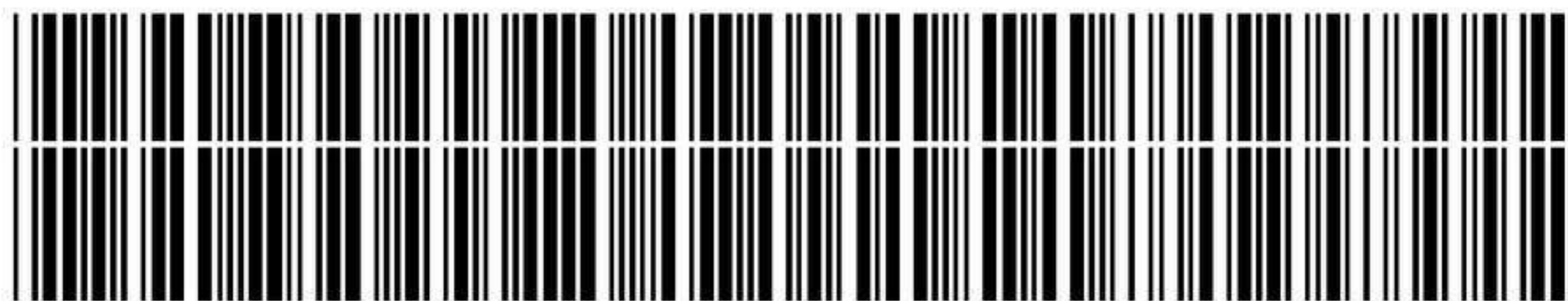


AWM38
Official History,
1914-18 War: Records of C E W Bean,
Official Historian.

Diaries and Notebooks

Item number: 3DRL606/91/1

Title: Diary, October 1917
Includes references to Broodseinde.



AWM38-3DRL606/91/1

DIARY

Oct 18 -

(incl Oct 4)

No 91

~~D 41~~

Original

DIARY NO. 91.

AWM38

30RL 606 ITEM 91 [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.

OPEN

C. E. W. BEAN.

Oct 16 Day fine, cold.
Oct. 17. Day fine till 3. Night wet warmer
Oct 18 Day fine. Night cold fairly clear.

1 as we came up to 1 Troops in 1 sunken road another plane - a German - came over very low - not 1000 feet I wd say. We stood still by a shell hole as he passed - his gun started going popping but not at us. He was so low that we sd certainly have seen his arm if he had waved it.

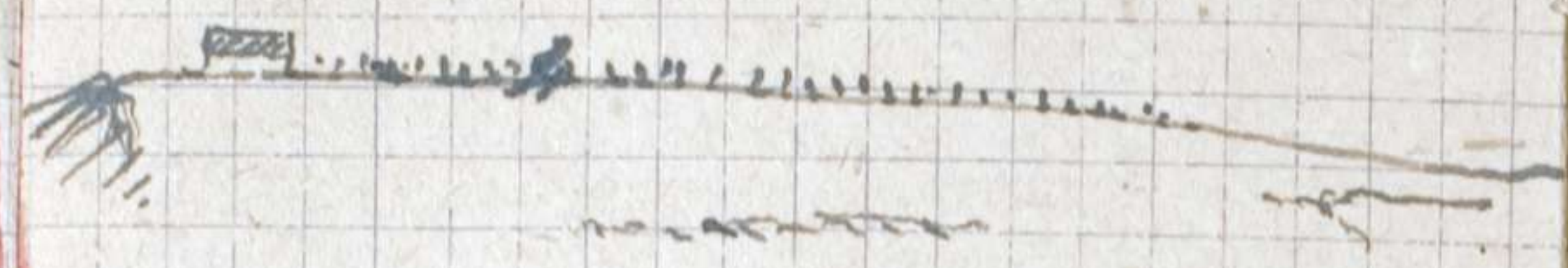
A little later ^(when we were on 1 Ridge) another plane, low down - but he was ours. He came over half a dozen times or so before we left, lower than any, wheeling when he got a little past our ~~past~~ ridge top.

About when we were at 1 crater I saw another going low over ^{the} S of the Rly cutting. He dropped a white star flare. (I wondered if he were ours - but I believe he was German. Our patrols following 1 German who retired to afternoon sd that he saw them, dropped a white star, & brought arty on to them).

(Written Oct 18 from here) 2
Walk with Wilkins on
Oct. 15 (cont) 91

I crossed the railway just where it enters the cutting - scrambled on ^{the} ~~past~~ the battered hedge & across towards 1 top of Broodseinde Ridge. The enemy was shelling 1 cutting w big stuff shrapnel just before & after, so we didnt wait there but hurried towards the S.S.E.

The ground was a rounded hilltop, & the actual summit was abt 200 yards away to our left - a hedge



running along / skyline
 itself. The Germans
 started shelling over
 with whizzbangs as
 we went. We'd see a
 great thing like a notice
 board over the hill - I
 think it was a barn, ~~it~~
 called Assyria, on the
 next hill top really - wh
 had been the objective of
 our 2 attacks ^{South of} the Rly
 on Oct 9 & Oct 12. I
 dare say they could see
 our movement from there.
 We dodged from shell hole
 to shell hole & ~~was~~ made

DH

4

forward a bit as the
shelling seemed to be
about 200 yds - 100 yds
behind us. We lay up
under a bank & 3
Shrapnel shells burst over
1 hedge in front at same
moment & the stuff
whizzed overhead (but
too distant I dare say
to do more than tear your
clothes) A man dodged
along behind 1 hedge, showing
to us he had a line there,
& into another hole - "like
a rabbit" as Watkins
said. A rabbit at same

4a

* Passing two Officers of
the 2nd Divn lying beside
one another - within 6 yards
both dead.

D4

5
time, curiously enough, I
was watching a rabbit
wh had come over 1 rly
& was hesitating on 1 edge
of 1 bank - disturbed by
1 shells, I suppose.

We made our way
South along 1 crest *
which at once became
perfectly flat. The soil
was sandy, with shallow
shellholes; & a little
to in rear of us wandered
what looked like a battered
communication trench -
or support 2.

The summit here
was entirely exposed to 1.



D+1

6

Germans, + to our own
 hinter land. On 1 hill
 opposite us (the Keiberg)

the big barn (Assyria)
 stood out exceed ingly clear.
 Behind that, I think it
 was, on the further hill,
 whos obscured by a
 shadow at 1 time, were
 some red bldgs (I think
 this is where they were -
 Moorleede). Down 1
 valley to 1 right of us,
 most clearly visible
 on a spur of our

D+

own ridge running down
towards hills, & covered
with dark blue grey
trees, was ~~the~~ silhouetted
the dark grey tower &
spire of Bevelaere church.

We could not get off
the skyline — the summit
was so flat — & so I
only thing was to walk
down 1 length of it
southwards. A short sharp
shower came on from
the country behind us
& turned the shellholes
very greasy — I noticed

