter-attractions, fear, and stoppage of pay—the only one fully effective was distance from the ~~source of infection~~.<sup>24</sup> In the middle of March the D.M.S., A.I.F., found himself compelled to inform the corps commander that drastic steps must be taken to deal with the situation, “over 2,000 cases” being then under treatment. Leave from the Canal to Cairo was stopped, and the training dépôt was moved to Tel el Kebir. These steps resulted in the number dropping in April to 914.

At the end of January the improvised unit which had in October replaced the scratch staff that at first supervised the self-treatment of these cases was itself replaced by a fully-equipped and well-staffed scientific technical unit. The “Australian Dermatological Hospital” took up duty at the end of January, the two senior officers being sent on to Europe to study the methods in vogue. Hereafter venereal disease was treated with the same scientific accuracy as any other, and, except for the “moral” stigma, and military stoppage of pay as punishment for wilfully contracted disease, was on the same plane as scabies or scarlatina.

The most important medical procedure in preparation for the move to France was a complete compulsory inoculation

<sup>23</sup> During the year which ended in February, 1916, beginning with the concentration of all Australian cases in the isolation hospital at the old Detention Barracks, Abbassia, 8,858 cases were treated there, of whom 5,924 were Australian, 1,979 British, and 955 New Zealand, the average stay in hospital (taking all types of case) being 35 days. Of these 1,344 were returned to Australia. The incidence per 1,000 of troops can be seen in graph No. 6, at p. 466.

<sup>24</sup> The Australian Y.M.C.A. and the Australian branch of the B.R.C.S. co-operated in running soldiers' clubs, etc., in Cairo, Alexandria, and elsewhere. Meanwhile an organised system of personal prophylaxis was developed by the medical service for the careless or uncontrollable.

27 March 1918.

10 Bde to RW1 (38 Bn)

RWG (37 Bn) for information.

No. MN132 (continued - but MN133 was handed in at 10 Bde signal office at 11.40 pm).

The 35 Bde have reported their troops pushed forward in wood in J11 to east of Mercourt l'Abbe. Please send out patrols at once to discover whether this is so or not and report result to this office. If the fact is as stated you will at once get into touch with the troops now there and if practicable incorporate the ground held by them in your line. Report to be made to these Hq when ground is taken over or if not taken over reasons for not doing so. The 39 Bn is relieving 33 Bn tonight.

continuous rains converted the surface into a tenacious mud. The tents were unfloored; mess huts and drying huts were lacking. Inspiratory infection, which even in the summer had caused the prevailing diseases, assumed a prevalence that gave rise to anxiety. The troops were transferred to Seymour pending the reconstruction of the Broadmeadows Camp, but any benefit that might have resulted from the transfer was frustrated by the rush of recruits. Seymour Camp became greatly overcrowded, and, in spite of improved hospital accommodation, deaths from pneumonia (idiopathic or associated with influenza or measles) became frequent.

A disease curiously similar to pneumonia in its epidemiological features, and with even greater lethal potentialities, now appeared. Since 1910 cerebro-spinal meningitis—part of a world wave of this disease<sup>19</sup>—had been increasing in the civil community. At the time under review the carrier incidence was beyond doubt very great.<sup>20</sup> The circumstances in the camps, particularly in the southern States, provided precisely the conditions welcomed by the *neisseria meningitidis*. A few cases occurred at Broadmeadows in May. Among the 15,000 troops at Seymour the outbreak assumed almost epidemic proportions. The disease appeared to a lesser degree in all the other States and, with measles, was a contributory cause of the abatement of recruiting and of the corresponding decrease in enlistments that took place during the last three months of the year.

As elsewhere, preventive measures pursued the inspiratory epidemic instead of forestalling it. In August the Principal Medical Officer of the 3rd Military District asked for increased tent space at Seymour. The Director-General thought it "not so much the number of men in the tent as the amount of fresh air" that mattered, but agreed that "the numbers should be reduced as much as possible."

<sup>19</sup> The prevalence of this disease in Canadian camps in England in 1914-15 will be recalled.

<sup>20</sup> Precise data are not available. The detailed bionomics of this disease have to a great extent been worked out during or since the war.

37 Bn to 10 Bde.

2.20 am 28/3/18  
No. EDW/08 in reply to MN 132.

My patrols searched this wood got touch with 35 Diver  
and are in position on the East. This happened before your  
message above quoted (MN 132) was received. RWI has been  
informed & my patrols will hold the ground until RWI takes  
over the position. Am advancing my line to conform with  
RWI line & will report result when established.

---

10 Bde reported this to 3 Dcv. at 4 a.m.



Living conditions were improved; opportunity for infection from without was limited by the abolition of night leave and of transfers from infected camps. A system of decentralisation was initiated, limiting the size of camps to 5,000. In September a conference of specialists, presided over by the Commonwealth Director of Quarantine (Dr. J. H. Cumpston) recommended as "essential" the stamping out of the disease by the lessening of overcrowding. Though recruiting continued, transfer to camp was for the time stopped. By this time the carrier-rate among the troops in camp had so greatly increased that the direction of the flow of infection was reversed—the camps became sources of contagion to the general community instead of *vice versa*.<sup>21</sup> The outbreak was aetiologically only an incident—though the most dramatic one—in a widespread wave of inspiratory infection,<sup>22</sup> whose ripples have been traced even to Gallipoli. With summer and improved conditions in all the States the tide of infection ebbed; but inspiratory infections, though they decreased, remained very prevalent. Cerebro-spinal meningitis continued in sporadic form with local and, in 1916, seasonal outbreaks.

Of the cases of disease reported among the troops in Australia from July, 1915, to June, 1916, inclusive,<sup>23</sup> 61 per cent were from inspiratory and nasopharyngeal infections, of which 20 per cent were measles, 55 per cent "influenza."

**Incidence in camps**

Up to 30th June, 1916, 604 cases of cerebro-spinal meningitis had occurred among the recruits (an incidence at least five times that among the civil population), with 256 deaths—a mortality of 42.4 per cent. Up till this date there had

<sup>21</sup> In South Australia, for example, it was reported that every case among civilians in September had been traced to the military camps.

<sup>22</sup> The epidemic of cerebro-spinal meningitis coincided with an extensive incidence of a febrile disease of moderate severity, but without mortality, whose nature was obscure and which was therefore called "influenza." The suggestion was made that a considerable proportion of these were meningococcal. (From a report to the Director of Quarantine by Captain M. J. Holmes.) In a very complete study of the civil epidemic by N. H. Fairley (afterwards a major in the A.A.M.C.) and C. A. Stewart (subsequently a captain in the A.A.M.C.), published by the Commonwealth Quarantine Department, reference is made to a "pseudo-influenzal attack without definite meningitis."

<sup>23</sup> Figures showing general incidence of disease do not exist before this date, and those available are not sufficiently complete for statistical purposes.

Capt Symons to 37 Bn.

28/3/18

Message No 5. 8 am.

(Messages 344 missing)

Enemy advancing in small parties. We have Lewis guns and snipers out in front to engage them. If we are attacked seriously we would like more ammunition. We can give at least half an hour's warning before an enemy attack. Still in touch with Lances Fus.

THE SERVICE IN AUSTRALIA 253

dental establishment for home service of 2 majors, 6 captains, 160 lieutenants, 5 warrant officers, and 163 staff-sergeants.

In August, 1915, authority was given for the formation in each military district of an "army massage reserve," and an establishment of 6 honorary lieutenants, 48 masseurs (staff-sergeants), and 48 masseuses (staff-nurses) was approved. From these were drawn operators for the military hospitals at home. The technical side of this branch of physical treatment was developed with an enthusiasm and conviction which left its theory and science—as expounded by the medical service and profession—far behind. By June, 1916, 18 male and 32 female operators were enlisted in this reserve.

As regards the supply and distribution of medical and surgical stores and equipment, the arrangements with Great Britain<sup>14</sup> freed Australia from the task of providing these for her overseas force. Home requirements were for some time met, very uneconomically, by a system of local purchase.

**Pharmacists  
and medical  
stores**

It was not till December, 1915, that the services of the pharmaceutical profession were enlisted in effective co-operation and the matter of medical supplies placed on a satisfactory basis. In December an establishment was approved by the Minister for what was in effect a pharmaceutical service. This included a commissioned officer (honorary captain) in each military district, through whom were made all appointments to overseas units and to home service positions. Pharmacists appointed to the A.A.M.C. Reserve were made to rank as honorary lieutenants; all dispensers, whether for home service or with the A.I.F., were assured of non-commissioned rank. A base dépôt of medical stores was established in each military district to supply camps, hospitals, and transports, replenishing by contract for items manufactured in Australia, by indent for imports. In April, 1916, a central dépôt of medical stores was authorised for "the supply, purchase, or manufacture and subsequent distribution to districts of medical, surgical, dental, and veterinary supplies." This ultimately served all the military requirements. The "senior pharmacist" in

<sup>14</sup> See pp. 57 and 94.

Symons to 37 Bn

28/3/18

Message No. 7

8.50 am

(message No 6 missing)

Lances. Troop in wood have only 30 men. Are windy and want assistance. Can we or 38a supply their needs. This is the position that will be attacked first.

---

by adjutant 37 Bn  
This message was sent to CO. 38 Bn for information, with message stating that "OC. D/Key will get in touch with you & arrange mutually".

---

that personnel should be "mobilised" by volunteers from these three sources, or, if an insufficient number should present, it might be enlisted "outside the Australian Military Forces" for the "term of the war or such period as may be required." Special provision was afterwards made whereby volunteers for the A.I.F., while awaiting enrolment, passed through a period of home service, which formed part

**Preliminary  
to service in  
A.I.F.**

of their training, and ultimately some ninety-five per cent of all men who volunteered for the medical service overseas were occupied, for longer or shorter periods, in these home duties. Moreover, officers and other ranks who were medically unfit, or unable for other reasons to proceed overseas for service in the A.I.F., were eligible for home service. A defect (and that a serious one) of this method of providing for administration and command at home was that important positions were at times filled by men without war experience. It must in fairness to the home authorities be said that in 1916 efforts were made to obtain "first class men" from the A.I.F.; but they "could not be spared."

**Nurses**

A military instruction in July, 1915, laid it down that "all nursing duties in connection with the Military Forces where females are employed will in future be undertaken by members of the Army Nursing Service." Special terms of service were defined for this duty and included a condition that nurses who thus worked in home establishments should have a prior claim to enlistment in the A.I.F.

**Dental officers**

Till the middle of May, 1915, dental work in connection with recruits was carried out by voluntary service. In that month Ministerial approval was given for calling up for duty "at pay of rank" dentists who had been "recommended for commissions in the A.A.M.C.," their function being to "carry out work to make men fit for service." Voluntary work was, however, continued, particularly in the capital cities, where the public dental hospitals were made available for the dental work among recruits, only the "cost of material and out-of-pocket expenses" being made a charge on the Defence Department. A military order dated 22nd February, 1916, provided for a

From Brig Gen Sandilands

28/3/18

B.G. 1

to 64<sup>a</sup> I.B.

8.55 am

Ref 1/100000 Amiens 17 we hold Wood l'Abbe  
 immediately south of Treux situation good until  
 Angacs withdrew toward Mericourt. Consider  
 situation Ribemont does not necessitate large  
 Garrison. Could you push out a party to about  
 C of Mericourt. Am getting short of men

SURGERY

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maintained under the direction of eminent British consultants. After May only slight cases were sent to the Australian general hospitals in Cairo, and in these the mortality rate was 0.75 per cent: the average for all Australian wounded being 6.8 per cent. After passing through Egypt the greater proportion of serious cases, when convalescent, and all those requiring reparative surgery, were invalided to England or Australia.

The following table shows the total woundings recorded, in the admission and discharge books reaching the Medical Research Committee, as having occurred in the A.I.F. during 1915. They represent battle-casualties that reached the field ambulances or other medical units. The number of "wounded" may be taken as correct to within 5 per cent; that of deaths from wounds in medical units to within 10 per cent.

Region of body.	Total wounds and accidents.	Total died from wounds in medical units.	Mortality rate per cent.
Head (including scalp) ..	2,120	381	17.9
Face .. ..	1,346	76	5.6
Neck .. ..	398	28	7.0
Chest .. ..	1,104	159	14.4
Abdomen (all) <sup>39</sup> .. ..	736	287	38.9
Perineum <sup>40</sup> ... ..	90	9	10.0
Back .. ..	1,367	107	7.8
Upper extremities .. ..	6,323	122	1.9
Lower extremities .. ..	7,663	302	3.9
Unclassified .. ..	433	..	..
	21,580	1,471	6.8

<sup>39</sup> The exact nature of the injury is recorded in only 414 of these, out of which number 205 are entered as "injury of abdominal wall."

<sup>40</sup> Including bladder and rectum.

<sup>41</sup> The occurrence as a complication of sepsis and other forms of wound infection was not recorded with sufficient frequency to permit of statistical presentation even as an approximation. It is recorded by Colonel F. D. Bird, R.A.M.C.T., whose experience of hospital ship work in the Dardanelles was unrivalled, that while rare at first there was an increasing number of cases of rapidly spreading gangrene with gas formation and rapid death. It was seen chiefly in ragged and dirty wounds but not confined to such. Its onset was presaged by a peculiar smell. A general order was issued in October that such cases should be isolated on hospital ships and transports. Radical removal of dead and injured tissue became a practice in the immediate surgical treatment of all wounds.

28 ~~27~~ March 1918

10 Bde to RW1 (38Bn) by runner

No. BM235 9.35 am.

No reply yet received to MN132. Expedite.

If not already done so push forward your line to East of wood in J 11 b to join up with 18<sup>th</sup> Lanes. Fus.



Headquarters, and not less so to those in the several military districts. It was also a matter of very serious concern to the civil community. The prodigious debauch of the world war made the "civilised" communities that took part in it realise the vulnerability of the Colossus of modern "civilisation," but in few ways did it bring home the fact more intimately than in revealing the extent to which the micro-organisms of transmissible diseases took charge, even in the camps of training at home, whenever any relaxation was permitted in respect of those fundamental principles of preventive medicine whereby the health of modern communities is maintained and the evolution of the "Western" type of civilisation made possible.

During the summer of 1914-15, up to which time there was still an adequate supply of well-trained medical personnel, no specially untoward happenings impeded the orderly progress of camp life: gastro-intestinal infections are very susceptible to a good water-supply and to comparatively simple "sanitation," and were never prevalent. Typhoid (very common in outback towns) was inconspicuous, paratyphoid unrecognised. The rush of enlistments after the Landing reached a maximum in July, when they totalled for all States for the month 36,575, of which 21,698 were in Victoria, which brought the high-water mark of troops in camp to 73,963 in October.

After the departure of the 5th, 6th, and 7th Infantry Brigades the medical organisation in the reinforcement camps was for a time very defective. From that time till the end of 1915 officers and other ranks of the A.A.M.C. were inadequate in numbers and imperfectly trained. With the **Winter in 1915** winter<sup>17</sup> and the break-up of the season, weak points became evident in some of the camps. This was particularly the case in Victoria, where the winter was wet and early, and it is on the events in this State that description conveniently centres. The roads in Broadmeadows Camp were unformed;<sup>18</sup> the

<sup>17</sup> In the southern States of Australia, from about April to September. "Summer" in the northern parts extends from about August to April.

<sup>18</sup> As early as October, 1914, the D.A.D.M.S., 1st Australian Division, had reported of this camp that "for a prolonged camp the site is not suitable owing to the clay character of the soil and difficulty of drainage."

38th

28/3/18

OC B. Coy

Please report present posn re Bosch patrol wood.  
Is patrol wood? If so what part? What is  
strength? How many m/ps has he? What steps  
taken re patrol matter?

Searcher to bring back reply as urgent.  
Return to memo.

— Maudsley map  
OC D. Coy

Noted

WPDM 9.35 am.

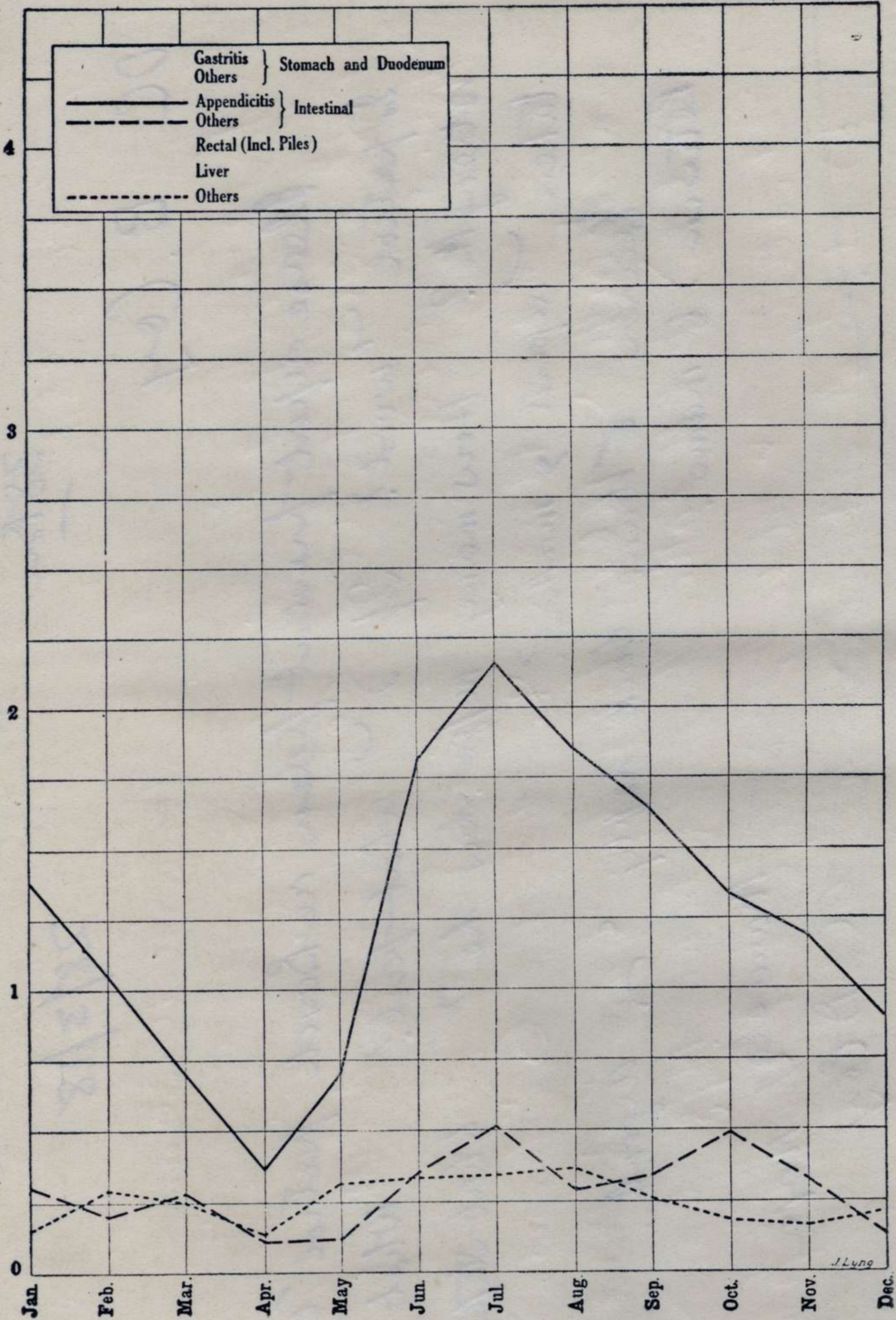
HWPMurie →

THE "NON-INFECTION" GROUP OF GASTRO-INTESTINAL DISEASES ANALYSED INTO INDIVIDUAL DISEASES

Copy 10

Graph 10

THE "NON-INFECTIVE" GROUP OF GASTRO-INTESTINAL DISEASES ANALYSED INTO INDIVIDUAL DISEASE ENTITIES



J. Lyne

To C.O. 38 Bn

28/3/18

Received 10.30 am

Here with report, re Bosch patrol.  
At 8.30 am the OC found 1 all clear.

snipers observers established 6' far side wood.  
 Aun Batta posted a Lewis gun team 1' flank wood.  
 Reported left Batta there a Bosch M/g team  
 valley outskirts village, abt 800 yds from  
 Wood. strength about 10

remainder of message missing

10121

SURGERY

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"previous case"—the occurrence and nature of wound infection depends on the infective content of the "dirt" contaminating the wound through clothing, skin, or contact. In war this is influenced ~~chiefly~~ <sup>largely</sup> by the presence or absence in the soil of certain specific anaerobic and commonly spore-forming bacteria.<sup>32</sup> Thus for wounds, as for disease, geographical circumstance as well as immediate physical environment may determine the predominant character of infection. At Gallipoli soil-infection by anaerobes was unimportant, and true gas-gangrene relatively uncommon, even in deep and severe lacerations. Wounding was chiefly by bullet or shrapnel, and healing by "first intention" was common and was expected in uncomplicated wounds.

In France during 1915 debate on the various problems connected with the treatment of wounds was forced to a crisis by the terrible mortality from wound infection. From an early date the casualty clearing station was recognised as the key to the problem, and by the end of 1915 this unit was definitely cast for the chief rôle in connection with immediate surgery. The course of this development will be followed in *Volume II.* of this work. The conditions of Gallipoli compelled development on very different lines. Surgery in the Gallipoli campaign is of interest chiefly as it illustrates the influence on surgical procedure of time and circumstance. On shore at Helles and Anzac little more treatment could be carried out than first-aid or imperative surgery; the casualty clearing stations continued to function chiefly as clearing units. The first-aid differed little from that laid down in *R.A.M.C. Training 1911* and other pre-war military text-books. Anti-tetanic serum was administered in the field, at first (by instruction) only "for dirty wounds" but after September for all.<sup>33</sup> Fourteen cases of tetanus, with ten deaths, are recorded as occurring in the A.I.F. during this campaign, but there were probably more.

In the middle of May medical officers of field formations in the A.I.F. were informed that "bullet and shell wounds"

<sup>32</sup> In particular *B. Welchii*, *vibron septique*, *B. Oedematiens*, *B. Sporogenes*, *B. Tetani*.

<sup>33</sup> A case is recorded by the 5th Field Ambulance of a death diagnosed as from "anaphylactic shock" five minutes after the injection of 1,500 units of anti-tetanic serum, the symptoms being dyspnoea, vomiting, and collapse. Post-mortem—"everything found normal." This is the only case of which record can be found in over 100,000 injections of "A.T.S." in the A.I.F. during the war.

3 Div. G.S. diary

28/3/18

at 10.30 am. Cops advised that the enemy was attacking near Dernancourt & that the attack may spread to Treux. As the right flank of the 35 Divn was unreliable we were asked to junction with it in J11a. This was carried out via our EC5 tunnel.

10.50 am. In addition the 10th A.I. Bde occupied Treux Wood.

...the D.D.M.G. ... the D.A.A.C. ... the D.M.C. ... the D.M.G. ... the D.M.H. ... the D.M.I. ... the D.M.J. ... the D.M.K. ... the D.M.L. ... the D.M.M. ... the D.M.N. ... the D.M.O. ... the D.M.P. ... the D.M.Q. ... the D.M.R. ... the D.M.S. ... the D.M.T. ... the D.M.U. ... the D.M.V. ... the D.M.W. ... the D.M.X. ... the D.M.Y. ... the D.M.Z.

clearance and weeding-out of unfits.<sup>29</sup> On General Godley's departure Major-General H. G. Chauvel, commanding the Anzac Mounted Division, was appointed G.O.C., A.I.F., in Egypt.

With the departure of the corps the "A.D.M.S., A.I.F.," in Egypt found his position difficult. The D.M.S. had left for England holding the view that Australian medical affairs in Egypt would be under his direction. Neither the British authorities, however, nor the new G.O.C., A.I.F., in Egypt, were prepared to accept the situation; which indeed presented considerable difficulties. The A.D.M.S. found his chief business—and a considerable one—in the gradual clearance of the hospital population left in Egypt.

Of 4,709 sick in hospitals in Egypt on June 1st, 1,589 had been boarded for return to Australia. Of these, from

**The light  
horse takes  
over**

300 to 400 had been boarded for "diseases contracted prior to enlistment." The complaints from the A.I.F. and retorts from

Australia on this matter deepened at this time almost to the degree of recrimination. That there were two sides to the question is visible in the nature of the disabilities and in the divergence of views even within the A.I.F. itself.<sup>30</sup> The training dépôt and "medical details" followed the A.I.F. headquarters to England, together with an additional sanitary section (No. 6) organised for duty at the base. On July 29th the Base Dépôt of Medical Stores embarked for England. Early in July Nos. 1 and 3 Auxiliaries were closed and the personnel transferred to England, leaving the Australian Dermatological Hospital to follow. No. 3 Australian General Hospital at Abbassia, and Nos. 1 and 2 Stationary Hospitals on the Canal, served in the first instance the requirements of the light horse, to whom from this time onwards belongs the history of the Australian Imperial Force in Egypt.

<sup>29</sup> For reasons that belong elsewhere the field ambulances went with three sections. They were, however, accompanied by dental sections.

<sup>30</sup> After the departure of the I Anzac Corps divisional medical boards reported 548 men unfit for service. Upon these cases being reviewed by the D.D.M.S., only 346 of the previous decisions were confirmed. "The opinions of the Divisional Boards," the D.A. & Q.M.G., II Anzac, reported to the corps commander, "are apparently at variance with that of the D.D.M.S."





Egyptian Army Barracks, Abbassia, a huge building selected by the acting D.G.M.S., Australia, while in Egypt.<sup>27</sup> Fitted up with the aid of the Australian Red Cross this formed one of the best Australian general hospitals organised during the war. In succession Nos. 2 and 1 General Hospitals were closed, and left for France. With No. 1 went the A.D.M.S. 2 of the medical headquarters, Lieutenant-Colonel T. E. V. Hurley, who arrived in France on March 31st under instructions "to furnish the British authorities with information concerning the A.I.F. medical units and organisation." No. 2 Auxiliary and the Australian Convalescent Dépôt, Helouan, were closed at the beginning of April, the staff being absorbed in the A.A.M.C. details.

These events practically synchronised with an important change in the system of command in Egypt. On March 19th dual control of the British forces in that region ended by the formation of the "E.E.F." "Egyptian Expeditionary Force" under command of Sir Archibald Murray. The Levant Base having ceased to function, the P.D.M.S. returned to the United Kingdom, as also did Sir John Maxwell, commander of the Force in Egypt, and his D.M.S., Surgeon-General Ford.

With the departure of I Anzac Corps the full significance of the transfer to France became evident. At two important conferences<sup>28</sup> with the "Imperial" authorities in London the decision had been reached that the administrative headquarters of the A.I.F. and the medical base for the troops in France should be in England. A cable from Australia instructed that the new D.M.S., A.I.F., should proceed to England at once in order "to personally arrange regarding hospital accommodation." He embarked on April 19th, leaving an "A.D.M.S., A.I.F.," in Egypt to represent him. A.I.F. headquarters left for England on May 10th, leaving under the "G.O.C., A.I.F., in Egypt" a cadre to which the A.D.M.S. was attached. The II Anzac Corps (4th and 5th Divisions), after eight weeks on the "Canal Defences," followed I Anzac to France, commencing its move on June 1st and undergoing a like

<sup>27</sup> The hotels were found to make bad hospitals.

<sup>28</sup> This matter will be referred to in *Vol. II.*

28 March 1918

10 Bde to RW1 (38 Bn)

Repeated to RWG (37 Bn) for information.

No. BM 239

10.47 a.m.

Boche attacking Demancourt & may possibly attack here from Demancourt to Treux from direction Morlancourt. Join up with 35 Div in J 11a at once & report completion

Completed

THE CALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN (Jan. 1915-June 1918)

generally known. The Minister and the acting Director-General, in common with the medical profession and the public, were greatly disturbed. The matter was brought into special prominence by the policy of returning to Australia all recovered "typhoid" cases.<sup>16</sup> The opponents of inoculation—by whom evidence of the numbers of typhoid cases had been collected with commendable determination and care—called for a reversal of the policy. The Director-General was almost without information, but it was abundantly clear that "something had happened." Leaders of the medical profession, being consulted, advised stricter care in inoculation. After due consideration this advice was accepted by the Minister, who, throughout, displayed admirable judgment and balance.

A cable from the acting Director-General on his arrival in Egypt, indicating that the trouble was there attributed to paratyphoid, cleared the situation ~~as if by magic~~. Preparations were made by the deputy-director in Australia for combined inoculation on the lines of the experimental work done at No. 3 Australian General Hospital, but the procedure was postponed till the return of the Director-General. He, how-

**Advice  
unfortunately  
neglected**

ever, reversed the decision of his deputy, and declined to accept not only the conclusions arrived at but also the direction of the War Office that inoculation against paratyphoid also should be carried out. Instead, he initiated a series of clinical experiments which postponed "T.A.B." inoculation in Australia for twelve months. In the meantime anti-typhoid inoculation was carried out on no exact plan, each military district deciding its own method and dosage. It is difficult to justify on any grounds this unfortunate neglect to follow advice from overseas, and it was to lead, as might have been expected, to much trouble.

To come to the camps. During the year 1915-16 the passage of the recruit through these in the various

**Sickness in  
camps of  
training**

military districts was far from smooth. It was, indeed, a cause of great anxiety to the medical departments at Defence

<sup>16</sup> One transport, for example, was entirely devoted to 358 recovered typhoids and paratyphoids.

“ ”  
^ ^ ^  
*completely*

To Major Maudsley H.Q.

28/3/18

From Lt C.H. Peters

Wood not occupied by either enemy, Cavalry,  
or infantry other than our observers.

British infantry on swollen road forward of  
left edge of wood.

sent at 10.45 am by runner  
received 11.5 am.

Immediately on his return the Director-General had obtained from the Minister authority for the gazetting of Colonel Howse to the position of D.M.S., A.I.F., with the rank of temporary surgeon-general, in place of Surgeon-General Williams, and also for an administrative staff in connection therewith. The establishment of this office, fully staffed and with defined authority, entirely transformed the situation in respect of the medical service of the overseas force. Not the least interesting aspect of the Australian participation in the European war is illustrated in the relations between these two departments.

Here must be taken up the narrative of the work performed in Australia by the medical service and various co-operating organisations in connection with the raising and maintenance of the A.I.F. and the care of its casualties sent back from overseas.

First among the duties of the administrative staff in Australia came the raising of a medical service for the overseas force and of medical personnel for service at home. The raising of the medical units which sailed with the early contingents has already been described. Those sent later consisted, first, of the field units and personnel proper to the military formations, recruited and raised within the various "districts"; second, of various special units and personnel recruited on requests from the War Office. The first of these requests, in February, 1915, expressed<sup>8</sup> the "desire" that 100 medical men, single and under thirty-five years of age, might be recruited for service with the R.A.M.C.; a second 100 were asked for soon after, and also nurses to serve with the Q.A.I.M.N.S. 115 medical officers and 136 nurses, raised by appeal through the press and through the faculties of medicine at the universities, had been despatched in answer to these calls when in May the request for a double general hospital, and in June for large "special reinforcements" for England and Egypt, brought a stop to this policy, and the endeavour mentioned in a

**Relations with  
new D.M.S.,  
A.I.F.**

**Raising of  
medical units  
and personnel**

<sup>8</sup> At the suggestion of Surgeon-General Williams (see p. 492).

38 Bn to 10 Dde (continued)

28 March 1918

(in reply to MN 132 & BM 235)

A1 683.

Have ascertained that Lancs. Fus. were in the wood J 11 b east of Mericourt l'Abbe. Have just received report from patrol that there is now nobody in the wood. I think it is practicable to incorporate the wood in our line or at all events to deny it to anyone else. Have sent "C" Coy Captain Fairweather forward to do this and will report on completion.

its members were called up for home service. The demand of the dental profession for opportunity to participate in the medical work of active service, with status as a technical branch of the Australian Army Medical Corps, was backed—with vehement and even bitter importunity—by the force overseas, and in July, 1915, "Military Order No. 387" (a landmark in the history of the Australian dental service) authorised the appointment of dentists to commissioned and dental mechanics to non-commissioned rank in the A.I.F. In this development there can be recognised the operation of a general principle, namely, that success in modern warfare requires that every advance in the science and art of civilised living must be called upon to play its part in promoting the efficiency of the fighting force. Authority was given for personnel totalling 39—13 lieutenants, 13 staff-sergeants, and 13 privates. These were to be enlisted partly in Australia and partly from the force overseas, and were to be organised as dental sections.<sup>11</sup> Adequate but as yet unstandardised equipment was provided. The reorganisation of the A.I.F. in Egypt involved the enlistment of a large number of dentists and dental mechanics, and by June, 1916, there had been sent overseas for dental work a total of 126. The dental service of Australia was raised as an integral part of the Australian Army Medical Corps, and it is beyond question that this step proved a source of strength and mutual benefit to both services.

It was not till a later date than is covered in this review that approval was given to the principle of granting **Pharmaceutical** honorary commissioned rank in the A.I.F. to pharmacists. Qualified pharmacists<sup>12</sup> served abroad as staff-sergeants, sergeants, or corporals. By the middle of 1916 29 qualified pharmacists were serving with the A.I.F.

The circumstances in Egypt that led to the reversal by the acting D.G.M.S. of his decision that masseurs and

<sup>11</sup> As an illustration of the uncertainty as to the part of a dental service, the dental officers of the 2nd Military District were sent out to train in stretcher drill with field ambulance bearers, and some claim to have achieved considerable efficiency in that line of service.

<sup>12</sup> In every State in Australia registration of qualification is necessary to practise as a pharmacist, and is controlled by examination associated with a regulated and well organised system of scientific study and practical training in pharmaceutical colleges.

38 Bn to 10 Bde (12.5 pm)

28/3/18

AI685. Treux Wood occupied by our "C" Coy  
at 11.25 a.m. Enemy shelling wood or  
approaches. Lance Juss report are in possession  
of Treux & have an output line established in  
front of the village. We have not yet confirmed this.

sent by runner.

G. Hurry Mas

sent as result of message <sup>by runner</sup> from Fairweather timed 11.25 a.m. 29/3/18  
received at 11.50 a.m.

must be 28/3/18



previous chapter<sup>9</sup> was made by the Australian authorities to ascertain the actual requirements, concerning which this irregular method of raising a medical service had caused much uncertainty and confusion. No. 3 Australian General Hospital was despatched in June, and No. 10 in July (the latter in the endeavour to check the system of "special reinforcements"). In response to a suggestion by the War Office that certain line-of-communication troops would "render the 2nd Australian Division more self-supporting," the 2nd Casualty Clearing Station and 1st Sanitary Section were sent to Egypt in October, 1915. The corresponding units were also provided for the 3rd Division. At the end of the year the "Australian Dermatological Hospital" was raised, on the initiative of the medical profession, to fill a deplorable gap in medical organisation, and was sent overseas on December 22nd. This was in some respects a unique unit, staffed by specialists, specially equipped for the scientific treatment of venereal diseases, and provided with a fine pathological department.

In June, 1915, "dental units" were raised and despatched. From the outbreak of war the dental profession in Australia had set itself wholeheartedly to two tasks, first, to meet by voluntary service the immediate requirements of the force which was being raised for overseas, and second, to convince the military authorities that a modern army, like modern civilisation, is incomplete without an effective dental service. There have already been described the steps taken to deal with the first problem, and also the tentative move by Surgeon-General Williams to provide for more direct participation by the dental profession in the work of the medical service;<sup>10</sup> "Military Order No. 11" of 12th January, 1915, wherein approval was given for the "establishment of Dental Surgeons in connexion with the A.A.M.C. Reserve," with a total personnel of six captains and fifty lieutenants, represents the first step in the formation of an Australian army dental service. The first appointments were made in March, 1915, but the reserve was not utilised till May, when

**The associated services:**  
**Dental**

<sup>9</sup> See p. 498.

<sup>10</sup> See p. 26.

28 March 1918

38 Bn ward diary

8 am Coy (Capt FE Fairweather) pushed forward and occupied Marret Wood about 1000 yds from main line of defence

11 am Enemy (about 100 strong) advanced down side of hill in 4 waves, moving towards Marret Wood, ostensibly to attack + take wood. Attack beaten back with rifle + LG fire

1/30  
1/30  
1/30

THE SERVICE AUSTRALIA 251

masseuses should not be enlisted as such in the A.A.M.C. will be recalled.<sup>13</sup> From December, 1915, both became a

**Massage**

regular part of medical establishments, and by June, 1916, eleven male and twenty-two female operators trained in this branch of medical treatment had been sent overseas.

Including reinforcements, by the end of May, 1916, a total of 554 medical officers, 43 dental officers, 844 nurses, and 7,936 others had been despatched for service in the A.I.F.,

**Nursing**

and, in addition, 115 medical officers and 126 nurses for service in the British Army.

Until the despatch of the 2nd Divisional ~~formation~~ medical officers with militia training were available for the field force, but in subsequent detachments

**Training**

the majority were for the most part ignorant of military organisation and routine. Their military training, and that of the rank and file, was at first directed entirely by the district commands. During 1915, indeed, there was little opportunity for systematic training: for the most part both officers and other ranks were prepared for service overseas very much on the system of Dickens' Dotheboys Hall, training being part and parcel of routine camp duties, picked up "as they went along." At the beginning of 1916 the Director-General introduced more exact methods, which embodied also the policy (initiated by the new D.M.S., A.I.F.) of enlistment for the medical corps as a whole and not territorially for units connected with particular States. Four weeks' "drilling" in camp was followed by six weeks in a military hospital on orderly duty, and seven on nursing duty. Training led up to voyage-duty in a transport.

With the departure of the 5th, 6th, and 7th Brigades in May great difficulty was encountered in supplying medical

**Home Service  
—medical  
officers**

officers to meet the rapidly growing requirements of reinforcement camps and military hospitals in Australia. For these "home service" duties there was gradually built up a special organisation based on the militia, citizen force, and medical corps reserve. To provide staffs for the military hospitals, a military order of 22nd June, 1915, laid it down

<sup>13</sup> See pp. 419-420.

130  
units for the  
/o

28/3/18

VII Cops to 3 Aust Div.

12.50 pm

GX787

Gen Headlam's

is transferred from

35 Div to 3 Aust Div

boundary

between 35 Div & 3

Aust Div will be line joining road junction

D29a 21 to road junction J11 central. 3 Aust

Div will arrange to relieve Gen Headlam's Bde by 6 pm

tonight when it will be reorganised at Heilly.

