

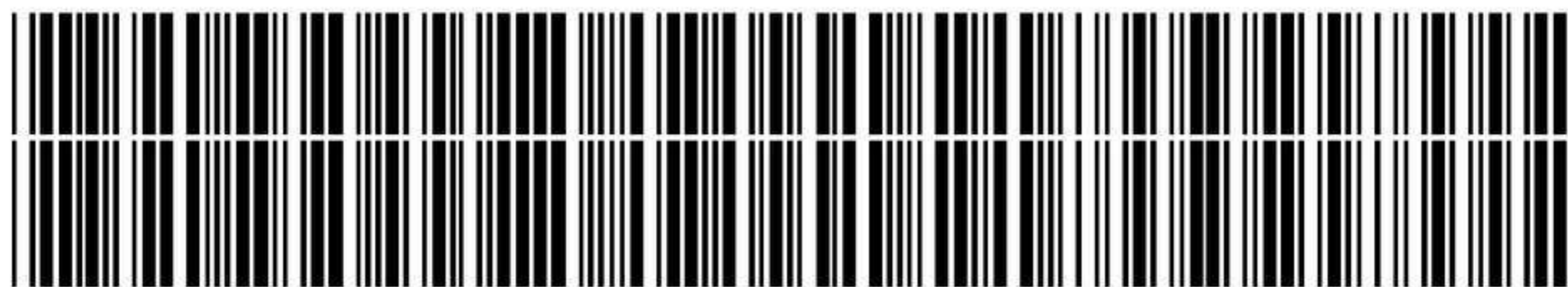
AWM38
Official History,
1914-18 War: Records of C E W Bean,
Official Historian.

Diaries and Notebooks

Item number: 3DRL606/118/1

Title: Photostats, Photostats

Comprise copies of enclosures to earlier diaries and includes copies of correspondence, typed diary entries for August-November 1918, maps, reports from "The Times Weekly Edition" and 1918 notes by F M Cutlack.



AWM38-3DRL606/118/1

Notes to Diaries

CONFIDENTIAL.



WAR DIARY
OF

CAPT. BEAN'S

From *DIARIES*

To *N.D.* 191

VOL. No.

10,000-9/17-6728.

1ST SET.
AWM 38

Diary No. 118.

302L 606 ITEM 118

**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
ACCESS STATUS

C. E. W. BEAN.

OPEN

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Dear General Walker,

you asked me to mention to you the names of any men that I might hear spoken of as having been prominent in this fighting. I am afraid my notes are very casual but the following are some of them.

~~Sgt.~~
~~xxxxx~~ Metcalfe 11th Bn was responsible for the supervision of the digging of the 11th Bn trenches beyond the Bapaume Rd during the heavy shelling. He was hit several times but I was told that he carried on excellently.

Capt. Lillie 5th Bn after ~~xxxxxxx~~ most of the other officers of his battalion in the firing line were knocked out was practically in charge of the 5th Bn in the firing line (or at any ^{a good} rate/part of it) during the fight of the morning of July 25 ~~xxx~~ which by all accounts was one of the hardest yet fought.

Pte. Angel of 5th Bn, a signaller attached to 2nd Bde HQ was sent with a message to the Battalion from Bde H.Q. It was an urgent message. On the way he ran into the enemy's barrage and going through it was hit. As he lay with his legs paralysed he saw an officer standing 300 yards away from him. He dragged himself by his hands until he was near enough to get the officer's attention and delivered his message to him. Two hours later he was found lying there with a piece of shell in his backbone. The first question he asked was: ~~xxxxx~~ "Did that message get through". I am told it is doubtful whether he will recover the use of his legs.

During the fighting of the same morning Pte Skillbeck of the Lewis gun detachment of the 5th Bn was in the Northern portion of trench O.G. 1 when our men were being gradually bombed back for the second time. ~~xxxxxx~~ More than one man tells me that Skillbeck was noticeable to everyone by standing out head and shoulders over the parapet beside our bombers, using his Lewis gun like a rifle. He ran through all his ammunition and waved for more. As he was

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shouldering his gun to fetch it, he was hit by shrapnel and the gun pitched away. He was wounded.

Another Lewis gunner, Pennicook, of the same battalion, was always standing up by Skillbeck; for an hour at least, I am told, he threw bombs, when the axes of the others were worn out. The bombers of the battalion were practically all killed or wounded. Sergt. Blair, of Coy 5th Bn, when the battalion was deploying in the night, was making sure that the men spread out. I am told he was quite careless of his own safety, going up and down and ~~forcing~~ forcing them to deploy and seeing that they did it.