D41

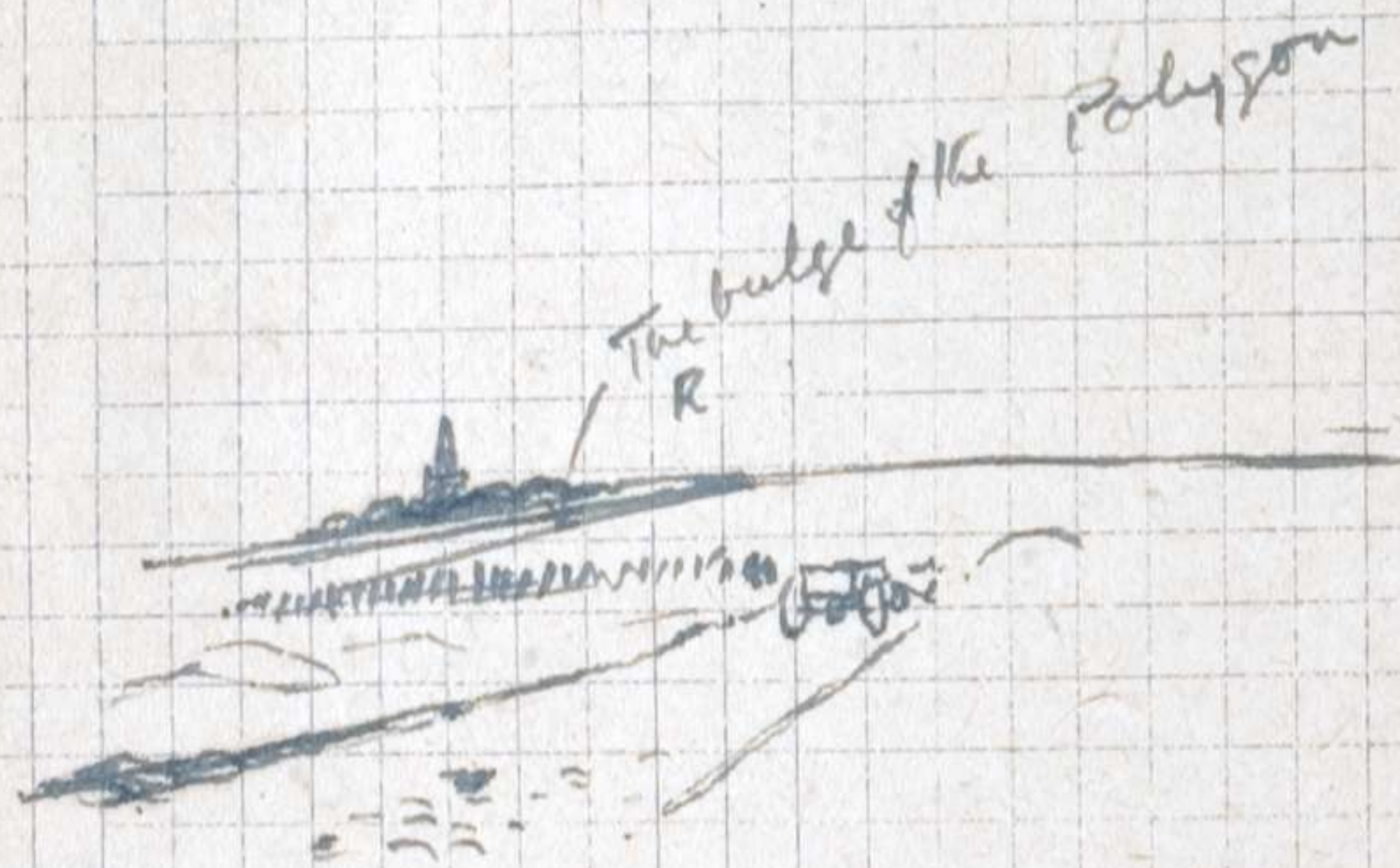
It they were greasy in
 spite of sandy nature
 of soil. It passed -
 we made along lines of
 a trench, roughly - there
 were two of our men lying
 dead in it. A road
 was crossing our front,
 coming from Zonnebeke
 up a hill; on the
 top, near some tumbled
 rubbish which had once
 been a house of Broodseinde,
~~where~~ it ran ^{squag} across
 another road - the road
 running down a whole
 crest. We set out to this

D+1

road. Someone, ^{day before} had told
 us this was a very
 well registered corner.

There had been dug
 on the left hand side of
 Crest road, looking South, a
 narrow trench. The road
 was paved, but had been
 battered about & shell
 having / scorched untidy
 look (rather like a mouse
 nest) of much-shelled
 places. On / right of
 road was a cemetery of
 many little wooden
 crosses, certainly German
 soldiers graves, a good

9a



10

DH

deal stilled also.
he walked down 1
road for some distance —
it was absolutely bleak &
bare — running ~~from~~
kerb ~~to~~ and kerb straight
down 1 crest, with the
open landscape on each
side of it. The stump of one
building made a ~~possible~~ observation post.
Some way down on
1 right was a hummock
of yellow sand. We
crossed to 1 right hand side;
a light four wheeled wagon
lay deserted on 1 road.
Further down, near the
hummock, was a field

* A little down / hill was
a cement dugout, very low in /
earth for these places;
I changed my films &
I took a photo of it with
Wilkins in / doorway.

D41

gun or light howitzer, on
the right side of road,
pointing towards us.
On / left of road, behind
it, was a ledge. I
wondered if this was the
ledge where had been the
trench occupied by /
German Officers & NCOs who
fought so well near / crater
on Oct 4. *

We found a well
cut trench in front of
hummock, with a man
in it. We went well to /
near a / hummock, &
then up to it - so as not

D.H.

to give 1 place away



It had a bit of a hollow
 scooped in 1 back of it -
 & a small trench behind,
 on 1 seat of this hollow
 were several spots of blood,
 & more on the floor
 of 1 trench - so I judged
 someone had been hit
 there. [Beutler told me, on
 our getting back, that he had been
 going up there that
 afternoon but Hum (5'10" tall,
 5'10" diam.) had run up & put
 him off, saying it was of

Probably Daisy
& think Copse.

(Probably like Copse
& Celtic
(C. 251632)

D.H. his observers had been ¹⁴
hit there.

We got out / map &
had a look round from
here for abt 5 minutes.
There were two woods
down the hill - one on
/ left a few hundred yds
down / slope which I took
for Daisy wood, & one
on / right, nearer up,
wh might be Daisy wood.
They were just / straight
standing stumps as after
a forest fire in Canada

11/11/11

11/11

D.H.

There was timber, rather
thicker, down towards /
bottom of valley, to the right
(China wood, I imagine).

The opposite slope was
fairly green & only half
shell shattered. Two of the
Eastern houses of Paschendale
stood up, very clearly,
red in / evening sun, along
/ main ridge to our ^{left} ~~right~~
& slightly in front.

The Bulge of ridge
E of Polygon wood, which
7th & 21st Divs took on
Oct 4 - stood out very
clearly on our right.

? Galtia?
C. B. B.
25. 8. 32

DH

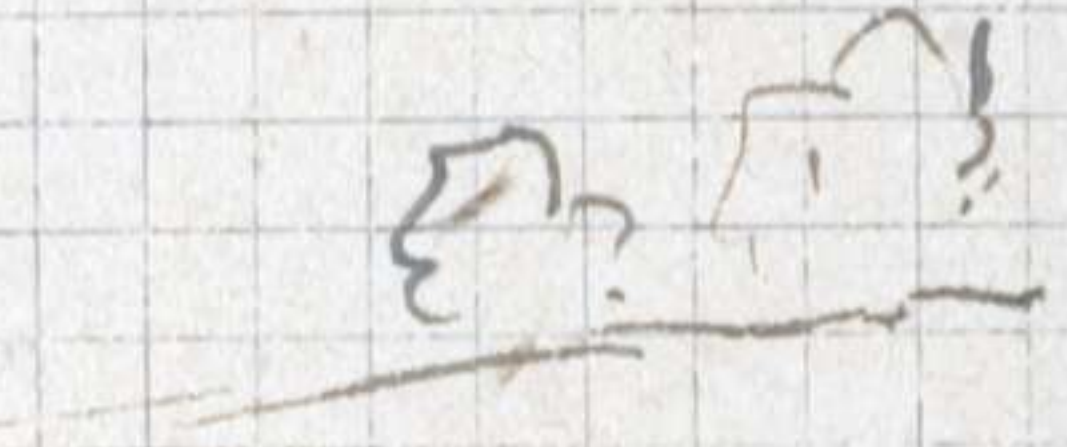
The top of ridge had very much narrowed here. South of this point it became almost a sort of blunt knife edge.

The Butte



A well trodden path in the firm sand ran round ~~the~~ in rear of it. This had been

This wd be.
Looking S
along the
summit of
rear (W)
slope of the
Broods Ridge
C. W. D.
25 June 1932



Dit

duckboarded right up to + into 1 dry well cut sandy trench on top of 1 hill near the O.P.

~~at~~ One or two short lengths of trench behind 1 crest, ~~had to~~ perhaps, Boyds down 1 slope, had been covered over with brown, red, or yellow tarpaulin - rather a good camouflage - + men seemed to be living fairly dry under them. They were 60 Bn. We took some photos of them. They told us they thought there

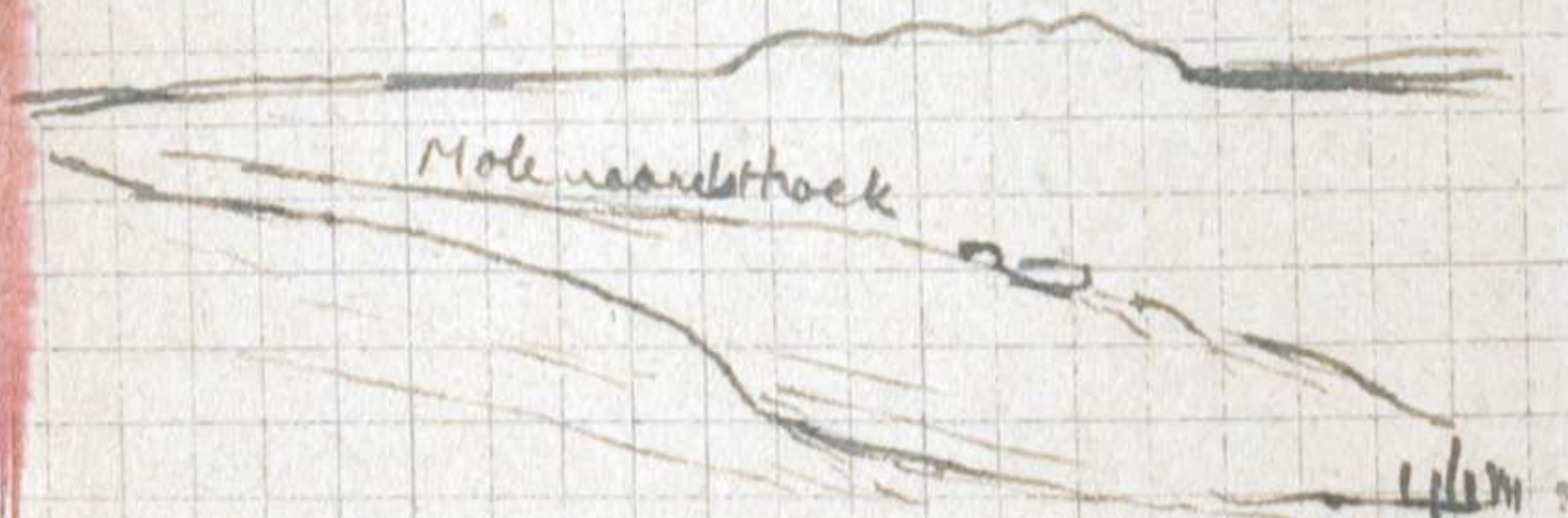
D+1
 was a crater on top of
 ridge a little further
 S - the next point in
 crest, in fact.