21 Div will place one MG Coy at disposal of

Gen Headlam at Heilly.

of the whole force with T.A.B. vaccine,<sup>25</sup> of which the advance supplies from England were made available for the Australian force. Except in cerebro-spinal fever and enteric, a search for bacillary carriers was not a practicable procedure. In those diseases, however, in which hospitality to the infective agents of disease was shared by the troops with camp followers in the form of insect pests, the problem became amenable to a campaign. For so large a force wholesale methods were needed, and fortunately were available through the experience of the Medical Advisory Committee in Serbia. A "delousing train" was fitted up under the direction of its originator (Colonel W. Hunter, R.A.M.C.T.), and by means of this the divisions were practically freed from vermin with no delay to their onward movement.<sup>26</sup>

**T.A.B.  
inoculation**

**Departure of  
infantry**

Units of the I Anzac Corps began to embark on March 14th, and, with the 2nd Division in advance, the whole corps had by the 30th left Egypt. A "divisional base dépôt" accompanied each division, taking ten per cent infantry reinforcements and seven per cent "extra medical personnel per field ambulance." Drafts from England were now stopped. The 1st and 2nd Casualty Clearing Stations followed the field formations; corps headquarters and the department of the A.A.G., A.I.F., left on March 30th. Before leaving for France, General Birdwood authorised General Godley to exercise in Egypt the "powers of the G.O.C., A.I.F.," conferred on him by the Commonwealth Government. Coincident with these moves, certain initial steps were taken to close up the Australian base hospital system in Egypt—except so far as it should be required for the light horse—and in general to disentangle the mounted and unmounted parts of the Australian Imperial Force and at the same time provide for continuity of policy and a unified command. The closing of the base hospitals was greatly helped by the opening of No. 3 General Hospital in the

**Australian  
hospitals in  
Egypt closed**

<sup>25</sup> Typhoid 500 millions, paratyphoid "A" and "B" 375 millions each of killed bacilli.

<sup>26</sup> Colonel Hunter records: "In three months two double-van disinfectors carried out the disinfection of 170,000 kits, 170,000 overcoats, 340,000 blankets, and a great mass of ordnance clothing. 60,000 troops and native Labour Corps had their clothing disinfected monthly."

~~29/3~~ 28 March 1918.

10 Bde to Ayc (13 Bw)

No. BM 246.

1.15 pm.

recd at 3 Bw  
12.55 pm

Confirming telephone message. At 12.20 enemy reported massing on ridge near track about M in Morlancourt on 1/10,000 map. Have communicated with 189 Army Bde Arty at D 21 C 93. 37 Bn have matter in hand. 38 Bn have occupied Treux Wood with one company at 11.25 am. 38th also report Lancs Treux in possession on Treux village with outposts in front. This is not yet confirmed.

deformities and diseases of which the military significance is notoriously difficult of exact appraisal, even if they can be detected. During the first year of the war approximately thirty-three per cent of all volunteers were rejected. In June, 1915, the standard of height was lowered to 5 feet 2 inches. With the establishment of a dental service the fitness of recruits, from the standpoint of that profession, became a matter merely of the time necessary for their treatment, for which an effective procedure was built up by this new and zealous department. Provision was made for the enlistment of men who required both upper and lower dentures, and this naturally rendered available a large body of men otherwise ineligible. As a result of reports from the ophthalmic specialists, the eyesight tests were slightly relaxed and the use of spectacles was permitted. Venereal disease was put on the same basis as dental unfitness.

In respect of the medical examination itself, the irregularity of recruiting made exact arrangement difficult, and it is evident that no very precise procedure was built up. In general the policy was adopted of making the examining medical officer personally responsible, and of seeking his co-operation in overcoming the difficulties connected with the detection and rejection of unfit men among the recruits. Toward the end of 1915, however, "standing medical boards" were appointed to pass or reject all recruits "about whose fitness there was doubt," and, in order to suppress impersonation, repeated re-examination before embarkation was ordered.

The unexpected developments in regard to enteric diseases in the latter half of 1915 brought about something of a crisis in the matter of anti-typhoid inoculation as a condition to enrolment. Early in the year reports from Egypt of the absence of typhoid had been hailed as evidence of the efficacy of the procedure. No greater danger besets the medical profession than that of premature wresting of evidence to suit current theory, and this hasty and unfounded optimism was soon shaken. By June the occurrence of cases diagnosed as "typhoid" in the troops at Gallipoli was

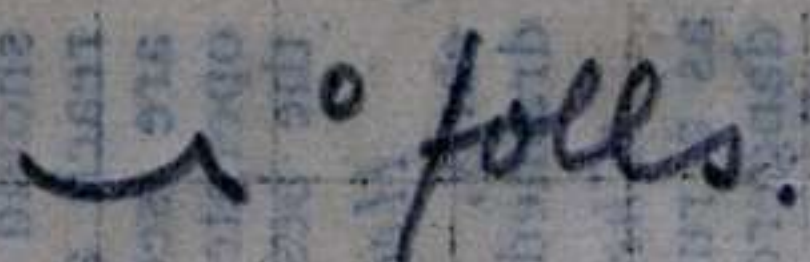
**Value of  
inoculation  
questioned**


C.O. 38 Bn.


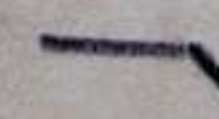

misdated 29/3/18

28/3/18

1.25 pm

Position  follows.

DLI have one coy dug  line running N & S through R in Treux to edge of wood, thence S along sunken road to first B in ABBE, thence along S.E. edge of wood. Their coy (dr reports they hold a continuation of 6 line N 1" not yet confirmed.

Enemy  considerable strength [unable to estimate nos]  observed digging  along a line bridge 60 south to P in Post. He also moving by parties of ones and twos from Moulancourt to timber SW. of V in Ville.

o M/8s' snipers — very active on E edge of wood

especially along sunken road running south from Treux. Several

Address

THE GALLIOLI CAMPAIGN

1912



From the technical side the surgical work does not call for description in detail. It is not, however, without interest to note for comparison with procedure elsewhere the principles laid down for the Gallipoli campaign by the consulting surgeon, M.E.F., in connection with the "immediate" surgery recommended in certain special types of wound.

**"Immediate" surgery** *Abdominal wounds.*—A morphia injection to be given and all food and fluid by the mouth forbidden. They bear transport badly, and should be moved as little as possible for the first few days. If they reach a hospital or hospital ship within a few hours of injury and are seen by an experienced surgeon, he may consider it wise to operate in exceptional cases but as a rule expectant treatment gives the best results.<sup>38</sup>

*Head injuries.*—Bear transport badly and should be operated on early, depressed bone being removed, the wound aseptically and drained but not stitched.

*Chest injuries* . . . from gunshot wounds, unless rapidly fatal, as a rule do well and should not be interfered with. Hæmorrhage, if dangerous, tapped by a trochar; incision and drainage if it repeatedly collects.

*Amputations* should be rarely resorted to unless the limb is smashed up.

Those surgeons with No. 3 Australian General Hospital who had seen service in France found that their experience at that seat of war was in some degree misleading, in that at the Dardanelles not all wounds demanded, as in France, opening up and drainage.

Speaking generally, it is probable that after the end of August the conditions on the lines of communication from Gallipoli were, for all cases, as good as on the French front at this time; for the lightly wounded throughout the campaign they were better.

At the base, the vast majority of seriously wounded Australians went to the British hospitals at Alexandria. Almost all the major "secondary surgery" and much "primary surgery" in connection with the Australian wounded was carried out in these units. No records are available of their work: but evidence makes it clear that, from June onwards, a high standard was

<sup>38</sup> Even Gallipoli experience was in some instances at variance with this advice. An Australian surgeon working on hospital ships assessed his successful immediate sections at 33 per cent.

Small patrols seen working forward every line

At 1.10 pm a party of enemy estimated at abt 25  
c. 2 MG's attempted to advance, were driven back  
arty, LG rifle fire. Our LG's caused  
several casualties.

Position quiet.

A Coy 'Lancos' just arrived to take up a  
position on the edge of the wood. Am going to

look at their dispositions.

F. B. Jarweather

Treux Wood

29.3.18

1.25 pm. by Capt  
Orchard.

OC C Coy

Received 1.55 pm.

This should surely be 28th

10121

SURGERY

C 100

operating was restricted both by lack of opportunity and later by definite order. At the end of July the Principal Director of Medical Services was instructed by the War Office—

to call the attention of surgeons aboard hospital ships to the necessity for limiting operations to those which are absolutely necessary. . . . Flap amputations should not be performed. Sutures should not be employed either in amputations or in deep wound. Too many operations are being performed on board ships.

Experienced surgeons were not available for all hospital ships; their staff was not large, and the rush was at times very great.<sup>37</sup> During the first two months much major surgery was due—in respect of time after wounding—to be done in the “black” ships, where for a time the conditions were at best difficult, at the worst dreadful. Medical officers, made responsible for serious cases in overwhelming numbers which must be held for two days or longer, found themselves between the devil of dangerous delay and a deep sea of trouble if severe operations were carried out under circumstances that made exact procedure and suitable after-treatment impossible. From the conditions of practice in Australia few “doctors” were without some operative ability; in the field ambulances—on which fell the brunt of the work in “black” ships during the first two months—were many hospital surgeons, but even for the experienced this was a harsh and violent introduction to war surgery. Though the severe forms of wound infection were infrequent, through inadequate attention and delay ordinary sepsis in severe and deep wounds was often extensive—even myiasis was not very uncommon. From the end of June onwards an increasing proportion of severe cases were carried in the hospital ships. Gradually also the “black” ships were better staffed; and, with the introduction in July of the “hospital carrier” and of supervision by surgical consultants, surgery in most vessels approached that performed in the casualty clearing stations in France.

*at this stage of the war* ©

<sup>37</sup> The *Guildford Castle*—with 5 medical officers, 7 nursing sisters, and 38 orderlies—normally took 350 patients, but at times carried up to 520. “On some trips” (a nurse records) “work was very heavy, we did at least 20 hours a day. . . . I have found patients dead, perhaps for quite a time undiscovered, not due to neglect but because of shortness of staff. . . . What we did was just like a drop in the ocean to what should have been done.”

Fairweather to 38 Bn

misdated 29th  
28/3/18

3:15 pm

Our arty very short. — corrected  
 touch c 37a — Lanes Dus' left.  
 English troops. — put several groups  
 under own NCO's. — I not consider — advance — wood  
 without strong fighting. — support — present line — held  
 main line. — Melancourt \* o M'Gs  
 being actively workup — Ridge — 2 wounded, one severely.  
 supers active, — casualties

THE GULLIBOLI CAMPAIGN

1912

Trace Wood  
3:15 pm

should not be sutured, and in September the senior consulting surgeon, M.E.F., found it necessary to repeat that instruction. The danger of the tourniquet and the superior efficacy, in most forms of hæmorrhage, of "direct action" by plugging and pressure on the wound was a discovery made gradually. The introduction early in the campaign of the "shell dressing"<sup>34</sup> marked what was almost an epoch in first-aid. No problem in first-aid was more difficult than that presented by fractures of the femur, and no surgical treatment was more tragically futile than that in use. Comparatively few of these terrible cases reached the base alive on the deadly "long Liston" splint then in vogue.<sup>35</sup> Thomas splints were not at this time supplied for field use. The principle embodied therein was, however, at times applied by regimental medical officers by extension from each end of the stretcher.

Such of the immediate surgery as was not postponed till the base hospitals in Egypt were reached was for the most

**Surgery on  
board ships**

part carried out at sea in the hospital ships or "black" ships and in hospitals at Lemnos. The circumstances, therefore, under which it was done varied greatly. In the hospital ships on the one hand there was opened up a unique short cut to safety for serious cases. Of the *Guildford Castle*, for example, Lieutenant-Colonel G. A. Syme, A.A.M.C., records "we had the equivalent of a well-equipped base hospital close to the firing line."<sup>36</sup> Save in some of the best equipped of these, however,

<sup>34</sup> After the Landing, except for local mishaps, there was at no time any shortage of dressings. The magnitude of the task notably accomplished during the war by the medical supply department of the War Office can be seen (*ex pede Herculem*) from the following items supplied to Gallipoli—namely, "over 4½ million bandages, 3,711 miles of gauze, 374 tons of lint and wool, and 186,000 shell dressings." (Sir Alfred Keogh: evidence given at the Dardanelles Commission.)

<sup>35</sup> In *The British Medical Journal* of January 1915, there had appeared an illustrated article by Dr. Robert Jones (later Major-General Sir Robert Jones), of Liverpool, containing the advice given by him to the War Office in 1914 for splints specially adapted for field use in the war. A pregnant sentence ran as follows:—

"Upper and lower thighs. In fractures of the thigh the Thomas knee-splint is incomparably the simplest and best. I have often fixed a fractured thigh in this splint and sent the patient home in a cab."

With strange lack of vision, this advice was applied by the War Office only by way of secondary procedure. Some of these splints were purchased privately by regimental and other officers in the A.I.F. before and during the Gallipoli campaign.

<sup>36</sup> An account, written by Lieut.-Col. Syme, of surgical work in this fine hospital ship appears in *The Medical Journal of Australia*, 1 April, 1916. In the same journal of 29 January, 1916, useful suggestions for "Transport of sick and wounded on ordinary troopships" are given by Major A. J. Aspinall, A.A.M.C.

28 March 1918.

Telephone message from 10 Bde to 3 Div. 3.50 pm.  
(from 38 Bn) ~~(copy to 38 Bn)~~

Durham Light Inf occupy line running from N to S  
through the R in Trees (1/10000 Amiens) thence S  
along road turning West along southern edge of wood.  
38 Bn are in touch with them in the wood & continue the  
line towards the figure 90 (contour). Boche has taken up  
position along spur from figure 60 (contour) between  
Trees & Morlancourt south to immediately south of T  
in Post 9 is actively working on it. Boche active in  
Morlancourt also. His m/sgs and snipers active.  
38 Bn had two men wounded.

each district and the pharmaceutical staff officer at headquarters maintained an effective *liaison* between the medical service and the pharmaceutical profession—which by this time was facing technical problems of considerable complexity created by the war in connection with the supply of drugs.<sup>15</sup>

It remains now to follow, from the point of view of the medical service, the fortunes of the general volunteers of the A.I.F. in the camps of training and hospital system in their home country. Attention is directed first to the medical responsibilities in connection with the troops for overseas—responsibilities which began with the medical examination of the recruits. In Australia, as elsewhere, the first year of the war revealed the fact that a comparatively large and quite unexpected proportion of the adult male population was unfit for military service. Recruiting during the first eighteen months of the war was marked by a progressive lowering of the physical standards (in height, weight, and chest measurement) and by increasing difficulty in complying with the reiterated demands from the A.I.F. for adherence to a high standard of fitness.

**Outward flow  
of effectives—  
examination  
of recruits**

Bombarded from overseas with repeated protests at the inclusion of men considered unsuitable by medical officers at the front, and impelled on the other hand—as the call for “effectives” became more clamant and the “first fine frenzy” for enlisting wore off—by increasing pressure, political and other, to relax the stringency of the medical tests, the acting Director-General trimmed a course to suit both sides, and ended in satisfying neither. It cannot be said that investigation of the available records of re-examinations of men returned from overseas as “unfit” reveals any startling evidence of laxity at this time. It is true that reports from various sources make it clear that a considerable number of obviously unfit recruits slipped through: but the majority of the men concerned in the iterated complaints from the A.I.F. were the subject of

**Protests from  
overseas not  
fully borne out**

Bombarded from overseas with repeated protests at the inclusion of men considered unsuitable by medical officers at the front, and impelled on the other hand—as the call for “effectives” became more clamant and the “first fine frenzy” for enlisting wore off—by increasing pressure, political and other, to relax the stringency of the medical tests, the acting Director-General trimmed a course to suit both sides, and ended in satisfying neither. It cannot be said that investigation of the available records of re-examinations of men returned from overseas as “unfit” reveals any startling evidence of laxity at this time. It is true that reports from various sources make it clear that a considerable number of obviously unfit recruits slipped through: but the majority of the men concerned in the iterated complaints from the A.I.F. were the subject of

<sup>15</sup> The problems, economic and technical, brought about by the dislocation of the sources of supply of drugs, etc., though of great interest, can only be touched upon in this work. Certain aspects of the problem will be mentioned in *Vol. II* of this history, and *Vol. XI* of the *History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918*.

Fairweather to 38 Bn.

29/3/18

Situation very quiet  
Lancs Fus & DLI  
have been relieved by Sherwoods & Cheshires.

In touch with units on both flanks  
sent about 5.15 a.m.

1918, but not made effective till May (see p. 200).  
The connection with the new Australian Medical Records introduced in January,  
his staff.

285 pages  
020 501-11  
111 21

THE SERVICE IN AUSTRALIA 213



This officer found in the local situation a counterpart, in its way, to the cardinal phase in medical development which had been reached at this time in Great Britain. Recruiting was at its zenith; the medical problems in camps were pressing; and the incoming stream of invalids was already presenting other problems approaching, and soon to exceed, these in magnitude and diversity. A policy (already overdue) of administrative devolution and development at Headquarters was introduced—and perhaps somewhat overdone. At Headquarters the staff of the D.G.M.S. was augmented on the clerical side and reorganised. “To organise dental services throughout the Commonwealth”<sup>7</sup> a “principal dental officer” was appointed to the staff of the Director-General and a “senior dental officer” in the 2nd and 3rd Military Districts. The appointment of a “pharmaceutical staff officer” was associated both with such a reorganisation of that service as to put it “in line with Dental and Massage Services” and also with much needed reform in the matter of medical supplies. In the military districts the principal medical officers were put on a full-time basis; also in each district new executive officers were appointed in connection with camps and transports. The district “command sanitary officers” were called up for permanent duty (part time), and the Federal Director-General of Health was appointed “Adviser in sanitation.” The co-operation of the medical profession in general was enlisted in the form of numerous expert committees of advice and technical advisers.

On his return on January 1st Surgeon-General Fetherston, now Director-General, reverted in some matters to a more self-contained policy. For the most part, however, the developments had been necessary and were retained and even added to. Early in 1916, for example, a special nursing department was formed in connection with that of the Director-General, a principal matron being appointed to his staff.

<sup>7</sup> In connection with the new Australian Dental Reserve authorised in January, 1915, but not made effective till May (see p. 519).

Handwritten numbers: 3369285, 05027211, 555 111 15



AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

6th Military District

For Dr Bean

DWS

HOBART, .....

18/1/35

Notes re defence dispositions. 13<sup>th</sup> Inf Bde sector

- Vide Page 26 Chap XI ; also see pages 8 and 9.

Policy for defence of sector held by 13<sup>th</sup> Inf Bde was to hold the outpost line (railway) with one battalion, 3 companies forward and one in reserve (see pages 8 and 9. in northern end of BUIRE Valley. The Brigadier (Glasgow) arranged that the Support Battalion would move a company to area vacated by reserve company of the line battalion when that company occupied the C.C.S. trenches. In addition the line battalion could, without reference to Brigade, call on support battalion for further reinforcements if required. The Support Battalion therefore was for tactical purposes available to line or outpost battalion C.O. whilst it remained under its own C.O. for administration.

It will be seen that this actually happened during night 4/5 April and on 5 April during the battle. Kelly's company of 51<sup>st</sup> Bn took the place of Kennedy's 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn company after midnight 4/5 April & later when Kelly was moved to support or extend Kennedy's left flank, a second company (Owen's) moved into 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn reserve area & was used during afternoon of 5 April to support Kennedy's right flank & restore situation of centre company on railway line.

Historical note. Death of Maj. Black - Apr. 11, 1917.

Col. Peck tells me that Maj. Percy Black knew before he went into the Bullecourt fight, that he was going to be killed. He gave Peck his papers before the fight and told him what to do with them.

Black had just seen his men through the wire into the second trench at Bullecourt - he turned to his runner who was with him and said: "Tell them the first objective is gained". The runner turned back to take the message, and the next instant Black fell shot through the head.

1914. Outbreak of War - Australian action. Sen. Millen.

On the outbreak of war Millen was in Sydney and remained there. He was wanted in Melbourne for the putting into force of the precautionary stage, but he could not be got. Finally Griffiths took the papers in to Cook. He explained to Cook the urgency and Cook had the precautionary stage put into force at once.

1918. March 21st. Breakdown of 5th Army.

Angus Butler, who was a captain with the 180th Tunnelling Coy R.E. in the later stages of the retreat in March tells me that though his company was at first inclined to blame the 66th Divn he hears that as a matter of fact part of the 6<sup>th</sup> at least was holding on at a time when the Germans were behind them, and when the Tunnellers thought that the whole line had come away. As a matter of fact it was the 16th Division, he says, which, though it throws the blame on the 6<sup>th</sup> Divn., let the Germans through onto the rear of the 6<sup>th</sup> Division. The South Irish Horse gave near Roisel, for one. The 21st Divn at Epehy held. (These details are possibly not exact, but they are worth remembering as nearly first hand evidence.) Ken Maxwell, who was Colonel of the 2nd/5th Manchesters ~~was~~ (brother of Arthur and Duncan Maxwell of 52nd Bn) was left fighting later at the Bridgehead somewhere south of Peronne, and the Germans captured him wounded.

There were a lot of bad mistakes Angus says - one was in connection with the failure to blow one of the bridges across the Somme at Brie (?) South of Peronne. The bridges at Peronne were blown by his own coy. and they were sure that no British were left the other side at the time.

There was a bigger dump than Ytres or Roisel which was not blown, further south. There was also a break through the infantry line further south near St Quentin, or in that direction.

The Bray line was left by an order from above when the Germans were not near. Two hours later up came an officer and said: "Its a blunder - we ought not to have left that line at all".

## HEBUTERNE.

### ARRIVAL OF AUSTRALIANS.

26th MARCH, 1918.

(BY BRIG.-GENERAL A. T. ANDERSON.)

In the minds of most men who took part in the Great War there must be one or two occasions which stand out with especial vividness, when some sudden change of fortune turned what seemed to be certain disaster into victory. Two such memories I cherish in particular. One, when on a black and terrible night in 1914, a brigade of guards turned up, apparently from nowhere, in the very nick of time to support the thin and cruelly battered line of the Meerut Division; and the other when, on the 26th March, seven years ago, a sore pressed body of Yorkshire troops greeted with an almost incredulous joy and relief, the totally unexpected arrival of the 4th Australian Brigade.

The great German offensive was launched on the 21st March, 1918, and on the evening of the 24th the 62nd West Riding Division had been withdrawn from a quiet part of the front a few miles north of Arras, with orders to support our IVth Corps. After marching all through that night and the following morning we reached Bucquoy at midday on the 25th, and our tired troops were at once thrown into the line from Logeast Wood to Achiet-le-Petit. The sight from the high ground east of Bucquoy was one I shall never forget. The Germans were pressing on in all the confidence of their overwhelming numbers, and seemingly assured of victory, while the straggling line of British infantry, worn out almost beyond endurance by three days continuous fighting, was stubbornly falling back step by step, contesting every yard in their vain effort to stem the tide, and fighting with the courage—not of despair, but something far finer than that—with the—

... courage never to submit or yield,  
And what is else not to be overcome.

All through that afternoon one continuous unbroken stream of transport, belonging to four or five different divisions, passed through the village of Bucquoy. The division had become inextricably mixed up in their retirement, and, while there was no panic, the confusion was extreme. Everything had to move along one rather narrow road, which, in bad enough condition to start with, became a quagmire of mud later on in the day, and one bad breakdown of a lorry or waggon would have led to a disastrous block and the ultimate loss of thousands of vehicles. The village was already under shell fire, which grew in intensity as the afternoon wore on, but by great good fortune not a single shell burst actually on the crowded road. Our infantry, lads from the West Riding of Yorkshire, went into the battle unit by unit, as they arrived on the scene weary and footsore from their long march, and found themselves at first merged in the general retirement. When night fell, however, the Divisional General withdrew them rapidly under cover of darkness to

a position about a mile further back, and when morning broke on the 26th the Yorkshiremen were firmly settled in a position running, roughly, from Bucquoy to Puisieux, against which the attacking waves beat in vain. Through the long hours of that momentous day the Germans, furious at the first real check which they had experienced, launched their hordes against our front, and during the afternoon five separate attacks were made of especial violence. They were all repulsed with horrid carnage. All this while the right flank of the division was entirely exposed, a huge gap of three miles existing between us and the nearest British troops on our right. To fill this gap a New Zealand division was known to be on its way, but there was no chance of its arrival till late that night. Fortunately the enemy at first knew nothing of this open road into the British defences, and it was not till evening that his troops began to envelop our flank. The headquarters staff were directing operations from Fonquevillers (Funk-villers, one pronounced it, and the name seemed horribly appropriate), and as the afternoon dragged on message after message arrived to tell us of this dangerous flanking movement. Not a single man, however, could be spared from our immediate front, and we could do nothing to avert the threatened peril. Many anxious glances were cast towards the ruins of Hebuterne, which lay a short way off to our right rear, and as the sun was setting German patrols were seen approaching it.

About half an hour later an officer called out that he could see a crowd of Huns on our side of the village, and in the clear twilight it was possible to discern moving figures. There was an anxious silence, while glasses were levelled on Hebuterne. If it was indeed the Bosche, it was all up with us. A short inspection, however, served to show that the men were moving into, and not out of the village. Someone declared that they were wearing slouch hats, but in the now gathering darkness it was hard to make sure of this. A few minutes later the arrival of an Australian staff officer dispelled all doubts. It was the 4th Australian Brigade, which had been rushed up to the critical point, and which, having been on the move by bus and route march for three days without rest, had turned up exactly at the psychological moment. Never was help more opportune. There was no demonstration in our little group. Feelings were too deep for words, and in any case the average Briton is shy or betraying his emotions, but I think that none of us who were there present will ever again look upon an Australian uniform without a curious thrill.

This timely reinforcement was led by Brig.-General C. H. Brand, who now, as major-general, commands the division in Sydney, and there must be many other members of that gallant 4th Brigade—in Sydney offices, shops, and factories, in the suburbs, far away in the back blocks, scattered over the length and breadth of Australia—who will remember this incident, even though they may never perhaps have realised with what heartfelt joy and thankfulness the weary 62nd Division recognised their Australian comrades, and watched them as they hustled the Germans out of Hebuterne. Some of them may perhaps be interested to read this brief account, from the point of view of one of those to whose help they hurried on that fateful evening seven years ago.

Notes -

"Beaulieu,"  
66 Ashley Street,  
CHATSWOOD,  
1st October, 1935.

The Official Historian,  
Victoria Barracks,  
PADDINGTON.

*Capt L.W.H. Cleland*  
*13th*  
*Page 136 of M/5*  
*Vol V*

Dear Sir,

I have to advise that the information contained in your Memo of the 27th inst. as regards myself is perfectly correct.

I obtained my education at both Chatswood and Fort Street Schools, leaving the latter in 1910 and entering the employ of the Willoughby Council as Junior Clerk and in 1912 entered the employ of W.D. & H.O. Wills (Australia) Limited in the same capacity.

I was Paymaster and Wages Clerk to this firm when I enlisted and I am still in their employ.

On the morning of 26th March 1918 I was instructed by my Co.Lt.Col.D.G.Marks to take a patrol consisting of myself, Sgt.A. McCormack, Cpe.J.Bales and other ranks to ascertain how far the enemy had advanced in order that the Brigade might take up a position that same evening.

We proceeded in the direction of Hebuterne and it was on the outskirts of this village that we first made contact with him.

In order to reach the village we found it necessary to take to the fields as the roads were choked with British troops, Infantry, Artillery, A.M.C. Engineers etc.with a fair sprinkling of peasantry who were endeavouring to salvage some of their possessions by wheeling them along the roads in barrows and handcarts, the women leading the livestock.

The confusion was indescribable and not one of their officers

seemed to have the capacity or the gift of leadership to rally them and make a stand.

They appeared to have plenty of S.A.A. but the machine guns appeared to have been jettisoned. The fact of the matter was that the various regiments had converged on the main routes to the rear and all had become hopelessly mixed up, the officers not deeming it their responsibility to make an endeavour to rally any but their own regiments or platoons.

I venture to say that had there been officers who were prepared to make that endeavour during that retreat when no resistance whatever was being offered them the enemy's advance would have been checked on the previous days providing of course their example was followed by others on the flanks.

Even Staff Officers G.S.O. 1s and 2s were urging the men to get back as quickly as possible informing them that tanks were appearing over the hill near Hebuterne when in actual fact we found they were French farmers endeavouring to salvage their farming machinery.

We proceeded through the retreating troops (who looked on us with wonderment seeing we were going forward and they going back) to Hebuterne, where, as I have already stated, we made contact with the enemy and well do I remember how Sgt. McCormack picked off one after the other in a sunken road near the cemetery. He must have accounted for at least 15 and the others many more before I deemed it necessary to return and report the information we had gleaned to the C.O.

I might add that the French people had left in such a hurry that meals which had been prepared were still on the tables of

some homes untouched.

I firmly believe that the demonstration made by that Patrol was the means of stemming his advance for the day as when the battalion entered the village that evening very little resistance was offered and that came from the cemetery where we had seen him during the day. This Patrol again covered the advance of the Battalion to the positions the C.O. was instructed to take up.

The old trenches of 1914 were occupied by us.

In justice to the British troops I would like to add that some of the Welsh Fusiliers who attached themselves to us for rations and discipline were the equal of our own men under efficient leadership and protested when told that they were to leave us and rejoin their own regiments.

Yours faithfully,

*L. W. J. Cleland*  
*Late Captain 13<sup>th</sup> Bn A.I.F.*

(Orders issued 7 pm 31st)

Extract from Divl Order 30 March  
(Copy of German order capt by 4th Bde on March 31 1918 at 8.30 pm)

The sector of XIV Res Corps is now divided into 2 Divl. Sectors

The Rk Divl Sector (the 119 Infy Divn) from Little WOOD 125 in distance to 100 metres N. of the FORK <sup>made</sup> on the road from the SUGAR FACTORY 400 metres S of HERBUTERNE

The 119 I.D. will be ~~attached~~ strengthened by 1 Regiment of the IV I.D. - The left Divl. Sector (39 I.D.) in touch with CXIX I.D. as far as the Corps boundary 200 metres south of the Eastern Railway crossing on the SERRE-MAILLY Road. To the left of the XXXIX I.D. is the ~~left~~ XXI R.D.

Battle Zones

Right - S edge of PUISIEUX the road junction SERRE-HERBUTERNE with the railway 100 metres N. of the Fork-Road S. end of FARM DE LA HAIE - the southern edge of SOVAISRE

Left - the N. edge of MIRAMONT - 200 m. south of eastern railway crossing on the SERRE MAILLY road - S. end of BERTINCOURT.

19

2/18 2

The boundaries in the evening (Sector) similarly apply for Artillery zones - Infantry regiment 172 with attached troops will on 31st in the early hours of the morning by Res. Reg. 46 of 119 I.D. be relieved. The 126 I.R. will be in the night of the 31st March & 1st April be relieved by one Regiment of the 4th I.D. \* Regiment will be named later.

On the right flank

It will remain in position on the right flank of the Division -

In consequence of the battle now in progress ~~particular~~ ~~noted~~ during the relief to attention must be paid during the relief to liaison on the NE. part of the line.

Should an attack take place during the relief, all relief will be cancelled. The reserves will hold & take up connection with the nearest regimental battle HQ. The regimental battle HQ of 2<sup>nd</sup>

- 92 Infy. Reg. 1315/5A
- 77 Infy. Reg. 1316/16B
- 79 Infy. Reg. 1415/17D

The Bde Battle H.Q. will be notified by the guide. The Flying Aviation Detachments





49

IR 126 on the 31/30 <sup>21</sup>/<sub>A</sub> <sup>5</sup>/<sub>14</sub>  
will inform the Bde Battle HQ of  
the completion of sketch.

Sketches showing the  
position of our own front line &  
the enemy's line with dispositions  
down to companies including  
MGs & numerals, HQ &  
boundaries must be handed in  
to the Bde by 10 am

IR 126 - the boundaries of  
the right sector -

Right boundary - BLUE  
POINT M 1214  
Left boundary BLUE POINT  
M 1314

There are  
2nd Batt<sup>n</sup> on the right, ~~1~~  
Batt<sup>n</sup> on the left, dividing line thro  
BLUE POINT ~~2~~ sq 1214  
The 3rd Batt<sup>n</sup> with the 2nd Coy of  
15th Pioneer Reg. in Reserve in  
the Area TOUTRENT FM. W of  
COLINCAMPS - POISIEUX RLY

As soon as it is dark the  
following will be relieved on 31st March  
2nd Batt<sup>n</sup> ~~126~~ by 2nd Batt<sup>n</sup> 49th  
North of BLUE POINT M 1314 - T  
elements of IR 92 by 1st  
Batt<sup>n</sup> 126

49

On the 21<sup>st</sup> April 3am <sup>21</sup>/<sub>A</sub> <sup>6</sup>/<sub>15</sub>  
Batt<sup>n</sup> 126 by 3rd Batt<sup>n</sup> 49th

The Heavy MG's must be distributed  
in depth - 6 MGs of 1/55 19 are  
to be posted in the North East Corner  
of 1316 east of PUISIEUX-COLINCAMPS  
Railway

The light TMs of 1st and  
3rd Batt<sup>n</sup>s are <sup>to be placed in</sup> ~~behind~~ <sup>opposite</sup> the centre of  
the Regimental Sector to afford  
barage fire in accordance with  
the dispositions made by the TM  
Officers of 3rd Batt<sup>n</sup> in consultation  
with 1st & 2nd Batt<sup>n</sup>s

Medical arrangements - Position  
of Regt. Dressing Station is not  
altered

Regt. Battle HQ unchanged.  
Sketch to be in to Regt 8 oc, to  
be in Div<sup>n</sup> by 10 - You are reminded  
to use great discretion when talking  
over the telephone

Von Wolterstorff

79

Doct's Record:

4/11/18  
8/4/18

Dear Bean

The enclosed speaks for itself.

To-morrow the 15-16  
th go out for a few  
days, being preceded by  
2 British Bns attached  
to me.

13-14th still  
now in.

All well.

Plenty of good shooting.

Yours sincerely  
C.W. Wood

21/7

4th Australian  
(Through 37

of the 4th Aust  
of HEBUTERNE ag  
relief and with  
many cases have

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ne defence  
Without  
d in

Heavy attacks on the 1st and 5th  
April were repulsed with severe losses to the enemy.

skillful enterprises carried out on the initiative  
of local Commanders have resulted in the capture of several enemy  
posts with a gain to us of 80 prisoners and 8 Machine Guns, besides  
inflicting heavy losses on the enemy.

The Corps Commander considers this a very fine  
performance which reflects great credit on all ranks of the Brigade.

H.Q., IV Corps.  
7th April 1918.

(Sgd) R.G. PARKIN, Brig-General.  
General Staff, IV Corps.



79  
Docts of  
Record.

21  
7

IV Corps No. 76/1/3 G.

4th Australian Brigade.  
(Through 37th Divn).

The Corps Commander desires to thank all ranks of the 4th Australian Brigade for their gallant behaviour in the defence of HEBUTERNE against all attacks during the past 14 days. Without relief and without complaint they have held their positions and in many cases have advanced and improved their line.

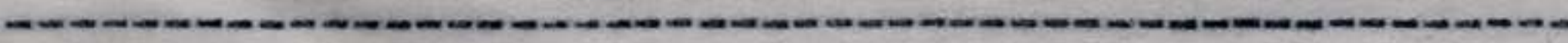
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The Corps Commander considers this a very fine performance which reflects great credit on all ranks of the Brigade.

H.Q., IV Corps.  
7th April 1918.

(Sgd) R.G.PARKIN, Brig-General.  
General Staff, IV Corps.





MEDICAL HISTORY. CHAP. VIII. FIFTEEN

Dawn of the 26th found the force clinging to the edge of the cliffs and heads of the ravines and precariously holding an area of some 500 acres almost everywhere overlooked by the enemy. But it had dug in and was in touch with supplies. **The next three days.** As a base of operations the Beach had proved tenable and, with lines of communication intact, everything was possible. But the issue was still uncertain, and the fighting of the 26th and 27th was a bitter struggle for existence. These days saw little respite for the stretcher-bearers.<sup>16</sup> The proportion of stretcher cases was large. Regimental officers reassembled their bearers, regained touch with their battalion headquarters, and formed new aid posts. The trenches, at first mere shallow cuts or isolated rifle-pits, were deepened and connected up. Routes to the Beach improved slowly; the lie of the land became known; and a few names (the first requirement in human co-operation) became current.

The greater part of the tent divisions of the 1st Australian Division, and all their transport, remained in the ships, as did the senior surgeon of the 1st Australian Casualty Clearing Station and its equipment. But on the night of April 27th the bearers of the 4th Field Ambulance landed and took over the evacuation of Monash Valley—"badly wanted," as were also their thirty-six stretchers.

By April 28th the tactical situation was such as to make possible the reorganisation of the force. The area held was roughly one and a half miles in length; its greatest depth 1,000 yards. The front was now divided into sectors, the

<sup>16</sup> The following table shows the numbers evacuated between April 25 and 30:—

Date.	^	Passed through Books.			Evacuated Irregularly.
		1st A.C.C.S.	N.Z.F. Amb.	R.N.D.F. Amb.	
April 25	..	800	..	..	670
" 26	..	790	250	..	
" 27	..	650	..	..	1,310
" 28	..	398	..	..	
" 29	..	..	250	..	
" 30	..	199	..	..	
Total	..	2,756	500	1,310	670

*Day or night?*  
*I wrote on 19 Dec*  
*to ask*  
*C.E.W.B.*

19th October, 1933.

Dr. C. E. W. Bean,  
Official Historian,  
Victoria Barracks,  
PADDINGTON, N.S.W.

Dear Dr. Bean,

Your letter of the 11th October has just reached me, and on thinking the matter over, the events standing in my memory are as under :-

I had command of "A" Company of the 16th Battalion in the attack in question on the afternoon of March 29th, 1918, and remember the broad outline of it.

Hall's party of the 14th Battalion certainly did attack and made a considerably greater advance along the enemy's trenches than that of the parties from the 15th and 16th. As far as the 16th Battalion party was concerned, quite a lot of progress was made until we reached the German mainline, when if my memory serves me right, we found it rather considerably occupied, well supplied with bombs, and as our barrage was totally insufficient and erratic, no further progress could be made. Of course, these details are slipping from my memory now; I have no notes or diary that would be of assistance to you, but I am definitely of the opinion that the facts as given above are substantially true.

In re-reading your letter, it would appear that there is some doubt in your mind as to whether there was one or more attacks, and also whether they were in different trenches. My memory in the matter is that the trench attacked was one, but we attacked it along various old dis-used communication trenches in different sectors, intending to force separate entrances and eventually connect up.

Yours faithfully,

*E. E. W. Bean*

15 Lyall Street,  
HAWTHORN. E.2.

28th December, 1933.

Dr. C.E.W. Bean,  
Official Historian,  
Victoria Barracks,  
PADDINGTON, N.S.W.

Dear Dr. Bean,

The Writer would apologise for not replying sooner to your letter of the 19th instant, but owing to a double change of address and the Christmas Season, he only received it yesterday.

However, to answer your query, my memory on the matter is that the original attack on the German outpost system was made in the vicinity of 3 p.m. on the afternoon of the 29th March, 1918, and as previously informed you the Writer's Company was working in conjunction with the party of the 14th Battalion under the Late Lieutenant Hall. Lieutenant Hall did establish himself for awhile at the 3 p.m. attack, but as far as the Writer's memory serves him, did not stay there very long on account of his flanks being in the air.

The Writer's portion of the attack was unsuccessful in view of unsuspected concentration of the Hun in what we then called "The Old British Front Line." In the Writer's memory there was no further attack or counter-attack later in the afternoon, but arrangements had been made for another smack at the position later in the evening, approximately 10 p.m. or 10.30 p.m., but on account of the lack of support previously given by both the artillery and the trench mortars, this attack fizzled out, as far as the 16th Battalion was concerned.