I heard that Sergt. Heston of the 9th Bn, who did great work, was killed. He was famous in Gallipoli, and they all say he did well this night. There is another old n.c.o. of the 9th whose name I have forgotten who did great work and was killed. I will try and get his name again.

Lieut. R.E. White of the 9th Bn on the first night was apparently the only officer amongst groups of men from every battalion who lost themselves ^{towards} in the N.E. of the objective. He took charge and organized them and ~~the~~ the digging of a line in that part of the village on the first night seems to have been largely due to him. He was just ^{E.N.E} ~~at~~ of the hedge with the guns in it, about the right of our first night's line - an area in which events were very uncertain.

I have not seen Angel himself, or anyone who ~~actually~~ actually saw him. But ~~the~~ the signal officer of the 2nd Bde knows of the facts.

Yours sincerely,

Reinforcements.

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7/28 3
August 15. Anderson called in by General Woodward at the War office A. writes to Birdwood to say that the War Office is getting anxious about the reinforcements for the Australian divisions and has decided to (1) break up the 3rd Australian division or (2) take a draft from the 3rd Australian divn (between 3000 and 6000 men probably) to make up. Anderson says he has wired to Australia that the latter course has been decided upon, retaining the 3rd Australian division in the meantime anyway.

August 16. Birdwood wires to Australia that he regrets that Anderson sent his wire the day before without reference to him - he thinks that he can find an arrangement by which the 3rd division need not be interfered with.

August. Birdwood thinks that if the Australian Govt. can send a special draft in November of 20,000 men, and 16,500 or 25 per cent (for the ~~infantry~~ 5 divisions) during the next three months after that, the 3rd division can still be retained and the ~~three~~ divisions all of them kept up to strength.

Birdwood's suggestion to bring the 11th and 12th Regiments of Light Horse over from Egypt, or the whole of the Light Horse, if possible, is taken up by Woodward. But the G.H.Q. of the Eastern Exped. Force says that in view of the state of affairs on the Canal it does not want to spare any of the Light Horse - so this has to be rejected.

August 31st. Hughes accepts the request of the War office. The reinforcements previously promised were 140 officers and 11,650 men per month. The war office requests, owing to "the heavy casualties" - (I think it is "very heavy cas.") - suffered by the Australian divisions, the special draft of 20,000 for November and 16,500 a month for three months after.

November 9th. Australian Government's request for extra transports is cancelled from Australia.

November 11th. Sir Munro Ferguson wires a message from Hughes saying that he regrets that Australia cannot keep her promise to send the special draft of 20,000 in November. If not too late, and if the 3rd Division can be kept in England without altering plans too seriously, it is thought that reinforcements for 4 divisions can be kept up on the 15 per cent scale.

Gen. Monash had been previously informed by the War Office that the drafts from his division must be prompt, and that the 3rd division would not be allowed to go abroad in any case until the drafts for the other divisions were fully made up.

November 16th. Bonar Law informs Australian Govt. that the 3rd Division must go abroad on November 21 as arranged as the plan

plans would otherwise be too seriously interfered with. It is hoped that even if the special draft of 20,000 cannot be kept up for November, either the whole or part of it, yet every effort would be made to keep the five divisions up to strength by reinforcements.

On November 11 the Australian Government asked that, as it was understood that training could better be carried out in England than in Australia, the War Office would concur in the giving to recruits of a very short period of training in Australia.

~~xxxxxxx~~ The War Office concurred, but added on November 17 that it hoped that the six first weeks training could be given in Australia as ~~contained~~ in a previous communication, and that that if men had to be kept in Australia more than 6 weeks waiting for shipment, the training for further weeks (as per that comm) should be gone on with.

Monash's objection to breaking up his division, written to Birdwood after a letter from B. of abt Nov. 16th, was that his division contained no great proportion of men at any advanced state of training. Except for a few old Anzac hands - men and officers - whom he relied on as a nucleus, the others were all being trained together. What he had done was to send a proportion of his men and officers to Lewis Gun, and other schools, and he was employing ~~xxxx~~ these to train the rest. It was obviously very undesirable to take away these.

The quota supplied by him was finally whittled down by arrangement to a little under 2000.

White marked the papers of Nov. 11 - 16, when sent over by Anderson for the information of A.I.F. Headquarters here: "Seen - very sad".

Griffiths thinks that if we are in for no actual scrapping during the winter, we shall build up enough to make good the 5 divisions.

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7/85 5

PRESS R. T. P.