There ~~was~~ were men
 moving up the slope
 towards this point - carrying
 pt as we afterwards found.
 We tried to find an
 entrance from the North
 but there was only a
 blind trench. Then we
 went to the Southern side
 & there was a trench
 leading over the top into
 a steep yellow sand
 crater - about 1 size

D+ of a hole made by
 1 explosion of a dump.
 Two shells were periodically
 bursting against the ~~the~~
 outer side of hill just
 apt this crater so
 my photo was very
 hurried, but Wilkins took
 his time. I expect they
 were really shelling some
 common trench. We probly
 went down 1 slope of 1
 hill here.



19a



D41

20

There were some men
 dug into / backside of place.
 [This was 1 crater where
 we + HQs of 1 German
 front line, where they
~~had~~ made their stand
 on Oct 4]

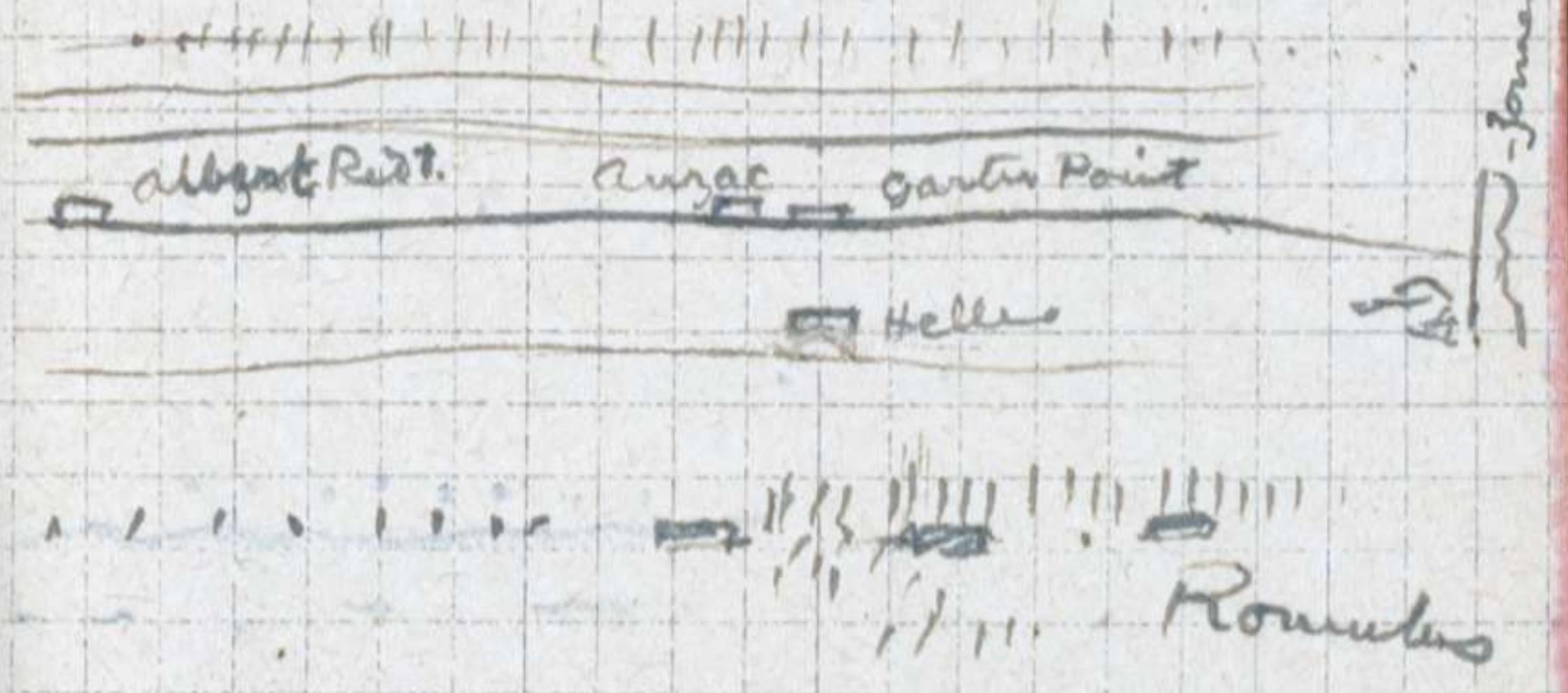
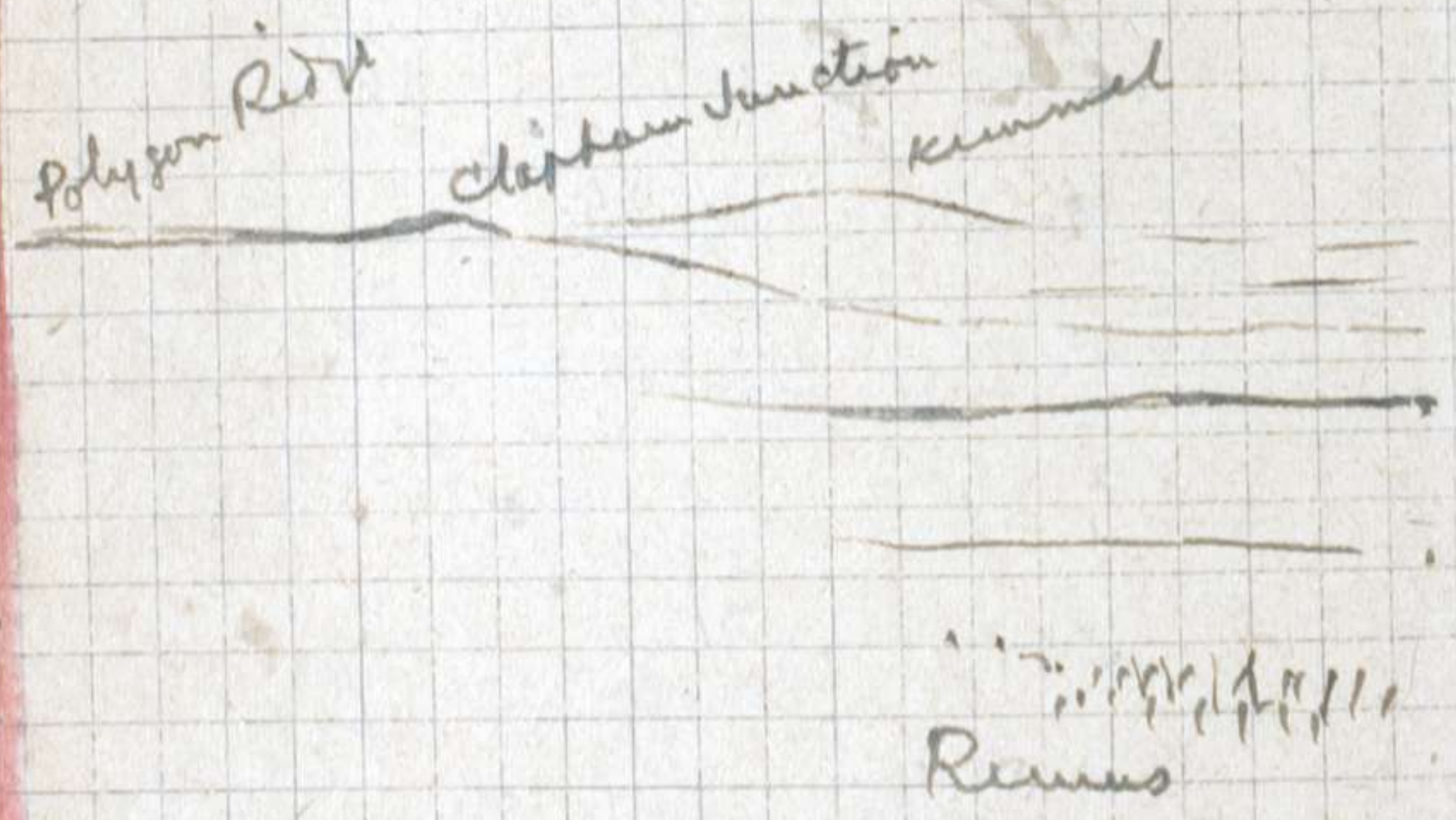
We went off
 down 1 hill

striking between Romulus
 + Remus woods. About
 30 yds down we noticed
 1 steep slope of hill forming
 a bank under which the
 first wave (8 Bn) dug in on
 Oct 4, for shelter from
 shell, beyond its objective.