Another feature to the failure of the attack on both occasions was, in the Writer's opinion, due to the fact that during the morning of the 29th March, the Writer's Company was employed in carting Stokes trench mortar grenades from the rear of Hebuterne to the Front Line position, and as the weather then was not conducive to good going - it having rained very heavily for two days previously - the men were in no fit condition to fight late in the night after having unsuccessfully done so during the afternoon.

Of course, this is entirely from the Writer's memory, but I have given careful consideration to it, and as Hebuterne was of great personal interest to the Writer, I think that my facts are O.K.

It is with regret the Writer recalls that someone "souvenired" his copious notes in his diary which would gladly have been



made available to you, and would have supplied quite a lot of the intimate details that are, no doubt, missing from the War Diary.

My reference in an earlier paragraph to "The Old British Front Line" recalls to my memory a feature of which possibly you may not be aware, namely, that we arrested the Hun's progress in Hebuterne when we first established contact with him on the 20th March. We forced him to occupy an old system of trenches which prior to July 1916 was "The Old British Front Line" - we in turn occupying what was "The Old British Support Line," and many excursions were made along the old communication trenches which, however, did not stand up as well as the main fighting trenches.


The C.T's. were more than half full, but nevertheless provided excellent cover for raiding purposes and patrols, and in many instances we made valuable use of this old system for carrying out the harassing methods that we continuously adopted from the time we established contact until we left the Sector.

If at any time in future, or any further information required on this particular phase, the Writer would be only too happy to supply.

Reciprocating your good wishes for 1934,

Believe me to be,

Yours very sincerely,



E.J. PARKS.

12 October 1933.

Dear Leane,

The Official History has now reached the point at which the 12th Brigade took over in front of Albert and Dernancourt in March 1918. The diaries are very sketchy, but, as far as I can make out, the outline of events was as follows.

At 12 o'clock on March 27 Gellibrand came across to Henencourt and issued verbal orders for the 47th and 48th Battalions to advance and take over a line on the crest above Albert and Dernancourt (or, rather, some way down the slope) in support of the 9th Division, which was understood to be holding the railway. As far as I can make out, Gellibrand's order must have been brought to you verbally by a staff officer of the 9th Division without credentials, who said he had been sent to guide the 48th. There was a question as to his identity which is said to have delayed the start of the 48th Battalion until 1.30. The 47th state that they had gone on alone and about 1.30 had come into position behind the edge of the crest, but were unable to find the 48th on their left. Imlay went down the Albert road for 1,000 yards, until fired on, and then stationed temporarily one or two posts there in the 48th's sector. At 2.30, the 48th still not being up, he was ordered to push on over the crest and part of the way down the slope. He did so with his two leading companies, and lost 30 or 40 men in the heavy shell-fire which resulted, and one or two by machine-gun fire from a British 'plane. Meanwhile the 48th appear to have come up on the left of the original position of the 47th, and you personally went forward around the forward slope, in order to ascertain whether British or German troops were ahead of you, and, if British, what they were. About 5 o'clock you reported your battalion in position, and at the same hour Imlay records that you gained touch with him on the left. From subsequent messages from yourself I gather that the posts placed this night by the 48th were about the crest of the hill, as you represented that it was better to have them there and to trust to counter-attack than to expose them unduly.

All this is very vague, but it is the best that I can make out at present from the diary. I should be most grateful for any help that you can give me from your own recollection.

With kind regards,  
Yours sincerely,

C.E.W. Bean.

Brig.-General R.L. Leane, CB, CMG, DSO, MC, VD.,  
Chief Commissioner of Police,  
Adelaide, S.Aust.



REFERENCE NO.

(To be quoted in reply.)

## Police Commissioner's Office,

Box 383E, G.P.O.,

Adelaide,.....20th October,.....1933.

2M-3.32 8317

C. E. W. Bean, Esq.,  
Victoria Barracks,  
SYDNEY.  
N. S. W.

My dear Bean,

Your letter to hand. The position was not quite as stated in your letter. Imlay was rather noted for forwarding information of this nature in reference to supporting Units. General Herring could furnish you with quite a lot of information relative to similar trouble with Imlay during the battle of Messines. In fact, it caused his removal from command of the 45th and transfer to England. I, knowing the truth, was able, when taking over the command of the 12th Brigade, to right the wrong. It is the first time I heard of this alleged lack of support of the 47th by the 48th. Certainly Gellibrand never mentioned the matter though he did discuss the serious losses. Imlay suffered in the advance and asked me to account for it. My Battalion losses had been low and my Unit had the brunt of the April 5th fight. Imlay not only had serious loss in the 47th, but had to have the help of two Companies from, I think, the 46th who also lost heavily.

Leaving Berles au Bois on the night 26th March the 48th moved to Senlis, arriving there at about 7 a.m. Shortly after arrival and before the men had time to have breakfast, I received orders to report to Brigade. The Brigadier informed me that I must move to Millencourt. He stated that the enemy were advancing fast towards Amiens. I gave the necessary instructions, reaching Millencourt about 10.30 a.m. The Germans shelled the Battalion and I moved them to low ground behind the Millencourt Cemetery.

Here we had breakfast. It was while we were still eating that a young English Officer arrived and asked for the commanding officer, 48th Battalion. I made myself known to him and enquired his business. He stated that the Germans had captured Albert and Dernancourt. The English were retreating and I was to immediately push forward and occupy the railway embankment and on no account to permit the Germans to advance further towards Amiens. I was not impressed with the Officer and asked him to produce his authority for the order. He replied that he had no written authority. He did not know the name of the Brigadier who gave him the order or the number of the Brigade. I then asked him the direction I was expected to move. He pointed to Henencourt and said "The Brigade Commander is there and we must pass that village to reach the line." I asked the name of the Village. He replied "Lavieville". As you are aware the 48th Battalion had trained in this area in 1916 and 1917. I knew every part of the Country between us and the railway embankment. We had been warned that German Officers, dressed as British Staff Officers, had been very active during the retreat in giving false orders, so I decided to hold this officer until I located Brigade. My men had been without rest since arriving and being dumped on the road about 5 miles from Berles au Bois on March 25th. It was owing to retreating British troops putting the wind up the Bus drivers that they refused to proceed to Berles au Bois. Since then we had seen men and vehicles spread all over the country, all going in opposite direction to that we were heading. I could not believe that the Brigadier would use such a method to convey an order to me. I only had the ammunition carried on the men. They were tired out and I wanted to know a little more about the position generally before committing my Battalion to action. There was no earthly reason, so far as I could see, to prevent the Brigadier either sending one of his own Staff or a written

message. Gellibrand would be the first to condemn me for accepting an order under such circumstances. I went to look for Brigade and found the Brigadier shortly afterwards. He confirmed the order, instructing me to occupy the railway embankment and prevent the Germans advancing along the Albert Amiens Road. He stated that he believed that this position was held by British Troops which the 12th Brigade would relieve. I saw the 47th moving between Henencourt and Lavieville. Immediately upon return the 48th, which I had given instructions to be ready to move, moved towards Albert. Time ~~would~~ be about 12.30 p.m. The move forward was in artillery formation on a frontage of about 600 yards and a depth of 2000 yards. The ground was very open and I knew that our advance would be clearly seen by the Germans from the high ground behind Albert. I decided that it was quite useless attempting to relieve the English or reach the Embankment before dark because of the heavy casualties we would suffer, so I decided to occupy the trenches built on the forward slope which had a fine field of fire and covered ~~the~~ advance towards Amiens. The Enemy shelled us heavily during the advance, but I reached the position without any casualties from enemy fire although I lost one man, killed, and four wounded, fired on by an English Plane. I understand the observer had been instructed that all troops east of Henencourt were Germans. About 2.30 p.m. I decided to reconnoitre the front and taking Downes, who was Assistant Adjutant and two runners, I moved across to the high ground overlooking Dernancourt. Here I found members of the 47th also English Soldiers. They were suffering casualties from shell fire directed from behind Dernancourt. I was given to understand that the reason for the severe shelling had been caused by the advance of the 47th. I learned that the Battalion had lost heavily in the advance, particularly when trying to push down the forward slopes where they came under machine gun fire. However, Imlay had obeyed the command he

received from Gellibrand. There was no need for the hurry. The English were in position and could not leave it before dark without severe loss. Therefore, the solution was to wait for darkness to cover the movement down the forward slopes to the Railway Embankment. I never believed in reckless waste of men when the object could be achieved without it.

Informing the 47th of the location of the 48th I moved along the high ground towards the Albert Road. I saw quite a number of the 47th, but could not ascertain where Imlay had established Headquarters, nor did I see the post supposed to have been established. Men of the 47th were in trenches which I later occupied with supports. I found English troops on the Albert Road and later occupied the position. It was here that I was picked up by the Enemy Artillery which followed me all the way back to my own Headquarters. Downes was wounded. Having decided to remain in the present position until dark, I sent a sketch and a report to Brigade. Between then, at about 4.20 p.m. and dark, I received several messages directing me to push forward. About 5 p.m. I located Imlay who had his Headquarters about 400 yards south of the 48th. Orders given by a senior must be obeyed, but if he was not present and able to ascertain the conditions I always believed <sup>in</sup> deciding for myself how I would carry the order out, having due regard to the prevention of casualties, a matter which appeared so often to have no weight with the higher Command. I never gave a definite command to a subordinate unless I was able by personal reconnaissance to know that it could be done with minimum casualties.

During the whole of this operation from March 27th to April 6th, during which period at least two efforts were made by the Huns to break through, and the 48th stood the brunt of the big attack on April 5th, prisoners captured informed me that the attack was carried

out by four divisions specially brought up for the purpose. The 48th Battalion casualties were extremely low, I believe about 150. Gellibrand asked me to explain why the 48th were so low compared with the 47th. I told him that it was because Imlay had obeyed Brigade instructions literally instead of deciding on the ground how the order should be carried out.

I am sending you a sketch which was made of the position on March 28th. You will see the position of the 48th. After the fight on April 5th, the line was slightly adjusted but gave a much better field of fire.

There was one incident which occurred, I think on March 28th. The Huns advanced but failed to break through the 48th line. Thirtyone Germans broke through the 47th, captured two prisoners. These were recaptured by Lieut. Mitchell and men of the 48th. Imlay afterwards reported that the prisoners were captured by the 47th. This was not correct. I sent a long report to General Gellibrand and although Mitchell obtained the M.C. for this act, I never knew what Gellibrand reported as official. Only 31 prisoners were captured, also two 47th we recaptured. This was done by the 48th after the Germans had broken through the 47th line.

You asked me about this matter after we were relieved, so that possibly you know all about it.

Will you please return the sketch after you finish with it.

Yours sincerely,

*Raymond A. Leung*

"Jarrar,"  
80, Sea View Road,  
HENLEY BEACH, S. Australia,  
9th November, 1934.

Dr. C. E. Bean,  
SYDNEY.

Dear Dr. Bean,

I read with interest the report of your broadcast talk in Smiths' Weekly, 6th Oct., 1934.

An incident which started when I received a couple of photographs from a Prussian Guardsman at the Battle of Villiers Bretonneaux has received much prominence in 'Smiths' of and on for about two years.

I have thought of another experience which I had at the Battle of Derncourt, and think you might find this of some value. Accordingly I have enclosed 'my story'. I will be in Sydney and Melbourne within the next three months, and if you consider the enclosed information of any worth, I will be pleased to bring written verification from well know citizens of Adelaide.

Trusting that my experiences may be of some assistance to you,

Yours faithfully,

*A. R. Wells*

A. R. Wells.

*Acknowledged  
cuttings returned*



"M Y S T O R Y"  
-----

A story of the beginning of the Battle of  
Dernancourt.

From the North Locre to Senlis you know all about. I will start by stating that we stretcher bearers and transport on the road leading into Senlis, and were facing that village on the morning of the Battle. 666

From some "Tommys" who were retreating we gained the information that the Germans had broken through and were coming.

Then we, the stretcher bearers of the 13th Fd. Ambulance, advance through Senlis, and turned to the right following metal road to Henincourt. Some distance before Henincourt we were halted and sat easy on a patch of ploughed ground. Then about ~~three~~ <sup>two</sup> and ~~one-half~~ <sup>one</sup> miles away we notice shells bursting. A few moments later we could see men running amid puffs of smoke. On they came, and by this time we could see that they were the Germans advancing, and further it would not take them long to reach us. None of our combative arms were in sight, and it looked as if they would have a great run through. rwc(2)

At this moment, however, an Australian Battalion marched round a small hill, opened out and immediately went in to action. They speedily checked the advancing Germans. Later I found they were the 48th Bn. under Brig. Gen. Leane.

From the position we were in this battle presented a wonderful sight. It was just like watching a military tattoo, except for the grim reality that it was war. No praise could be too great for the gallant Australian Battalion. They arrived just at the critical moment, and to our minds covered themselves with glory.

Signed A.R. Wells



would end, but it would come down again locally wherever called for by message or S.O.S. signal. It was also usually put down on the whole front for an hour at dawn on the day after the attack, that being a probable time for a counter-attack.<sup>12</sup> Most of the available machine-gun companies would be employed on the barrage, but the attacking brigades were allowed to take their own companies with them, not, as earlier in the war, for offensive purposes, but to secure immediately against counter-attack the ground seized at each objective. Except for these mobile guns, the machine-gun force of the corps, which at Gallipoli had been controlled by battalions, at Pozieres by brigades, and later by divisions,<sup>13</sup> was now operated as a single

<sup>12</sup>As the machine-guns covering the advance could not range deeply beyond the final objective, the barrage machine-guns would be massed in two equal bodies - the first, to participate in all except the farthest stage of the creeping barrage; the second, emplaced much farther forward, to lay a barrage on any counter-attack after the final objective had been gained. On Sept. 20, as the final objective was not deep, the machine-guns for the creeping barrage also answered S.O.S. signals after the advance. In addition, by a prearranged system they concentrated their fire on any area close in front of their own or the neighbouring divisions when called upon to do so.

<sup>13</sup>At Bullecourt the machine-gun operations were "co-ordinated" by the corps machine-gun officer.

instrument under the Corps machine-gun officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Here. In these great set-piece attacks the artillery was controlled on an even larger scale, by the artillery commander of the army. The whole artillery of I Anzac operated as a unit under the Corps artillery commander (Brigadier-General Napier). Divisional commanders nevertheless remained responsible for seeing that the barrage planned by the corps staff suited the needs of their infantry.

(LEAVE SPACE HERE)

The first consideration that presented itself to Generals Birdwood and White, in applying these principles in a plan for (thick black) The plan seizing the ridge, was that the advance along the for Sept. 20 ridge involved two separate tasks, first, that of thrusting back the enemy in front, and, second, that of holding

(TAKE IN SKETCH No. 282)

Dernancourt. Mar 27

From Gellibrand.

18.1.34

Gelly found 9 Div Cds v. upset about 35 Div. He was order to move in at once without giving the men breakfast - to relieve at once. He was to move until his men reached the fl. & relieve the British who were to fall back at once. G. asked if it would not be possible to give 1 men a meal, but was told that there was not time for that. This was probably why no written order was sent to Leane. ✓

From Witham.

Mar 26. Witham was acting in/c 13 Bde on the way down from Flanders, Glasgow being on leave. St. Pol was being shelled, & the landlady of the inn at which Witham wanted to lunch was anxious to close the place & clear out. Brand however was lunching there, & he arranged with Witham to ~~hold the seals~~ to let Witham supplant him & continue the meal.

From Gelly.

Mar 26. At Perles au Bois during 1 day Gelly was ordered (1) to secure a position (2) to take up a position. He was out there to supervising the taking up of position & waiting for 1 men when 1 order to move S. arrived. Norman was at Bde H.Q. & was responsible for all 1 arrangements for the march S.

Allen 45 Bn

HN/251

Allen. <sup>6.30 am</sup> 45<sup>th</sup> went up from Lavieville & barbed caught them <sup>at 6.55 am</sup> in Sq. 12 & they dug in at once. Lost a few in last pm. Allen was on tel. to Leane & Bde.

By 11.30 <sup>am</sup> Leane told Allen to move up to position dug on night of 27<sup>th</sup>.

(for defence fl. 13 etc) Allen was mostly 3 Coy & Co to do this when Norman rang & told Allen to take Bn to Pt 2. Allen took Leane's side & sd it wd be better posn.

Babe sd ords were to go to Pt 2.

45<sup>th</sup> moved to Pt 2 (A & D to Pt 2 Davies<sup>D</sup> & Holman<sup>A</sup>)

Third Coy kept back. Fourth Coy was under Sunday.

men sent by 6's at 100x intervals. Both in posn by 1.30.

B stayed in E 12.

Before 2 pm. Pt 2 was fl. Att was ordered for 2.30.

The <sup>45<sup>th</sup></sup> was waiting for 49<sup>th</sup> out in front of trench, ready to move & had to go back again.

(Davies says it was the worst Inf. fire he ever faced). No arty suppl. They got blimp & ~~and~~ 3 of L Sq wh. Js were using. Js ran & 2 of L Sq fired from hip

Note: 45 Bn dug in on fl. of 47 on night of Mar. 27

HN/251

DERNANCOURT.

Extract of letter (5/12/33) from Colonel A.S. Allen to  
Brigadier-General R.L. Leane.

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~~Wx~~ I was talking to Col. Lavarack the other day. He was very interested in my views on Dernancourt. He was not aware that your orders to me ~~(to occupy)~~ to occupy the high ground overlooking Dernancourt village before the Germans occupied it, were countermanded by Bde. You will remember that I was in close support with the 45th when Fritz attacked 47th and 48th. You instructed me to move to the high ground on the right, a position which the 45th dug on the first night in. Simultaneous to your orders, Brigade ordered me to Pioneer Trench. I remonstrated with Babe Norman, Brigade Major, and was curtly told to carry out the orders of the Bde. commander. You will also remember that this move allowed the Germans to occupy the high ground and command Pioneer Trench and your Battalion H.Q., and resulted in 45 and 49 counter-attacking in the afternoon. Your tactics would certainly have prevented this counter-attack. I have often thought of this stunt, which was one in which your actions have always been an inspiration to me. Lavarack was very interested in this aspect of the battle.

89  
14 N/251  
10  
A  
Interview with Cpl C.W.Lane and Pte Ruschples of 12th M.G.Co.  
April 13 . 1918 (Notes of F.M.Cutlack)

Machine guns on morning of 5th(Dernancourt)did not fire a shot. They were captured by the enemy coming behind them over the hill---very misty too. Their guns were dismounted from firing positions around the top of the quarry at seven o'clock every morning and this was done on the morning of the battle ~~every~~ every other morning. When the barrage came down on the quarry it was impossible to get the guns up again. The shells were bursting all over the top and machine gun fire was clipping the grass all around the edges. The machine gunners were in pozzies in the sides of the quarry and ~~xxxxxxx~~ did not suffer any casualties from the enemy's preliminary bombardment so far as these men knew. When the barrage lifted and gave them a ~~xxxxxxx~~ a chance they went out to mount the guns and the first thing they knew was the Boches firing rifle shots among them from around the edges of the quarry. The garrison cd do nothing but put their hands up. The two men saw no more of the others. They were told by the Germans to walk down the road into Dernancourt, which they did unescorted. The time when they were captured wd be between ten and half past. From the rifle and machine gun fire they heard down in the front line direction they agreed that it would be about 9.30 when the Germans attacked.

The position was well sited for view against an attack coming from direction of Dernancourt---i.e., up the road. They are sure the Germans did not come from this direction but from over the hill behind them\_\_\_i.e., northerly.

On the way down the hill Cpl Lane founded and wounded Australian. The Germans were then beginning to march up the Dernancourt road towards Lavieville, and he called out to a ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ red-cross man among the Germans marching up to come and help him bind up the Australian. This the German did. The wounded man then said he could walk and Lane helped him down to the German dressing station in Dernancourt.

The other man, the private, was detailed to help a wounded German infantry officer. This officer with his orderly was sitting in a field west of Dernancourt and here Ruschples found him. One or two other Australians collected there after a bit. Our artillery was shelling Dernancourt and approaches very heavily and for hours the shells were going just over the heads of the party. Now and again high shrapnel and shorts. The German orderly was wounded in this way, also one of the Australians. The German troops were very thick on the railway embankment, and this and the road bridge were quite untouched by our shelling. If only our guns, which were firing in enfilade, had been a little shorter and a little more left they would have killed hundreds of Germans. The fire on Dernancourt was so heavy that the Germans could not get into the village to the dressing station. At length as it slackened a bit Ruschples and another Australian volunteered to go in and get stretchers. When he took the German officer into the dressing station he met Lane again, who told him he had been making himself handy there with the idea of escaping after dark.

The German doctor in the dressing station told them it was getting rather dangerous in the dressing station and to take the wounded German officer down a cellar a few houses away. This they did and then took down also a wounded Australian who had been dressed in the d.s. They had hardly got the Australian out when a field-gun shell of ours went clean through the d.s. and took off the German doctor's head in transit. There was a ~~xxxx~~ great mess in the d.s. and the Germans who had been treating them very well were much annoyed. Later about four p.m. these two escorted by two unarmed Germans were detailed to carry the dead doctor's body back to his billet at Meaulte. They carried him in a waterproof sheet with a long stick shoved through it. The road was muddy and much shelled and they were very weary. About half way they were done and the two Germans took the burden. They all four sat

down beside a water-tank stand outside Meaulte, near a road fork. Meaulte was also being shelled. The two Germans sat at one corner of the tanks and the two Australians at the other. Suddenly a heavy shell of ours came along and just missed the heads of the two Germans. It was a dud. The Germans got up and called to the Australians to run with them for the village and leave the dead doctor. They ran and got to the billet. There they ate the doctor's dinner. The two Germans would not eat anything till the Australians had eaten first. They all slept there that night and in the morning went on and joined a body of about two hundred prisoners who were being marched along the main road to Peronne.

At Peronne they were taken before an officer. He did not ask them anything about their dispositions etc but gave them cigarettes and told them that the Australians had fought very well and caused the Germans heavy losses by machine gun fire. ~~xxxxxxx~~The 47th batn was all wiped out, either killed or captured (this was told them by a wounded sergeant of the battalion on the German dressing station, not by the German officer).

The food they got was very little---less than the German soldiers. Four oz of ~~ix~~ black bread and coffee for breakfast, a basin of thick soup for lunch and coffee and remains of their bread for tea. They felt very weak after a week of this food.

6th. Maricourt, Peronne(1.30). billeted in brewery night of 6th.

7th burying German dead on hill outside Peronne. They did not work hard and did no more than drag twelve German bodies to a shell hole from near about it. Some Tommies also engaged on this work told them that they had been working farther over the hill where the Germans were very thick and were buried ten and sixteen in one hole. Large numbers of dead there had evidently died of wounds---their wounds had been dressed and their clothes cut in the process, and then they had bn left there.

8th. Working in m.g. ordnance stores. There ~~xxxxxx~~ was a whole shed full of m.g. there.

9th. Camouflaging hydrogen gas cylinders with twigs of trees. Carrying wounded from dressing statn to rly .

10th. Went tout to work bt did nothing. Night marched to Bray. Slept ~~xxx~~ on road outside Peronne and arrd in Bray at 10 a.m. on mng Thurs. 11th.

11th. Working on ground for new aerodrome at Cappy. Slept night at old P. o. W. compund north Bray.

12th. At aerodrome at Cappy. Shells meant for Bray were falling short on top of Bray hill. One shell made a hole at the end of the cage away from the sentry. They escaped thro this at 9.30 p.m. that night. Walked back across country and dodged Germans several times on roads between Meaulte and Albert rly. Got back into our lines in E15, nearly shot by our own people as they did so. They crept up to the German trench & when they saw it

Germans were very confident about their attack and spoke to the two men quite freely about it. They described the offensive as an endeavour to separate the French and British armies and they believed that if successful the British wd leave France and the French wd then give in. They wd then establish long range guns on the coast at Calais and elsewhere and bombard England. A big new attack had bn planned for somewhere near Arras by an "army of sailors" (naval divisions) but it had had to be postponed once because the sailors got drunk on the way ~~up~~ from somewhere in rear.

had no  
were  
reached  
across  
it  
between  
the sentry

The Germans were very nervous of our barrages on the Meaulte road which was very nasty - as was the barrage in Dernancourt. The British shell with a sensitive fuse was dangerous at 600 yards & made the 5.9 seem silly.

*Jul*



5/4/18

5  
A

## 45 Bn.

From support arrd ~~xx~~ betwn roads E 7b and c at 1 p.m. Situation about straight as far as Boches concerned at about ~~x~~ 3. Attacked at 5.15 with 49th. Attacked with 2 coys other coy in support. M.g. barrage very heavy. Recaptured 4 lewis guns and took one German m.g. Casualties of three coys 120 in attack. Casualties in coy forward 78. Total cas., not complete 16 off. 267 o.r.

## 48 Bn.

T.m. fire on front trenches and heavy shelling of back areas. This was on 3/4 April. T.m. registrations were suspicious on posts along rly embankment and reported to Bde. Warning recd night of 4th that enemy wd attack on follg day N. of his attack wd be ALBERT. 6.55 next mng enemy barrage fell on support and reserve trenches. During night whole of road in front of rly was occupied by enemy, not usually there in force. Bn reported to Bde at 4a.m. that enemy in position on road and looked like establishing jumping off trenches. Artillery asked for. Lewis guns and t.m. told to assist in dispersing enemy. Barrage supprt and reserve trenches 6.55 a.m. Most intense fire experienced ~~xxx~~ except at Pozieres. Crept over from front support trenches to rear. In addition there was a scattered fire on support and reserve line. 8 a.m. started barrage on front line. 9.25 enemy began advancing large numbers. Came up ravine right of ALBERT road.

10.30 information from all along line everything ~~xx~~ OK and holding well. 11.30 support cy in E8b and c said 47th falling back thro them. 11.5 reported Hun broken thro 13th Bde and 47th. Just after 12 coy comdr in E9 reported enemy coming in behind them and wd have to retire. They retired from there abt 12.15. Fought rearguard action all way back and had very light casualties. They were well protected by left coy which stood firm till 3.30~~2~~ aftn when ordered to retire as they were ~~xxx~~ being surrounded. Platoon officer shot thro lungs continued duty and refued come back till direct order. Enemy was then in valley in 8d and 9c, also abt E3c and holding rly. Cy retired r fighting across AMIENS road thro 2d on to 2 central and took up positi~~n~~ on left of line again. This coy lost abt 50 out of 80. Bn Casualties 120.

Later in afternoon coy of 46 Bn at disposal was put in behind Bn.

Enemy attacked whole morning on direct front until retirement abt noon of 48th Bn. Came on very thick formation M.G. fire cut them to pieces.

Sgt ran from Cumming's position (left coy) and tried to carry signal to British on left that coy was retiring. Dropped under enemy m.g. fire several times. Then two tommies ran out hundred yards or so and brought him in. Signalling connection followed.

Prisoners were of Marines. 50 R.D., and 9 R.D. and ~~and~~ other divs also mentioned.

## 12 M.G. Coy.

There were 4 m.g.s in quarry E14 c and four more in 14 centl. with 2off. 33 o.r. No runner or message from them tat all during acton, *or since.*

## 47th.

Saw enemy massing abt level crossing in E15. Platoon comdr wen out with lewis gun and fired into them for two or three minutes. Also heard transport on road but mist too thick to see. 7 barrage came down. 7.15 enemy seen moving on top of hill (above mist) in E27. 7.20 heavy increase enemy art fire and all lines down. Visibility decreasing all this time. 8.30 telephone thro to Bde again. 9 all lines again gone. M.w. at 9.30 right along front line, this just before enemy inf. attack. 9.40 S.O.S. up from bde left flank.

At 9.40 left spt coy up hill had no officers left and only 20 men out of 108. Rt spt coy only 50 men left out of 120. One platoon 45th came up from further back to reinfrce these coys. ~~10.20~~ suddenly stopped arty fire in front and m.g.

2  
 fire opened in front. T.m. personnel and Pioneers helped coys in line. At one place lewis gun fire on Huns at 10 yards and oncoming enemy had climb over heaps of dead. There were about 400 dead enemy in front of one of our posts alone. In front line 47th had one man loading for four riflemen. Lewis guns and rifles were taken from dead enemy as they fell. Lewis guns fired so many rounds that metal of barrels expanded and they became useless. Principal attack began 10.25 (N.B. This must mean enemy began coming up hill at this time, which agrees with flank reports of break through).

11 a.m. enemy brought up two field guns at E15 d 15 about, only 250 yds from our men. 11.30 party about 100 or 200 enemy came into our support line. These supports had no lewis guns left, all damaged mud and shell fire. Rifles also blocked mud of shell bursts. Support coy fought till all officers wounded or killed and only 25 men left to fight the enemy after the preliminary bombardment. anyway. 12 front line of 47th intact along whole length, but not on rly line. One coy of 45th down to support the line. 1 p.m. enemy seen all over ground inside rlyline. About 1 movement started from right to retire up slope of hill. Right ultimately conformed. At end of day had 6 men representing the two support coys of morning. Enemy got to these coys in flank about 11.40. (no, about 1 hour earlier time)

At 11.40 there was gap of abt 1000 yds on 47th right. All details btn hq helped to extend flank along DERNANCOURT road up to AMIENS road. At 2 pm. 52nd left flank bent up hill oppositer refused flank 47th. About 3 enemy brought sevl field guns across rly abt E15 centl and fired uphill.

Counter attack line 5.15 right to left---49th, 2 coys 45th 47th(3off. 750.r.), 48th. Advanced across ridge and as came into exposed view enemy great clatter m.g. and rifle fire broke out. Dug in on line ~~xxx~~ NW of road running thro E8 and 13 (about 300 yds back). 49th, 45th, and 47th captured 10 m.g. this c.a.

5.45 there were 45 men left 2 coys 45th bn and 43 men of 47th.

Boche Sgt-mjr captured said two-thirds his division lying killed and wounded on hill, greatly enraged at losses.

52nd. Bn.

Left coy opp. DERNANCOURT only fell back when m.g. fire on flank and rear from high ground on left. This was abt or soon after 10.30

All communicatns brig. and forward broken 7.15 At 10.15 left coy still in position on rly and repulsed attack from DERN just aftwds. Very hard pressed by t.m. fire from village. Badly wanted arty on it. All officers ~~xx~~ this coy ultimately killed or wounded, sgt also wounded brought back the story. 10.55 sent message left coy centre coy reported falling back with right flank on rly and left at old C.C.S. E19b. Support coy sent up to strengthen. Coy of 51st at disposal ordred to prepare for counter attack from ~~xxxi~~ E19. 11.15 message that left flank left ~~flank~~ coy pressed back again---this left the ~~fl~~ flank now approx. on old C.C.S. facing east. Ordered no retire ment from that line in D19. Line then rightwards along rly to B uire intact. From rly in D19d up through old CCS to about D13d40. At 2p.m. supports in D18d had touch with 46th Bn on left.

Coy at CCS sent message abt 11 a.m. that whole left flank gone and some of centre.

*Our guns all time knew / battle they were fighting; Bde & the infantry from time to time save them all the information wh was going. & they were as excited as could be. Queenslanders backing up the Queensland infy & so on.*

*Mul  
 ndis  
 8.9 April 18*



HUDDART PARKER LINE.

T.S.S. ZEALANDIA.

↳ Galloway 45 Bn. Dernancourt.

The troops with  
Terrace on Mar 28 coming down  
the slope of hill got tremendously  
shelled as soon as they appeared. They  
went for a sunken rd - the

worst thing they could do!

When they reached <sup>the H.L. on</sup> the rd they

they had to move along to left,

of then go forward across the  
first (western) level Xg to an

old trench practice trench, <sup>just</sup> east  
of it. In crossing rd they

were heavily sniped at and

Terrace was k. From trench, where

was grass grown, they looked down

on D.C.T. That night they could see

nothing but heard pigs squeaking

in D.C.T. They were anxious as they  
never knew how many Gs were in I.G.



# Huddart Parker Limited

T. S. S. "Zealandia"

14th March 1935.

Re-9119.

*All communications  
to be addressed to  
the Company.*

Dr C. E. W. Bean,

Official Historian,

Victoria Barracks,

PADDINGTON.

N.S.W.

Dear Dr Bean,

Unfortunately, due to our having been in Newcastle until Wednesday morning, I did not receive your letter until after we had sailed for Hobart, so I trust that any information I can give you may not be too late for your requirements.

There may be a lot of extraneous matter in the following, but I might as well relate events as far as I can remember. I never kept a diary, so am uncertain of dates, but of course you have those at hand.

On the day in question our B. Company was in reserve or support (it meant the same thing then). We seemed to be in comparative security behind a slight rise and about 200 yards or so from the crest. Re-inforcements were called for to strengthen the Highland Light Infantry and our own 47th Battalion, which later had gone up in support of the H. L. I. that morning.

We moved off in artillery formation and directly we topped the rise the enemy opened fire with H. E. and Shrapnel,

causing numerous casualties. The fire was so severe that it was impossible to keep formation, but as everyone knew the objective, the railway, everyone went for it in their own way. A sunken road ran almost parallel with our course and quite a number were killed there. Among others killed there I saw the Company Sgt. Major. A chap named Grogan and myself took temporary shelter in a hole at the side of the road until there was a lull in the firing, when we started off again. Several other chaps who had taken shelter in a quarry followed us. As soon as we were in the open again the enemy opened fire again, and though laden with Lewis Gun Pannies<sup>r</sup> which we had taken from the killed we did our best to run. There were several hayricks and huts on our course (the latter, I believe, belonged to the Aust. Corps School) so we used these as screens as far as possible, eventually reaching the front lines safely. The railway at this part ran along an embankment and this was the part the H. L. I. were holding. (They by the way had had severe casualties, their dead littered the base of the bank where they had slithered down.). We found some of our own men along on the left, where the railway went over a level crossing and into a cutting. It was on this level crossing that Lieut. Terras was killed. The objective was an old disused practice trench, to get to which it was necessary to get into the cutting and scale the bank. Lieut. Terras was leading some men in single file at the crossing when he and the two men behind him were sniped through the head. A few men had gained the cutting previously, one of whom was killed by trench mortar fire. (A man who virtually

had his 1914 leave pass in his pocket.). It was resolved then to wait until the light began to fade, when we rushed singly, dropped between the rails and crawled into the cutting. Nearly everyone gained the trench, which was a comparatively short one running at right angles to the railway and overlooking Dernacourt and the opposite hill. Animals left in the village kept up a continual howling and squealing all night so that everyone was on the alert, and we had just settled down to snatch a little rest the following morning when the strains of martial music were heard. How little the Germans suspected our presence was evident to us when we saw a complete regiment - Cookers and all - marching along behind their band on the opposite slope. This was our revenge, and great care was taken to see that all Lewis Guns and rifles were able to go into action together. I don't think that it was necessary for the German Colonel to give orders, even if he had the chance, for they simply melted away.

Incidentally I have a hazy recollection that Lieut. Jimmy Watts and Sgt. Kelly went out looking for the sniper the previous night. Whether they got him or not I do not remember. We suspected that he was in a house which I will show on the sketch. Lieut. Watts was later badly wounded at Villers Bretonneux, in a little outpost which I happened to be in.

In closing, I am very glad to be of any assistance to you and trust that you will not be tired wading through this to reach the essential.

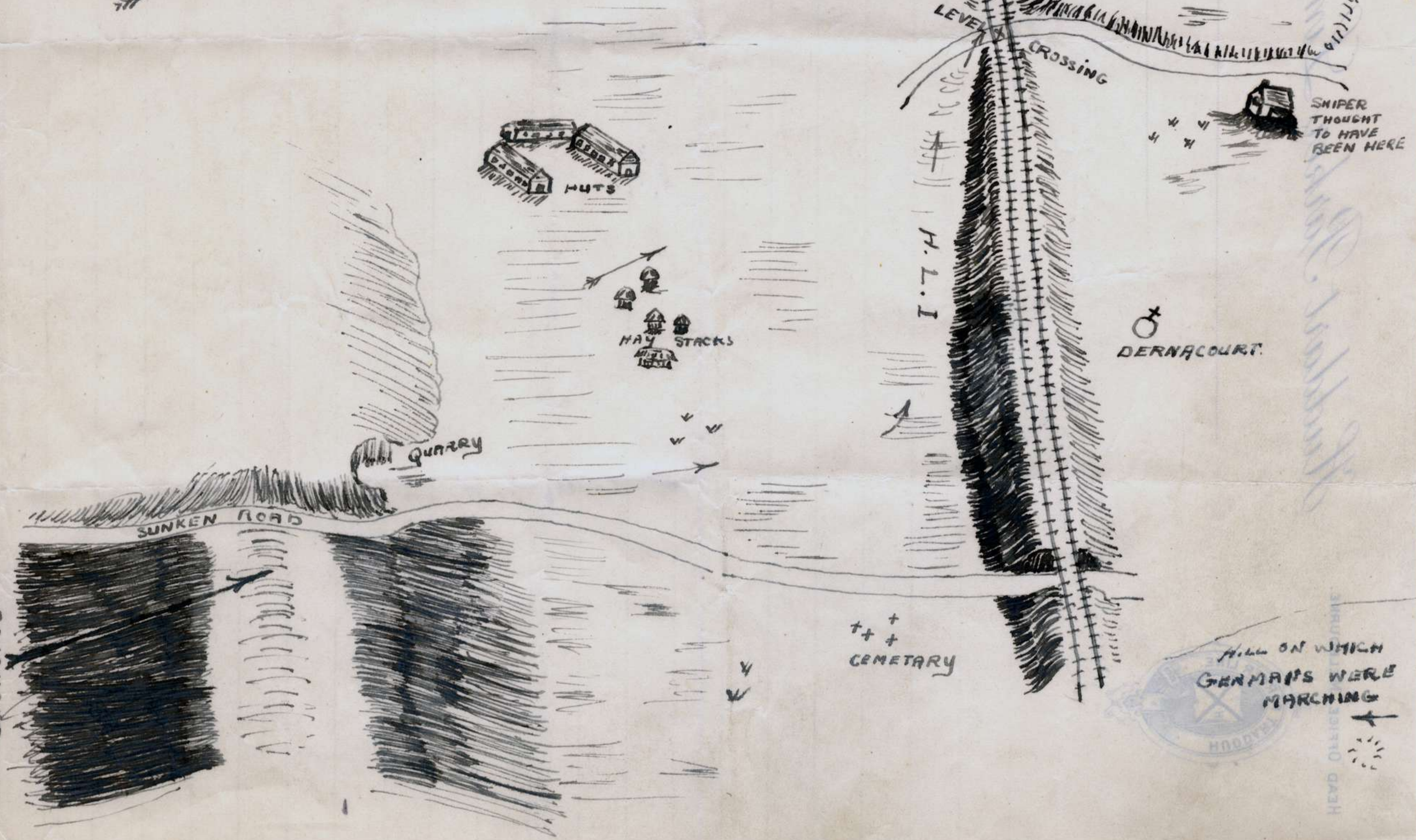
Lieut. Terras was held in high regard and respected  
by all. Respected because of the regard.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

*Jan C. Galloway.*  
.....

THIS ROUGH SKETCH WILL GIVE YOU AN IDEA OF HOW  
THE LAND LAY. THOUGH BY NO MEANS CLEAR, REFERENCE  
TO A MILITARY MAP WILL PUT YOU RIGHT.



ADVANCED  
FROM HERE



From <sup>Capt</sup> Adams: Chas. XI 45 Ba C Coy Derwent  
Vol. 133 A Ph Squires lead Bannister his shoulder,  
& constantly did so till they were withdrawn  
~~at the end~~

P 158. A.K. McDonald were these K in C/A  
& Mitchell at Sharp Pens?

When Adams got out to Perry's Coy  
he found that they could see Germans in  
front, but didn't quite make out  
what was happening; P. wondered  
if he ought to go forward.

McDonald was K in the C/A; P  
Mitchell was K. also almost as  
soon as they left Pioneer Trench.  
Both were in the leading Coy.

available. All the turmoil and bitterness of the referendum campaign would therefore, even if the referendum had been favourable, simply have brought the Government back to the position in which they were in September, when it was sought to avoid forcing a double dissolution. They would have been strengthened in the pursuance of their policy by the knowledge that they had the country at their back, and could have forced the double dissolution with confidence; but there is a material difference between that confidence and a legal right to enforce the ministerial policy by virtue of the referendum.

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*Handwritten notes, partially illegible due to bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.*

8129

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4314

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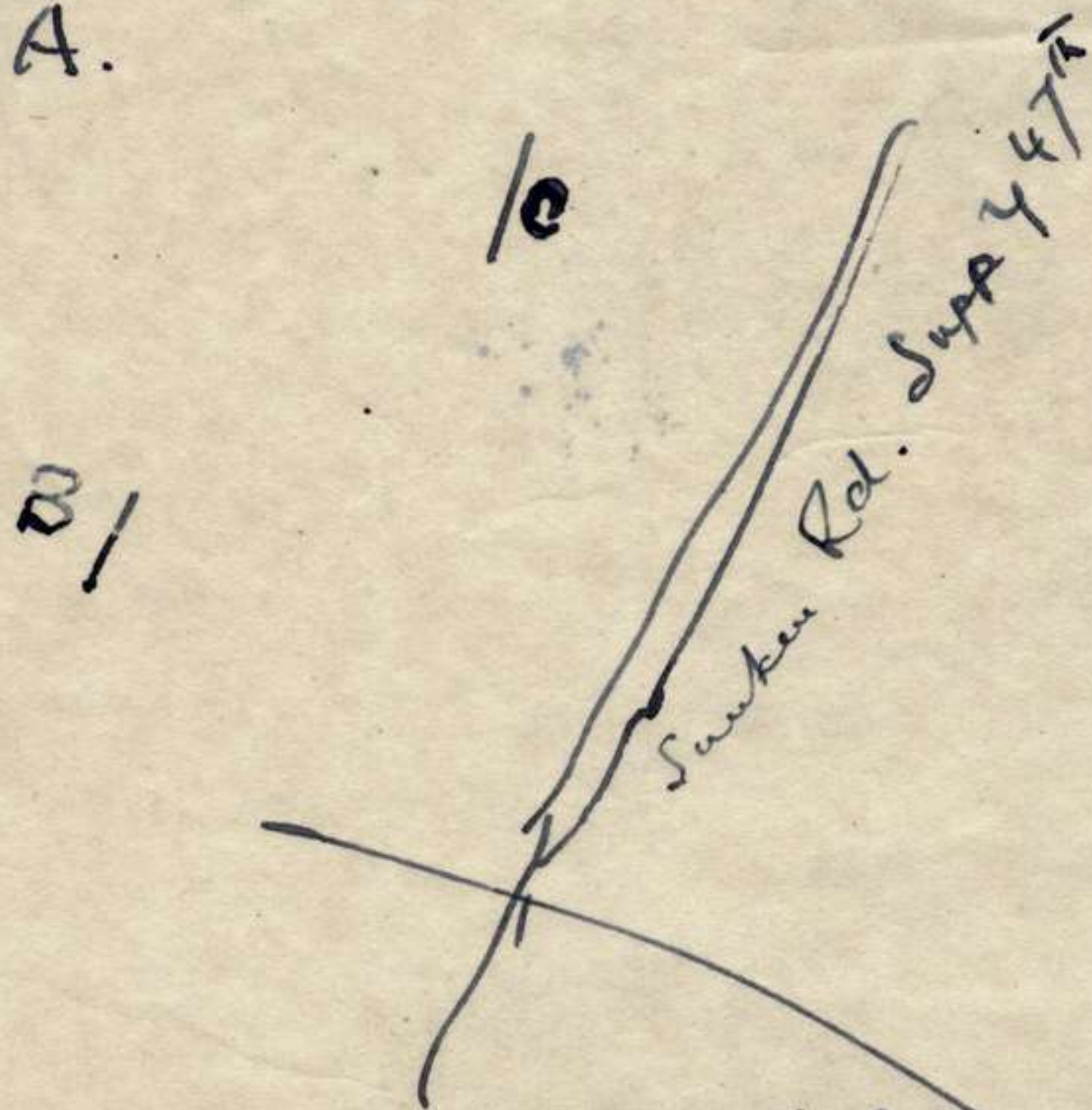
*Handwritten notes, partially illegible.*

45 at Desert. Apr 5 1918.  
From Capt W. G. Adams.

HN.

Perry (Mar 31)  
Dibbs } Adams took over }  
Adams B. }  
Jerguson took over }  
Davies D  
Holman A.

in support to 47th.



Dibbs was killed <sup>Mar 31st</sup> Perry got his legs  
& Jerguson etc  
from Engl took over B. during night of Apr 5.  
S. Perry was in/c after Dibbs was killed  
Adams came over from B on Apr. 5.  
Perry was then at the Sheep Pens - brush wood, hurdles scattered abt.  
When Adams got there, there was only 1 pln  
on open pasture  
left under S. Perry near the sheep pens, (In open).  
Other 3 had been sent forward to support 47th & Perry wanted  
to know if last pln shd go. Adams got glasses  
out & I see men in front giving themselves up.  
Adams told them to stay where they were, wait.  
after an interval the appd again ahead, apptly in English tin hats. waited  
till I could see the appd (as they seemed  
to be wearing our hats). <sup>There is no doubt they wore our hats.</sup> These appeared  
after an interval coming from g. direction.  
Adams then had 14 men & 1 L.G. (Bannister). When he  
decided they were for a dog he ordered pln to

fire w L.G. Bannister fired over Madden's  
shoulder, standing up. Adams was behind  
brushwood. Perry got wounded mid  
by fs ad of ahead rows sent back. We held  
attack up - they were on a wide front.

Suddenly a gap opened up from rd on  
flank - & as soon as v. Exposed Adams  
sent one man after another back to support  
3 (Pr 4) L.G. to come in last.

Adams then told Allen <sup>at HQ</sup> what had  
happened.

Davies & Holman led C/a  
Adams remained with 8 men in Pr 4.  
& fell behind C/a. It was held up at  
Exactly 1 posn Adams had left - the  
sheep huddles.

Mig. fire was so heavy that they  
couldn't get to the road.

47/  
45/

49/

There was no one on Adams left when at Sheep Pens.

## Dernancourt—A Recollection

(By Capt. A. J. Gledhill,  
49th Bn.)



For some days previous to April 5, 1918, we had been leading a more or less peaceful existence in a valley at the back of Bray, disturbed occasionally by a few shells which caused those on the wrong side of the depression one or two anxious moments, much to the amusement of the men on the safe side. Our situation appeared precarious, as rumor had it that the German offensive had penetrated so far south and west that we stood a good chance of being cut off.

When the usual intense barrage that generally presaged a hop-over came down on the morning of April 5, orders were issued to move up in close support. No one seemed to know exactly what was happening, although the cook's offsider, whose information was generally reliable, said there had been a break-through. As we moved up during the morning, the absence of troops and guns was most marked and there seemed to be little to stop the enemy from going as far as he wanted.

Arrived at the foot of the high ground overlooking the railway to Dernancourt, a hurried consultation of the company commanders—Captains J. H. Willenbrock and Jim Atkinson, Lieut. Jim Graham, and myself—at battalion headquarters confirmed the news that Fritz had broken through at the railway. Jimmy Atkinson was in high spirits, skylarking with Wally (Willenbrock) as was his wont. Both these good fellows were killed that afternoon. We were informed that our battalion (49th), together with one from the 12th Brigade, was to re-establish the line, our objective being the railway.

This attack was to be undertaken without artillery support and, in our case, without bombs. The meeting was quite a cheerful gathering, ending up with a quiet "Wahoo."

Despite the lack of preparation due to the urgency of the affair, the attack moved off in good style at the sound of the whistle. It was a fine sight to see the whole battalion extended in open order, two long waves with scouts out in front. These fellows soon came in touch with the German skirmishers, with whom they exchanged a few shots, and then dropped back.

Owing to the formation of the ground the centre companies came under fire sooner than our company ("B") which was on the left.

As soon as the front rank topped the rise, it was met by a machine gun barrage like a blast out of a furnace.

Men were dropping fast. More fortunately situated, we were able to get within a couple of hundred yards of the German outpost-line before coming into this fire. The enemy put up a fair opposition, but our men, wild with excitement, shooting and yelling, were soon on top of them. The first platoon to get to holts with the Fritzes was Bill Argue's, on the left, a lad named Bugden, leading. The Germans, who could do so, broke back at a run, their officers making valiant efforts to steady them. One young German dropped his rifle and threw up his hands a bit too late, being shot by the leading man, who, himself, stopped one almost immediately. Things were getting a bit mixed, some rough work going on on the extreme left. A lad with a "Blighty," coming cheerfully back, was hit again, another's laugh was cut short, bullets were flying freely. By now we must have been well in sight of their machine-gunners as the fire seemed to be just sweeping the top of the ground. During the attack young Taylor, who had the platoon on the company's right, passed me cheerfully on his way to the rear, wounded; unfortunately he never reached there.

From where I was, between the two lines, it was difficult to see exactly what was going on. I thought the boys might be going too far, so I made a sprint forward. The whole German army seemed to be shooting at me. Anyway, I got along and flopped in a small shell-hole, alongside a sergeant who had been hit in the body. His cartridges, apparently, exploded when he was hit. Nothing could be done for him.

From this position the enemy could be seen making a break for the rear—those who waited being summarily dealt with. The railway line was still a long way off, but there was nothing else for it other than to assume the prone position, tilting the tin hat at the best considered angle to deflect a shot. Directly in front was a small mound, thrown up by the opposition. Later, when I was lying on my back talking to Bob Carlisle, several Germans hopped up from here. Luckily, they had had all the fight they wanted.

As soon as it was dusk we occupied the half-dug posts, taking several prisoners. The escort that marched them to the rear failed to report back to the company for about a week, having probably taken them to the coast.

The counter-attack achieved its object in denying the enemy the use of the high ground that would have given him command of the main Albert-Amiens road, but at what a cost. The centre companies ("A" and "D") had been practically wiped out. During the night Sergeant Sharp and I made an extended tour along the front, and for what seemed hundreds of yards to the right there appeared to be only a handful of "D" company. It was most uncanny moving about in the darkness, unaware whether we were walking into the enemy line or not. Several times we stalked our own men. We came across Sergeant Lane and fifteen or so men, and I had a few words with Lieutenant Turner who had been badly knocked. The dead and wounded were scattered thickly over the ground. The limit of their advance was only too plain the following morning, a line of dead stretching round the hillside.

That night I had a visit from Major R. F. Fitzgerald (52nd Bn.)—though he was not of our battalion.

(Continued on Next Page)

I was pleased to see a senior officer and explain our position, particularly as our right flank was well in the air. Later there arrived another visitor in the person of a Tommy who had escaped through the German line. C. S. M. Richardson made his journey a bit more hazardous by shooting at him as he came in. Good shooting, too, according to the Tommy.

In my company ("B") the casualties were high. The roll-call, a day or two after, was a sad affair. "C" also got its issue.

The conduct of all hands during the operation was beyond praise, particularly that of the runners, whose dangerous and arduous tasks were so cheerfully undertaken.

No. 3 Copy

OCTOBER 1, 1930.

REVELL

To miss what he fell into or over. You may encounter other obstacles, but that is all in the game. No two steps on the one level. If the Devil claimed a place, this is it. At the hardest parts the mud is halfway to the knees; at the worst, waist deep.

The rain and cold are forgotten in the fierce demands of movement. Four shining wet helmets in a shell-hole, motionless men beneath, we are passing the last outpost, and are in No Man's Land.

"If Fritz is mug enough to come out on a night like this, it would be a mercy to shoot him," said some of the thoughts wander aimlessly. This sort of thing must be hell for some pampered mothers' sons. But probably the pampered ones were all at home.

In nearly every war picture I have seen, some long-haired fool, whose uniform did not fit him, starts waving his arms about squealing. He dashes out of his cushy dug-out or trench, and gets stonkered.

I am afraid that the histrionic gifts of the Diggers must have been very poor, for here and now I affirm that I have never seen anything of that sort. No blasted heroism. The best they could say was "Home was never like this," and get on with the job.

After a long struggle we had descended the slope and climbed again, till the trench lay at our feet. The heat died out of our bodies, and the misery of the cold set in. Occasional shots marked the slow march of the minutes. A bursting bomb would recall us from a state that was half coma, half sleep. In these times recurs the memory of how often this sort of thing had been endured before. And how long those nights were when darkness set in at 4 p.m., and changed again to the feeble grey light that was called day at 8 a.m.

When at long last word came "knock off," I set out alone to return, satisfied that I could, undelayed by the

column, cut down the 30-minute journey to cover the half mile to our dug-out, by an hour.

I was deaf, and did not know the pass-word. A Digger challenged me from a shell-hole at the front line, but neither heard nor saw till I fell in beside him. "Damn near shot you," he said, "Why didn't you give the pass-word?" "Deaf," I said, "What is the pass-word, any way?" "Mutton camp," he said.

I was drinking hot cocoa when the others drifted in too weary to curse. "Why didn't you tell me you were deaf?" demanded Lane. "Didn't want to be hel up pulling a raw recruit out of all the shell holes he wanted to fall into," I told him. He cursed comprehensively till Walter shut him up.

On February 21 we were warned to take over the out post line that night. Four nights in a shell-hole, gawd

**CHAPTER VII. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MILITARY ADMINISTRATION.**

tea. My feet ached with a dull, nagging pain. Fingers were split at the quick and intensely painful. My temperature was up from trench fever. The chaps were raging round in berles.

Much of the protecting mist had been cleared away by the rain. Our line followed the duckboards till the derelict tank was on our right. "Zipp," a bullet hit the mud. "Zipp" again. "Blasted sniper," said a sergeant, "take cover under the tank. Shouldn't I be a little wounded here like those other cows who are always getting cracked," I thought, and kept on.

"Whizz-smack," came the bullets. Pretty close. Hope he doesn't get me in the guts. An officer started yelling at me till I could not ignore him any longer. "I'm deaf," I told him, loudly, looking blank as I got under cover.

"Why didn't you come in with the others when the sniper started?" he yelled. "Was there a sniper?" I asked him, looking stupid. He promised to put me under arrest, and gave up the unequal contest.

(To be Continued)

# Slope Arms ...

Slope the arms, bend the elbows, and lift the long glass of Toobey's Pilsener to the expectant lips. Let the flavor of the refreshing drink register its goodness on your palate, and go on to bring health and exhilaration to the whole body.

Here's To 'ee!

## TOOBEY'S



provisions, but while it is not possible to lift money's value to the other than to be pensioned like widows and orphans to be used. To adopt any other method would involve extensive and costly administration, would give rise to grave and insuperable inequalities between ex-service men living in different parts of the Empire and would be open to the very serious objection in principle that the expenditure of funds provided by the Imperial Parliament would be controlled by decisions of another Legislature which the British Ministry could have no share in settling or any right to challenge.

Comparisons between war pensions arrangements in different parts of the Empire are to be deprecated. These arrangements depend on such varying factors as currency, the cost of living and the development of social legislation, which each Government must deal with in its own best interest in its special requirements. The instance of the United States is a case in point. It has been shown that the United States Government has been able to maintain a high standard of living for its ex-service men by a system of war pensions which is far more liberal than that of the British Empire.

15 July 1936.

MEMORANDUM

Captain F. Anderson, M.C.,  
25, Invergowrie Avenue,  
Highgate, S.Aust.

Dear Captain Anderson,

In connection with the Battle of Dernancourt, April 5th, 1918, the diary of the 48th Battalion states that about midday, when the 47th began to retire, you conferred with the commander of the "centre company" (i.e., "D" Company) of the 48th, and both of you decided to wait for a short time in case the 47th counter-attacked. At 12.15, however, as the Germans were firing from your rear, you gave the word for "A" and "D" companies to retire.

I take it that the officer with whom you conferred was Lieutenant G.A. Pavy, but should be grateful if you would kindly confirm this from your recollection.

Yours faithfully,

C.W.E. Bean

Official Historian.

MEMORANDUM

PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS MOVEMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

DELEGATES TO ANNUAL MEETING, 22ND NOVEMBER 1933.

MEN'S RECREATION

(Representatives on Executive Committee, 1932-33: Mr. A.W. Green, President; Messrs. F.J. Herlihy and C.S. Watson, Members.)

Amateur Athletic Assocn.	Messrs. R.P. Heathwood & J.R. Butler.
Amateur Swimming Assocn.	Messrs. H.R. Kelly & D. Hellmrich.
Aust. Workers' Sports Fedn.	Miss M. Swain & Mr. A.W. Winter.
City & Suburban Cricket Assn.	Mr. C.A. Fairland.
Combined Hard Court Tennis Assn.	Messrs. G.G. Tremlett & J.A. Turnbull.
N.S.W. Cricket Assocn.	Messrs. A.W. Green & E.A. Tyler.
Metropolitan Hockey Assn.	Messrs. H. Davidson & A. Seaman.
Junior Cricket Union	Messrs. J.D. Durham & C.S. Watson.
Lacrosse Association	Mr. C.R. Gibbs.
Lawn Tennis Association	Messrs. M. Henry Marsh & S.E. Wynn.
Metropolitan Junior Rugby Union	Messrs C.A. Fairland & L.B. Callaghan.
Northern Districts Cricket Assn.	Mr. A. Harrison.
Protestant Churches Soccer Football Assn.	
N.S.W. Rugby Union	Messrs. F.J. Herlihy & N.E. Mitchell.
Swords Club	Captain F. Stuart.
Y.M.C.A.	Mr. B.E. Monfries.

WOMEN'S RECREATION

Representatives on Executive Committee, 1932-33: Mrs. O. Peatfield, Vice-President; Mrs. F.J. Davy and Miss M.M. Peden, Members.)

Amateur Athletic Association	Messrs. R.P. Heathwood & J.R. Butler.
Amateur Sports Council	Miss M.M. Peden & Mrs. F.J. Davy.
Aust. Broadcasting Coy. Women's Association	Misses G. & J. Varley.
Aust. Workers' Sports Fedn.	Miss M. Swain & Mr. A.W. Winter.
Ladies Amateur Swimming Assn.	Mrs. W. Chambers.
Baseball Association	Miss R. Jones & Miss Glover.
Basket Ball Association	Mrs. O. Peatfield.
City Girls Amateur Sports Assn.	Mrs. D. Delaney & Miss E. Mallard.
Combined Hard Court Tennis Assn.	Messrs. G.G. Tremlett & J.A. Turnbull.
Cricket Association	Miss M.M. Peden & Mrs. O. Peatfield.
Hockey Association	Mrs. F.J. Davy & Miss Friend.
Lawn Tennis Association	Messrs. M. Henry Marsh & S.E. Wynn.
Rowing Association	Miss Ellis & Miss Harvey.
Swords Club	Captain F. Stuart.
Vigoro Association	Mrs. E. Dodge & Mrs. Wilson
Y.W.C.A.	Mrs. O. Peatfield.

CHILDREN'S RECREATION

Representatives on Executive Committee, 1932-33: Miss M.M. Simpson, Vice-President; Miss H.A. Dumolo and Mr. E. Clarke, Members.)

Feminist Club	Mrs. S.E. Vickery & Mrs. A. Hews.
Housewives' Progressive Assn.	Miss Portia Geach & Miss Thorp.
Kindergarten Union	Miss H.A. Dumolo & Miss K.P. Chase.
National Council of Women	Miss Fidler & Mrs. Norton.
Parents & Citizens Fed. Assn.	
Public Schools Amateur Athletic Association	Messrs. E. Clarke & S. Lynch.
United Associations	Mrs. E.I. Proud & Miss M.M. Simpson.



26 Trevoorten Av  
Glenunga

2-9-36

Ref # 9833

Sir

Lieut. G.A. Pavy was the  
O.C. D. Coy 4th Bn with whom I  
conferred during the Battle of  
Bernan court before our withdrawal.

F. Anderson

**PAVY, HARRY & PAVY**  
SOLICITORS, ETC.

GORDON AUGUSTUS PAVY  
GEOFFREY COURTENAY HARRY, LL.B.  
EMILY DOROTHEA PAVY, C.B.E., D.Sc., B.A.

TELEPHONES: CENTRAL 345 AND 346

P/F

**A.M.P. BUILDING,**  
**KING WILLIAM STREET,**  
**ADELAIDE,**

31st August, 1936.

C. E. W. Bean, Esq.,  
Historian,  
Victoria Barracks,  
PADDINGTON,  
N.S.W.

Dear Sir,

I regret not having replied to your letter of the 14th ultimo earlier. Your letter has awakened memories which have long lain dormant: memories which I have studiously refrained from rousing. The delay has been caused by this unwillingness to bring any vivid picture of the war before me, and not through discourtesy.

The answer to your questions are as follows:-

1. I was born at Crystal Brook in the State of South Australia on the 14th August 1891.
2. Prior to enlisting in the A.I.F., I resided with my parents at North Adelaide.
3. I was an accountant - but since the war have become a barrister and solicitor in the Supreme Court of South Australia.
4. I joined the 48th Bn. with the 5th reinforcements just prior to the Battle of Messines, and took part in that battle, and in others until I was wounded on the 5th April 1918 at Dernancourt. I was promoted to the rank of Captain after the Battle of Dernancourt, and after convalescing rejoined the 48th Bn. some four months later and had command of "D" company until the end of the war.
5. Further particulars relating to the 5th April 1918, if required, are as follows:-

I was then a lieutenant, and in command of "D" Company 48th Bn. Captain "Tom" Elliott, who took the Company into its position along the railway embankment, facing East, opposite, and a little to the South of Albert, had been killed some four or five days earlier. He died in my arms.

"B" Company, commanded by Captain Dervis Cummings, occupied a position at right angles to "D" Company running back in a westerly direction and facing North, overlooking the road leading into Albert, and with "D" Company occupied the apex of a salient which jutted into the enemies' territory. "A" Company, commanded by Captain "Fred" Anderson was on the right of "D" Company along the railway embankment facing east.

At about 9.30 a.m. after prolonged and intensive shelling from field guns, 5.9s, and minnenwerfer shells, which caused heavy losses along the railway embankment, the enemy who had assembled in deep depressions to the North and North East of our line, left their positions and advanced wave after wave in sections against us. There was a short and sanguinary fight. Our lewis gunners and stokes mortar crews disposed of most of them. The few who actually succeeded in penetrating our line were immediately killed.

I then moved my lewis gun teams to a position to assist "B" Company situated at our left rear as some of the enemy had got in behind them. The wounded and dead were then evacuated. As soon as we had cleared up, and after ascertaining that "B" and "A" Companies were in their respective positions, we became troubled by bursts of machine gun fire from the South which enfiladed parts of our position. The exposed men were soon moved but, being unable to locate the trouble I walked behind the embankment to speak to Captain Anderson, and met him on his way to me to report that the enemy had broken through the 47th Bn. on his right. A 47th man informed us they had lost heavily and that all their officers had been killed or wounded. Captain Anderson and I conferred, and as it was clear from the flares fired into the air by the enemy that he was progressing rapidly up a depression a little to the South, and that there was grave danger that he would soon be behind us, we immediately posted certain lewis gun teams on to a ridge overlooking the depression up which the advance was being made, to protect our flank and to cover our retirement up a corresponding depression on our side of the ridge should it be necessary to withdraw. Positions had already been prepared for such an emergency on higher ground to our rear. A report was immediately sent to Bn. headquarters by Captain Anderson.

After arranging the method of retirement, we returned to our respective companies and gave our officers and N.C.O.s directions for gradual and orderly retirement should it be necessary.

Lieut. Roy Potts volunteered to make the somewhat hazardous journey across to "B" Company to inform Captain Cummings of what had taken place and of the arrangements made.

By about noon the pressure had become severe, and it was clear that we would probably be cut off if we remained ~~in~~, and an orderly evacuation was made to the prepared position in our rear with relatively few casualties. One of the Lewis gun teams protecting our withdrawal disappeared and I have since learned the survivors were captured.

I was wounded by machine gun bullets when nearing the new position.

The details set out above will be of no value to you, but it presents a summary of a morning's hard work, as viewed from one actually in the scrap, and it might assist in building up the whole.

Yours faithfully,

*Gordon A. Pary* .

Extracts from

^ Notebook of Captain C.A. Pyke,

D.A.A.G., 3rd Aust Div.

Instructions received from General Monash after interviewing  
the commander of the  
March 1918. (???) VIII Corp

26th Albert-Bray.

4pm. told to hold at all costs.

Orders not up in time.

Considerable confusion.

West of Bray — position obscure  
up to nightfall.

A line of wire & trenches in fair order  
not far east of line of road

Méricourt — Sailly le Sec will be  
occupied during night by 2000 odd  
infantry.

1 brigade south of Corbie Bray road.

1 brigade North

Both flanks resting on respective  
rivers.

1 brigade in reserve.

Div Hqs. — Traviillers.

1st 2 Bns of 11th debus at Heilly —

1 Bn to cross river south of Heilly  
make by track "Halte" across spur,

spread out on line S of E-B road in

a series of posts. Other bn. approach  
 the position by going up valley to  
 Mericourt make good line between  
 X roads ~~1~~ & N - River.

? If 3<sup>rd</sup> bn arrives to go in  
support of Right Wing

Gen. Cannan to take over all troops in  
 position

Neel brigade take front N of X roads.

11<sup>th</sup> close to right

All bridges destroyed as far west as  
 Bray. West of B - all preparations  
 made to blow bridges.

South of Somme - 5<sup>th</sup> Army. position  
 of left flank not known, believed  
 to be somewhere S of Bray. This  
 not assured.

N. of Ancre is 39<sup>th</sup> Division. hold  
 line of Ancre - D'Hail favorable  
 River valley to be held.

Probable critical time will not exceed

48 hours — possibly only 24 — but situation so serious that if we not held Josche may reach Amiens.

Artillery. Corps Artillery — along River Ancre.

Bulk of Vickers should be on his right sector — owing to good observation.

No direct artillery support until ours arrives.

Reserve brigade — Heilly

Pioneers & Spare MG Coy. Vicinity of DHA.

? Artillery concentrate La Houssaye.

No 40,000 maps available.

Enemy not much artillery.

Habit to make war thrusts 11-1 & 3-5. Quick in discovering saps & getting through them.

Usual method for infantry to

4

advance in <sup>higgledy piggledy</sup> order for 600 yards  
then lie down, & then for us to suddenly  
find ourselves enfiladed by his M.G.  
which have crept up to our flanks —  
his inf. then get up & walk over us.

~~least~~

Just definite infor. re enemy east of  
line E. of Albert — may vague  
rumours he has got through.

Coys say . . . Artillery ordered to  
move to Biencowit.

S.A.A. for 11a & de.

400,000 to be dumped at point  
East of X roads of "Halte" track  
& Vauve - Menouit road sometime  
tomorrow.



5.

Gen. Cannon to be found either  
at Heilly Cha. or Quarry  
point 107 = S. of Heilly.

---

Visited 11<sup>th</sup> Bde HQ at Heilly at  
8 am. 27<sup>th</sup> inst.

6.

Locations 26/3/18.

DHQ. Courturelle.

Dw. Art. Humbercourt.

7<sup>th</sup> FAde. Coulemont.

8<sup>th</sup> " Humbercourt.

DAC "

HQ Dw Engs. Courturelle

HQ Div Train "

HQ MG Bn "

23 MG Coy "

Pioneer Bn. Warlincourt

Supply Column La Felleuve

Mob. Vet Section "

9<sup>th</sup> Bde Group. Famechon

Guincourt

Henn. Bayencourt

Bde HQ ? Mondicourt.

10<sup>th</sup> Bde Group. Thieues

Authie

11<sup>th</sup> Bde Group. Couin

St Leger

Coignies.

MG Coys with brigades.

DADOS  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile N. of Mondicourt  
in Field.

Hist. Notes.  
Apr 4/1918

Maj. Carr 35th Bn at Villers Bretonneux.

On the day of the Hamel fight Lieut. Hawkins, 35 Bn, gave Murdoch and myself luncheon at 11th Bde Hqrs; and at luncheon I found out that he was with Maj. Carr at Villers/B on April 4th. He told me that it was utterly unfair to connect Maj. Carr in any way with that retirement. The last man but one to leave the line was Carr, Hawkins being the last.

Hawkins said that in the morning the flanks had been bent back and they managed to keep the line. In the afternoon however, about 5 pm the Germans put down a heavy bombardment on the right and the right - the British - went. The movement spread along the line and the Australians on the right, who had been in the line 4 days after their relief was promised, began to give with the British. Hawkins and Carr tried to stop this. They got hold of the officers and tried to make them get hold of their troops - which could easily have been done; but the 35th happened to have there some young officers who were not of the right stamp, and they would not heed. Maj. Carr accordingly took one half of the line and tried to steady that while Hawkins tried to steady the other half. Hawkins said that you could quite easily get the men around you to stay; but the moment you moved on to the next lot those whom you had left began to pick up the general movement again. The whole line in that part went and there was nothing to do but to follow it.

The Battalion Headquarters was in V/B under old Goddard who is a very amiable man but not a man of the crude determination necessary for a job like that one. He was in charge of the Brigade in the forward area. He gave the order, Hawkins says, that the 34th Bn was to cover the retreat of the rest. Sayers counterattacked with the reserve company was a thing off Sayers own bat - he jumped up and went out without his revolver, and led his men out till he actually got amongst the Germans in a shellhole, when he killed one of them with his tin hat, strangled another, and the third ran.

Morshead was in V/B with Goddard. Hawkins thinks that Morshead was preparing to retire. Anyway, he says, when the position became known, Morshead, in spite of Col. Goddard's order to the 34th Bn, ~~was~~ went and found that battalion and - so far from ordering it to cover the retreat, ordered it to come with him to support the counterattack. Fry wouldn't do this, in view of the order he had received, until he got a written order from Morshead. M. then gave him a written order and he obeyed it. (This of course needs confirmation - about the written order).

35<sup>th</sup> Br. Villers Boctormere, Ap. 4<sup>th</sup>.

During the night of Ap. 3/4 by light of a burning house in Warpsell the 35<sup>th</sup>'s outposts, holding 1 line <sup>(opposite)</sup> in front of V/B cemetery, cd see Germans passing in thousands. They informed Batt. Q. that something was up.

In morning, abt 6 am. after  $\frac{1}{2}$  hrs bombt. the Germans came on, massed. One column was a bit to rt of the cemetery; one ahead of it; one to left. The one ahead came to within 500 yds before the 35<sup>th</sup> fired. Then they opened - never had such a target. The Germans got down flat & were tied to ground.

The German column on their left however got through & began to T out; & another got through B Coy of the 35<sup>th</sup> on their right. They first bent back the flank of Coy on their left - they had a Coy bent back but it wdnt stretch far enough. The whole line came back in some disorder - It stopped twice. The second time it was near the aerodrome. They had on both sides there were two lines of support trenches behind them, both garrisoned but they found no trenches & no garrison. Each time they stopped in an open field & lay in

In the afternoon about 3.30 the line was almost asleep when some <sup>in 1 detached position</sup> on 1 right woke & saw 1 British line on 1 right retreating - the whole of it. They went back too - right into 1 village - <sup>They put up an SOS but the Germans did not answer</sup> but a counter attack with the

6<sup>th</sup> Londons & the 36<sup>th</sup> - up along 1 rly - put things right again. (My informant, of the 35<sup>th</sup>, believes there was no one left in front of V/B at all but 1 German never got into 1 village. The Germans were dead tired, he says at end.)

# "SAVING AMIENS"

Australia's Greatest Battle Picture

Showing the Charge at Villers-Bretonneux by the 9th Brigade on the 4th April, 1918, which is claimed to be the turning point of the War

3 DAYS' FREE INSPECTION



"SAVING AMIENS"  
(Painted by the great War Artist, L. Matania, R.I.)  
The actual size of the picture is 28 x 18.

A copy of "Saving Amiens" was presented to General Monash, who described it as the finest battle picture he had ever seen.

It depicts one of the most glorious incidents in the history of the A.I.F. The Hun was within a few miles of Amiens. His big guns were bombarding Paris, and he, and all the world, knew that the fall of Amiens could only precede the fall of Paris by a short time. It was the Allies' blackest hour.

On the 4th of April, 1918, the 9th Australian Brigade began their attack at Villers-Bretonneux—the attack which Matania has so realistically presented, and the attack which killed the Hun's hope, and started the last big retreat, which ended in his capitulation.

The painting shows certain episodes that actually took place in the counter-attack. A Lewis-gun crew, having been put out of action, an infantryman slung his rifle and worked the gun, while an unarmed Australian officer, coming on three Germans, strangled one with his bare hands, smashed the skull of the second with his tin hat, the third taking to his heels. He, however, did not succeed in escaping, for at this moment the officer's batman, who is seen kneeling on the extreme left, picked off the man as he was attempting to jump down into the shelter of the railway cutting. The German machine-gun on the bridge was blown up by a hand grenade.

The whole scene has been carefully reconstructed from all available official material,

and the personal narratives of eye-witnesses.

All the topographical features shown will be recognised by those who fought through this desperate action. The little bridge, for instance, actually spans the railway line running from Amiens and Villers-Bretonneux to Marcelcave, which is just visible in the distance. At the moment depicted by the artist, the men were advancing towards this cutting, and the picture gives a very accurate idea of the number and positions of infantry when attacking.

It was felt that an event so important and an achievement so great should be perpetuated on canvas, as "Rorke's Drift" kept evergreen the famous stand in the Zulu war. Accordingly, Matania, whose realistic war pictures had been the talk of Europe, was commissioned to do the work. It was immediately acclaimed his greatest success. Accurate in all its technical details, it has preserved the true atmosphere of the battlefield. But its appeal is not confined to soldiers. In the years to come, when the Australian children of to-day will want to visualise battles made famous by their fathers, it will be an invaluable picture in every household.

The original painting was sold for £500. We have been able to obtain a limited number of reproductions, and these are now available for the Australian public. The actual size of the picture is 28 x 18, printed in India tint on finest quality board and well mounted, measuring 34 x 24 over all.

The price has been fixed at a low figure, and as the supplies are limited orders will be given preference as follows:—First, to Returned Soldiers and their Wives; second, to Parents of Returned Soldiers; third, to relatives; and 4th, to the general public.

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So confident are we that once you have an opportunity to see in your own home a copy of this beautiful picture, and appreciate its value, that we are willing to send it POST FREE FOR A 3 DAYS' FREE INSPECTION. Don't send any money. Merely post the coupon or write a letter, and the picture will be sent you by return of post. All charges prepaid at our risk. If you are not entirely

satisfied, send it back at any time within three days after you receive it, and you owe us nothing.

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Please send me by return mail, POST FREE, \_\_\_\_\_ copies of "Saving of Amiens" (unframed). If I am satisfied with the pictures, I promise to send £1/1/- by return post or to pay FOUR MONTHLY INSTALLMENTS OF 5/6 EACH. If I decide not to keep the pictures, I promise to return same in good order within THREE DAYS.

NAME (Mr., Mrs.) .....

Address in full .....

W. B. 17.7.20.

State .....

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## SUPERFLUOUS HAIR

Painless, inexpensive home remedy applied by yourself. Removal and destruction of disfiguring hair guaranteed. Particulars sent for 1/6d. Mrs. Boyd, Box 2309, G.P.O.—0.

should complain of her pen-friends falling off, and yet ignore your five letters and a parcel; it seems incredible that they should all miscarry; her address on our books is Hughstonia; I trust she will return your crochet books; I try to follow the advice of Polonious, "Neither a borrower nor a lender be;" many thanks for the stamps for our postage fund; will gladly give your address to any member wanting a pleasant friend; and "GATHER" (I was delighted to hear from you once more, and to have all your news; have sent you another form, and trust you will be successful this time): Thanks for your nice letters.

"CHUB" (glad you have rain at last; our members seem to be getting careless in the matter of sending stamps; envelopes for addresses wanted; I really must stick to my rule; you have not even mentioned by their pen-names the members whose addresses you want; though I have repeatedly announced that we do not keep any record of their ages or other particulars; thanks for contributions, although written on both sides of the paper); "ANNETTA" (delighted to hear of dear little "Dorothea;" I wish you much happiness in "Doron"); "THANEY" (I have noted that you come from Aylesbury, in Buckinghamshire, and shall be happy to give your address to any members from that part of England; you had evidently not seen my message to you in the "Budget" when you wrote); "GANNY" (it is always a pleasure to hear from you, though I grieve to know that you have been so ill; I hope that "Date" has shared in the recent rains; "Vene" last wrote to us from Campsie; I suppose she forgot to give you her address; we go to press now earlier than we did, owing to the enormous number of "Budgets" that have to be printed, so I fear it sometimes seems a long time before correspondents get a reply to their letters; I hope you will see the Prince when he returns); "TONTELECTIC" (I fear the rain came rather late for you, but am glad it reached you at last); and others: Thank you for your friendly letters.

"CARNIS" (sorry to hear you did not get your badge or your money from the military authorities; have forwarded you another form; will gladly give your address to any other widow who may ask it); "THEMISTOCLES" (thanks for your useful hint and for your generous help towards our postage fund; reading matter must be a special boon to our dear bush friends during the long, cold winter evenings); "SNAPDRAGON" (yes, it is a long time since I last heard from you, but I am glad we are not forgotten; also that you and "Peter" still correspond and that you keep in touch with other W.B.B. members; I suppose Berridale is even colder than Sydney; I have felt nearly frozen ever since our return from the tropics during the recent "cold snap."); "LUDLOW" (I regret very much to hear that you were kind enough to send me some views and a booklet which must have gone astray, as I have no record of their arrival, and should certainly have acknowledged your kindness through the "Budget"; it is best to register any articles of value, and we shall gladly do the same on returning any to their owners; when correspondents are kind enough to offer us the loan of anything they value, the least we can do is to return them carefully at our own expense); "JALBANS" (have noted your full address, and forwarded it to the firm supplying W.B.B. badges); "BELGA" (thanks for recipes; sorry you had not better news to give me; remember me to "Weapon" and "Wevelynlace" please); "HORSESHOE" (your best plan is to write to the Editor of the Newcastle "Herald," who will doubtless be able to

give you a list of the winning numbers in the art union to which you refer; I was grieved to hear of your double loss, though it was happier for your father and mother not to be long separated; and others: Thank you for your letters.