10000

D.H.

From top of the hill
we could see every ridge to
Ypres - the haze prevented
me from seeing Ypres towers
clearly - but I have no doubt
one could easily have made
them out amongst the trees.



D+1

we went down 1 hill W--
 at first we thought Retaliation
 Farm was ~~the~~ ^{one of the} place the
~~between~~ three concrete
 shelters by Romulus Wood.
 (But afterwards I came
 to 1 conclusion that it was
 a prominent broken down
 farm building wh we
 passed later on our left).
 Nearing the valley bottom,
 between 1 two woods, I
 knew we ought to come
 across signs of farmers
 who had been k. in the
 attack of Oct 4 when
 our men met them in

Now and land.

Sure snow, on top of
1 shell holes, between 1
two woods, was a
clump of grey clothes.
There was another nearer
to Remus - another
nearer still to it.

We had no more plates
(Wilkins had ^{just} used his
last in photographing a
carrying party taking
iron cookstoves pickets
up 1 duckboards
onto 1 ridge). ~~but~~
I thought this must be
too far back for 1
front line of Germans. So

Jth

we went on, over
 the little trickle bordered
 by willow stumps which
 ran in the bottom of a
 valley (a good deal
 battered in its course
 by shell holes) & up
 the beginning of further
 slope towards the
 spur (it is little more
 than a swelling) S. of
 Zonnebeke, where our
 line had started from
 the day. About 100
 yds from where our
 line would be we
 found them. ~~It~~

They lay in about every
3rd or 4th shell hole.
The first we saw was a
boy - a rather good looking
boy - with ^{rather} close cropped
reddish hair, lying on
his back in the water,
of a shell hole - his
head & trunk out of
water, ^{his} chest twisted
round & his tunic &
white shirt torn open.
& one hand half extended
half closed almost as
if he slept. Only his
eyes - wh were dull
sunken white - had

changed since he died.
His rifle was by him but no
bayonet fixed. A couple
of shell holes away was
an officer or under-officer
with three silver stripes
on his ~~cuff~~ cuff, head
thrown back, a slight
moustache carefully
trimmed & curled upwards.
Next him a man, who
had been carrying bombs
I fancy, for he had no
rifle. A loaf of brown bread
was by him. He wore
putties, not boots as
they generally do. All of

They were carried very full packs. Their shoulder straps had the Number 212.

We tore off one mans shoulder strap, & took a couple of helmets, covered with their paper sandbag material, & a cap which was inside one of them, for the ~~assault~~ station A.W.R.S.

Up the hill 100 yards away, amongst the remains of wire which was certainly mostly German, we came

D41

on our front line.

The tape from which the attack had started was still lying out along the paradises.

I pulled up a couple of lengths of it & stuffed them into 1 helmet.

In one small shellhole lay 3 or 4 of our men - one of them blown in half just at the waist so it was hard to say without looking longer than we liked how many men there were. They were 1st Bn.

We strode up from here
 towards the Butte in
 Polygon Wood, which
 I very much wanted
 to see. We passed,
 in the bottom of some
 valley thro' wh. we
 had come, the ruins

~~of a farm house~~



in a bog of filthy black
 mud. Above it
 on a knuckle of the
 main ridge were some

D+ blockhouses which
 must be on / outskirts
 of Molenaarsdijk. I
 have fancied since the
 Farm must have been
 Retaliation Farm - but I
 think it is too far South
 for that.

We climbed up / Knuckle
 spur to / left, Wilkins
 thought the best way to
 the Polygon Ridge - I had
 suggested the Amzac Ridge
 further back as I thought
 we should run into a
 barrage up near /
 front. Near one of the

D4

dirty yellow blockhouses,
 wh we being shelled occasionally
 (wh we inhabited for we
 saw a man there) we
 turned South across the
 black Swamp on our right
 in a corner between a
 knuckle of a Polygon.
 There was German barbed
 wire across this stream
 - if one can call it so -
 the filthy black shells
 were quite difficult to
 cross. (The German wire
 must have belonged to the
 Staden - Zornbeke line; it
 was thick stuff with a barb
 every inch ~~thick~~)

We climbed up the

D-1

short remaining slope to
 ridge & walked towards
 Polygon mound - not more
 than 500 yds away. A trench
 was on our right, a good
 deal ^{but not totally} battered with ^{rusty} wire in
 front of it, well cut. Behind
 it in 3 ^{little} shell holes, very
 close together, Wilkins suddenly
 spotted 3 trench mortars.



D⁴¹

One had its green canvas hood on, the other two were just they had finished firing. The shells were hardly large enough to hide a man even if he kept low — made by our 6 in how. with ~~106~~ 106 fuze.

I shd say. Beside the mortars were their boxes of tools, complete but I lost detail in one case, the little hammer, the lanyard, the oil can, fresh springs etc. and even the Record book & Explanation book (like a cheap manufacturers catalogue).

We took as much as we cd carry — hammer, sights,



1) H oil can, lanyard -
 stuffed them into 1
 helmets & went on to
 Butte. Just NE of it
 we crossed a road
 of black grey mud (the
 soil up here was ^{light} yellowish
 - grey sand - not such
 pure sand as at Broodseinde.)

On the E side of the
 Butte was a shallow
 tray in / earth, very
 muddy, from which
 the Butte had clearly
 originally been dug.
 There were two or three
 dugout entrances low

D+1

down on the East side; a Tommy was standing near one — we had seen 4 shells burst there & cloud the foot of Butte with white-grey smoke & steam only an hour before — and another Tommy was emptying a tin of some sort of slops out in the mud depression I have just spoken of. An ^{irregular} string of Tommies was coming up towards the Butte from the Polygon wood (low stumps of young trees) & one of them

Dx1

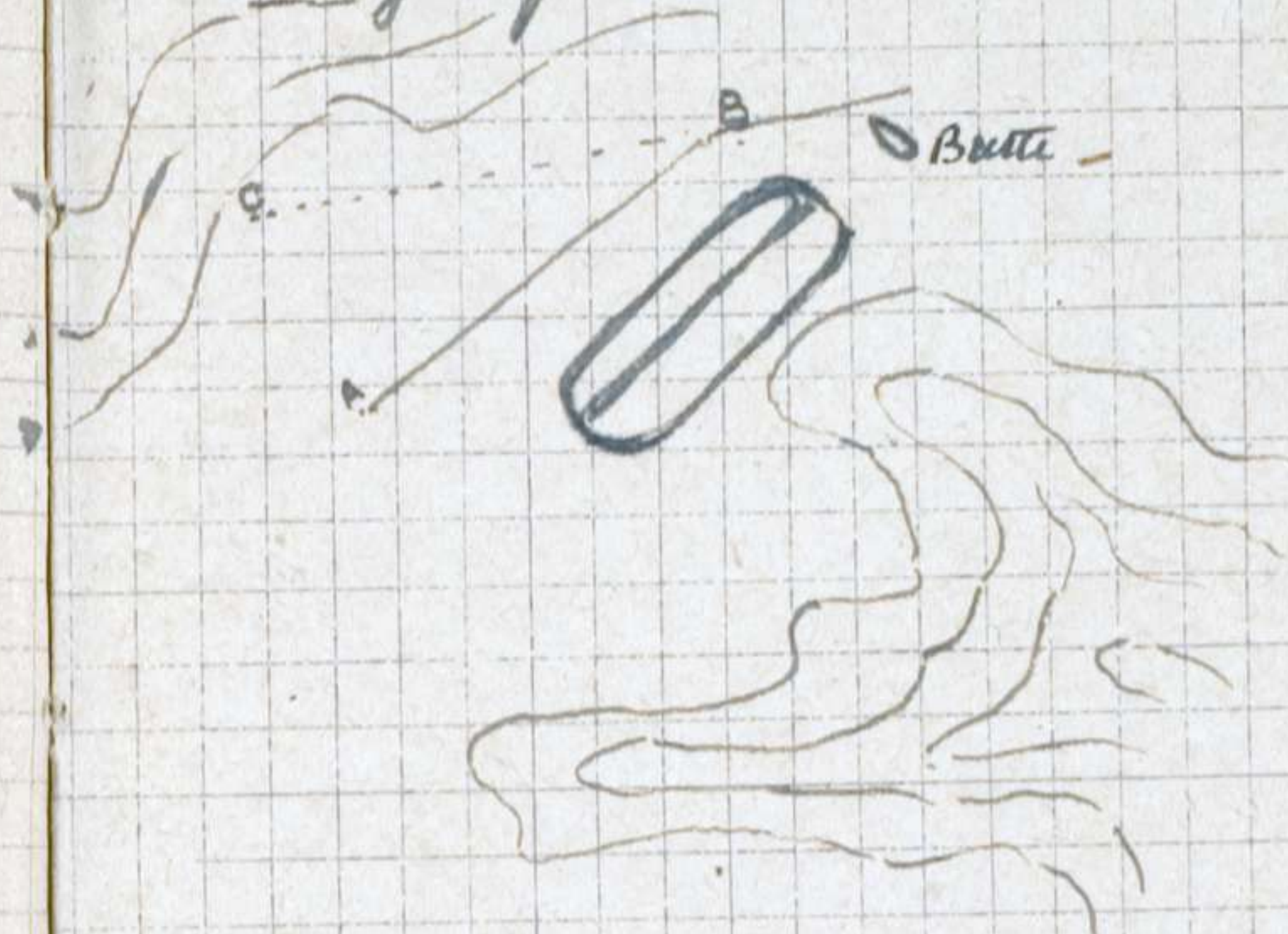
was just crossing round
 the Northern shoulder of
 Butte on a well ~~further~~
 packed sand ^{foot-} track (which
 showed how good soil up
 here was). We went behind
 1 Butte & found 4 or 5 men
 sitting round 1 entrance
 to a depot (one newly
 made, from 1 safe side, by
 us or 1 British). A tall
 officer, bareheaded, came
 out to them. Seeing as he
 wanted to know who we
 were, where 1 camera
 was (Wilkins - my
 vest pocket kodak was in my

1)H pocket) & what the helmets were. We told him. ~~Leads~~ ~~was~~ Wilkins sd "Pretty quiet today." The offr sd "How long have you been here?" "Abt 1 afternoon more or less," we sd. "Well, it was damned hot an hour ago" sd 1 offr. "I wouldn't stand abt there if I were you - I'd get away from this place as quickly as I could." We left - I wanted to see the Southern corner of 1 wood overlooking Rentebeek - so we

I thought we were on
BC (glencovee track)
but we were probably on
BA.

D+1

planned to cut across
towards the left hand
Edge of the hill

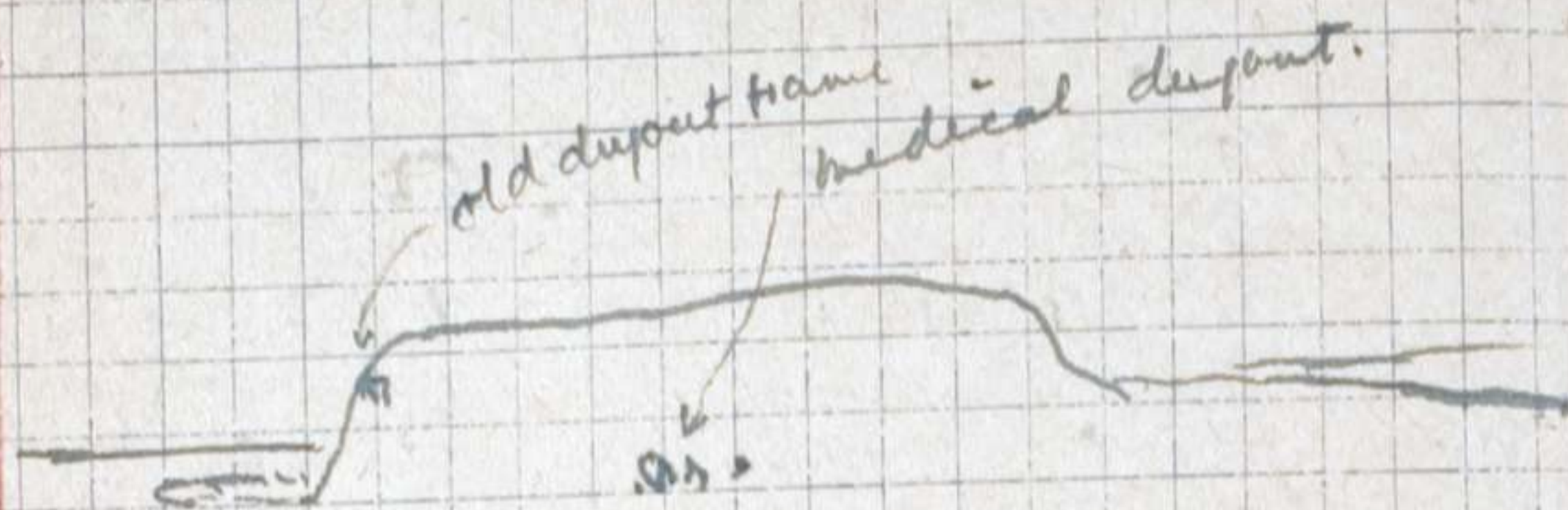


For the sake of easy going we
struck ~~out~~ onto the road lower
right, wh we had crossed
before. There was an ^{old} white
tape down it part of way -
It was continually interrupted

D+1

to shellholes - shallow ones in / sand; ~~a~~ few foot prints along. it showed H it had been recently used as a track. There were a few Tommies coming up it - these strips arriving at the Butte seemed to be a relief of the Northumberland Fusiliers, 23rd Division. The Officer there had on their regimental medical officer.

To the left of us from here we cd see down over the depression in the SE end of the Polygon to blue misty country



beyond & a further, lower,
slope.

Wilkins asked me if this
was our country. I must
say the right hand slope of the
far landscape looked to me
as if it ought to be our
country but a moment's
consideration made me
pretty sure it was not.

We were evidently looking
down the beginning of the
Polygonbeck into the
Reutelbeck valley. #

D.H.

About / same moment
 I noticed a string of
 men coming along the
 skyline due S.W of us.
 There was a band of
 chrome yellow sky stretched
 like a silk ribbon under
 / evening clouds - &
 against this came a platoon
 of British soldiers in
 single file, silhouetted.



Slender Fence



Stumps of Pol. Wood.

I sd to Wilkins - Halls -
 now for the barrage -
 Presently a machine gun
 began to pop. We wondered

D+1

if it were ours or German.
 it was due south of us.
 The swish & flick of bullets
 between the little stumps
 of Polygon wood &
 round the sandy
 undulations of shell
 craters soon settled the
 question. The ^{few} Tommies
 who were coming up
 our own track made
 off into 1 bush on 1
 right - diverted their
 line, it is to say.
 The string on 1 skyline
 disappeared. The things
 were so close to our

feet that I lay as flat
 as I could behind a
 sandy crater brim —
 & advised Welkins to do
 (same). We dodged on
 a few yards in an
 interval & I got onto the
^{edge of a} shallow crater mostly full of
 dirty water — ones knee
 was in / water & I trod
 on my over coat in getting
 up again & floundered
 rather miserably — but still
 the bullets were whipping
 in to / crater sides
 around us; a second
 & possibly a 3rd mg. joined

Dut

in. They must have been from almost due South - perhaps 1200 or 1500 yds away - Polderhoek or just behind it, I should say. But it was a thing one was glad to have experienced for it showed in the most practical way / difficulties of our position North of the Renteelbeek.

The Germans were shelling straight ahead with one big shell & presently others from left. The path we went by petered out entirely in water filled shellholes -

D41
 - not very far to our
 left must have been
 Black watch corner - (where
 there is a little round pool,
 as a matter of fact).

We struck half right towards
 the Northern edge of the Polygon
 veld - out of the way of
 a salvo of 4.2 shells
 which was beginning to
 fall regularly & close on
 our left front. Presently
 the Nonne Booschen stumps
 appeared over the edge.
 Close to us was a
 depression with ^{a blockhouse of} about
 4 contiguous big stumps

D+1

Chambers. A few
men were about it -
the place on top looked
heavily & recently shelled.

We struck further right
Nonne ~~the~~ Bosschen valley ^{with} gave no
walking. ~~Then~~ we saw a line of men
approaching ^{to our} ~~over~~ left,
over duckboards. I was
nearly dead - it
was like salvation to
find those duckboards.
I thought just then I
would rather go thro' a
barrage than get off them
to avoid it.