"THEMA" (thanks for cutting; have handed it to our advertising manager; sorry you should have had other ill-luck besides that of losing the wool sent to "Organist;" star sylko, when "Speedwell" last bought it, was 4s 6d for a hank of 3 1/2oz; it looks very pretty when knitted, but might be a trifle hard for a child's soft little feet); "CRUDEN" (I am afraid I can only suggest your advertising for a teacher; I know of none; "Windrum's" address on our books is the unsatisfactory one of the Camden Post Office; sorry you had no reply); "BARRENGARRY" (sorry to hear from you from a hospital; I trust the "three operations" were successful; we are sending you something to read); "WYBALEENA" (glad you want the "star" removed, as several members wanted your address; "Kabun" was much touched by your message and verses; will try and find a corner for them some day on the gardening page; have noted the address that will always find you; hope you will soon be well again; thanks for capital contributions); "KANEY" (it is good news that you "have not had time to be lonely" since your new pen-friends came along); "MALICER" (glad to hear from you once more; it is sad for poor "Armistice" to have lost her dear mother; her address on our books is still Mascot); "WROTHAM" (grateful thanks for your help towards our postage fund); and others: I wish I could answer your friendly letters more fully.

### A Knitted Fancy Front

G.M. (via Goodwindi, Q.): I think you would find the shell pattern an easy and effective one for the front of your silk stockings. Each shell requires 14 stitches, so if your stocking, like the one given in our issue of July 17, 1919,



### A Fancy Front

has 103 stitches on the three needles, when the decreasing is finished, you could do either three or four shells for the front of the leg and the instep, doing the rest plain. To make a shell only four rounds are required. For the first, knit 1, purl 2, slip 1, knit 1, draw the slipped stitch over, knit 1; then make 1 by putting the thread before the needle, knit 1, four times; knit 2 together, purl 2. For the second round, knit 1, purl 2, knit 11, purl 2. Third round, knit 1, purl 2, slip 1, knit 1, draw the slipped stitch over, knit 7, knit 2 together, purl 2. Fourth row, knit 1, purl 2, knit 9, purl 2. These four rounds are repeated for each shell, and each shell is made in the same way. If the number of stitches of a sock or stocking be divisible by 14, the whole leg and instep can be done in the pattern, while another plan is to do as many plain stitches as liked between each shell. This gives the pretty effect of a stripe. The accompanying illustration has been drawn with a plain division between each shell, in order to make the pattern clear.

### Information Wanted

"HONORABLE" (I was interested to hear that you wish to become a trained nurse; from inquiries made I find there are a number of good books on nursing, but they all seem to be rather expensive; those most recommended are "Howard's Surgical Nursing and Principles of Surgery for Nurses," price 7s 6d; "Pope's Manual of Nursing Procedure," price 12s; and "Stewart and Cuff's Practical Nursing," price 7s 6d; to which postage has to be added if ordered from Sydney);

W. M. (the manager is sending you one of our price lists, which I hope you will find suggestive; I understand the "Welcome Home" lace makes a pretty edging to patriotic designs; write to Messrs. Hordern Brothers, of Pitt-street, Sydney, for price of knitting silk and Sylko; better advertise for helpers; you will get plenty of replies); V. E., of Gympie (we do not seem to have given a crocheted pilch since August 18, 1917, so will repeat it); and L. R., of Willoughby (1. cut a paper pattern either from an old shoe, or like the crocheted one illustrated on December 6, 1919; lay on the hat, cut out, and then sew up the back. 2. buy some permanganate of potash and dissolve in hot water; dilute with cold water to the shade required, apply to the floor with a brush; give a second coat when dry, and afterwards varnish. 3. A good furniture polish is made of one part turpentine to three parts of linseed oil); I trust these hints will help you.

### W.B.B. Members Married

"ERRICK," formerly "MERRICK" (Eastern Dorrigo): It was a good idea of yours to make a new pen-name for yourself by the simple process of taking away the first letter of your old one. Thank you for telling us your former name, pen-name and address; many of our correspondents forget one of the three; you also wrote separately to the manager and thus saved us both trouble. I hope you and your husband will accept my best wishes for your health and happiness.

"FAIRYBELL," formerly "MOLASSES" (Newcastle): I am glad that your marriage has not lessened your interest in the W.B.B., and I have gladly changed your name to this pretty one. Thank you for giving me all the details of your change, and also for so kindly sending reading matter for our bush folk. I hope that you and your husband will both be very happy, and that your health will improve.

### Late Letters

"LANEFORD" (how wonderfully kind of you to send us so promptly the exquisite iris lace corner; we shall be glad to reproduce it, and feel sure it will be very popular among our workers; will return carefully; there was no need for you to send postage); "PEATEA" (thanks for your hint); OLIVE R. Q., of Buchan, Vic. (shall be glad to enrol you in the C.L.B. next week); A BERRIGAN HELPER (many thanks to the kind friend who sent such a splendid parcel of English papers and magazines for our bush folk); AN ANONYMOUS FRIEND (there is not even a postmark as a clue to the good friend who sent us a beautiful bundle of magazines for our country readers; we are delighted to have plenty of reading matter to send 'outback'); ENA MAY A. of Yarraford (sorry your application arrived too late to enrol you in the W.B.B. this week); "HEGMOTH" (very sorry to hear of your continued ill-health; this weather is certainly very trying; it was delightful for you to hear from your son in America); "MILLI-NUDGEL" (have noted your move to Nashua, but cannot send addresses without a stamped envelope); "SUNDART" (thanks for contributions; we are sending a few papers for the returned soldier and the children's scrap books); "ROMANOFF" (to mount your crochet, sew it neatly and firmly on to the linen, which is then cut out and the raw edges buttonholed); "ADDIE" (thanks for useful hint; your little girl's scrap book of Zoo pictures will be very interesting); "ANDREAS" (the Princes Edward and George, now King George, landed in Sydney on July 14, 1831); and others: Your letters only reached me just as we were going to press.

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Address All Communications—  
**"S. BENNETT, LIMITED,"**

H/N

Lieut. Sayers 35th Bn V/Brettonnux.

Sayers tells me that the picture of his strangling a German or ~~hitting~~ him on the head with his helmet is wrong. What happened was:

First He hit a German on the head with a German's steel helmet  
~~then~~ <sup>then</sup> he strangled a second German.  
The third ran off as the picture shows.

I think Sayers told me that he had forgotten to take his own steel helmet with him.

The picture of course gives too much daylight. It was nearly dark, or dusk.

E-E

Note for ~~Maxwell~~ 1918  
April

June 30, 1931

### BRAVE OFFICER: 36th BATTALION

By Joe Maxwell, V.C.

I think that it is engendered by a spirit of esprit de corps—an outstanding trait among units of the A.I.F.—but most of us, in moments of reflection, are apt to recall only deeds of superb heroism connected solely with the unit in which, individually, each one of us served.

But a deed which has always remained green in my memory, and one that impels my sense of chivalry to record it, was performed by Captain J. E. W. Bushelle, M.C., of the 36th Battalion. My association with this officer during his lifetime was of less than an hour's duration; yet his conduct during this short period, and the manner in which he died, have impressed me more than anything else that I can recall.



Capt. Bushelle

During the retreat in March, 1918, the 3rd Division had been rushed to a position in advance of Villers Bretonneux, and on April 6 our battalion—the 18th—relieved a company of the 36th Bn., of which Captain Bushelle was O.C. The front line consisted of a series of pot-holes; and, in the drizzling rain, Captain Bushelle, in effecting the relief, led me from pot-hole to pot-hole. Once we stumbled into a hole containing three very young and miserably cold Tommies, who, mistaking us for the enemy, "surrendered."

Daylight began to peep through the enveloping drizzle and mist, and, assisted by the improving light, snipers were decidedly active. Bushelle strolled about quite unperturbed, and appeared oblivious to the proximity of the many death-dealing missiles. Several times I glanced at his face, which was quite impassive, and, in the circumstances, I did not have the heart to mention my fears. A bullet kicked up the dirt at my feet, and I leapt about three feet in the air. Bushelle merely smiled, and remarked, "Damnably close, old man!"

"Too bloody close!" I earnestly replied, "but there is one consolation, you are a far better target than I." Bushelle, by the way, was a splendidly built fellow, and must have stood over six feet in height. I had hardly uttered the words when I heard a dull thud. Bushelle staggered a few paces and fell on his face. A bullet had entered his side, travelled through his body, and out through his box respirator. In a minute he was dead.

After days in the trenches, and regardless of his own personal comfort, this brave fellow had remained behind after the relief had been effected, merely that we should gain the benefit of his experience in this particular sector, and to facilitate our knowledge of the position in every way.

A few days later, a party of his men returned from their rest billets, recovered his body, and laid it reverently to rest in the little cemetery just behind the village—a splendid token of the esteem in which he was regarded by his men. This was my first and only front line association with the 3rd Division, but from that day I always regarded our compatriots of the 3rd as worthy to uphold the traditions and fine record of achievement so nobly portrayed in Captain Bushelle.



G. Wynn Roberts Ltd.  
14 Spring St.  
Sydney  
7th July 1932.

Dr C. E. Bean  
Victoria Barracks.  
Paddington.

Dear Sir,

I notice in June issue of "Reveille" a list of ex-members of A.I.F. with whom you are anxious to get in touch. I am assuming that your reason is to obtain information having a bearing on the "Official History of the A.I.F." with which you are busy.

Might I draw your attention to the fact that Mr. A. R. Horwood late R.S.M. 36th Batta. a personal friend of mine, is I believe in possession of information regarding operations of this Batta. in April 1918 which might be of a good deal of value to you. when it comes to the time for you to set down the events of this particular period. I have many a time pressed this gentleman to get into touch with you. but I believe he has not yet done so. He has not been fortunate in employment during the depression & probably has a lot to occupy his time &c. I know he would be only

too ready to give you all information he  
possesses. if you were to get into touch with  
him. As a matter of fact I have told him  
I would report him to you. if he did not  
get a move on, so your getting into touch  
with him will not be altogether unexpected.

Mr. Howwood is at ~~Springdale~~<sup>Shanning</sup> Rd. Killara  
& is on the 'Phone.

Wishing you every success Sir. with the  
very heavy tasks which still lay ahead

— Yours faithfully

G. D. Cuddy

(late 412. 36th Btn)

But see Howwood's card.

He was reverted to Sergeant  
by order of G.O.C. 3/5/18

---

7584.

17 August 1932.

F.D. Cuddy, Esq.,  
c/o Wynn Roberts, Ltd.,  
14, Spring Street,  
Sydney.

Dear Sir,

I have to thank you for your letter regarding Mr. Horwood, and for your interest in the Official History. As I shall before long be dealing with the operations of April 1918, I should be glad to receive any notes that he could give me which have a bearing on them.

Yours faithfully,

C.E.W. Bean

Official Historian.

H.N.

V/B. 36 Ba.

notes from acct written some months later by

Address <sup>RSM</sup> A R Rowwood, 36 Ba. Apr 4 V/B.

<sup>In morning</sup>  
B't'atbe shelled in bursts - increasing.  
Tro had to leave B't'atbe. many cas:  
moved to w. end of wood.

<sup>came</sup>  
Wood to go preparing to break thro'.

Noon; milie org'd move in plus across open  
S of wood.

V. heavy going, carry ammo & L.G. drums.  
over lately ploughed field.

Abt 2pm bn halted near a chateau & meat.  
Ba HQ w HQ of a RHA Bty in a small  
chalk pit.

Intents - to supply 35 & small pty went  
up to creel.

After 1 1/2 hrs rest exp'd att. had bn launched  
accompanied by <sup>a little</sup> fire, & in a very  
short time a no of disorg'd Buffs came over  
Creel - some only w gas masks.

Sound of MGs showed go along.

Automatically (so far as H. cd see) the 36th  
drew bayonets & spread out <sup>along head of valley</sup> for c/a wth  
they knew <sup>must</sup> follow, & asked returning  
Hqs men to join in with them.

Abt 3.15 p.m milie arvd from Bde, almost  
breathless, & windy called for Coy chos at 1 double

& gave orders (wh Howard wrote down soon after) to attack.

In a v. short time surplus overcoats, w P Sheels discarded & they went off over crest at a jof trot. The ground fog was in favour of surprise as you could see only 100 yds. Gs were reaching Chateau (front) & from its garden were firing a few shots on the 12 lb batteries to rt of H.Q. Fired a few shots at horse teams as these galloped up & w wonderful alacrity & steadiness withdrew 1 gun.

Gs were gfly surprised by 3 Coys Arty had ceased in the area as neither side knew where Gs were - henceforth all re. & m.f. on rt side hidden in stacks hampered adv. On l. reached pan from wh Buffs had retired. many heaps of ammoe on ground - many men hit hiding resting behind them.

By 6 pm. had reached end of adv. Milne was afraid of ammoe running out. news th 5 G. mps were in good order, was reassuring. Milne hated using his reserve Coy.

28/6/35

HN  
✓

Dr Sean

Capt. Coghell (35th) rang up this afternoon to let you know something about the work of Dr Thomas, then RMO, at Villers-Bretonneux — he forgot to tell you this before.

Thomas ~~was~~, with his medical staff, had his aid post right under the railway viaduct at <sup>V/B</sup> and in between the <sup>German</sup> onslaughts he was ordered to retire because of the danger of the Germans, ~~suddenly rushing~~ <sup>being caught in a sudden onrush by</sup> Coghell told Thomas that while he (C.) was out in front, Thomas

and higher staffs for collation, to be followed by action, sometimes almost as automatic as the reactions of a living body. Every fine day the lower margin of sky in rear of the Germans was dotted with stationary balloons, in shape much like fat garden grubs, from which observers brooded all day over the distant landscape. The British intelligence system was probably as elaborate and efficient, but the Royal Flying Corps had not yet fully developed the balloon service, and for some time no balloon was sent up in the Anzac area. On the German side there were visible on certain days as many as seven. It became recognised that if a balloon could be seen from any road leading towards the front, it was inadvisable for a staff officer's car to use the road or for a party of men to move along it. The danger was not to the passing car, since the place might not be shelled till next day, but to the troops who normally used the road or were billeted beside it. Men in "close billets"—that is, houses near the line—had to be kept indoors during the bright hours, no matter how tempting the weather. Batteries, in order to avoid observation, as far as possible refrained from shooting when an enemy balloon was within sight of the gun-positions. On May 22nd a gun of the 10th Battery, which was firing from a cellar, continued in spite of a warning that a balloon was "up." That afternoon the Germans began to shell the position—first with single shells until they hit the building, and then with salvo after salvo of 5.9-inch shell until they had destroyed both house and gun.

The German artillery was employed with a methodical persistence which would have been impossible for the Turkish gunners at Anzac even had they possessed the inclination. When once the German found an important target, his object was to shell it until it was destroyed; if it was not blown up by one day's bombardment, he returned to it on the next. When the 1st Australian Division was moving into the front line, the enemy discovered, probably by the flash of telescopes injudiciously used by reconnoitring visitors, two British observation posts in a hedge or ruins near La Boutillerie, 400 yards behind the line. These posts were accordingly shelled on April 19th, on which day one of them was blown up. On the 20th the German guns opened again upon the other,

need have no fear. Thomas replied that he had already decided to disobey orders, for he felt that it was his duty to remain with the wounded, and stay he did, despite the shellfire. With his sleeves rolled up, & covered in blood, he worked among the "hundreds" of wounded lying all around the place.

Coghell was very much impressed by this action and is keen for you to be made aware of it.

Thomas is already mentioned by you in the First Killers' list chap (p. 355) in connection with his work that night (see 4); but Coghell's notes refer to his work <sup>earlier</sup> during the day.



vaguely illuminated by a flickering candle or lantern, were found an N.C.O. and a man of one of the Second Army survey sections, whose nightly duty was to keep watch from an opening in the steeple in the endeavour to locate the flashes of German guns. In Bois Grenier the scouts of the 18th Battalion, though they spent several nights in observation, could find no trace of the reported lights in the ruins. The Anzac troops were certainly not wanting in a sense of humour, and it is real evidence of the strain on men and officers that the "peculiar and suspicious manner" in which the sturdy agriculturist manœuvred his horses "during shelling" was not attributed by eyewitnesses to the same natural causes which probably induced the farmer of Fleurbaix to "act in a suspicious manner" while a German bombardment was blowing up his house.

By the end of April the more intelligent were recognising that the information as to which houses were crowded with troops was being given to the enemy not by spies but by the actions of the troops themselves, which must be visible to the enemy's artillery and other observers. The men began to realise that a large part of the back area was under the most careful observation. There is little doubt that, in spite of official warnings and orders, they had been careless on first coming into reserve billets, showing themselves around the houses or on the open roads, lighting fires, even hanging out their blankets on the side of the buildings nearest to the enemy. As an eyewitness wrote:

I think the real cause (of the shelling of billets) is that they do not realise that all this country has eyes. Through the trees you can see a ridge,<sup>46</sup> only about one or one and a half miles away. That ridge belongs to the Germans—they have all the high ground. The men do not realise that . . . there are eyes in the distant trees, and telescopes, too, probably. They are being watched here as never have they been watched in their lives before. And if the enemy sees movement about a house there goes down on his map a cross against it (he has almost every tree mapped); and the next fine day that house is on the list for shelling—as part of the normal procedure.

The fact was that the troops in and behind the British lines (and equally those behind the German) were subjected to the whole system of intelligence by which the daily impressions of numerous observers were transmitted to lower

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<sup>46</sup> The Fromelles-Aubers ridge.

9234.

14 May 1935.

W.W. Warden, Esq.,  
Sogula,  
Taveuni, Fiji.

Dear Mr. Warden,

In writing the Official History of the war for the Commonwealth, I have been describing the battle of 4 April 1918 at Villers-Bretonneux. I have from Captain Coghill very minute details of the attack in the morning, but as to the afternoon the records are much scarcer. I find, however, a statement that the British troops on your right retired, and that you then threw back a flank endeavouring to cover the right of the 35th, but that the line gave way and it was found impossible to stop the withdrawal.

I should be most grateful if you could let me have the benefit of your recollection concerning the afternoon's attack. The chapter is just going to the printer, and I would therefore be extremely obliged if you could see your way to send me a few notes as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

C.E.W. Bean

Official Historian.

defence-line of the town. The road furnished a sure means of guidance. The end of the bent-back wire-belt just crossed it, and, as the flanking troops approached this point, fire was opened on them. On their returning the shots, this fire ceased, and a number of newly-arrived youngsters, thinking the fight over, raised the cheer which was heard in all parts of the battlefield. Lieutenant Millar's company moved round the eastern end of the wire, and, after passing it, and leaving behind a supposedly empty trench from which the fire had come, turned half-right again, and, crossing the road, moved straight towards the main defences of Hermies, taking them in rear.

The flank was reaching the low hill on which lay the western outskirts, when much shouting from that direction, and the firing of flares and rockets, showed that the alarm had been given. A burst of machine-gun and automatic-rifle fire caught Millar's company at the foot of the hill, and men fell on all sides. By breaking into a rush the company succeeded in advancing some way up the slope, but then flung itself down in face of a too deadly fire. The voices of the N.C.O's could be heard coolly controlling their men - "Up a little on the right!" "Ease off to the left!" - but the German positions were so difficult to locate, and the fire sweeping the crest so furious, that farther advance seemed hopeless. Add to this that some part of the German garrison on the extreme right now faced to its rear and fired into the Australian flank. Shots also came from some of the enemy who had feigned death and been passed on the slope. These were quickly suppressed,<sup>101</sup> but the opposition ahead was insuperable. A machine-gun, whose position could not be ascertained,

(TAKE IN SKETCH No. 88)

was enfilading the crest from the right; against the sky, now showing the first grey of dawn, could be seen the dust whipped out of the ground by the stream of its bullets. A corporal, named Keith,<sup>102</sup> kept his Lewis gun playing to the right, although

<sup>101</sup> Some were killed, and two made prisoners.

<sup>102</sup> Cpl. T.M. Keith, D.C.M. (No. 187; 2nd Bn.)

"SOQULU"  
TAVEUNI  
Fiji  
14/6/1935

C. E. W. Bean <sup>Esq.</sup>  
Official Historian  
Victoria Barracks  
Paddington  
N.S.W.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of 14/5/1935  
re the battle of 4<sup>th</sup> April 1918  
at Villers-Bretonneux, only reached me  
yesterday.

The 35<sup>th</sup> Bn were holding  
a sector of the line between Villers  
Bretonneux & Marcelcave, we had 3 Cys  
in the front line with the 4<sup>th</sup> Coy  
in reserve at Villers Bretonneux.

Our left Coy connected up with  
a Battalion of the Kings Royal Rifles,  
& Captain Coghill's Coy (in which I was

second in command) was the right flank of the 35<sup>th</sup>, on our right was a Battalion of "The Buffs".

Shortly after daylight on 4/4/1918 the Germans attacked, all along our front, our Coy did not open fire until the enemy were within about 300 yards of our trenches, their losses on our front appeared to be enormous, only an odd man got within 50 yards of our line, the attack originally appeared to consist of 8 or 9 waves.

About 2 hours after the commencement of the attack, & just when we thought we had repulsed the Germans with heavy losses, word came from over left Coy to say they were forced to withdraw, owing to the whole Bn of the K. R. R's giving way on our Battalion left flank, we could then see the Germans had broken through & were already behind us (on our left flank.) Coghill then gave instructions

for our Coy to withdraw by Platoons,  
 & a message was sent to "The Buffs"  
 on our right advising them  
 what had happened, & what we  
 were doing.

We took up a position  
 about 600 yards from the line we  
 vacated. Our Coy was still holding  
 both sides of the Railway line  
 between Pillers. Bretonnet & Marcelcaud  
 Coghill was wounded in the  
 arm during the withdrawal, but  
 he gamely held on for an hour  
 or more, & saw his Coy were all  
 in position, & finally persuaded  
 him to leave the line, as he was  
 on the point of collapse from loss  
 of blood.

About 3 to 4 PM that afternoon  
 the Germans again attacked our city  
 front, & on our right flank, the  
 attack was particularly severe  
 on the sector held by "The Buffs".  
 About an hour after the

attack had been in progress, "The  
 Buffs" withdrew, & this left our  
 "right flank in the air", & we  
 had to give ground.

Towards dusk  
 that evening our B Battalion, together  
 with the 316<sup>th</sup> P.I. (who had been  
 in reserve behind Villers Bretonneux)  
 counter attacked, & recovered all  
 the lost ground.

Yours faithfully

W. W. Gardner

*HN*

255a, George Street,

Sydney, 13th. May 1935

My dear Bean,

Reference your enquiry last Monday night. The officer who tried to make a flank with what came nearly to disastrous results on the afternoon of 4th. April was Lieut. W.W. Warden. His explanation to me after the action was - seeing the troops on his right had retired and his flank exposed he sent some men to his right rear to cover that flank. His action was correct enough with the exception that he does not appear to have given them definite location to rest upon. Unfortunately some of the 35th. and 33rd. Bns. seeing these men apparently retiring also commenced to fall back.

Warden was doing good work and I have no blame for him, taking into consideration the strain of the two fights, and the urge to act quickly in a very critical situation, I consider that he may be forgiven for the lack of that little foresight which might have prevented the awkward results of his good effort!

Kind regards,

Sincerely yours,

*D. A. Warden*

Dr. C. E. W. Bean, M.A., B.C.L., Litt.D.,  
Official Historian,  
Victoria Barracks.



It was at this stage that Germany made at least a narrow move towards peace. Among some of her civil leaders, the fall-

10 July 1935.

There of Verdun had been added to that of the Marne, there had existed a genuine desire for peace negotiations. This was shared by some of the royal leaders, who foresaw impoverishment of their country and a republican revolution if the struggle was

W.W. Warden, Esq.,  
"Soqulu",  
Taveuni, Fiji.

Dear Mr. Warden,

With reference to your courteous reply of June 14, which was helpful, General Goddard tells me that he understood that when the Buffs on your right gave way on the afternoon of April 5 you wisely threw back the right flank, and that the men farther to the left, seeing the right flank in motion, thought that the whole line was withdrawing and left their trenches also. I should be grateful if you could tell me whether this was the case.

Yours faithfully,

C.E.W. Bean

Official Historian.

its close in Germany's defeat. It will be remembered that, at Christmas 1915, the then chief of the German staff, Falkenhayn, supported two plans for the securing of victory. The first was an "unrestricted" submarine campaign against England's food-supplies; but this was abandoned in April through American protests, culminating with that after the sinking of the Sussex, against the torpedoing of merchant ships without warning. Germany had thus been forced to rely solely on the second plan - a military blow aimed really at England, but struck through France. This blow

<sup>6</sup> For example, the Crown Prince of Germany.  
<sup>7</sup> See Vol. IX, p. 274, footnote.  
<sup>8</sup> See Vol. III, p. 224, esp.

fell at Verdun; but, although France suffered there 410,000 casualties, she had not been induced to make terms; on the contrary, with the British she had struck back on the Somme in the tremendous combined offensive which occupied the second half of 1916; and, in September of that year, Ludendorff and Hindenburg, after acquainting themselves with the situation on

It was at this stage that Germany made at least a manoeuvre towards peace. Among some of her civil leaders, since the failure of Verdun had been added to that of the Marne, there had existed a genuine desire for peace negotiations. This was shared by some of the royal leaders,<sup>6</sup> who foresaw impoverishment of their country and a republican revolution if the struggle was fought to its end. Moreover, offers might be made to some of Germany's opponents which would cause pacifist agitation among them, and might induce some to desert the rest. The military staff, however, had been utterly hostile to any peace move, and the German people, fed with false reassurances as to the future, was ~~not~~ <sup>more</sup> opposed even than the Allies to the notion of American intervention. Nevertheless in September, unknown to the German people, their leaders adopted a change of attitude so momentous as to determine the course of the war not merely in 1917, but to its close in Germany's defeat.

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<sup>6</sup>For example, the Crown Prince of Germany.

<sup>7</sup>See Vol. IX, p. 274, footnote.

<sup>8</sup>See Vol. III, p. 224 seq.

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HEV  
"SOQULU"  
TAVEUNI  
Fiji

3/8/1935

Captain G. E. W. Bean  
Victoria Barracks  
Paddington

Dear Sir,

Referring to your letter of  
10<sup>th</sup> July. I regret to state I am unable  
to say exactly what happened to the  
of our our left when I had to  
move my men back to conform  
with the ~~gap~~ gap left by the  
Buffs on our right.

The 35<sup>th</sup> B.H.Q. were advised  
by runner from me exactly what we  
intended doing & B's Headquarters  
were immediately moved from Villers -  
Bretonneux to the wood (Bois ?)  
about a mile to the rear.

Yours faithfully

W. W. Anderson

~~Papers sent down past Qy.~~

P. 134 miles order.  
Order for first M. must have known  
Queen's were on rt. Then sent over.

Did Goddard order M. to  
att. astride or S of Qy?

Was Doig or fadd w 4<sup>th</sup> Coy.  
Probably Doig.  
Campbell - was he Tedder's Coy?  
Think he was B. Tedder  
was hit early, then Campbell.

Order to fix bay to. Who gave it  
Coy's were not behind each other but in  
place  
Strength of 36<sup>th</sup>?

There was no time to get coy's one behind  
1 other - they were in order B.C. & would  
of as soon as. Ask well then 36<sup>th</sup> Bn Sydney  
maps changed. blow whistle - Coy adv at the double

~~Sent to Robb & Sayers  
(or get Sayers up here.)~~

~~9~~

~~D. D. D. (from Allen)~~

~~A. Holman~~

~~D. Davies~~

~~R. Sapp~~

~~W. G. Adams reorg. remainder~~

~~C.~~

180 Queens

Ames C hit twice

Australian force went into action there were to be found men who, come what might, regardless of death or wounds, stayed by their fallen friends until they had seen them into safety.

These qualities of independence, originality, the faculty of rising to an occasion, and loyalty to a "mate," conspicuous in the individual Australian, became recognisable as parts of the national character. Not that either the British people or the Australians themselves realised fully before the war that an Australian national character or even a nation existed. The people of the young community were hardly conscious of complete union. It was only thirteen years since the six unconnected colonies had been formally federated by Great Britain, at their own request, into a Commonwealth of six States under the Australian Parliament. The Commonwealth controlled the defence, the common trade, and the customs of all the States; but until the Great War the feeling of the people appeared to be still largely one of attachment to its "State" rather than to Australia. Only in one point was the Australian people palpably united—in a determination to keep its continent for a white man's land. Nationalism and patriotism are cherished ideals, and the genuine Australian, with an almost feminine sensitiveness about laying open his feelings to another's gaze, disguised all such sentiments under a mask of cynicism. If he respected a person or an ideal, he screened his feeling with a dry jest which deceived others and perhaps himself. Only those who knew him well suspected the intense nationalism which the war revealed.

Such, at this date, was the people of this offshoot of the British stock, the embryo, it may be, of one of the earth's great nations. Hitherto it had lived secure under the protection of the British Navy, and had never yet been called upon to engage in any heavy struggle on behalf of itself, its principles, or its friends. It was obvious to many that this supreme test must one day come. The policy of Great Britain had left the oversea dominions free to prepare against it, beforehand or to remain unprepared. What provision had their free sense—in time of peace, when the motive was not insistent—induced them to make against an emergency which might be remote?

Their resolve for freedom had impelled them to provide armies, and in some cases navies, of their own; it had at the

H-N.

4 + 5 Apr. 1918

H N

Certain Maxwell . . .  
Vickers Brest. Ap. 4. 1918

Col. Burgess at Amiens -

ord. to retire? by 101 or

VII Corps).

wrote on order to retire

"My guns are geared to  
run only one way."

Dernancourt. Ap. 5 1918

Below Ga at Dernancourt

our guns were firing  
over open sights.

9930.

14 September 1936.

A. Harrison, Esq.,  
8, Evans Street,  
Belmain.

Dear Sir,

In writing the account of the Battle of Villers-Bretonneux, 4th April 1918, I am in some difficulty as to precisely where the northernmost posts of the 35th Battalion lay - whether they were in the same trench as the English, or out of touch with them, and whether level or farther back. Some of the posts were under an acting-sergeant, Albert William Harrison, who was taken prisoner, and I am writing to you in case you happen to be he. If so, I should be grateful if you could give me the benefit of your recollection on this point.

Yours faithfully,

G.E.W. Bean

Official Historian.

*Copy sent also to*

*(1) Princes St, St Mary's NSW*

*(2) 64 John St, Granville NSW*

been captured by the enemy; but, as against this, 11 Germans had been taken and over 50 lay dead in the streets and about the village. Elliott, incensed by the German attack, desired to hit back, and actually issued instructions for an immediate assault on Doignies and Louverval, in defiance of the injunction that he must advance no farther until ordered to do so. No word of this order was at first sent to divisional headquarters, and consequently the troops on either flank and their artillery were not warned. The proposed operation - a daylight advance, with little artillery support, against the main German outpost-line, - offered every chance of a severe repulse. After the brigade-major, Wieck, had made the strongest protest open to him, the divisional commander, Major-General Hobbs, was informed, and, hurrying to Elliott's headquarters, cancelled the operation.<sup>64</sup> Despite Elliott's fine qualities of leadership, not every superior could, like Hobbs, have <sup>confidence</sup> continued after this incident to accord to his his/and support.

The Germans, having failed to recapture Beaumetz, shelled it persistently during March 23rd, causing considerable loss.<sup>65</sup> That night the <sup>Battalion</sup> 57th/relieved the 29th, and the 58th the 30th. At 4 a.m. on the 24th the Germans launched a second attempt to retake the village, this time after an hour's bombardment. They again attacked on both flanks, and, as before, their right, advancing up the valley leading into the village from the north-east, drove back the outposts and reached that there/edge of the village. This time, however, they did not penetrate it, the few Australians from the posts continuing to the houses and the cemetery, on the eastern edge of the town. At day-break a portion of the attacking force was seen sheltering in the sunken way leading from the cemetery to the Cambrai road. An Australian machine-gun fired from the cemetery<sup>66</sup> straight into this party, killing and wounding a number, and thus again, without the assistance of reserves,<sup>67</sup> the garrison drove the enemy clear of all

<sup>64</sup> A telegram was first sent, cancelling it. Leave was subsequently given for an attack on Doignies and Louverval that night, in accordance with a plan already discussed by Elliott with Birdwood, but this permission was soon afterwards revoked. The 59th and 60th Battalions, which had moved up on receipt of Elliott's order, were sent back.

<sup>65</sup> Among those killed was Capt. Booth, whose company had held the town.



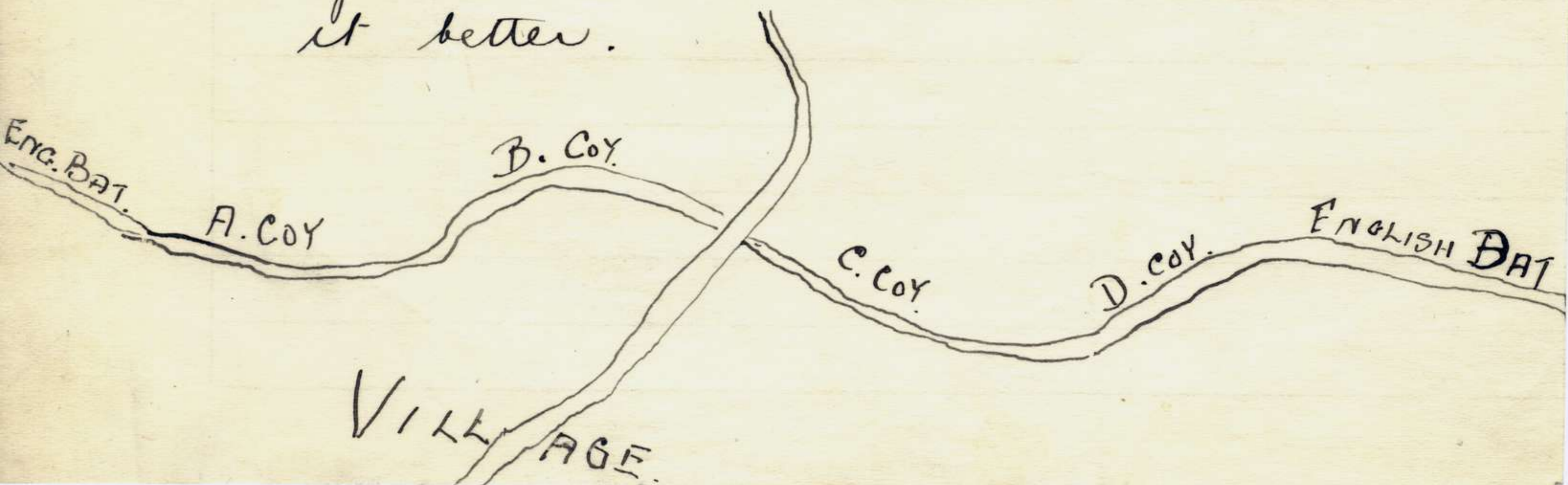
8 Evans St  
Balmain

20-9-36

C. S. W. Bean Esq.  
Dear Sir.

Re your letter of 14<sup>th</sup> Inst  
in reference to Battle of Villers-Bretonneux.  
I am not the person to whom you are  
inquiring after.

Perhaps I could give you  
a little information regarding our  
position. The 35<sup>th</sup> Bat. was both sides  
of the railway line in front of Village.  
There were English Battalions on both  
our flanks. The line was very crooked  
but if I gave you a small diagram  
you would be able to understand  
it better.



The English Batt on our right (D Coy) mainly consisted of young fellows who had been in the line for some considerable time and were worn out. When the push began in earnest they were the unfortunate ones to be struck first - so had to give way. It was here where Capt G. Coghill gained his M.C. so I think he or Lieut Jack Beaton could give you a better idea of this stunt. We were all deceived here as the German Machine Gunners were disguised as Dutchmen - beavers and were wearing our steel helmets. Hoping you can get more information out of the two Gentlemen I referred to and am sorry to have kept you waiting for an answer to letter.

Yours Faithfully  
R. G. Harrison  
Kati C. Company  
35<sup>th</sup> Batt.

C O P Y .  
-----

H/N  
Derrancon

Army Form  
W.3121.  
Number:

12th Aus. Inf. Bde. 4th Aust. Divn. Aust Corps. 9/4/18. Date of Recommendation.

Action for which commended.

Recommended by

Honour or Reward

46th Bn.  
A.I.F.

Hon. Capt.  
Q. Mstr.  
Reginald  
OUTHWAITE.

For gallantry and devotion to duty near ALBERT on the night of the 5th April 1918. During the progress of the enemy attack he went forward to Bn. H.Qrs in the line in order to make arrangements to meet the changes of disposition, and, although wounded, remained on duty in order to ensure that supplies and hot food were delivered to the Companies. The nature of his duties allowed him little time for rest during the previous five days, and his determination to see the matter through resulted in maintaining the fighting power and good spirits of the men in the line. Throughout the period of his work forward his only shelter from the enemy fire was the Bn. H.Qrs for a few minutes.

J. Gellibrand  
Brig. Gen.  
Cmmdg. 12th  
A.I. Bde.

M.C.

(Sgd) E.G. SINCLAIR MACLAGAN Maj.Gen.  
Cmmd. 4th Aust. Divn.

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## REPORT ON OPERATIONS 5th./6th. April 1918.

13th. A.I. Bde. H.Qrs.  
10/4/18.Reference  
ALBERT aPersonnel(1) DIS  
she  
and  
rel  
and  
al  
26t.

Dear Gen.

Herewith.

(2) WAR  
on  
poi  
11.  
to  
don  
infCopy of our report  
on recent operations  
as promised you(3) RECO  
rec  
ener

Am also sending

(4) ENEM  
dur  
6 an  
area  
unti  
the  
loc  
and  
BRES  
BRES  
to h  
the  
obli  
wire  
unti  
Bns.  
the

one to Culback.

Yours truly

R. Wood.

21/4/18.

(4) INFA  
of t

Railway Line from the Road and Railway Crossing at E.20.b.2.6. eastwards. While the assembling in and near DERNANCOURT he was engaged by Vickers and Lewis Guns, Rifles and Stokes Mortars, and heavy casualties were inflicted. Later a strong party advanced towards the our left flank but was met by rifle and M.G. fire and was practically annihilated. At 9 a.m. our line was in its original position.

At about 10 a.m. seven men of 47th. Bn. came to our left Coy. H.Qrs. near Railway Arch and said that 47th. Bn. had withdrawn. The Company Commander sent his C.S.M. back with these men along the embankment. They went 200 yds. into 12th. Bde. Sector and found no trace of 47th. Bn. so returned.

Between 10 and 10.15 a.m. large parties of enemy were seen moving North and North East over the high ground near the Prisoners of War Cage in E.14.d. The left Coy. Commander then ordered his Coy. to fall back to the line of posts in E.19.b. and E.14.c. While doing this they were subjected to a heavy M.G. fire from E.14.d. The right of the Coy. remained in touch with the centre Coy. on the Railway Line. This Company Commander was wounded and is now missing and the facts given above were not clearly known at the time.

At 11.5 a.m. when it became definitely known

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DISPOSITIONS. At 11.20 p.m.  
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April 1918.

13th. A.I. Bde. H.Qrs.  
10/4/18.

Reference 1/40,000 combined sheet.  
ALBERT and disposition sketches attached.

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- (1) DISPOSITIONS. At 11 p.m. on 4th. April the Bde. was disposed as shown in sketch I, the 10th. Aust. Inf. Bde. being on the right and the 12th. Aust. Inf. Bde. on the left. The 52nd. Bn. had relieved the 51st. Bn. in the line the previous night (3rd/4th) and was fairly fresh. The 49th. and 50th. Bns. were in Divisional Reserve. All units had been bivouaced in open trenches since 26th. March.
- (2) WARNING OF ATTACK AND ALTERATION OF DISPOSITIONS. At 11.20 p.m. on 4th. April a wire was received from Div. stating that indications pointed to a probable enemy attack the following morning and at 11.45 p.m. the Reserve Coy. of the 52nd. Bn. was ordered forward to occupy the line of posts in E.18.b. and E.20.a. which was done by 2.15 a.m. (Sketch II) Other units of the Brigade were informed of action taken.
- (3) RECONNAISSANCE. The night was misty with showers of rain. 14 reconnaissance patrols were sent out by 52nd. Bn. but no unusual enemy movement was reported till dawn.
- (4) ENEMY BOMBARDMENT. The usual desultory enemy shelling continued during the darkness but at daybreak it increased and between 6 and 7 a.m. developed into a brisk bombardment of the forward areas with heavy and light guns and minenwerfer which lasted until 8 a.m. when it lifted on to the area in D.17 and 18 where the H.Qrs. of 51st. and 52nd. Bns and a Coy. of 51st. Bn. were located. About 9 a.m. the shelling of the forward areas slackened and a heavy shoot was carried out on our battery areas in the BRESLE - RIBEMONT Valley and bivouac areas in the vicinity of BRESLE WOOD and HENENCOURT. The bombardment does not appear to have done very much damage amongst the forward troops, but the 50th. Bn. in particular suffered about 60 casualties and were obliged to move from the aerodrome in D.2.a. The shelling cut all wires to the Brigade Forward Report Centre (D.21.B;7.2.) and until 10.30 a.m. the only means of communication with the Forward Bns. was by visual so that in the early stages information as to the progress of the operations was rather scanty.
- (4) INFANTRY ACTION. Taking advantage of the mist and under cover of the bombardment the enemy worked his troops forward to the Railway Line from the Road and Railway Crossing at E.20.b.2.6. eastwards. While assembling in and near DERNANCOURT he was engaged by Vickers and Lewis Guns, Rifles and Stokes Mortars, and heavy casualties were inflicted. Later a strong party advanced towards the our left flank but was met by rifle and M.G. fire and was practically annihilated. At 9 a.m. our line was in its original position.

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At 11.5 a.m. when it became definitely known

that an Infantry action on some scale was taking place the 49th. Bn (under orders from Division) had been moved forward to the line in front of LAVIEVILLE and became Brigade Reserve.

At 11.30 a.m. an Artillery F.O.O. reported that enemy were massing in DERNANCOURT and all available artillery was put onto this village.

At 12 noon our dispositions were as shewn in Sketch III.

At noon the Divisional Commander and the Brigadier discussed the position on the telephone and it was decided to restore the situation at once by working along the railway towards DERNANCOURT. The G.O.C., 12th. Bde. at 11.35 a.m. had reported the 47th. Bn. were in front of E.14 Central and at 12.5 p.m. that his right was on the Railway Line so that it appeared possible for 52nd. Bn. to carry this out and at 12.50 p.m. orders were accordingly sent to this effect. At 1.5 p.m. as the situation at the junction of the Bdes. was then obscure the Divisional Commander decided that the 49th. Bn. was to be used to clear it up and 50th. Bn. was to occupy line in front of BRESLE WOOD.

At 1.10 p.m. the 12th. Bde. reported that the enemy were in E.13.d. and subsequently in conversation with G.O.C., 12th. Bde. plans for launching counter-attack were discussed and it was decided that as H.Q. 49th. Bn. adjoined his H.Q. he would get in touch with C.O. 49th. Bn. direct and arrange co-operation - the boundaries of 49th. Bn. to be LAVIEVILLE - DERNANCOURT Road and a line through D.18. Central and E.19 Central. Previous instructions to 52nd. Bn. were cancelled verbally and orders in accordance with above issued to 49th. Bn. at 2.0 p.m.

At 3.55 p.m. following instructions from Division orders were given for 50th. Bn. to move forward and occupy the LAVIEVILLE line from DERNANCOURT -- LAVIEVILLE Road (exclusive) through D.16 Central to D.23.a. joining 51st. Bn. <sup>there</sup> who were to connect up with 3rd. Aust. Div. at BUIRE Cemetery.

The right of 52nd. Bn. was now being enfiladed from the vicinity of DERNANCOURT with M.G. and rifle fire and the centre and right Coys. withdrew to the line of posts in D.24.d. and E.19.c. the extreme right remaining in touch with 10th. Aust. Inf. Bde. (situation 3.15 p.m. Sketch IV).

At 4.00 p.m. the left of the 52nd. Bn. was again attacked and 'A' Coy. of 51st. Bn. was sent to reinforce it.

Meanwhile the 49th. Bn. had moved forward for the counter-attack which had been fixed for 5.15 p.m. and at that time was deployed between E.18 Central and the DERNANCOURT - LAVIEVILLE road, being in touch with 46th. Bn., ~~on~~ the right of the 3 Bns with which the 12th. Bde. were attacking (situation at 5.15 p.m. Sketch V).

The 49th. Bn. attack relieved the pressure on the 52nd. Bn. and pushed forward the line on the left. In doing so they had had heavy casualties from M.G. and Rifle fire, both the Coy. Commanders of the two centre Coys. being killed and the majority of the Officers and many N.C.O's killed or wounded. The result was that the information sent back was very scanty and also a gap occurred in the middle of the line.

The right of the 52nd. Bn. pushed forward and re-established themselves on the Railway Line. The position at 6 p.m. is shewn in Sketch VI.

During the night 5th/6th. the line was consolidated and 'C' Coy 51st. Bn. was put in to fill up the gap in the line and at 10 p.m. the Brigade was disposed as in Sketch VII with continuous touch from flank to flank.

The enemy remained inactive during the night 5th/6th. and the following day, and on the night 6th/7th. the 50th. Bn. took over the right sector of the front and 49th. Bn. the left Sector being disposed as shewn in Sketch VIII and these dispositions remained unaltered until the Brigade was relieved by the 7th. Aust. Inf. Bde. on the night 7th/8th. April.

(6) COMMUNICATION. During the artillery bombardment prior to the attack on 5th. inst. the lines to the Brigade Forward Report Centre at (D.21.b.7.2.) were repeatedly cut and till 10.30 a.m. communication was restricted to visual signalling. Fortunately the ground and weather conditions were very favourable for this work and it was possible to send messages forward, as the mist rendered observation from the high ground above MORLANCOURT impossible.

The wireless set which had been allotted to the report centre was not in working order and though several efforts had previously been made to obtain them no power buzzers were available.

Owing to the roads being in good condition runners were able to use bicycles between Bde. and Bn. Headquarters and this method of communication was therefore considerably quicker than usual.

At 10.30 a.m. the wires held fairly well and it was possible to get information and orders through quickly. Communications forward of Bn. H.Qrs. were not so easy, owing to the long bald slope down to the front line, which was under enemy observation.

Pigeons would have been useful here when lines were down had they been available. Considerable difficulty was experienced in getting wire and it was not possible to duplicate lines. For this reason it is considered that too much reliance was placed on this method of communication and that whenever possible power buzzers should be installed at least as far forward as Brigade Report Centres and pigeons should be issued to Bns. in the line.

(7) ARTILLERY CO-OPERATION. The Brigade was covered by the Right Group Artillery consisting of 3 English Army Bdes under Lt-Col YOUNG R.H.A. A senior liaison officer from 4th. Aust. Div. Artillery was stationed at Bde. H.Qrs. and a junior officer at the H.Qrs. of the Bn. in the line.

Prior to the action telephone communication had been established with Group H.Qrs. and also with the H.Qrs. of the other Bdes. R.F.A. composing the Group, and the wires held well during the day.

When the first attack developed against the 52nd. Bn. an S.O.S. was fired, but after the targets were engaged as often as they presented themselves either at the request of Brigade through the liaison officer or direct by F.O.O's. The 35th. Div. Artillery attached 3rd. Aust. Div. co-operated by enfilading the Railway Embankment near DERNANCOURT during the day. Both forward Bns. report that Battery Commanders visited them on several occasions to obtain the latest information and arrange co-operation.

(8) MACHINE GUNS. In no action in which the Bde. has taken part have machine guns had such an opportunity. The whole of the front except the left flank was covered by the R. ANCRE which enabled a certain proportion of guns to be pushed well forward to the Railway Line and they were thus able to bring enfilade fire on to the Railway Embankment and the ground North of DERNANCOURT, without any risk of being attacked frontally.

Other guns were sited on the rising ground in E.19.a. (complete disposition as shewn in Sketch I).

Throughout the day all parties of the enemy assembling near DERNANCOURT were engaged and frontal and flanking fire was brought to bear whenever he attacked. Hostile M.G's were also engaged.

The withdrawal of the left Coy. of 52nd. Bn. to the C.C.S. line was covered by machine guns two of the guns remaining in action until the crews all became casualties and were overpowered by the enemy. Except for a little indirect fire on the QUARRY and sunken road in E.14.c. all firing was done with direct observation over the sights.

(9) TRENCH MORTARS. Two 3" Mortars were in position covering the main street of DERNANCOURT and the railway bridge with 150 rounds of ammunition per gun. Fire was withheld until asked for by the Company Commander in the line and 80 rounds were then fired on previously registered targets in R.20.b. When the attack pressed forward excellent living targets presented themselves and both mortars opened fire into the crowding enemy with direct observation.

Firing was kept up until almost all the ammunition was expended and the Infantry were falling back towards the C.C.S.

Both mortars were then blown up to prevent them falling into enemy hands and the crews joined in with the 52nd. Bn. as riflemen. When fire was first opened the legs of one mortar collapsed but the N.C.O. in charge immediately removed the damaged bipod and supporting the mortar with his arms and legs carried on firing with great success. The other mortar was traversed by being picked up bodily and pointed in the direction required.

(10) MEDICAL. The Medical arrangements worked without a hitch. Wounded men were cleared from R.A.P's by wheeled stretcher to A.D.S. at LAVIEVILLE whence they were taken on by Motor Ambulances.

(11) PRISONERS. Two prisoners were captured by the 49th. Bn. of the 229th. Regt. and 3 Light and 1 Heavy Machine Guns.

(12) CASUALTIES. Our casualties for the period and the 7 days preceding were as under :-

	: 49th.		: 50th.		: 51st.		: 52nd.		: M.G.Coy.:		: L.T.M.B.:		: TOTAL	
	:Off	O.R:	:Off	O.R:	:Off	O.R:	:Off	O.R:	:Off	O.R:	:Off	O.R:	:Off	O.R:
KILLED.	8	54	-	11	3	13	1	29	-	2	-	-	11	109
WOUNDED.	6	153	-	50	1	43	6	117	1	15	1	1	15	381
MISSING.	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	9	-	-	1	9
	14	207	-	61	3	58	8	146	1	26	1	1	27	499

GENERAL. (1) When the action started a party of 1 Officer and 40 men from 4th. Aust. Pioneer Bn. were tunnelling M.G. positions in the Railway Embankment near DERNANCOURT. They left their work and joined in the fighting with 52ndw Bn., as did also a party from 3rd. Aust. Pion. Bn. who were working near BUIRE Cemetery.

(2) At 11.30 a.m. on 5th. April 4 tanks were placed at the disposal of the Brigade but they were not used.

(3) With the exception of the Two Vickers Guns previously referred to and the two Stokes Mortars that were blown up, no guns were lost to the enemy, though 1 Vickers Gun and 3 Lewis Guns were damaged by shell fire. These were replaced the same night.

(4) Twice during the day on the 5th. April the Brigade Intelligence Officer rode forward and made a personal reconnaissance of the situation, and on the night 5th/6th. he again went forward with another officer of the Bde. Staff and remained until the line was re-organised.



CONCLUSION.

The 10th. Aust. Inf. Bde. was not involved in the fighting at any time and the enemy's objective would therefore seem to have been the high ground North and North-West of DERNANCOURT.

When this sector was first taken over the original intention was to hold the line D.24.d., E.19.c., E.19.b., R.20.A. as the line of resistance; this being the best tactical position, but was subsequently decided to hold the Railway Line in order to conform with 12th. Aust. Inf. Bde.

The enemy's gain of ground on this Brigade Sector was therefore of little tactical advantage to him, and; though it is impossible to make any estimate of his casualties, they must have been very heavy.

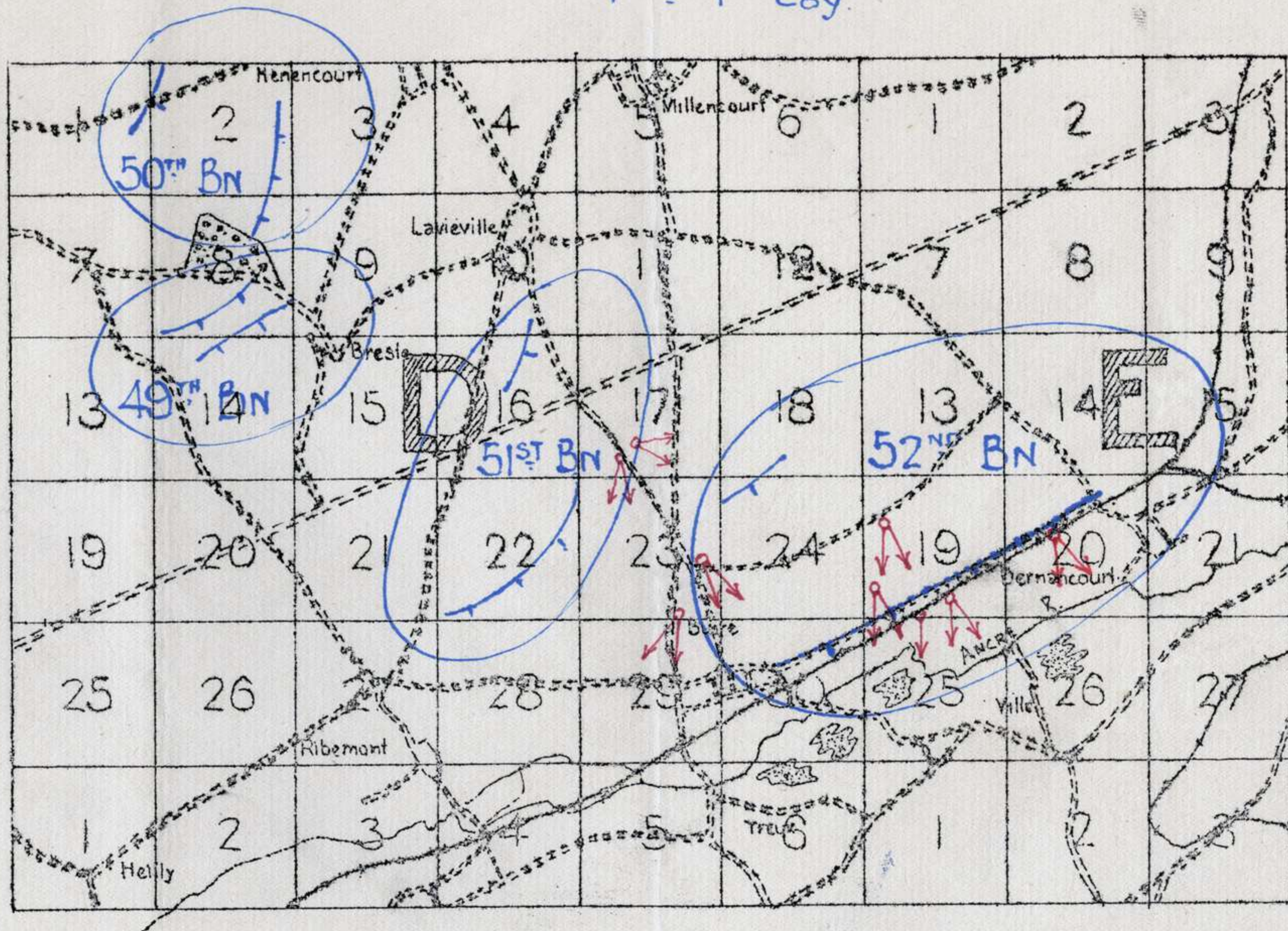
(sgd) T.W. GLASCOW; Brigadier-General,

Commanding 13th. AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

# SITUATION

11 P.M. 4.4.18

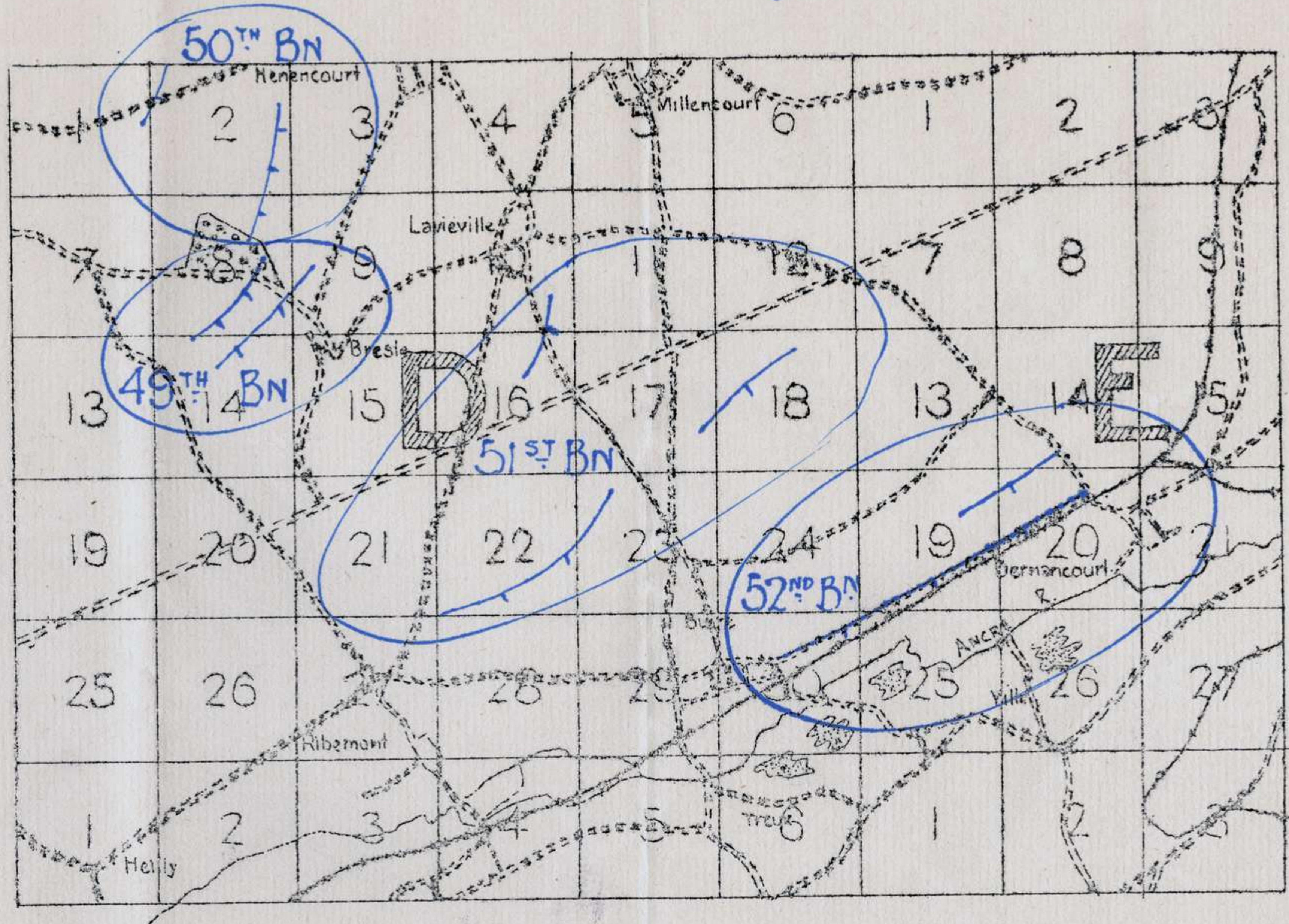
— = 1 Coy.



# SITUATION

2.30 A.M. 5.4.18

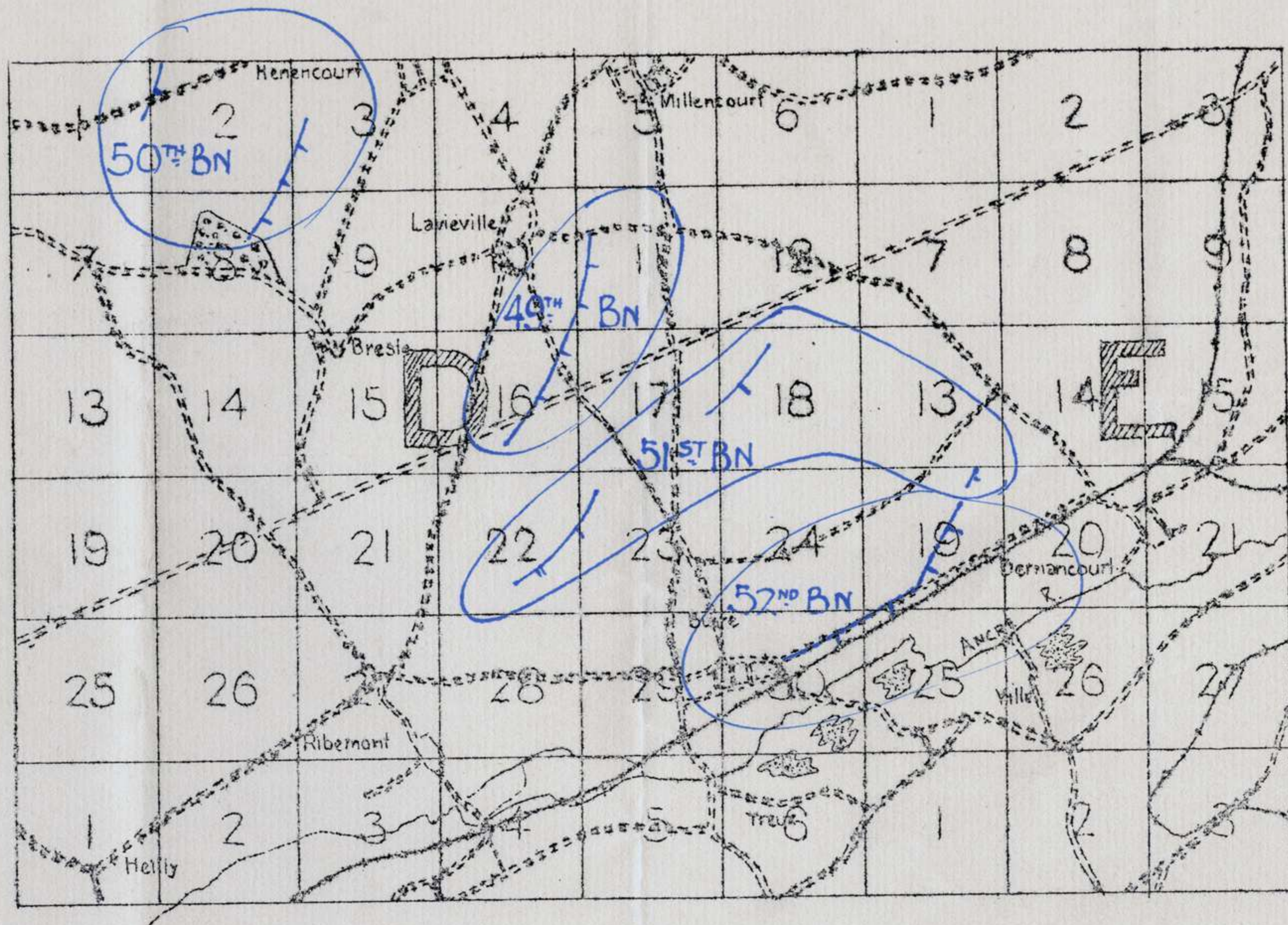
T: 1 Coy.



# SITUATION

Noon 5.4.18

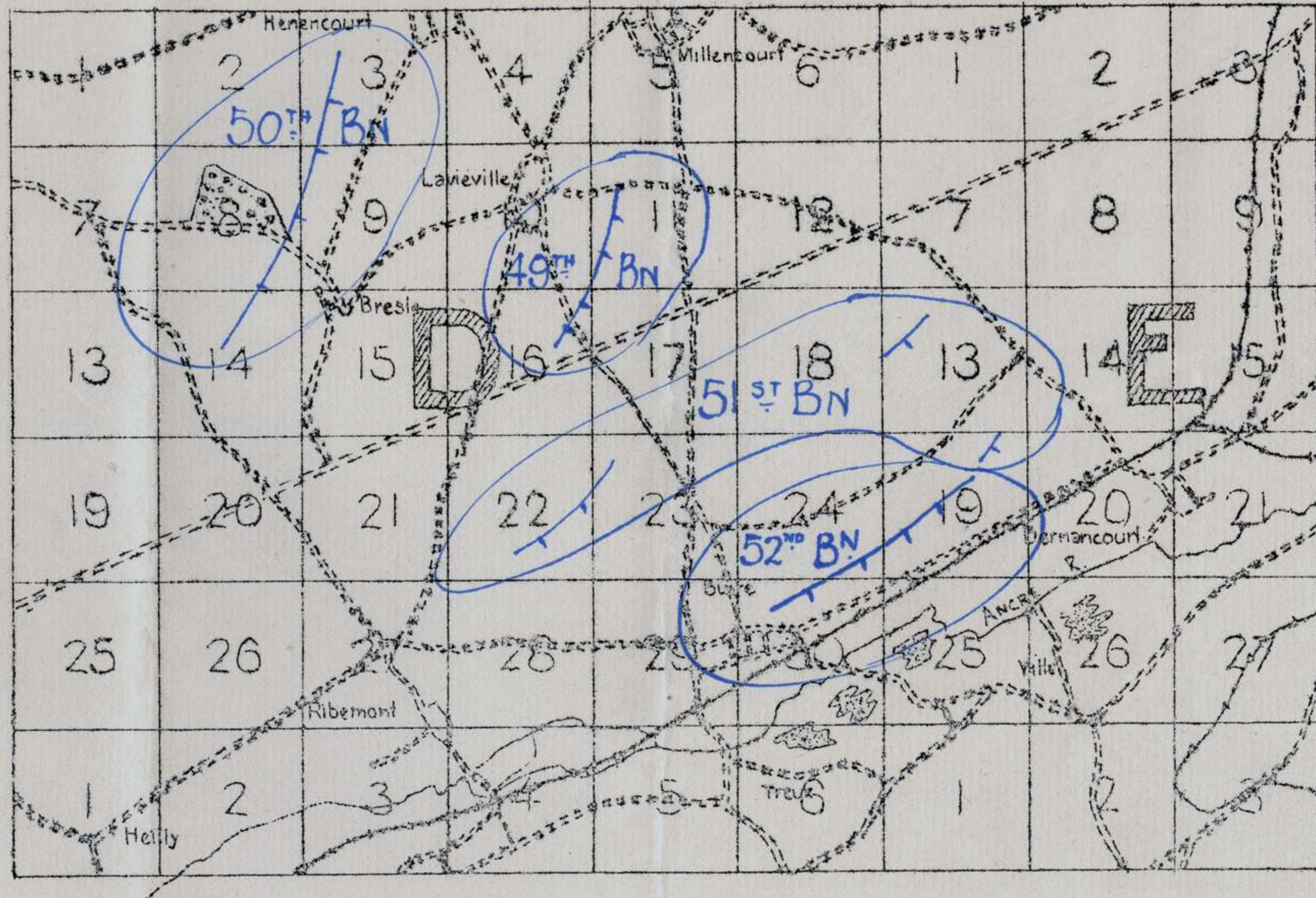
T: 1 Coy



# SITUATION

3.15 P.M 5.4.18

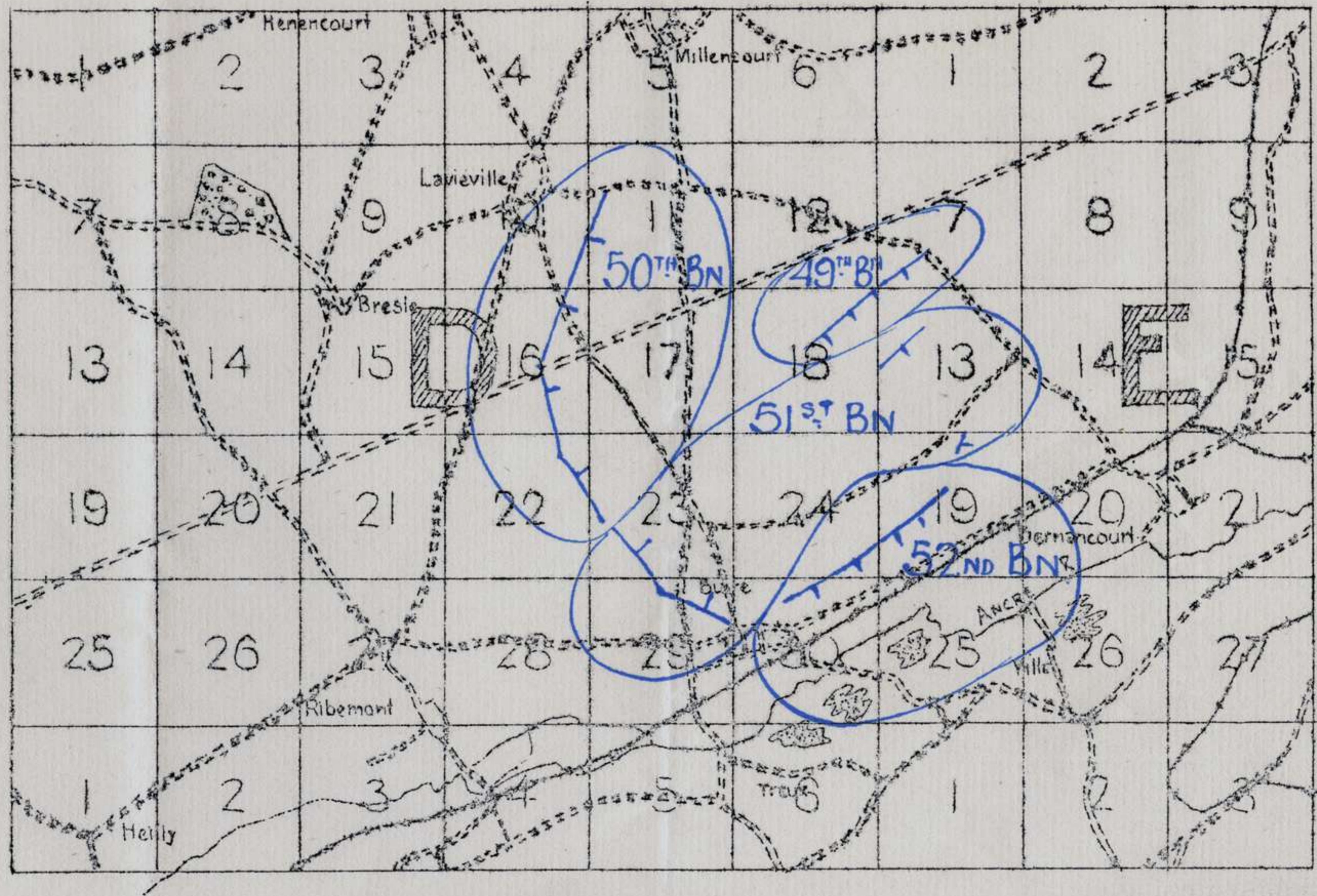
T = 1 coy



# SITUATION

5.15 P.M 5.4.18

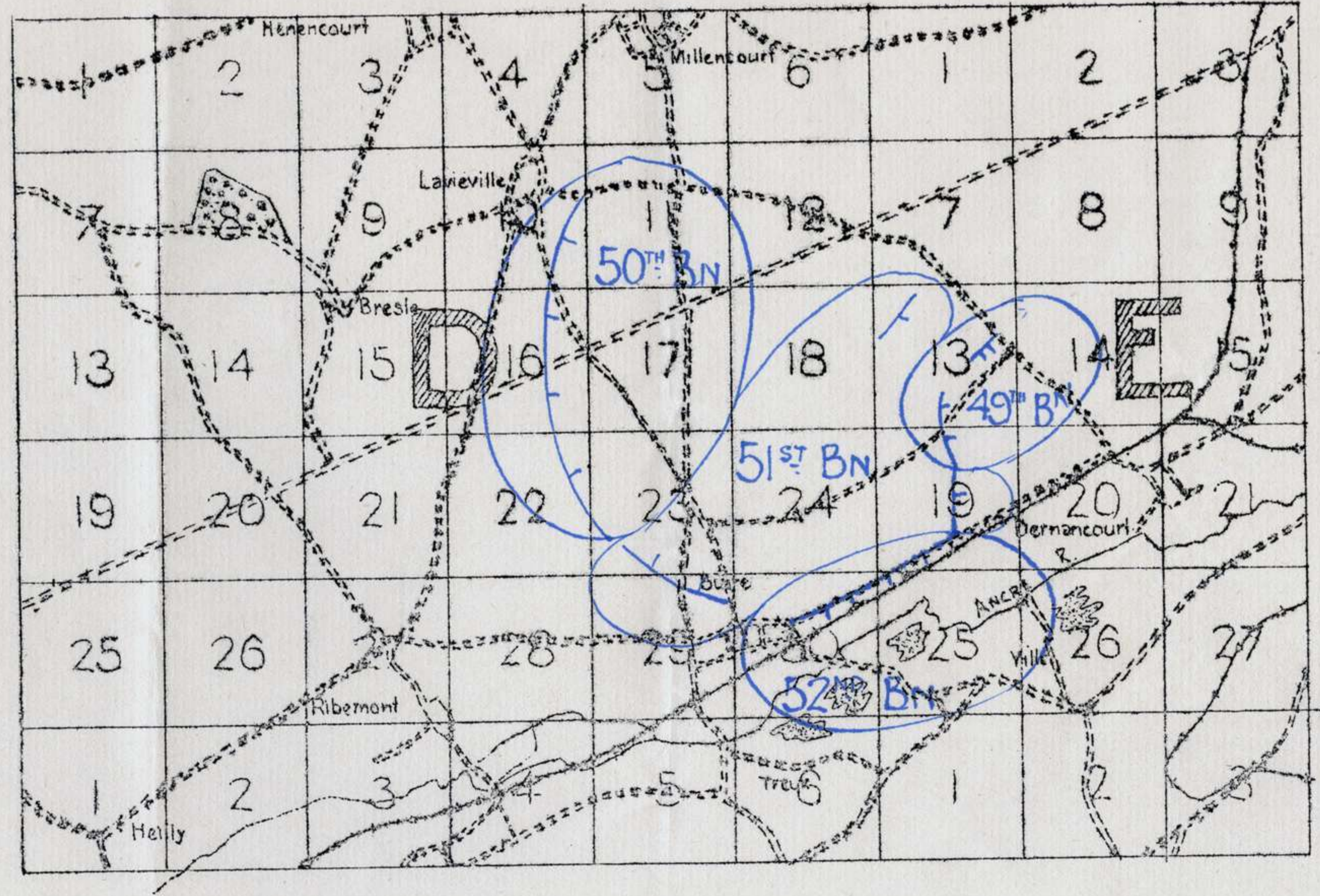
T: 1 Coy.



# SITUATION

6.0 P.M 5.4.18

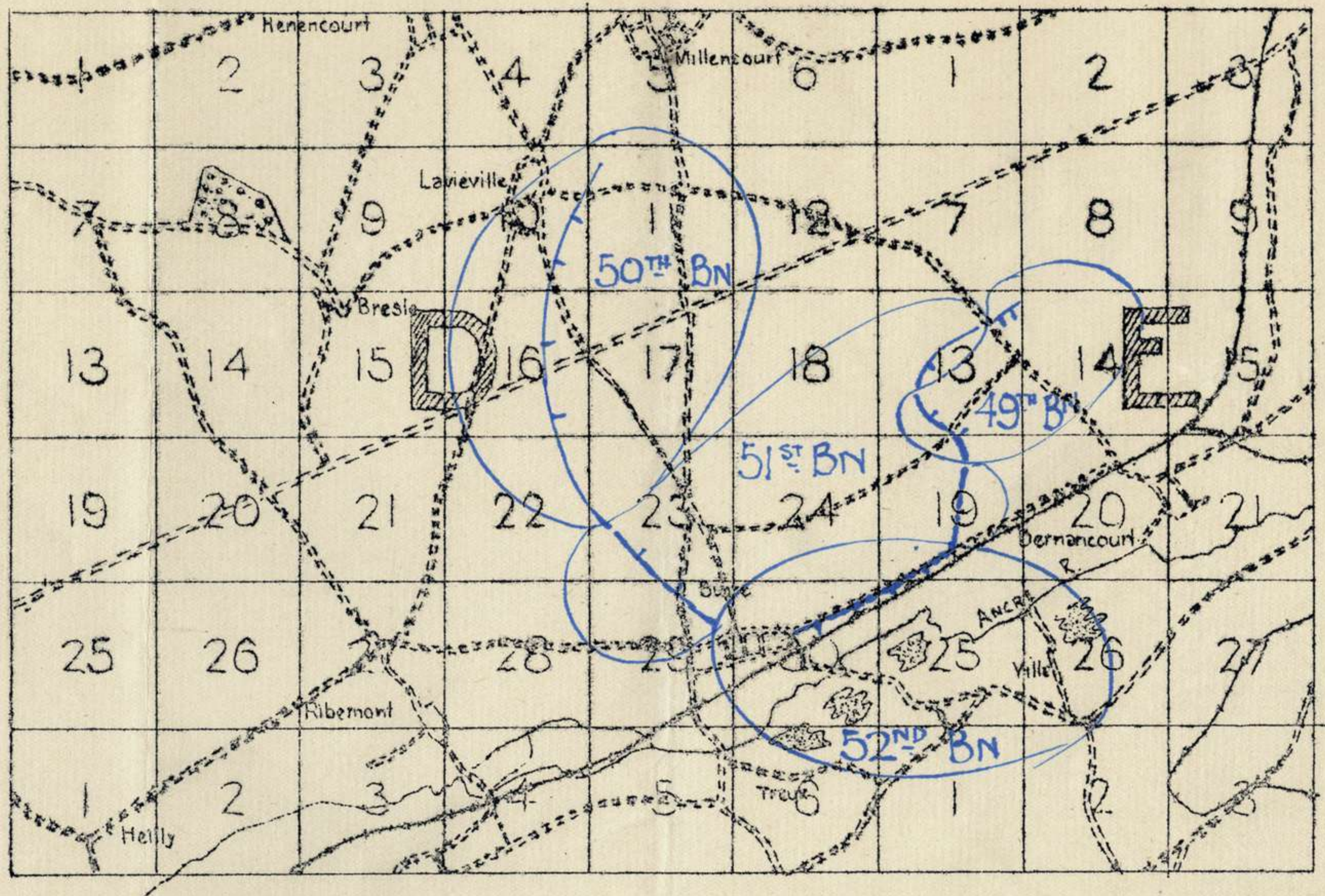
— = 1 Coy.