The German, I
think because he saw the

till we overtook
hope of easy

D41

relief, had turned
 a bannay onto the
 Northern end of Chateau
 Wood - we cd see it
 in 1 hollow below us;
 our deck boards -
 Wilkins knew - led straight
 down there. we cd see
 from 1 edge o 1 hill
 1 deck board winding
 down there



48
D.H. An English subaltern
at the head of a string of men
was cutting across, past us,
from some track further
South. He told us it was
much better the way
round - so we
followed his track &
at no great distance
up the hill came on a
road ^{- first muddy - then} ~~was~~ for a few
yards ~~was~~ planked;
then more mud; &
at last definitely planked.
It led over the ^{rear end} ~~back~~
of the crest, still a
little to the right O I

D41

49

Summit. Planks at
last. It was / road
made by our engineers &
pioneers Tro Chateau
Wood!

I was exceedingly
tired - Wilkins took the
oil can off me & I put
the spanner & lanyard &
some oil in my over-
coat pockets.

But that barrage,
wh. was pretty heavy -
& wh. had been ~~set~~ well
to / right of road,
was creeping left. As we
looked down / hill which

D41

we were descending, the foremost shell - 5.9 or possibly 8 in - kept on falling 10 or 15 yards more to left every time it dropped. The nearer shells were uncomfortably close too. When we were within 200 yds ~~x they~~ and clearly have to pass within 30 yds (or less) of them, ~~they~~ on we cut off to our left towards Clapham Junction, the highest point on 1 ridge. It was getting pretty dark,

D41

but we could see it
to our left front. and
as we neared it Wilkins
showed me, in a hole,
the curious cupola
topped gun position



of which he
had taken
a photo
on Sept 20.

It had been in Noumea.
Toward we passed
Clapham In close on
our right. Stirling
Castle - another point
of the rear end of hill -
was lower on our left.

D+1

We struck across
leftwards & almost at
once hit the remains
of the main Rd.

It was indescribably
filthy - deep in mud,
black mud, stirred up
by 1 mules. I chose
the thinnest mud because
it was easiest to
slog through. Wilkins
having more self
respect chose the
thicker - A few men
were coming out of some
hole deep in the left
hand side of road.
It was the tunnel wh

D+1

1 German dug under
1 main Rd. (I believe
we have not yet
explored it to end -
they say there have been
3 queer explosions
there lately, & some
people think they are
mines but I doubt it.)
all along the stretch of
filthy road - not so
much shelled as 1
Roulers Rly Embankt,
but still with only
a winding foottrack
of shiney black mud

D41

wandering down it -
there were deep holes
at 1 side, where the
entrances to 1 German
tunnel and depots were.
Wilkins was walking
w a young Derbyshire
soldier of #23 - down
who sd he had fallen
out sick as they were
going into 1 line. I
thought 1 road wd
never come to an end.
But at last we came
to the planks - &
down them, past 1
edge of our old

D+1

crater & HQs at
 Hooze to well known
 Menin Rd.
 It was too late for most
 of lorries. I was almost more
 tired than I have ever
 been when I dropped
 into 1 seat of Boddy's
 car just inside 1
 Menin Gate.

Since then three or four
 quiet days; the Canadians
 were well up past Steenvoort
 on Oct 15 - to relieve
 the 2nd Army Corps.
 On Oct. 16 Murdoch
 went w one of their

D.H.

Generals, Kensit,
to see front line near
Hamburg. He was much
impressed by Kensit.
He said that there was a
barrage on when they got
to Seine (the Cross Rd where
we ~~saw~~ the 4th Bde men
when 1 German plane
passed over) + the Canadian
Staff officers w/ Kensit recom-
-mended that they shd
"take it as read". But
K. insisted on going on,
lying in a shellhole in
1 front line & taking a
very good look at
Bellevue wh caused
all 1 trouble for 1

D.H.

N. Zealanders. There was a thick brown band of uncut wire in front of it, Murdoch sd. ~~Several~~ wave after wave of the N. Zealanders had reached it, & dug in there. Some had tried to get thro' it; one crawled under & was killed by one of our own rifle grenades on 1 German parapet.

The N.Z. Division seems to have made a magnificent attempt at it.

On Oct 15 when we got back we found 1 enemy had withdrawn to 1 Keiberg Spur. Our patrols followed

58

X On Oct 14/15 ^{took 5} the

German heavily gas shelled our back area behind Glenrose wood. They had promised their men they would do this as soon as 1 weather was ~~better~~. Suitable, in return for our gas shelling we noticed 1 gas (mustard & tear) coming down 1 Menier Rd.

into valley

59

They were withdrawn in 1 end by order. X

[Oct 16. ^{Next} day I wrote a letter to 1 Eng papers. The day was fine for October ~~20~~ but ~~1~~ night we ~~indeed~~ ~~to~~ ~~came~~ ~~up~~ at a rain about 3 pm. The rain saves us from aeroplane raids but it is miserable for 1 poor chaps up in ~~line~~.

I think it was this night that 1 German gave our artillery a heavy gas shelling & got 116 casualties. Cleared of all my correspondence.

D.H. Oct 17. Wrote a letter
to 1 morning papers
(M. 49).

The day began
beautifully fine, but
became wet abt
3 pm. This saves
us from air raids at
night but is not what
is wanted, & must be
miserable apt time.

It is warmer. I keep
warm writing w a petrol tin
of hot water under my feet.

Oct 18. Wrote a good
part of this diary -
it is as a geography to
one wants it - a
geography of battlefields.

I hope it will bring it
all back - when I read
it - vividly, to myself.

The Germans have
landed on 1 island of
Oesel in 1 Gulf of Riga.
Their whole method
seems to have been an
extreme contrast to
Gallipoli. They landed
2 divisions.

The day has been
fine & 1 night cold
& fairly clear.

Oct 19. Writing
Murdoch & I thought
out ~~outline~~ ^{outline} scheme for cable to

DH

Hughes - First, the results of this battle, a big success on 1 whole; Secondly the certainty that we should have no more recruits after a spring offensive - probably 5 full divisions to start it with, & only 3 afterwards - This would mean a certain break up of one Divn at the end of 1 offensive - possibly 2, unless recruiting improves.

Recruiting can only improve by conscription or

D44
 by some special effort.
 Conscriptu wd
 make it possible to
 keep 5 Divns going; volunt-
 ary recruiting, we think,
 is most unlikely to
 approach this. Therefore
 it is conscriptu or 1
 break up of a division;
 & if one is broken up
 it shd be now. That
 wd (1) leave reinforcements in
 hand after 1 spring &
 wd (2) solve 1 question
 of keeping all Australian
 Divns together.

At 1 same time if

DH we are to have
Conscripts tried again
we must be able to
assure Australia that
all 1 divisions are together
under Australian Offrs.

And if we are to
keep 1 division up by recruiting
voluntarily, we must
even ~~more~~ by stronger
necessity, be able to
assure 1 people of this
advantage.

Therefore in any
event - 4 Divs or 5 -
we must try to get all
Divs together under an

D.H.

Australian Staff.

Gen. Birdwood's hand will have to be forced, to get that staff. He is too loyal to his old friends to turn them out; tho' he is keener on appointing Austolus (when new appointments have to be made) than any one else exc. perhaps Gillibrand or Hobbs.

But Monash for an Australian C. in C. we cannot have. He is not a man.

The purity & absence of jealousy in political

D41

intrigue in Birdwood
administration, is
worth anything. There
is no "eye-wash" — bluff
& humbug & insincerity
in it; & there is in
Monash's. White wd
do, but not Monash.

Besides we do
not want Australia
represented by men
mainly because of their
ability; ~~like~~ natural
& inborn in Jews, to
push themselves. Monash
& Rosenthal have
both the quality, though

67

D.H. Mowash does not
use it shamelessly.
Rosenthal does.

Birdwood 515
Murdock & Rosenthal
wd get 1 next division,
Gellibrand next best,
after him, he said.

Really, I wd almost
rather see Birdwood
dispensed with, than this
happen. Gellibrand, a
thousand times too proud
to push his own barrow -
a man who wd rather
pick crusts out of
gutter than go begging &

D41

claiming a step in promotion - all I force knows to be is / best man we have for a division. all I force expects to see him in one, after Bullecourt.

Birdwood never gave him one word of thanks after Bullecourt; never spoke to his brigade about it; never patted them once on / back.....

And Jellicoe is / one man, white barred, who wd be fitter to command the AIF than Gen. Birdwood himself.

D+1

Spent most of day
going round amongst
the Salvage & Ordnance
Officers begging for trophies
for the A.W.R.S.

Maj. Maxted has been
splendid in backing us
up — & old Grant of
the 2nd Divn, & Viner
of the 5th. ^{Grant} ~~Viner~~, has
Maxted, went up & got
as 22 suits of German
armour from Bavaria
House.

Maxted has given me
Capt. Bailey for 1 Museum
Collecting Depot, a boy
as keen on it as Sullett.

D#1 who keeps me up to my
job.

The Germans have
carried out either 2 or
3 heavy gas shoots /
last few nights - 60
gas casualties last night
in the Corps + 150 the night
before I think it was.

This morning + last
night there was heavy
combat on both sides -
we gave them ^{shell} gas last
night.

Today since midday
1 german has been carrying

1st Army Corps
(See Intell. Summary.)

D41

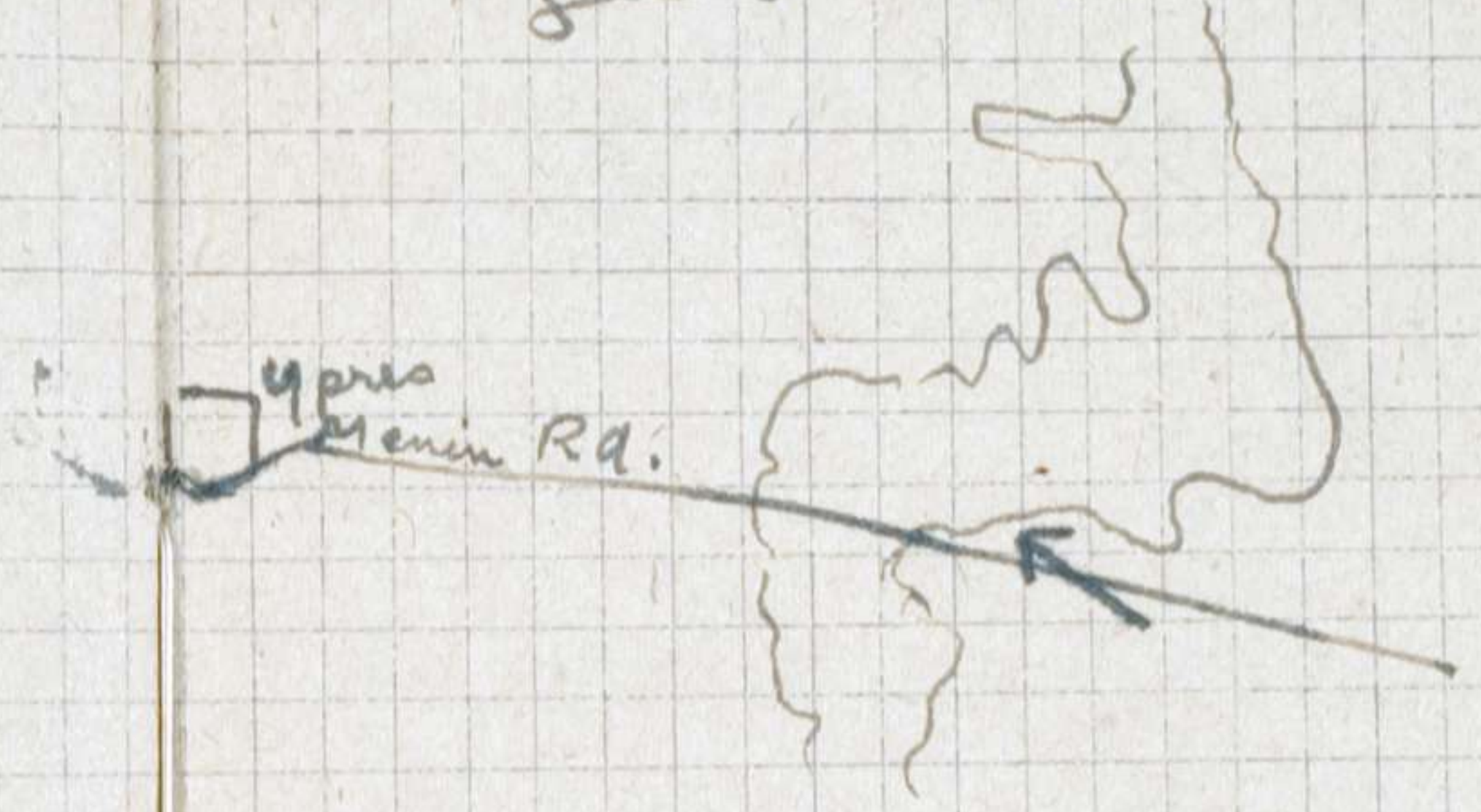
71

out very heavy
area shoots on this
corps - from 1 very rear
to 1 very front. It
is especially heavy at
dusk. This may be
practice barrage for an
attack, or it may be
to break up our roads.

Kennedy (heavy art)
says to even if we get
down to "peace" conditions
we shall always ^{keep} ~~have~~
a big concentration of
guns at the Menin
Road - Polygon wood

D41

front. The German, if he got to top there, cd make it impossible for us to move any guns back.



Oct 20. Very heavy fog most of last night & this morning. I was certain the German had attacked, but apparently he had not. Having gone back on our

D.H. front (Keiberg) he cant very well attack there.

The moon is new & a German plane has just gone over & dropped his bombs near Abele. You can tell the German plane quite clearly by the sound - the recurring whirr-irr-irr of his engine - a tuneless sound; our engines have a higher musical note & no recurring swell.

The Trans-Australian railway from Perth to Port Augusta was finished on Oct. 17. Heavy shooting on Canadian night after dark very heavy shooting of us, & possibly by Germans.

D.H. I had not time to write up what Murdoch, Gullett, & I actually saw of the fight for Broodseinde Ridge on Oct 4. I will do so now while the memory is still fairly fresh: I wrote up my cable at the time & that is the only ~~entry~~^{note} I have made:

Murdoch was here. Gullett wanted to see one big fight before going to Egypt - he had been away at Rouen to see the Base Records Branch & find that they practically did nothing at

D41

all, so far as / collection
of Historical Records went,
except to keep ^{most of} them a
month & pass them on
to London.

White told me the
fight had be brought forward to
Oct 4 — it had been fixed
for Oct 6 & was brought forward
so suddenly to Butler (who
had ~~been~~ sent out the maps)
did not know until
3 days before.

~~also~~ I went up
on Oct 2 to reconnoitre
a good place to see from It
seemed to further North

D+1 we shd see better - up to
 this we had always used the
 Menin or Warrington Rds &
 had never gone N of Westhoek.
 I got Baddy to drive me out
 thro' 1 Menin gate; but
 instead of turning to 1 right
 at 1 Menin Rd Junction
 went straight on through
 Politze. I left the car
~~below~~ on 1 other side of
 village - sent him back to
 1 other side of Ypres - &
 walked up to near
 Frezenberg, which is on 1
 Westhoek Ridge but further
 North. ~~See~~ Nearing the

1914
88
D.H. ridge I saw, at a dressing station on 1 right, Wilson formerly a chaplain to Bishop of Newcastle N.S.W., & then chaplain to the 3rd Bn. on the Somme winter. He was burying a couple of men of the 36th Bn (he is now attached to the 4th Bde) & I waited by while he sd the services over them. They were simply wrapped up in two dark brown rough blankets - & a burial party of about 4 men of their own battalion lowered them into a shellhole. They had an officer present

D+ too. Wilson said the service
- a longer one than I thought
they used - standing simply in
his tin hat, as they all did
- threw a few ^{with} clods of earth
in, when the words came
"dust to dust" - The ~~grave~~
~~was~~ grave was quickly
filled in by 1 gravediggers -
& they were left there by 1
side of 1 road. Of course
a cross with their names
will be put up. They were
almost certainly men
who had died on 1 stretcher
at 1 aid post or before
reaching it.

D+1

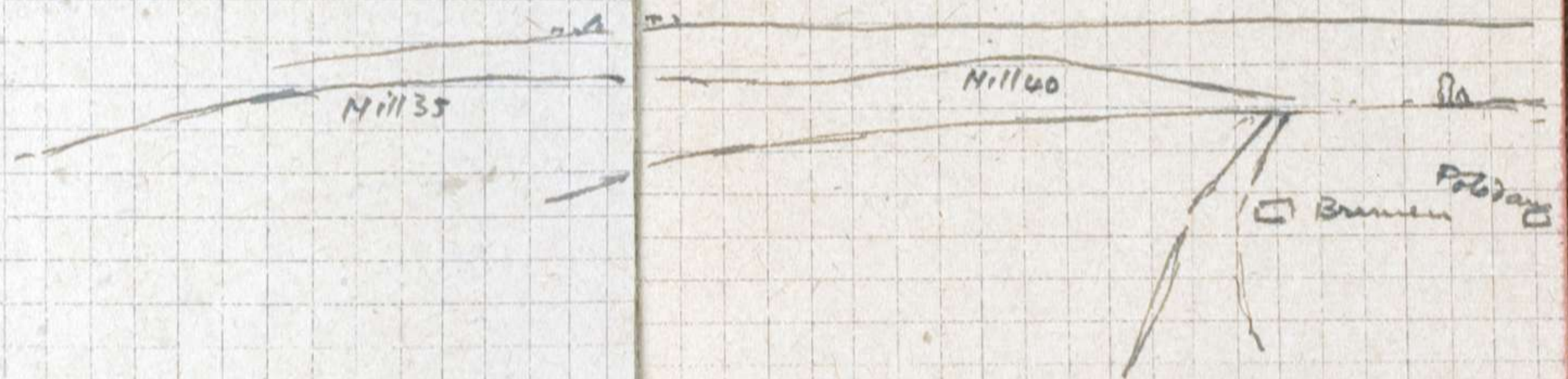
79

We went on over 1 hill -
he wanted to reach a place
called "Bremen" where another
Padre was. Just over 1 top
o 1 hill on 1 left was a
concrete shelter ^{20 yards} ~~a little~~
away from 1 rd, w a sort
of half trench half breastwork
leading to it. We inquired
there - it was another ~~dressing~~
station aid post, Bavaria
House. They pointed out
Bremen to us at 1 bottom
o 1 hill in 1 bend o 1
road, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile on.