# SITUATION

10 P.M 5.4.18

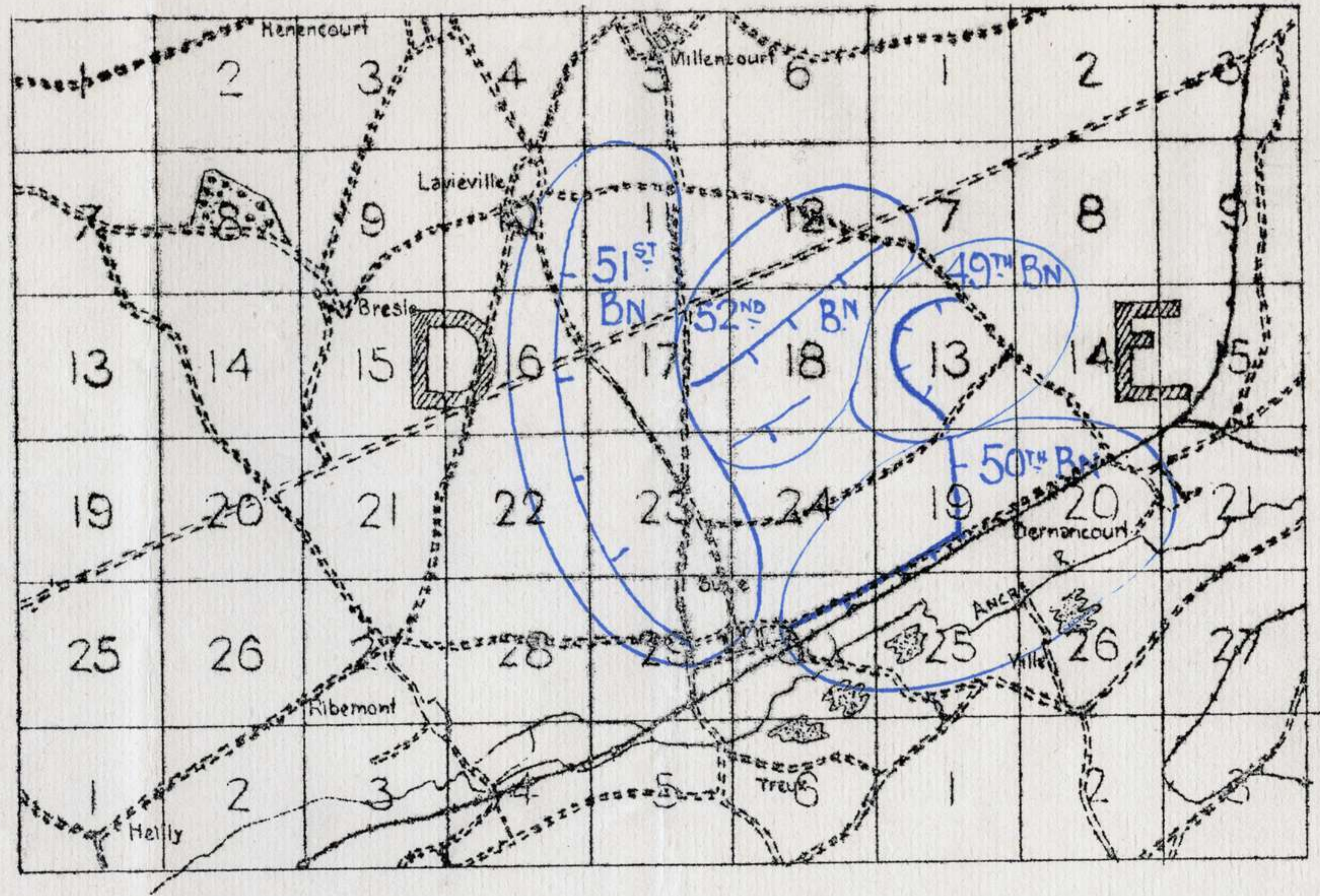
— = 1 Coy





SITUATION  
& as handed over to 7th A.I. BDE.  
— = 1 Coy

MIDNIGHT 6/7.4.18



89

10  
A

Dear Charles -

Herewith - notes

for you - a bit  
rough -

Frank

MESSAGES AND SIGNALS.

No. of Message..... 10/A

Prefix.....	Code.....	m	Words.	Charge.	This message is on a/c of:	Recd. at.....	m.	
Office of Origin and Service Instructions.							Date.....	
99					Sent	Service.		
					At.....	m.		
					To.....			
By.....					(Signature of "Franking Officer.")	By.....		

TO {

Sender's Number.

Day of Month.

In reply to Number.

AAA

Wheat Culbask.

I am sending you the first report as promised.

Naturally, I do not want any reference made outside our own Page, to the action of Lieut Thompson since he is of wounds. I thought it better to send the whole report, and mention my wish rather than delete any portion of it.

Yours sincerely,

Chas. J. Murphy  
Sgt.

From

Place

Time

The above may be forwarded as now corrected.

(Z)

Censor.

Signature of Addressor or person authorised to telegraph in his name.

\* This line should be erased if not required.

89  
From B-Genl Smith, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ 17/4/18 (Notes of F.M. Outlook)

5th Bde went in night 5-6th. sth of Villers Bretonneux. 7/4/18 19th and 20th Bns attacked German (eastern) half of Hangard wood. Attack was by two coys and one platoon of 20th and one coy and two platoons of 19th.

At 4.55 attack started (a.m.) Got thro wood without difficulty. They were held up for a while by two m.g. and a large number of enemy on edge of wood in 17b. Two officers and seven men all with bayonets got the enemy in flank. One officer crawled up and shot the man at the nearest gun then all nine rushed them. They killed a few and the rest surrendered---three officers and thirty-nine men. These prisoners were sent in. Our party no casualties.

The attack got 200yds beyond eastern edge of wood but the undergrowth and grass was ~~xxx~~ very dense and they cd not get a field of fire. After they had bn out there two hours they were ordred back to a posn half way thro the wood where they had a better chance, but during the day the Brig. decided that it was not worth the casualties the posn ~~xx~~ wd cost to hold and at night the men were withdrawn to our original line between the two halves of the wood---the 1 line of the road.

Estimated enemy left three hundred dead in ~~XXXXXX~~ Hangard wood and abt 150 south of it. We took 3 off. 63 o.r. prisoners and two or three m.g.

Bde came into line night of 5th with all 4 bns. in line. This lasted till 9th. Then 9th Bde came in (see under). On night 5th 20th bn had to fight its way into some of the posts they were supposed to relieve. At one post gave over a lewis gun to Huns thinking they were British, then fought the Huns killed the lot before they cd get the gun back.

On 12th 9th Bde out again and 17th and 18th Bns came in, in that order -N to S. 11th next the French at Hangard. N. boundary brigade was somewhere near Monument 3 of Villers. On night 12th Essex Bn (10th Essex) and French counterattacked retook Hangard and dug in about cemetery and around Copse to N. of Hangard.

From Col Murphy 18th Bn.

He gave me copy on one report and said he would send me a later one. Two reports attached.

Only one man unwounded got back from Cemetery Copse Sgt Bishop. Saw Sgt Bishop and he said ----

In front of Cemetery Copse was a hedge and about 150 of the enemy lying along it under waterproof sheets. They bayoneted or captured ~~the~~ the lot. also bombed and shot at them. Then nn about 150 yds to Copse itself. Lt Frewin with a part went round right of copse, Lt Roye with another party round left. Sgt himself with remainder of the 50, about 11men, went through the copse. nThe copse was full of Huns also just starting up out of sleep. They also had all been under sheets and tarpaulins. Shot and bombed a lot of them, impossible to estimate how many in all for it was dark. Remaindr of Huns ran away. Two m.g. captured in copse and one under the hedge. When the Sgt came out from the copse on the oter side he found the two officers and their parties already waiting for him

*asleep*

This was about 4a.m. The Sgt soon afterwards was detailed to go to the right and meet the French patrol. Went alone as none of the men wd ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ volunteer to go with him. At abt 150 yds struck a post. Called out---Is that you froggy? Men in the post opened fire on him. Saw from their heads that they were Huns. This was abt half way between copse and cemetery. Went back and reported to Mr Frewin. With Frewin and an orderly went back to meet ammunition party in the sunken road. On return journey with these saw flares going up---green flares---from ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ left rear of copse (he probably meant right rear) Frewin thought they were French but the Sgt was sure they were German and he turned out right

Veered to the left and found Mr Maxwell but two hundred yards further on ran into heavy M.G. fire and cd not proceed.

It was about this time, according to Col Murphy that the copse was surrounded. (6.25 a.m.)

Lt Roye was brought in wounded from copse, foot shot off by m.g. fire, but Frewin was with the others there. He also was wounded.

Another party endeavoured to get to the copse and succour the people in it but were unable to ~~an~~ reach it.

Saw the lad aged 19 who shammed dead all day near cross-roads(see Murphy's report).

At 2a.m. morning follg the attack he got up from his furrow to get hom. Walked without knowing it in wrong direction and went about 500 or 600 yds down NML and then jumped into sunken road. Strange to him. Was seized by the arm by a Bosch who called out to his mates and tried to get a spade to hit him with. Had Mills bomb on his pocket but cd not pull the pin out with his one free hand. Wrenched himself loose and ran. Ran back along his tracks towards the poplars(where the cross roads are). From there walked the other way and eventually got into our own lines.

- - - - -

From Brig-Genl Rosenthal.

On 9/4/18 @ 9th Bde took over from 5th and held line till night 12th. Order N to S 34th, 36th, French. On 12th enemy made strong attack and took Hangard. French on immediate right wavered for a time but 36th told them to box on and put out lewis guns to help them and they dug in. That night the French retook the village for the second time.

From Capt Gadd 36th Bn. i/c right flank coy.

At 5.45 a.m. on 12th heavy barrage on Hangard and our own forward area well mixed with smoke shell. Smoke completely prevented view of our men 20 yds in front of posts. 7a.m. shelling more pronounced behind on support posns and 12 noon heavily shelled copse U29a and posts. French S.O.S. at 6.15 a.m. 7a.m. smoke cleared and large numbers enemy seen moving obliquely across our front towards Hangard. They were coming from U18 direction and looked like a divisional parade ---long columns of bunches of men. At one place they were only 200 or 300 yds from our line and so close that our line cd not see them all at once owing to contours. Artillery got on to them and cut hem about severely. Lewis guns and rifles also. Only small parties of thirty or forty seemed to be left for the attack and these were driven off easily. Main attack was on Hangard not on our Bn.

French were driven back to west side of village. At 8 a.m. French came asn and asked for assistance in covering further retirement. There was a French officer and a Sgt interpreter. The Sgt in charge of the nearest platoon replied ~~NNNNX~~ ---No tell him he's got to box on with us. We will give them a cheer". They cheered the French on and rushed out a lewis gun to s. edge of copse in U29a and the French dug in and stopped the German advance. Between 7 and 9.30 that same night French and Essex Bn retook village and out to Cemetery.

*Full*

ACACIA AVENUE

LEETON

15. 8. 33.

Dear Beau,

First allow me to congratulate you

On your excellent voluntes on the war.

Second - Do enquire after your health,

Have you still the bullet in your thigh.

Third - I am enclosing a few notes

on the 9<sup>th</sup> Brigade's effort at Villers-Bretonneux.

I gave the notes to a friend (an A.D.)

to type for me - he has coloured them

a little, so overlook any little

eccentricities. I notice he goes into raptures

over the A.D.'s work.

There is a Sgt Woods here who was with

the 35<sup>th</sup> Battalion in Villers-Bretonneux.

ACACIA AVENUE

LEETON

I should think he would be able to give  
you quite a lot of information in regard  
to the actual fight should you desire it.

This Scrap really was a classic and

I hope you have been able to collect all  
the necessary data.

Cheers and best wishes for the future.

Alan J. Peery.

VILLERS-BRETONEUX.

ANWB ap. 4 1918

Following are a few facts supplied by ex Sgt Wood of the 35th Battalion, in connection with the Villers-Bretoneux Stunt. Sgt Wood was hit during the first day, but has given everything of note he can remember up to the time of his evacuation.

The attached rough sketch, is given in the hope that it may help to illustrate the opening phases of the battle on the first day as described by him.

On the 21st March, the 35th Battalion with the other units of the 9th Brigade, were at Boulogne.

We moved at short notice to Hazebrouk, and after spending two nights there we moved at instant notice to a position behind Arras, where after only a few hours, we were rushed to Doullens.

On the 26th March we moved into Bonney.

On the 27th March we moved into Saily-le-Sec.

On the 28th March we moved into Cachy, and on the 29th March we moved into Villers-Bretoneux.

A hectic week of packing, moving, and general bewilderment.

The place was fairly quiet at this time, and we assumed our positions in the village, in comfort. There were an unusual lot of Hun planes about, but we had no idea of the actual whereabouts of the enemy line.

On April 3rd, heavy shelling commenced.

On Thursday April 4th, at about 2.a.m. we made our first contact with the enemy, when two Huns, very drunk, wandered into our posts and were taken prisoners. At 5.30 a.m. on this morning the Hun laid down his barrage.

I was up with one of the front line posts, of about 40 men, at the time, (The front line then being only a series of these posts, about 30 to 50 yards apart) when the barrage started. It was intense, and he laid it on our front line with a striking degree of accuracy for about two hours. When daylight was advanced, and some of the smoke and dust had cleared a little, we found dense masses of Huns streaming down the road on our left. At this time they were also streaming down the Railway line on our right, in dense formation. One of my chaps calculated them in millions, and it certainly looked like it.

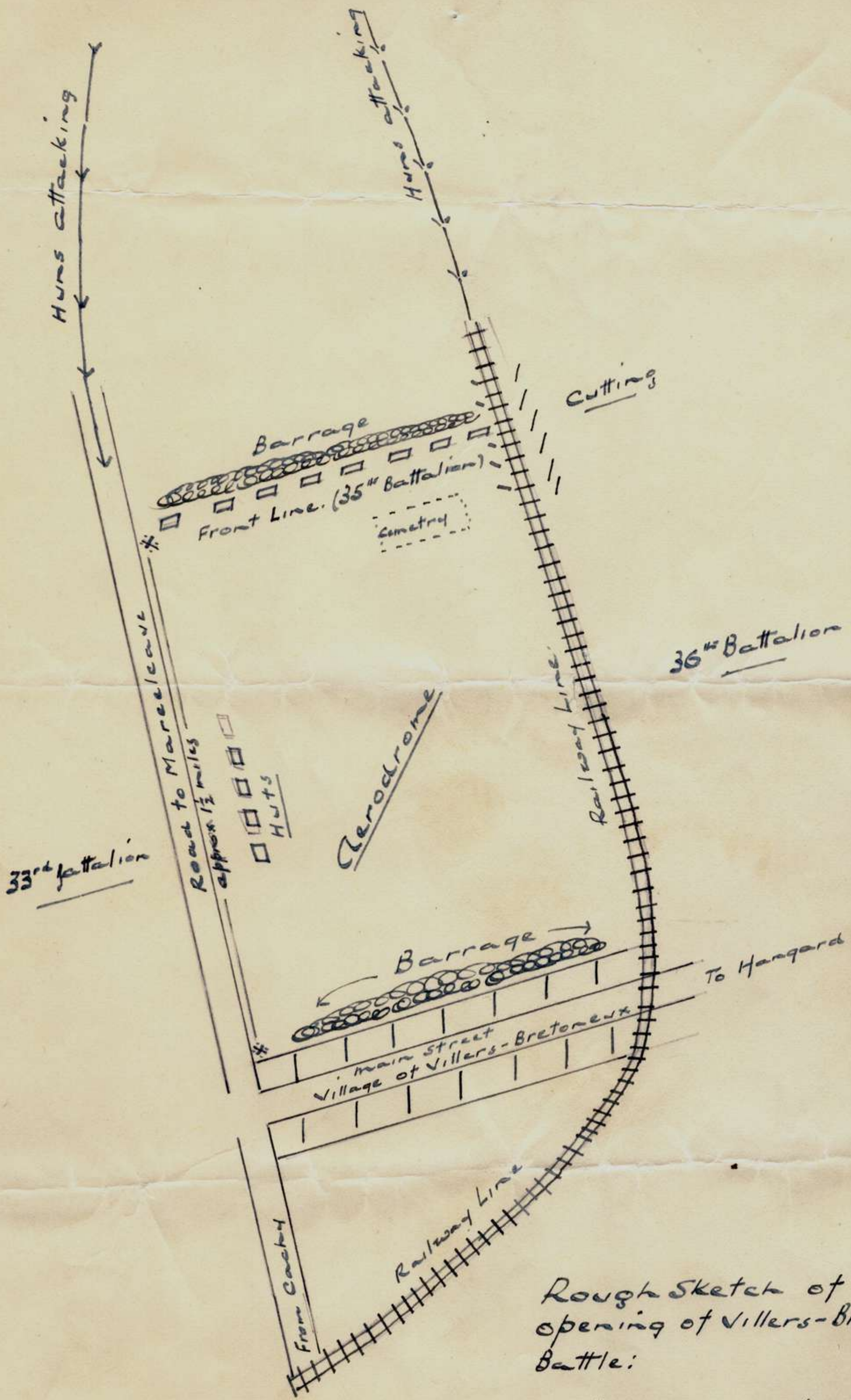
From the left, they cut into the aerodrome behind and amongst us, and were apparently right up to the outskirts of the village, when the right advance along the Railway, were caught by the 36th Battalion and the right company of the 35th, and definitely checked. On the left the Huns swarmed over the 33rd and left section of the 35th, and most of the posts retired to the village.

At about 10 o'clock a.m. a counter attack, by the re-organized 33rd and 35th with some Scots Greys, swept the Hun from the Aerodrome, where some bitter hand to hand fighting took place. It was during a duel with a batch of Huns, around one of the huts, that I was hit, and my interest in the scrap finished. I understand I was carried out with much difficulty, and was for a time in one of the cellars, with Capt Thomas (previously mentioned).

I might mention, that the day before the scrap commenced, a batch of Scots Greys wandered into the village, and finding nobody to report to, attached themselves to us, and fought with great courage alongside our chaps, during the counter attack. They suffered heavily, and I have no doubt that, of those who were with us, very few survived.

Major Connell, (previously mentioned) went right through the whole stunt, and should be able to supply you with valuable information in connection with the later phases of the operation.





Rough sketch of opening of Villers-Bretonneux Battle:

(not drawn to scale)

If the Huns had broken through at Villers-Bretonneux, I think we certainly would have spent the rest of the War in Germany.

Although splendid work was done by every man engaged in this stunt, efforts of General Rosenthal, Lt Colonel Milne, a corporal of Lewis Guns in the 36th Battalion, and numerous other individuals, are among the epics of the super-miracle performed, by keeping the Huns in check here.

A tremendous amount has been said of the 14th and 15th Brigade's fine work later, but organization was complete at the time of their stunt, whereas on April 4th and 5th, there was no organization to speak of, and in cold fact, it was only the wonderful initiative and commonsense, together with the splendid fighting ability displayed by the Australians, that won them the day, as on many occasions they were split up into small batches, and very often without officers.

It always sticks in my memory as the best stunt ever performed by the Australians, as they were all on their own, without artillery support of any kind, and in spite of the tremendous odds, and an enemy with his tail up, through sheer tenacity, and exceptionally heavy casualties, hung on, and even at times assumed the offensive. It is quite certain that had the Hun broken through, he would have had miles of valuable country, and many important centres entirely at his mercy, without apparent opposition.

I was an eye witness to the retreat of the English Troops. They were exceptionally pannicky, and moving back as fast as they could, without any attempt at order.

Our fellows seemed to be just the opposite, and were eager for the impending contact with the Hun, although they had no idea where the enemy were, or what was going to happen. The sight of troops, guns, and all manner of transport moving back in such disorder, seemed to inspire, and often amuse, more than depress them.

The Australians had rather a poor opinion of the English troops at this time, and the impression gathered from what they were now witnessing, was not helpful.

I am just a little hazy after fifteen years, as to the actual dates but no doubt, these will be available to you.

About March 27th, we had instructions to move over to Gentelles during the night. At daylight we saw the retreat in full blast.

That day, the 9th Brigade, moving forward, made contact with the enemy at Hangard Wood.

A couple of days later, both Cachy and Gentelles were heavily shelled. Imperial troops came from everywhere, apparently they had been sheltering in the cellars. They were completely disorganized - no idea where they were, or what to do. On calling at the English Divisional Headquarters, (or where they were supposed to be) in Gentelles, I found they had gone.

Later the Hun attacked Villers-Bretonneux.

How many Divisional Commanders there were controlling the 9th Brigade, during the period from March 28th to April 5th, I have no idea, as we seemed to have nobody to report or refer to.

About this time, the Australians moved across from Hangard to Villers-Bretonneux.

On April 4th, early in the morning, Bois L'Abbe came under severe bombardment. We, in this wood were not aware of the gravity of the situation until the afternoon, when the Ambulance Orderlies informed me, that the Gremans were in Villers-Bretonneux.

(2).

At this time, English troops, guns, ambulances, and all manner of transport, were still streaming back as fast as they could towards Amiens.

A few lost 9th Brigade stragglers from the flanks came wandering in along the road, and as they arrived at the advanced dressing station, they were collected by us. On General Rosenthal being informed, he sent Staff Major Paine, to take charge of them, and lead them back into the scrap in the village.

Thomas and Mailey, the M.O's of the 35th and 33rd Battalions were on the outskirts of the village, with a cellar full of wounded. They sent word back to the 37th Battalion H.Q., for information, but found they were gone. At this stage the Germans were less than 100 yards away from them, as they had ever-run the 33rd and 35th, and our fellows and Huns were all mixed up together in small batches in a glorious hurly-burly of private scraps.

Thomas was quite satisfied, that he was going to stay with the wounded, no matter what happened, and when I saw him a little later, he only complained of having no cigarettes.

It is possibly common knowledge, the business like way the 36th Battalion cut into the advancing battalions of the enemy, along the railway line, and although outnumbered by probably 10 to 1, stopped him, and finally forced him to retreat. I often think the Hun Commanders thought they had been led into a trap there, but had they known the real state of things, there is no doubt they would have probably overwhelmed the shattered remnants of the 9th Brigade in the village, had they as vigorously persisted. Lt Colonel Milne was at his Headquarters at the time, when the C.S.M. came in and reported that they were surrounded. The Second-in-Command asked Milne "What is to be done Sir", who without hesitation replied "Well, when in doubt, attack". This, without question saved the whole situation, as the whole village would have been completely surrounded in a very short time.

It was as Milne described afterwards:- "Like pushing a full hand out of a game of poker, with a pair of twos".

Milne told me afterwards, that during the advance, an Officer dressed in English Uniform, rushed in among the troops of the 36th calling out "Every man for himself". A corporal of Lewis Guns without hesitation, promptly shot him with his revolver, and then turned round and enquired, quite sincerely, "Do you think I did the right thing". When they later examined the body of this man, they found his pack filled with straw, and no identification disc: He was apparently a German.

Sgt W. Wood of the 35th told me, that during the engagement on the old Aerodrome in front, he saw Capt Sayers being escorted back by two Germans, when he took off his Tin Hat, brained one of the Huns with it, knocked down the other one, and made his way back to his own men, in full view of everybody.

Major Connell (now Member for N.S.W. Parliament, Newcastle) second in command of the 35th, when things were extremely hot, ran up and down behind his men singing out "Remember our motto boys", "We bend but do not break".

The Tent Section of the 9th Field Ambulance were situated in Boves during this engagement; When Major Smeal found English Troops deserting the village, he himself went to the English Headquarters and found them gone also. Before long his Section were the only troops in the village. As Boves now seemed in danger of being isolated, it was decided to move to a sounder position along the Amiens Road. Unfortunately this movement had to be carried out during the evacuation of the wounded during the night. But, in spite of this, not one man was left, and no inconvenience caused the wounded in that sector.

(3).

The question of handling the numerous casualties from Villers-Bretoneux was now becoming acute.

Word came down during the afternoon, that the 33rd and 35th R.A.P's were isolated. Capt McLean immediately galloped up on horseback, through the dense barrage in the village, and made necessary arrangements with the Battalion M.O's, to clear the casualties with bearers to a point on the outskirts of the village, where they were to be picked up by a specially organized column of transport that night.

After dark, a train of every available vehicle, horse and motor ambulances, G.S. Waggon, limbers, and two English three ton lorries, (these had been stopped going back and commandeered) went up through the village to the R.A.P's and cleared the whole of the casualties from the line, before daybreak. (They sounded like a column of tanks when they all got going). There is no doubt, that this saved about 75% of the wounded, as it was an extremely difficult, and hopeless task getting the men out by these splendid, and overworked bearers, on account of the heavy shell, and machine gun fire. Many of the casualties had

been lying in cellars and other places for some time then, tended by their wonderful Battalion M.O's. The greatest difficulty

experienced, was the broken glass and debris in the streets, which punctured the tyres of the motor vehicles, in fact, most of them finished the trip with all tyres flat.

After getting them clear of the village, the casualties were transferred through the advanced dressing station to suitable positions off the road about 4 or 5 miles behind Villers-Bretoneux. Haystacks were pulled down, and the men covered over, and made comfortable for the night in charge of orderlies. At daylight all these cases were transferred on to Amiens, and the whole position cleared. As far as I can remember, about 700 casualties were cleared from the village in the abovementioned manner, that night.

As far as we could see, there was not a soul on our right flank, and had the Hun decided to go through there, there is no doubt it would have probably been the end of us all behind Villers-Bretoneux, as it certainly appeared as if he could have walked into Amiens without any trouble.

After the main stunt, order was restored behind the lines, and some system of organization appeared. The Ambulance arrangements certainly improved.

About the middle of April, the 33rd Battalion was drenched with Gas while in Villers-Bretoneux, and suffered heavily. The remnants of the Battalion were brought out in two three ton lorries, and taken to Boves for a bath. For a short time after they came out, two of my Medical Officers, were acting C.O. and Second-in-Command of this Battalion's remains, as they had not one officer to take charge of them, until the transport officer came up and took them over. The Adjutant of the 33rd, a very fine soldier and gentleman, died of the effects of this Gassing.

A few days later we were relieved.

General Rosenthal expected an attack while the relief was going on, but fortunately for us, it did not develop until a few days later.

One of the outstanding impressions gathered during the heavy fighting here, was the wonderful spirit of our fellows, who at no time seemed at all anxious or depressed, and it is a pity one cannot remember all the splendid things done by them.

I am sure, that the success of the stunt here will always be a tribute to their wonderful courage.

Note for  
Chap. XI (in proof)

Amanda  
Deane  
Marara  
21-7-26

Dr. Beau,

Dear Sir,

Memories  
of Villers-Bretonneuse on the 4<sup>th</sup> April  
1918. On the afternoon of the  
4<sup>th</sup> April we had been laying  
down in a wheat field and  
after a considerable time word  
was given that the Germans  
were sending over Pineapple  
gas. I might mention it was  
a cold miserable showery  
afternoon. When all at once  
Colonel Milne saw British  
soldiers retreating followed  
closely by Germans. We were  
on the left of Villers-Bretonneuse  
and the British and Germans  
were almost running. The  
Colonel waited until the  
Germans were coming up the  
rise and then gave the word  
to charge. It was a most.

imposing sight to see the dear old 3<sup>rd</sup> in extended battle order. We soon were in action and immediately the Germans saw they were up against Australians they started to retreat closely followed by us. On arriving at the bottom of the hills we met our first real obstruction a Hawthorn hedge with barbed wire in it and it was there. The Germans put in some good work with machine gun - fire from a chateau. But it would have taken all the machine guns in the world to stop the troops. We then went through an old deserted Apple orchard and again the enemy was busy with machine gun fire from a Haystack, but we were through Villers Bretonneux

(1)

(2)

P.S. If you have any further details I would  
obdy be too pleased to give any  
further information. A.M.

and consolidated about half a  
mile in front of Villers Bretteuil.  
I had charge of a Lewis gun  
section and had a bullet  
put through the barrel of the  
gun whilst firing at the  
enemy on the Haystack, also  
had a wound in the lip from  
part of bullet that struck  
the gun but I carried on and  
stopped until we were relieved.  
on the 6<sup>th</sup> April I may mention  
I got a Lewis gun that had been  
abandoned by the British and  
put in some good work. It  
was the most imposing sight  
to see the men in this charge  
and it proved their superior-  
ity over the enemy. It did  
not seem long before the battle  
was over but whilst it  
lasted it was sharp.  
Hope that this account has  
been able to help a little  
Yours faithfully  
A.M. Madison

Dr Bean

Gascoigne-Roy rang up to correct any possible  
misapprehension that you may have regarding Frewin's death.  
The arrangements were that a carrying party was to follow  
them after a certain time, but as this did not turn up  
Frewin went back to fetch it as well as to get a  
Lewis gun.

AWB

9/7/35



Lieut. Gascoyne Roy, 18th Bn. Hangard Cemetery Copse.

~~Sgt Roy~~ Officers were to there wd be arty support. All we got was TM shells - no to keep the f leads down.

Sgt Gray info not wave.

G. Roy went to left of wood. and pt to rt. <sup>Sgt</sup> Bishop thro middle

Levied up alt 200' from Copse wh cd be seen ahead. with rt on a road - left fl. <sup>some way</sup> south of Hangd Copse.

~~No ferns were met~~  
1st wave we divided into 3 pties.

Level w front of wood <sup>N. of it</sup> was a German post. G. Roy's ptly had passed this on S. before he saw them. There was a cut N + S thro wood.

As soon as we got to this cut a Copl (Mapperson) drew GR's atten to 1 fact it

there were 100's of f behind them. These were rushed from behind at once & surrendered. There were probly 30-40

They were sent back.

We turned back; ~~just~~ some firing was coming from a deep depression in wood. We fired about 5 rounds rapid & rushed the place & found a Company HQ. a few f were k. Place was taken in a few seconds.

Pty then came thro' wood & Jewin & Bishop also appeared. 2nd G.R divided 1 men up - no fire then - &

began to establish three posts. The arty ptly

Scoullar.

(2)

was to bring tools.

While this was being done Lt Col  
Porter was sent out ~~with~~ (He was on  
ret w Sgt Smith) he was looking  
round & saw a German patrol  
of an offr & 2 others. This had been  
sent out to find our position.

"The offr - Hans Herwig - was sent  
back inc of wounded but possibly  
escaped."

We were dug in 4 feet or so. Duncan's  
pty hadn't arrived. L. G. was on ret w  
Pte Price inc. None on left. Frewin  
went back for another L.G. for the left  
- to our fl. After a time as he had at  
termed up G.R. sent Pte Scoullar, &  
moved along bet. He came back &  
found Porter w 1 prisoner & Scoullar  
shot thro' chest (from front). Sent back  
Sc. in c. of ferrous. Shortly after that  
some f. ~~could~~ seen to get out of a 2

close ahead, & line out. They started to  
adv - & we dispersed them immediately. Then  
heavy firing at abt <sup>50-</sup> 50 x range. They were  
using mifs. They now found 1 existence

G. Tots were throwing  
bombs behind us  
thinking we were  
on edge of wood.  
Saw nothing of  
French.

of 1 line. Price on it was engaging  
& mifs to his L.G. - all now concentrated  
on him. While this was going on carrying pt  
came round N. W. of wood & came and was  
direct mfg. fire, & were scattered.

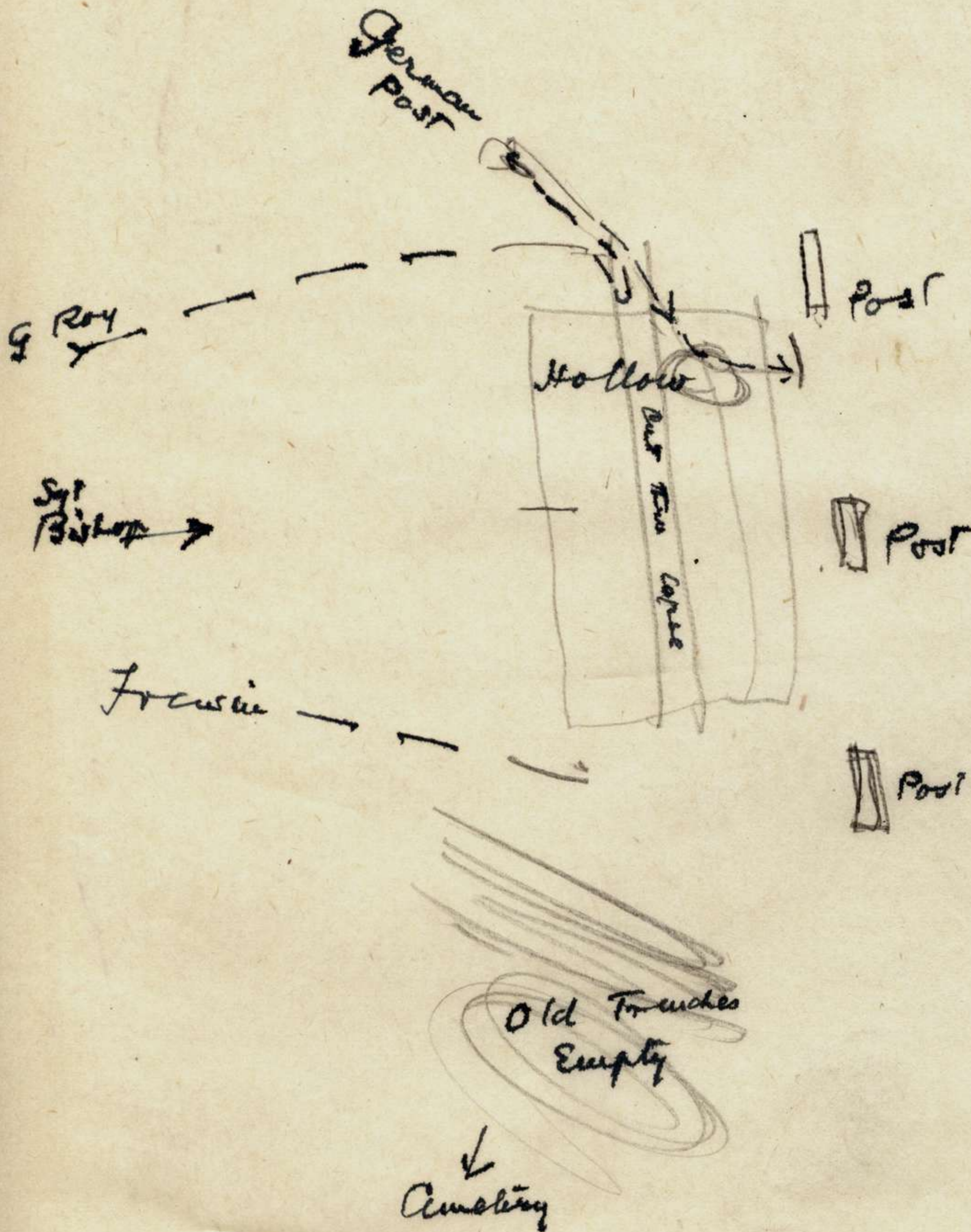
J.R. found no  
fo on rt.  
Empty of  
there - No  
sign of  
French.  
+ sent up no light.  
They were to  
send up a  
light on  
reaching  
posn.

G. Roy dashed out to try & reach  
being them up. Just started to move  
them forward - Saw, Duncan. & when he  
only had 40 x to go, when G.R. was hit.  
They moved on a bit - G.R. had rolled  
into Coy H.Q. Duncan shortly afterwards came  
& called & told J.R. to get on his back  
& carry him back 100 x & put him  
in a shell hole.

Duncan was k. shortly after.  
J.R. was lying out until Maxwell (wandering  
abt) picked him up.

Gascoyne Roy's  
Sketch (June 1935) of  
Cemetery Copse action

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19th

19th Battalion, Hangard Wood.

From Capt. P.V. Storkey. (May 1935)

The officers of the attacking company were told that the wood was lightly held and that on getting through the wood they would find the objective a good road, with a clear field of fire of 400 yards, and

and lay down They lined out/in the open just northeast of the west-

ern wood. Storkey went to sleep, and the opening of the barrage did not wake him. It was evident to everyone that "something was wrong with the barrage." It was very thin and ragged. Storkey did not wake until his men had gone 70 yards or so, when he hurried on after them. It was just daylight and they had some 300 yards of open space to cross before reaching the wood. From somewhere in the wood on the right front came extremely heavy machinegun fire. Capt. Wallack was hit through both knees. Lieut. McDonald was killed.

Before reaching the other side a large part of the company had been hit. But the survivors reached the wood and

climbed through a wire fence into it. It was entirely young growth, mostly about head

high, with taller saplings here and there. As Storkey, now commanding the company, with Lieutenant Lipscombe and their men made their way through it they were caught every now and then by in part of the maze of telephone lines that had been laid through it. As they pressed on, trying to get in

rear of the force - whatever it was - that had been firing on them when in the open, the bush thinned a little/

After working round suddenly they came out on an opening, perhaps seventyfive yards in length.

a clearing, lying to the south and rather behind them; and along the western side of it, in half a dozen short trenches - each apparently a machinegun post - were nearly 100 Germans, the riflemen and half a dozen machine-gun crews, ~~fixing~~ with their backs to Storkey's party, ~~but~~ firing for all they were worth at ~~the~~ such remnants of the company as were still attempting to cross the open, and, possibly at elements of the 20th/<sup>Battalion</sup> which may have been observed by them to the south west.

Storkey had only six men with him, and Lieut. Lipscombe, who just then came up, had only four. ~~Storkey~~ They were all of the company that, after its heavy casualties, could be expected to arrive, but Storkey's mind was instantly made up. Shouting to his men as if the whole battalion was arriving he ~~instantly~~ led an immediate charge upon the rear of the Germans. Before these could recover from their surprise a number were shot through the head at close quarters. ~~at once~~ Most of the rest ~~showing~~ ~~at once~~ put up their hands. They had ~~only~~ only to swing round one of their machineguns and the Australians would have annihilated Storkey's confident manner gave the impression been ~~that~~ that many others were behind, and on the first sign of hesitation to obey his order to climb out of their trenches he shot three with his revolver (which then jammed), and his men rolled ~~in~~ a couple of bombs into the saps and then ducked while they exploded. Thirty Germans were thus killed, and the rest - three officers and 50 men - surrendered and were at once sent to the rear under a small escort.

Storkey and Lipscombe and the handful of men who remained with them then pushed on through the wood ~~xxxxxx~~ in search of their objective and its "good field of fire". ~~But~~ They found a road, but the scrub continued ~~xxxxxxxx~~ to the very foot of chest high ~~xxxxxxxx~~ the gentle slope beyond it, and only ended in the bottom of a valley. Beyond ~~xxxxxx~~ <sup>this</sup> rose a bare knuckle on the crest of which, 400 yards from Storkey and Lipscombe, at least a battalion of Germans could be seen hurriedly assembling along a reserve trench, almost certainly with the intention of counterattacking, if that step should be necessary to restore the position. To dig a trench ~~xxxxxx~~ in the bush, with a field of fire of a few yards and dead <sup>close</sup> ground/ahead would be absurd, and to dig in at the foot of the bare slope would be equally so. After hunting round vainly for some site with any field of fire, Storkey and Lipscombe <sup>a blunder had been made in the plans;</sup> decided that no place there was defensible and ~~they~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ only reasonable course was to withdraw their men to the nearest tenable position - the jumping off line for the attack. Fortunately since seizing the German outpost line they had met no fire worth mentioning, and they only came under moderate fire ~~xxxxxx~~ when withdrawing across the open west of the wood.

~~xx~~ On reporting to the battalion commander that he was back at his starting point, Storkey was ordered immediately to ~~xx~~ <sup>take his company back to the object</sup> ~~xxxxxx~~ live. He answered that the objective was an impossible one and anyway there was very little company to take. He would go if necessary himself; but before he went he would

see the brigadier and make sure that he knew the conditions  
 arrival  
 at the far side of the wood. The ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ at that moment  
 of his fifty prisoners and their officers ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ gave a  
 more pleasant turn to the interview, and Storkey afterwards  
 had his interview with Brig. Gen Smith, who appreciated  
 his information.<sup>x</sup>

<sup>x</sup> helping to  
 Storkey who spent the afternoon in going forward and bringing in  
 numerous of the wounded men of his company from the open in front of  
 the Jumling Off Line, was awarded the Victoria Cross



9259.

10 June 1935.

Captain R.A.P. Hamilton, M.C.,  
"Kiama",  
82, Consett Street,  
Concord West, N.S.W.

Dear Captain Hamilton,

I have been writing for the Official History the account of the fighting on 7 April 1918 at Hangard Wood, but am much troubled for lack of any sufficient record. I am particularly anxious to find out anything I can about the work of Lieutenant Coolahan, who was wounded and taken prisoner and died in enemy hands on May 3, and should be most grateful for notes of any recollections that you could give me.

The chapter will shortly be finished, and I should be greatly obliged if you could find time to write to me at an early date. If you prefer, it might be best to arrange a meeting at my office.

Yours faithfully,

C.E.W. Bean

Official Historian.

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H.N.

5th Mily. Coy at Hangard Wood.

82 Bonsett St.,  
Concord West.

31<sup>st</sup> July 1935.

Capt. C. E. W. Bean  
Official Historian,  
Victoria Barracks, N.S.W

Dear Capt. Bean,

With reference to your No 9259  
of 10<sup>th</sup> June, enquiring for recollections of the late  
Lieut. Coolahan and fighting round Hangard  
Wood, I am sorry that I have been unable  
to supply the information earlier.

My personal recollection of that stunt are  
rather hazy as I collected a "blighty" in  
the head on the 15<sup>th</sup> May.

However, through courtesy of Capt. R. B. Ramage  
of the Aust. Tank Corps, who is hon. secretary of the  
2<sup>nd</sup> Aust. M.G. Bn. Association and who got in  
touch with some of the members of Mr Coolahan's  
gun crew at that time, I am enclosing extracts  
from their replies, giving the salient features of  
their information.

Should you require to enlarge on these  
or to obtain any other statements. The  
addresses of Heath & Ryan, mentioned in the statements

are respectively Afforestation Camp, San James, N.S.W. and 90 Burdena Station Trangie. N.S.W.

I might add that during rather disconnected actions, such as the Mangara wood stunt, our sections were usually detailed, one to each battalion of the brigade, to work under the C.O. of that Bn. This was found to be the most effective way of using the Mickers Guns and under such circumstances the O.C. of the M.G. Coy. had little to do with the tactical movement of the guns.

Steve Coolahan was one of my best officers and I would like to discount Cpl. Noble's remarks about his inexperience as on all previous occasions his handling of his gun was all that could be desired.

The 5<sup>th</sup> M.G. Coy has not enjoyed much publicity in any published history of the A.I.F. actions and in fairness to its ex-members I would like to see it mentioned more frequently. A better set of soldiers didn't exist in the A.I.F. Their "esprit de corps" is evidenced by their muster on Anzac Day and at their reunions. Their V.C. and other decorations speak for themselves. They invariably did their job and did it well. Usually they

were dotted along the line in small gun crews whose actions were not spectacular but effective and were not brought to the notice of Bn. or Brigade commanders many a brave piece of work going unrewarded

Any information you would like on any action can be supplied by either Capt R B Ramage (23 Macquarie Place, BW 5050) who was orderly room corporal in the 5<sup>th</sup> A.M.G. Coy, or myself U.M. 7492.

Again expressing sorrow for the delay in supply you with the desired information which I hope will be of service to you, and hoping you can see your way clear to give the 5<sup>th</sup> Coy some of the mention it deserves

yours faithfully,

R Hamilton

late O.C. 5<sup>th</sup> A.M.G. Coy.

Enclosures.

2. Statements by Corp. J Coy  
& Corp. J Lisle.

Hillers Bret,  
Turline Street,  
Katoomba

TELEPHONE  
K 332

26<sup>th</sup> April 1935

Captain C. E. N. Bean  
Victoria Barracks  
Paddington N. S. W.

Dear Captain Bean,

In reply to your  
letter of the 17<sup>th</sup> April 1935 No. 9203

I certainly took the reserve company  
in at 'Hillers Bret' and to make

certain of this at yesterday's march  
I had a check up with R. S. M.

Horwood who I understand made  
the statement that Doig was in charge.

I might mention that I am still holding  
the map of this sector with our positions  
marked thereon.

Yours faithfully  
Richard Ladd

11 1935.

Official  
1918.

Charge of  
First order,

by in. I  
light on

rian.

9203.

17 April 1935.

**Captain R. Gadd,  
"Wedonga",  
Coomonderry Street,  
Katoomba, N.S.W.**

Dear Captain Gadd,

I am finishing the chapter of the Official History dealing with Villers-Bretonneux, 4 April 1918. According to one account, Captain Doig was in charge of the reserve company when Colonel Milne gave his first order, but the records indicate that you took the company in. I should be grateful if you could help me with any light on this little tangle.

Yours faithfully,

C.E.W. Bean

Official Historian.

by advancing money to park or playground trustees who were short of money with which to improve their grounds. The question at issue was whether commercial sport or sport played by the lovers of it should have the official encouragement of the State. After discussion, it was agreed that the Hon. Secretary should write to the Minister putting forward these considerations and urging that the interests of amateur sport should be safeguarded.

382. Representative on Committee of Youth Movements for Leadership Training. In conformity with a request from the Secretary of this Committee, Miss Muriel Swain was appointed as representative of the Movement, with Mr. E.W. Herbert as second delegate if necessary.

The meeting terminated at 6.30 p.m.

A.W. Green, Esq.,  
5 Julia Street,  
Ashfield, N.S.W.

Hon. Secretary,  
Metropolitan Hockey Association,  
c/o Sydney Press Club,  
5 Hamilton Street,  
Sydney.

Mrs. L.M. Middleton,  
Hon. Secretary,  
The N.S.W. Federation of Mothers'  
Clubs for Infants Schools,  
"Leithcote",  
Hanover Street, ROZELLE, NSW.

Miss Rita Jones,  
Hon. Secretary,  
NSW Women's Baseball Association,  
21 Wollongong Road,  
ARNCLIFFE, NSW.

Miss M. Hayward,  
Hon. Secretary,  
NSW Women's Basket Ball Association,  
51 Redmyre Road,  
STRATHFIELD, NSW.

Miss D. Dobbin,  
Hon. Secretary,  
Naturalists Society of N.S.W.  
Box 2178 LL, G.P.O.,  
SYDNEY.

P. Keddy, Esq.,  
Hon. Secretary,  
Maroubra Junction Progress Assn.,  
99 Gale Road, MAROUBRA, NSW.

Hon. General Secretary,  
Amateur Athletic Association  
of N.S.Wales,  
c/o Y.M.C.A.,  
325 Pitt Street,  
Sydney.

Hon. Secretary,  
Federation of Parents & Citizens  
Associations of N.S.Wales,  
c/o A.S. Gerrand, Esq.,  
Assembly Hall,  
Wynyard Square, SYDNEY.

Secretary,  
National Roads & Motorists  
Association,  
3 Spring Street, SYDNEY.

Miss Lorna M. Ellis,  
Hon. Secretary,  
NSW Women's Rowing Association,  
c/o Messrs. Copeman, Lamont,  
& Keesing,  
70-72 King Street,  
SYDNEY.

Miss Pearl M. Giffin,  
778 Pacific Highway,  
GORDON, N.S.W.

Hon. Secretary,  
Wild Life Preservation Society,  
Science House,  
Gloucester Street, SYDNEY.

Miss Ethel Mallarky,  
Teachers' Training College,  
University Grounds,  
NEWTOWN, N.S.W.



Statement by Pte. (later Cpl.) J. Coy.

I was a member of a Gun team under Lieut. Coolahan at Hangard Wood, the other members being Cpl. Noble, Ptes. Heath, Ryan, Meadows and Callaghan. Capt. ? Porter of C. Company of the 20th. Battalion advised Coolahan at Midnight on April 6/7th. that his company was to attack Hangard Wood at 4.30. in the morning and that Mr. Coolahan with one gun was to advance in rear of the attacking wave. Should the attack be successful he was to select a position, consolidate the position and be in a position to deal with any counter attack. The general impression was that the attack was sure to fail as the Infantry had to advance over 800 yards of open country without any cover with the German holding Hangard Wood in force. We were to have 30 minutes barrage from the French 75s, which however did not come off. Instead Fritz opened with Machine Guns, of which he appeared to have unlimited numbers, just as we hopped off. Mr. Coolahan instructed Cpl. Noble to endeavor to bring the gun up to a position about 50 yards from the edge of the Wood and after instructing that the gun was to advance in rear of the Infantry attack went forward in company with the runner Callaghan, advising that he would select a gun position and send the runner back to bring the gun team up. We reached the laying up position and remained there.

As daylight increased we saw that the Infantry had failed to reach the objective and had apparently been wiped out for, with the exception of walking wounded and others lying about, there was no sign of the 20th. Bn. while the Fritz were clearly visible on the edge of the Wood while on a road at the rear large bodies of enemy could be seen making their way forward to reinforce. Then Callaghan appeared to come from the back of the enemy at the right of the Wood and Noble went forward to meet him. Callaghan reported that Mr. Coolahan was lying out badly wounded and had sent him back to bring Noble up to him. Noble later came back wounded and advised us that Callaghan had been killed while he himself was wounded. He then ordered us to get back to our jumping off position and remount the gun in anticipation of a counter attack.

Pte. Heath then took charge and on reaching our old position reported to Major McDonald (Bluey) who advised that the action taken was the only one possible as C. Company had been wiped out and the attack a failure. Later Major McDonald sent over word that Mr. Coolahan had been reported as having been sent out wounded. We came to the conclusion that some of the 20th. had picked him up. That night a small party of C. Company under a L/Cpl. reached our lines. They had reached an enemy outpost and held on all day and apparently were the only ones to get anywhere that day. They were attacked several times during the day but managed to hold the Fritz off with bombs and rifle fire. Each time the enemy attacked we managed to get in some good shooting at them.

Lieut. J. Carmichael came up and took charge of the gun during the evening of the 7th.

During early May, while at Esbart I think, word came back that Mr. Coolahan was missing and an inquiry was held at Battalion Hd. Qrs. when evidence was taken by Mr. Dunningham, I think) from Heath, Ryan and myself. Later we were advised that Mr. Coolahan had died of wounds while a prisoner of war and had been buried at Valenciennes.

No. 322 Cpl. T.J. Coy.  
Enlisted 18. 3.1916.  
Machine Gun Corps reinforcements.

Now residing at Bendick Murrell N.S.W.

Statement by Cpl. James NOBLE.

I was the Corporal in charge of a gun of the 5th. Machine Gun Company (2nd. M.G.Bn.) under Lieut. S. Coolahan from April 5th. 1918 to April 7th. 1918 during th Hangard Wood operations.

On the night of the 6th. April Lieut. Coolahan ordered me to go out with him to investigate a haystack which was on our right. On the way I discovered two young Germans in a shell hole who where later handed over to Section Hd. Qrs.

On the morning of the 7th. Coolahan instructed me to detail a Runner as he desired to investigate a position on the edge of the Wood.

I detailed a man by the name of Callegan or some similar name.

On reaching within about 50 yards of the objective Mr. Coolahan was wounded and instructed Callegan to bring me up to him.. On reaching Mr. Coolahan I was under the impression that he was dead. I was then wounded through the right wrist and in company with Callegan made my way back to the gun position. Almost immediately Callegan was killed.

On reaching the gun I was bandaged by Pte. T. Heath and reported to the C.C.S.

Hangard Wood was a hornets nest andwe could see the Germans massing for two days. I reported this on many occasions to Mr. Coolahan.

In my opinion Coolahan was very game but inexperienced and his rashness was responsible for him losing his life.

Cpl. J. Noble.

enlisted 30. 5.1915.

embarked 6. 6.1915. H.M.A.T. Kanowna. with 2nd. Reinforcements. 20th.Bn

Now residing 17 Gunnedah Street,  
Sunshine Victoria.

9251.

4 June 1925.

Captain V.B. Portman, M.C.,  
Arkell Road,  
Mount Roskill,  
Auckland, New Zealand.

Dear Captain Portman,

I have been writing for the Official History the account of the fighting on 7 April 1918 at Hangard Wood, but am much troubled for lack of any sufficient record. I see that you were the only officer eventually left, and would be grateful notes of any recollections that you could give me.

Major

Was it ~~Major~~ McDonald's company that attacked? If you could tell me when and how the other officers were hit, it would also be of much assistance. I understand that Coolahan of the 5th Machine Gun Company was wounded and captured. Did you see him?

The chapter will shortly be finished, and I should be greatly obliged if you could find time to write to me at an early date.

Yours faithfully,

Official Historian.

W.E.C. Bean

consolidate, 852-5, 856, 857, gains second objective, 859-61, consolidates line by system of posts, 866-7, Ger. c/attack fails, 868, casualties, 876n, Ger. account, 872; Battles of Passchendaele, 901, 934, to raid Celtic Wood, 9 Oct., 885, raid fails, 899-900, relieves 4 Divn., 24 Oct., 932, ~~12 Oct.~~ 26 Oct. attack, ~~total casualties, 1917, 684n; see also 1st 1st, 2nd, 3rd Inf. Bdes. (below)~~

--2ND DIVISION, 19n, 22n, 60, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67, 75n, 78, 96, 128n, 256, 414, 416, 417, 562, 731, 734, 735, 947; Gen. Smyth commands, 24-5; on Somme: to capture Butte de Warlencourt, 26; 5 Divn. relieves, Jan., 27n; Gallibrand commands, 24 Feb., 72; its role, 25 Feb., 77; to attack Malt Tr., 89; ~~establishes~~ task in Loupart Wood attack, 98, establishes posts on Loupart bastion, 105; approaches R.I line, 2 Mar., 112; extends line, 112; to attack R.I line, 115; Smyth resumes command, 4 Mar., 115n; ~~making~~ advances beyond R.I line, 12-13 Mar., 117; patrols encircle Grevillers and approach Bapaume, 13-17 Mar., 119; during Ger. retreat to Hindenburg Line, 17 Mar., ~~132~~ 132; advance held up, by m.g.'s, 152; proposal for offensive by, overruled, 123, 133; forms advanced guard, 17 Mar., 152, composition, 152; progress of Gallibrand's column, 161, 162, 163, 164, 166n, 173, ~~174-7~~, occupies Vaulx-Vraucourt, 18 Mar., 174, 175, Favreuil, Sapignies, Beugnatre, ~~180-181~~ German dispositions, 17-18 Mar., 175, ~~180-181~~ attacks Noreuil and Lagnicourt, 20 Mar., 178-88, 7 Bde. relieves, 20-21 Mar., 188; 4 Divn. relieves, 208; relieves 4 Divn., 13 Apr., 360; Germans break through its posts near Noreuil, 15 Apr., 364-5, 374, 376, 379-81, 382, 384-7, 390-2, Ger. account, 398-9, casualties, 393n; Second ~~Battle~~ Bullecourt: plans, 413, 420-5, 428, arty. allotted to, 414n, 2nd Bde. attached to, 414, 430, preparations, 415, 419, 420, 425-6, 429-30, additional m.g.'s, 422, 1st Bde. attached to, 430, the attack, 3 May, 433-46, 453, difficulties in maintaining supplies, 473-6, 5 and 7 Bdes. withdraw, 480-1, 6 Bde. holds on, 482-6, 487, 1 Bde. relieves 6 Bde., 487, maintains advanced sector, 507, 5 Div. relieves, 8-9 ~~1800~~ May, 527, casualties, 543n; in

Capt. G. E. W. Bean.

Victoria Barracks.

Sydney.

Dear Capt. Bean,

HARRIFORD WOOD.

The following is an extract from my diary for the period mentioned in yours of June 4th:

5<sup>th</sup> Op. 18. At Blangy Ironville. 10. am. ordered to reconnoitre ground towards Bouilloy, and to arrange for relief of elements of an English Bde: on the high ground above Blangy. Arranged relief and Coy: moved 2. pm to effect it. Stopped by rain at 2.15 pm, until overtaken by Bn: 3 pm; then whole unit moved forward via GERTEUILLES to relieve in the front line. Relieved ESSEX REGT and elements of another Bde: astride the centre of HARRIFORD WOOD. in a few hot holes on a frontage of about 800 yds. Relief complete 2. am. A light corner with Hangard village half a mile away held by 2 Coy: (MORCAN TANKS) with the French somewhere on his right again. on my left 19<sup>th</sup> BN in a few very detached posts. 2.30. am. Lt. COULAHAM, M.G. Coy. found a prisoner just outside Support H.Q. Courban a big raw boned fellow surprised himself and the Hun by colliding in the dark. Grabbed the Jerry and threw him into the bivvy like a bundle of skins.

The position of posts was obscure, not having been known by the Tommies. At day break a party of Huns appeared on the edge of their half of the Bois opposite our hot hole system, but were dispersed, leaving us a prisoner, wounded. 2 pm. Ordered to see C.O at 3 pm. Enemy aeroplanes thick above. Passed word that prisoners stated CORBIE would be in their hands that night, and also that they were concentrating against Bois de Hangard. Got preliminary orders for an attack to establish a line from east of the Bois to a position in the village of Hangard. Returned and prepared for the attack. The men were very tired after their recent rapid movements, and their conditions in shallow wet chalk holes very cramped and cold.

7<sup>th</sup> At 2.15 am received word that "6 Coy: and one Coy: 19<sup>th</sup> were to do the attack, supported on either flank by a detached platoon from the rear with supporting objectives. My flank support in charge of Treacher. zero hour 4.55 am. Attacked at that hour, and cleaned up our front without much loss. In objectives were enveloped by M.G. fire from the slope forward of Hangard village, and right flank wiped out by counter attack coming up a re-entrant under cover of the M.G. fire. No support from Treacher in evidence. Maxwell of 19<sup>th</sup> came over to say he had no support on his left flank, and was retiring. A charet on my right front seemed unoccupied, and the enemy not yet worked in that for, I sent Sgt Clifton and a section to reconnoitre and hold it, as offering the only cover possible on that flank. Then tried to dig in with trenching tools - no other tools. Clifton occupied charet. M.G. opened from our right flank rear, and began to cut us up. Corp: Paul located it, and I sent him with two men to go back and work round behind it with rifle grenades. Shortly after it ceased fire, but I did not see the Corp: from Hangard, now got on to us heavily, and enemy troops surrounded the charet, cutting it off, and started to work in behind us. I had to withdraw, which we did in good order, clearing our wounded with us. Sgt Clifton put up a serop for some time after we withdrew. Before leaving the objective, we were able to wipe out with L. G.'s two attempts to concentrate in shallow depression along our front. Saw things straight in an old position,

Handwritten notes in red ink on the left margin, including "19th BN" and "M.G. fire".

And, having been wounded in chest and arm, handed over to Lt. Elliott  
and reported to Major Macdonald at support H. P. and later Co. Bn. a  
Bde. on the way to C.C.S. " was hard chalk

though, and trenching took no part in it. I think probably  
Coulahan was responsible for their holding up that  
counter against us for an hour or more.

This is all that my written records show. As for my  
memory, however, Bn. K.D. was in some gun pits about a mile  
behind the front line in the direction of Gentelles, with a company (B.A.)  
in reserve. Major Macdonald I think was second in command of Bn.  
and was in a chalk pit with his old Coy: "J" at the Southern edge  
of the wood on the Hayward-Cashy road. I enclose a snap of this  
chalk pit, which shows that the Bois was only very light scrub.  
Most of that we fought through was about the same, excepting  
the right flank where it was little more than stubble, and  
once daylight came, wide open to M.G. on the higher ground to  
the S.E. My Company was "C" Company, and I had with me  
Lt. Blyth, and, I think, Lt. Thomas, but I am not certain of him.  
Coulahan I did not see after leaving Bn. K.D., where I arranged  
for him to give me all the cover <sup>he could</sup> on the weak right flank,  
where there was a gap of nearly half a mile ~~between~~ between  
me and Morgan Jones in Hayward Village. As you will see from  
the Map (HARBONNIERES. 1:70,000) this gap was low lying from my  
position, and not fully visible at any point held by me  
during the action. At Bn. K.D. it was arranged that a  
platoon should endeavour to move up this depression and  
cover the flank, and at the same time "B" Coy should provide  
what cover they could. Subsequently I heard that this  
platoon either got no order, or got them too late. At any event  
they never moved. All arrangements were made verbally  
at Bn. K.D. with the then C.O., a temporary one whose name  
I have no memory of — excepting the line of zero hour, and  
the detail of supporting platoon. As I remember it I  
think I had only about 70/80 bayonets in "C" and hopped over  
with about 120, so must have got some from either A or  
D — probably the latter. Casualties were very heavy, but I can't  
say, exactly, as I remained in the scrub on the enemy side  
for some time peering at the Huns as they came up through the  
scrub. When I finally moved over to our posts, most of our  
wounded had been cleared. I had lost a bit of blood by then  
and was not at my keenest, so cannot recall much detail  
of the wounded. In withdrawing I had our wounded  
moved out in the open on the Northern edge of the wood, and  
along that edge to our positions under cover of the guns in  
the 19th Bn. posts. On our way back we found Lt. Blyth  
badly wounded in the stomach with several M.G. bullets. Sgt.  
Sharks and myself carried him out to our stretcher bearers.  
Elliott later told me he had died, I think. An old hand, and  
one of the best I had the luck to fight alongside of.

Our objective was never definitely fixed, but I was  
told we were to secure the wood, and the artillery would shell the  
dip beyond the wood. I actually stopped on a disused road  
on the Eastern edge of the wood overlooking the hollow beyond.

No I did not see Coulahan again, but I should say that  
he was the sort that would push up ahead himself, when he  
found my support missing. The first counter attack on my  
right flank was about 6 am, but for some reason

Green Dr. M. P. ...  
... ..

And, having been ...  
was not pushed back, and gave me time to swing  
back the centre, while we tried to dig in a few  
posts facing the flank. The ground was hard chalk  
though, and trenching took no good on it. I think probably  
Coulahan was responsible for them holding up that  
counter against us for an hour or more.

I hope this will give you what you require.

Yours sincerely,  
H. B. Postman.

*[Faint, mostly illegible handwritten text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

P.S. Pardon the several  
times we have  
and writing paper  
a luxury.

*[Red handwritten notes:]*  
Dr. Beam  
Lt. Blyth  
died of wounds  
on 8 April 1918

4.9.1.

Blyth had the left flank in this stunt; I had the centre, and Thomas or a sergeant had the right flank, which, on account of shortage of men, and the thin nature of the scrub on that flank reached only to about seventy yards inside the edge of the wood.

I judge Blyth was wounded about 5.15 by a machine gun which we afterwards found about thirty yards in front of him, and half way to the objective. It was in a sunken tank or sidling, and had been put out by a bomb, with its crew. German casualties in the wood were light - it was only held by half a dozen posts, each of two guns. But his counter attacks were expensive, especially from the front where we caught them in the open with L.G.s and saw them fall in heaps.



107 RIR 436.

Relief of Prisoner of War by 107 RIR 24<sup>th</sup> D.

"The enemy lay directly under our nose, shot at every one of us <sup>ways</sup> that dared to show himself out of his hole."  
Schauen

107 Times at Hanyars . 6.30 Capt of White saddle

Apr 15 Bann. Bann.

Capt Thomas his remains of his I Ba to his HQ

2 hrs prep by arty  
5 am att - no class info

---

133 RIR.

7 Apr. 5.10 Times of Eng. att.

In cpa 10th & series at another to re.

6.15 3rd Eng. att. 11 by road at 100<sup>th</sup> feet.

---

Attack by 5th Bde was supported by  
Lt J. S. Coolahan's 3 guns firing on  
German entering S. of wood.  
Coolahan was wd in fight.

12/3/49

9884

## AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

TELEPHONES:

B 404 &amp; 405

*"They gave their lives. For that public gift they received a praise which never ages and a tomb most glorious—not so much the tomb in which they lie, but that in which their fame survives, to be remembered for ever when occasion comes for word or deed. . . ."*

CANBERRA.

F.C.T.

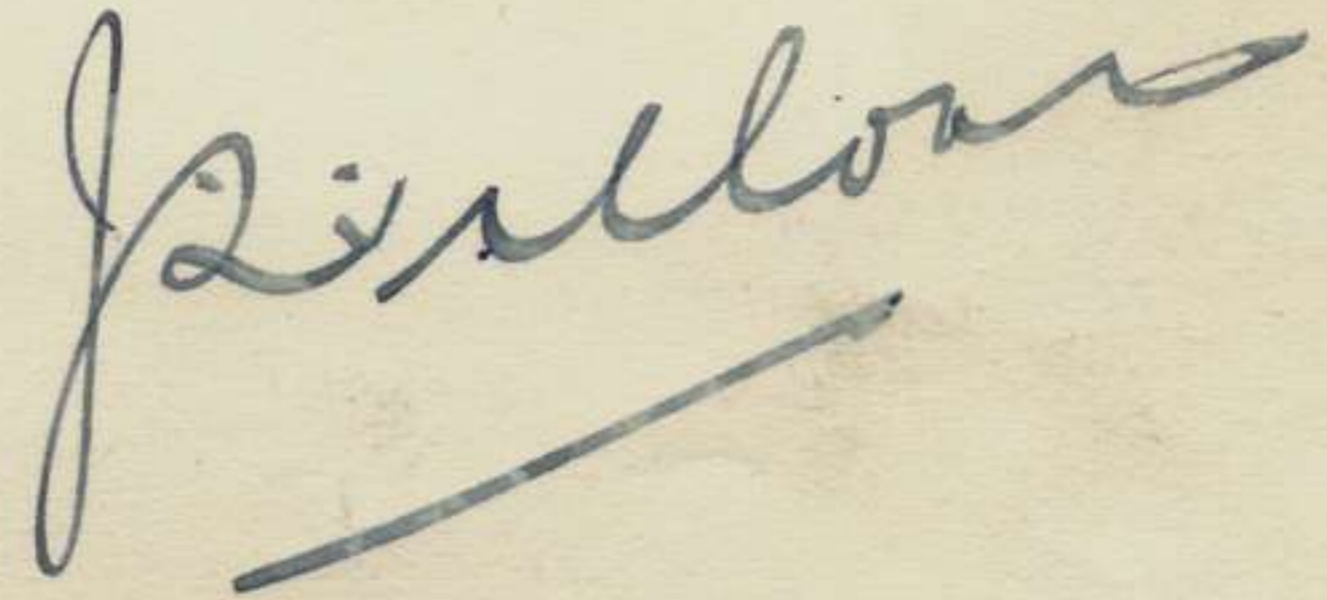
19th August, 1936.

Dear Mr. Bazley,

With reference to your letter of the above number, dated 18th August, I am sending herewith a photostat copy of the table showing Australian losses between 21st March and 5th April, 1918, for which you have asked.

Mr. Keage will be going to Melbourne on Monday next and we have asked him while there to call at Base Records and obtain the figures which you require for the period up to 7th May. He prepared the previous table and it will probably be more satisfactory in every way if he obtains the further particulars you require.

Yours sincerely,



88  
251  
225  
16  
580

Mr. A. W. Bazley,  
c/- Official Historian,  
Victoria Barracks,  
PADDINGTON. N.S.W.

12/3/49

9881

# AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

CANBERRA

P.C.T.

19th August, 1950

"They give their lives for that public good they received a private which never goes and a thing must be done - not to make the good as much less but that in such cases there is to be responsibility for each other occasion comes for word or deed"

TELEPHONE: B 404 & 405

Dear Mr. Bailey,

With reference to your letter of the above number, dated 18th August, I am enclosing herewith a photostat copy of the table showing Australian losses between 21st March and 5th April, 1918, for which you have asked.

Mr. Keage will be going to the War Office on Monday next and we have asked him while there to call at Base Records and obtain the figures which I prepared for the period up to 7th May. He prepared the table and it will probably be more satisfactory in every way if he obtains the further particulars you require.

Handwritten numbers: 23, 45, 302, 605, 128, 1409, 1309

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature: J. A. W. Bailey

Handwritten initials: J. A. W. B.

Handwritten numbers: 280, 12, 222, 221, 88

Mr. A. W. Bailey,  
c/- Official Historian,  
Victoria Barracks,  
PADDINGTON, N.S.W.

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES ALONG THE FRONT OF THE GERMAN OFFENSIVE DURING

THE PERIOD 21st MARCH to 5th APRIL, 1918.

Date.	2nd Aust. Divsn.			3rd Aust. Divsn.			4th Aust. Divn.			5th Aust. Divn.			Corps Troops.			2nd Tunnelling Coy.			2nd Squadron A.F.C.																	
	Officers			O R			Officers			O R			Officers			O R			Officers			O R														
	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.									
1918																																				
Mar. 21																			1	3																
" 22																																				
" 23																		1																		
" 24															1																					
" 25												2						1 1																		
" 26									1 1			2 7						1 1			1															
" 27						2			3			25 126			18 16			1			2															
" 28						2 12			69 254 1			5 14			88 232			1			2 3 3															
" 29						8			10 40			2 3			18 49			1 2																		
" 30						6 16			70 311 1			3 2			22 40																					
" 31									22 32			1 2			13 29			1			2 3															
Apr. 1						3			8 16			2 1			12 40 1			1 1																		
" 2									6 34			1			11 23						2 1															
" 3									16 46			1 2			33 90						1															
" 4						4			7 21 3			83 382 9			2			7 8			4 10			1												
" 5						6			4 9			62 140 38			23 45 6			302 805 128 1 4			22 79			1												
	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	22 68 3			349 1279 49			38 76 6			533 1451 129 1 5			48 123			-			1 4 3			5 13 1	-	-	-	1 3	-	1

GRAND TOTAL:-

Officers.

K.	W.	P.
63	153	12

O.R.

K.	W.	P.
936	2879	179



TELEPHONE:  
CENTRAL 4780.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE,

No. ....

MELBOURNE, S.C.1. 9th September 1936

Dear Bazley,

Attached hereto is a list of casualties in the Australian Divisions and Corps Troops during the period 6th April to 7th May. It has been compiled on lines similar to that already supplied by the Australian War Memorial for the period March 21st to April 5th 1918. Killed includes died of wounds and died of Gas Poisoning, and wounded includes gassed and shell shock wounds.

I understand that Mr. Keage was to have prepared this list but owing to his illness Mr. Heyes asked me to run it out for you. I am sending a copy of the list to Mr. Heyes for his information.

Yours sincerely,

A.W. Bazley Esq.,  
Victoria Barracks,  
PADDINGTON. N.S.W.

P.S. I have handed over biographical detail cards to Base Records and have explained to the O.I.C. in writing and verbally the system I have followed in their preparation.



TELEPHONE Nos.  
F 2597.  
F 2598.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS  
"AUSWARMUSE."

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO  
"THE DIRECTOR."

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

NO. ....

*"They gave their lives. For that public gift they received a praise which never ages and a tomb most glorious—not so much the tomb in which they lie, but that in which their fame survives, to be remembered for ever when occasion comes for word or deed. . . ."*

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL,

POST OFFICE BOX 214 D.

EXHIBITION BUILDINGS, MELBOURNE.

12th June, 1935.

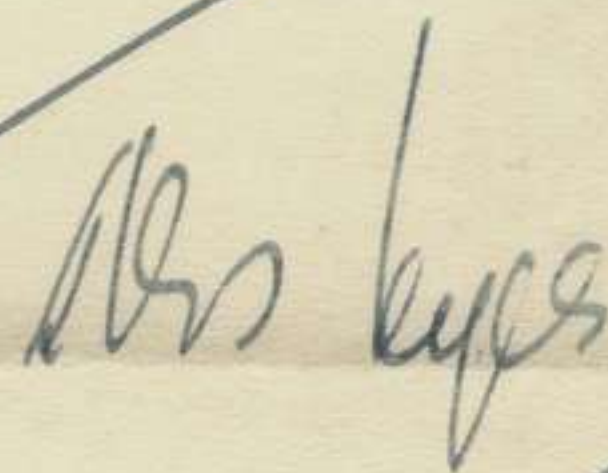
Dear Mr. Bazley,

Further to my letter of 27th May relative to the Australian casualties along the front of the German offensive during the period 21st March to 5th April, 1918, a statement compiled by Mr. Keage and checked by Mr. McAllan, furnishing the desired particulars, is now enclosed. As in the case of the figures for the Third Battle of Ypres which were compiled on a previous occasion for a purpose connected with the History, the figures for the present statement have been extracted from the Third Echelon records in Mr. Withers's possession. By referring to a report on the subject of the casualties of the Third Battle of Ypres attached to our letter of 15th March, 1933, you will find that after careful consideration we arrived at the conclusion that the statistics compiled by the staff of 3rd Echelon must be accepted as being reliable. As advised in the report mentioned, the 3rd Echelon figures, although compiled mainly from Part II orders, were corrected from time to time as information came to hand in hospital reports, etc., care apparently being exercised to avoid duplication.

In compiling the statement, Mr. Keage has worked on the basis that as soon as an Australian unit arrived in the Third or Fifth Army areas, it was within the radius of the German offensive, and any casualties occurring subsequently have been included.

We are sending you only a summary of the information which has been extracted. The statement was, of course, compiled on a battalion or unit basis, and should detailed figures be required for purposes of checking, we shall be pleased to send them to you.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. A. W. Bazley,  
c/o Official Historian,  
Victoria Barracks,  
PADDINGTON. N.S.WALES.

TELEPHONE Nos.  
F 2597.  
F 2598.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS  
"AUSWARMUSE."

COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO  
"THE DIRECTOR."

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE  
NO. 12/3/49.

"They gave their lives. For that public gift they received a praise which never ages and a tomb most glorious—not so much the tomb in which they lie, but that in which their fame survives, to be remembered for ever when occasion comes for word or deed. . . ."

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL,

POST OFFICE BOX 214 D.

EXHIBITION BUILDINGS, MELBOURNE.

4th July, 1935.

Dear Mr. Bazley,

When speaking to Dr. Bean during my recent visit to Sydney about the casualties suffered by the Australians along the front of the German offensive during the period 21st March to 5th April, 1918, he asked me to let him have the detailed figures for the battalions of the 4th, 9th, 12th and 13th Brigades for 5th April. A statement furnishing this information is enclosed. It will be noted that in his enthusiasm Mr. Keage has, in addition to the Brigades mentioned by Dr. Bean, supplied the casualties of the 10th and 11th Brigades.

Dr. Bean raised the question of the possibility of casualties occurring, say, on 5th April being included, owing to delay in reporting them or to other causes, in the 3rd Echelon figures for 6th April. Doubtless casualties were occasionally recorded as occurring on the day following that on which they were suffered, but it is thought that these would be few in number. That there is justification for this assumption will be apparent from the abovementioned statement, in which we have included the figures for the 6th in addition to those for 5th April. These figures make it clear that with the possible exception of the 45th and 48th Battalions there was no serious overlap on the 6th as the casualties occurring on that date do not exceed the normal casualties of units not actively engaged. The figures for the 45th and 48th Battalions for 6th April are respectively fourteen killed and four wounded and two killed and thirteen missing. The figures are rather unusual for units which, although in the line for part of the time, did not report any fighting, and it is likely that some of these casualties may have occurred on 5th April.

Dr. Bean also enquired if wounded who remained on duty were included in the 3rd Echelon figures. Mr. Withers informs me that it was the practice to include these men, and he assures me that we can rely on the 3rd Echelon figures covering all casualties whether these were evacuated or not.

When speaking to you in Sydney recently, you requested that two further copies of the statement attached to my letter of 12th June should be furnished to you. These additional copies are now enclosed herewith.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. A. W. Bazley,  
c/o Official Historian,  
Victoria Barracks,  
PADDINGTON. N.S.WALES.

*A. W. Bazley*



5th April

6th April.

	Officers			Privates			Officers			Privates		
	R.	W.	M.	R.	W.	M.	R.	W.	M.	R.	W.	M.
3rd Battalion				8	20					2	1	
34 <sup>th</sup>				2	8					2	7	
35 <sup>th</sup>	1	2		23	9	38				5	4	
36 <sup>th</sup>	1			6	4		1			6	4	
37 <sup>th</sup>		2		1	9						2	
38 <sup>th</sup>				1	5							
39 <sup>th</sup>		1		3	31			1		5	9	
40 <sup>th</sup>	1	2			19							
41 <sup>st</sup>				1	1					1	4	
42 <sup>nd</sup>	1	1		4	2			1		1	1	
43 <sup>rd</sup>				1	6			1		2	2	
44 <sup>th</sup>				3	2			1			2	
45 <sup>th</sup>					10					1	3	
46 <sup>th</sup>		2			4							
47 <sup>th</sup>		1		3	8						1	
48 <sup>th</sup>				9	28					1	4	
49 <sup>th</sup>	5	6	1	31	134	20				44	4	
50 <sup>th</sup>	1	2		20	44			5		4	6	
51 <sup>st</sup>	2	6	3	60	86	82		1		2	11	1
52 <sup>nd</sup>	1	5		25	58	10				2		13
53 <sup>rd</sup>	7	3		61	118	1	1			2		
54 <sup>th</sup>				44	46					1		
55 <sup>th</sup>	1	2		10	23					2	8	
56 <sup>th</sup>	1	4	2	34	102	6				6		



AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES ALONG THE FRONT OF THE GERMAN OFFENSIVE DURING  
THE PERIOD 21st MARCH to 5th APRIL, 1918.

Date.	2nd Aust. Divsn.			3rd Aust. Divsn.			4th Aust. Divsn.			5th Aust. Divsn.			Corps Troops.			2nd Tunnelling Coy.			2nd Squadron A.F.C.								
	Officers			O R			Officers			O R			Officers			O R			Officers			O R					
	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.	K.	W.	P.
1918																											
Mar. 21																			1	3							
" 22																									1		
" 23																		1									
" 24															1												
" 25												2						1 1									
" 26							1	1		2	7					1	1	1									
" 27				2		3 24		3		25 126			18 16			1		2									
" 28				2	12		69 254 1	5 14		88 232						1	2	3 3									
" 29					8		10 40	2 3		18 49			1 2														
" 30				6	16		70 311 1	3 2		22 40					4												
" 31							22 32	1 2		13 29		1	2 3														
Apr. 1				3			8 16	2 1		12 40 1			1 1														
" 2							6 34		1	11 23			5					2 1									
" 3							16 46		1 2	33 90			3					1									
" 4				4			7 21 3		2	7 8			4 10			1		2									
" 5				6			4 9		23 45 6	302 805 128 1 4			22 79					1									
	-	-	-	- 10 -			22 68 3		38 76 6	533 1451 129 1 5 -			48 123 -			1 4 3		5 13 1				- - -			1 3 -	1	

GRAND TOTAL:-

Officers.

K.      W.      P.  
63    153    12

O.R.

K.      W.      P.  
936   2879   179