On the fore slope you
could see, as open as 1

D41

palm of your hand,
 the Broodseinde Ridge,
 & the two heights of the
 Spur, N.W. of Zonnebeke
 - Hill 40 & Hill 35. A
 lower ridge was between
 us & them, just in front
 of Bremen House.



I think one could see the
 Zonnebeke Church over
 the hill. Anyway, Hill 40
 was in the hands of Germans

D+1

81

— who had them also
Zonnebeke Rly Station (on
| same hill, ^{as Hill 40} in a cutting)
while we had the Church.

Outside Bremen, (wh
was also used as a
dressing str then - later as
a Bde H Qrs, Cannons Bde)
were some AMC men,
some stretchers, & a whole
heap of German kit. I
took one rifle & fixed bayonet
(the only German rifle I ever
have seen w Bayonet fixed)
for the A.W.R.S. The Q Bde
medical ofrs & Padre inside
told us th 1 place was 1

D41

82

centre of German barrack
& I think they added to it.
It was constantly hit without
breaking it. I had a
cup of tea w them, &
then cut off S. across
country towards Westhoek
Ridge.

On the way, in the
valley abt 100 yds or so
from Bremen, I passed
another redoubt like
a brick waterlogged in
a swamp - Potsdam.
From there one cut up
the hill, across the Railway
on / south side of wh
a much used path ran to a Belle
Hors in some long low

Diary 83 (on 1 Southside of it)
concrete dugouts beside 1 Rly

- Railway, across a
rather green unshelled
space in which a battalion
I think of the 9th Bde was
digging itself little poggies
in shell holes for the night

- the first time I had ever
seen a promiscuous shell hole
because like this.

I went on up to 1
top of Westhoek Ridge - the
ground becomes frightfully
shell torn as you near 1
~~top~~ top; on the rear slope
of ridge just clear of
crest some of the 6th Bde
machinegun coy were digging

D+ themselves into little
new trenches. The whole
Broodseinde Ridge &
Abrahams Heights & Hill 90
cd be seen from there too -
& I thought th a shell hole
in 1 green patch on th front
slope where the Q Bde were
wd be 1 very best point
for watching a fight.

As I stood there our
guns suddenly opened a
very heavy fire - it was
abt 5 or 5.30 pm. & it
was clearly a practice
barrage. A line of officers
were breasting a bank just

July

85

By one of tall Westhoek
blockhouses, watching it;
• We followed 1 battery up
1 hill - ~~the individual bursts were~~ soon lost in
smoke & dust as at Missines.

The German began to
put a big shell over into 1
valley filled with 18 pounders
at our back. I found a
duckboard leading back
across the hollow, & followed
it. The big German shell
pitched first 100 yds on
one side of it & then 70
yds on 1 other, & one had
to walk thru the dust cloud.
But you see 1 man serving
1 battery walking about

D.H. them as if nothing were happening, far nearer than yourself, & it gives you wonderful confidence & makes you even a bit ashamed of your nervousness.

Anyway I was glad when the big shell was behind me.

The track led over some frightfully marshy shell torn country to a number of craters as (our old front line of course) wh I found — by a map wh a padre at Cambridge Rd showed me — to be Railway Wood. You don't notice 1 wood — but I

D41

87

did see one ^{stump} ~~piece~~ of
a shrub a little further
back with green leaves on
it -

Saw at 1 head of att
20 men of 21 Bn passed me
on 1 duckboards. They
were camped in some old
German line over wh 1
duckboards passed E of
Railway wood - that
in describable area of mud &
waterfilled shellhole was more
or less inhabited by four
heavy long howitzers painted
like boar constructors, a
wireless tank, & an
ammunition dump.

I found 1 car^{in Ypres} ^{at} home fairly late.

The next night was Oct. 3. Gullett was back & Murdoch was here (having flown^{*} back from London on news to Silmons was here - Silmons left on Sept 30 & came back on Oct 9 - staying as well ~~at~~ Murdoch till Oct 20 - Murdoch's brother acted as press officer. I shd say to Murdoch beat Silmons in every way.)

Murdoch came up w Gullett & myself to Ypres. We started at 3 - ~~old body~~ drove ~~us~~ to Mr. Barker set up to wake Boddy & get

✓ I.E. hurried
C. G. B.
2516/32

D41 some hot cocoa. Boddy
 came round & drove me
 down to N. Camp where
 the others (who shared half a
 Mussen hut) were getting up.
 We drove through Ypres,
 the roads being fairly clear,
 to the School on the Menin
 Road; then struck along
 the duckboards for Kit &
 Cat - the same duckboards
 I had come back along 1
 day before. Kit & Cat was 1
 point on Westhoek Ridge where
 I had seen 1 Bomb from.

It was lowering &
 drizzly & the German flares
 looked dull & glazed like
 fishes eyes.

we reached Westhoek

90
D4 Ridge about 5; as
we were too far right I
struck left along edges
of shellholes over
top of ridge till we
hit the rly track & then
in again towards Westlock.
On a decent night we shd
have hit our shellholes
in green — & this night
we must have passed
within 150 yds of them;
but it was so overcast
& drizzly that we could not
see; so I decided to
head again through the
muck to Kit & Cat &
lie up there till daylight.

At abt 5.20 just as
we were floundering on!

D+
 edge of the green & the
 shelled crest a yellow
 flare went up on 1
 Broodseinde Ridge instead
 of a white. It was followed
 by a couple more, &
 then sheafs of them; then
 others & left & right spreading
 gradually. About 7
 minutes later, or less,
 1 German barrage began
 to come down, battery by
 battery. By 5.30 it was
 really heavy about the
 rt rear especially; at Glenora
 & Noune Bossehem &
 Inverness Gorge we'd
 hear crump crump crump
~~some~~ particularly heavy.

D.H. but it was ^{even} more continuous
along / front - just opposite
us - front & left. We were
quite certain our men had
been seen -

(This ^{narrative} was unfinished, evidently
for want of time)
At 6 am. our barr. banged out & seemed to
swallow up / German ^{barrel} ~~barrel~~ ^{from} our shellhole. Murdoch
Gullett & I could see nothing
for a long time after our
barrage came down. Later,
when it was bright day we
noticed that ~~the~~ the ^{flat} summit
of the Broodwinde Ridge
opposite to us we could
see figures - obviously
Australian - to left &
right, looking on the
skyline; but directly
ahead we could only see at
first nothing - then occasional figures keeping
low, moving to right or
left crouched down - a
sure sign that there was

first nothing - then

hard fighting there (as,
we found later, ~~that~~ there
had been).

We learnt - I think at
6 or 8 AM HQ - that the
attack had been successful.
As news came in - & prisoners
of the GR Guard Division - we
realised that our attack
had run into a ferocious
one, & the barrage laid
thought down on our
men at 5.30 was
thought to have been the
barrage ordained for this
attack. I felt sure - &
still feel sure - the Germans
saw our attacking force
or learnt somehow that
it was there - & sent up their
signals. The outbreak of
these was much too impressive to
have meant anything else. They
could not have ~~meant~~ "and
been signals to "lengthen range"

for the German artillery had then not begun to fire. I afterwards learnt that they had captured some of our people - & we had taken some of theirs - but in each case too late for useful action to be taken upon the discovery of the plans.

This battle was felt by everyone to be a very great success - greater than Messines - greater, we thought at the time than any success the British had achieved during the war. This was never realised by the nation, but at the front there was a feeling that it only wanted one or two such strokes & the victory would be decisive. The British correspondents felt about it just as I did, & so did Second Army headquarters.

From statements made by Gen. Harrington since, I feel sure that he looked upon it as the Second Army's ^{most important} ~~greatest~~ success, & we know that he & Pumeroy thought we might ~~make~~ break through at the next stroke if weather favoured us, & roll back part of the German line. He told us correspondents so before October 12th.

I have always felt that the world does not realise the ^{potential or even actual} effects of this battle.

C. G. B. 17. March 1932