COMMONWEALTH GAZETTE MELBOURNE

BRITISH HEADQUARTERS FRANCE NOVEMBER EIGHTEEN. THIS BATTLE OF
 SOMME IS CONTINUING UNDER CONDITIONS IN WHICH WORLD HAD
 PREVIOUSLY TAKEN IT FOR GRANTED IT IMPOSSIBLE TO FIGHT STOP
 IT THIS IS
 PART OF GREAT EFFORT TO ASSIST ROUMANIA IT IS
 WELL THAT WORLD SHOULD KNOW HOW DETERMINED THAT EFFORT IS STOP
 CONSTANT RAIN UNENDING RAIN OF LAST FEW WEEKS CHANGED
 SOME DAYS SINCE TO BITTERLY COLD CLEAR DAYS STOP YESTERDAY
 EVEN AT MIDDAY ROADS POOLS WERE FROZEN FAST STOP THIS MORNING
 FOUND WHOLE COUNTRY UNDER WHITE COVERING SNOW STOP DURING DAY THIS
 TURNED TO SLEET THEN STEADY RAIN STOP TONIGHT DRIPPING WIN-
 TERS FOG COVERS BATTLEFIELD STOP THROUGH ALL THIS SOMME BATTLE
 CONTINUES STOP NO COMFORTABLE TRENCHES THERE STOP
 WHICH THOSE WHO ARE ON THE BATTLEFIELD ARE STOP
 BATTLEGROUND HAS BEEN SHATTERED AS NO OTHER BATTLE
 GROUND EXCEPT VERDUN EVER BEEN STOP TRENCHES ARE NO MORE THAN MUD
 SHALLOW DITCHES IN WHICH MEN HAVE TO FACE OUT LONG FREEZING WINTER

M2/85 6

(2)

nights stop THROUGH ALL THIS GOES ON PERIODICAL ATTACK COUNTERATTACK
 WITH INCESSANT SHELLING MORE OR LESS HEAVY ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ NIGHT AND
 DAY STOP IT IDEE PRETEND MEN ARE NOT UNDERGOING VERY SEVERE
 HARDSHIP STOP FEW DAYS SINCE I PASSED AUSTRALIAN BATTALION COMING
 OUT OF LINE STOP IT FIRST TIME I EVER SEEN AUSTRALIAN TROOPS PASS
 WITHOUT SINGLE SMILE ON ANY MANS FACE STOP ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
 MAN AFTER MAN PASSED EVERYONE VERY GRIM ^{VERY PALE} VERY VERY TIRED STOP TWO
 DAYS LATER SAME TROOPS WERE OLD CHEERFUL SELVES STOP REST IS FIRST
 AND LAST NEED OF THESE MEN ~~XXXX~~ AND ONLY WAY I KNOW OF BY WHICH
 AUSTRALIANS CAN HELP THEM IS BY COMING HERE ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ TO GIVE THEM
 REST STOP WINTER HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN AND THESE THINGS HAVE BE FACED
 THROUGH FOUR OR FIVE MONTHS OF ENDLESS BITTER NIGHTS STOP IF DIV-
 ISIONS ARE KEPT UP TO STRENGTH MEN CAN GET REST AND WITH REST
 THESE ~~XXX~~ TRIALS ARE BEARABLE STOP BUT IF DIVISIONS/FALL BELOW
 STRENGTH THIS IS SIMPLY ASKING MEN HERE TO SLAVE UNTIL THEY DROP
 STOP IF YOU PUT MAN HOWEVER SPLENDID TOO OFTEN ~~XXXXXXXX~~ UNBEAR-
 ABLE STRAIN YOU WILL BREAK HIM AND THAT IS RISK WHICH ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~
 THESE MAGNIFICENT AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONS ARE THREATENED WITH STOP
 AUSTRALIAN COMFORTS FUND CAN DO MUCH BUT REAL NEED CAN ONLY BE ~~MR~~
 MET BY ACTUAL HELP OF ~~XXX~~ MEN STOP ~~XXXX~~ IN THIS WEEKS FIGHTING
 GERMANS REGAINED ~~XXXXXXXX~~ TRENCH WHICH AUSTRALIANS WON TWO DAYS
 BEFORE STOP GERMANS ATTACKED FROM FRONT AND FLANK IN DRIVING ~~XXXXX~~
 FEW BRITISH TROOPS ON FLANK STOP ^{WESTERN} YOUNG/AUSTRALIAN OFFICER LED
 HIS MEN STRAIGHT OUT IN OPEN AGAINST ADVANCING GERMANS AND THIS
 BOLD MOVE WAS SUGGERING WHEN OFFICER HIT STOP MEN WITHOUT LEADER
 WERE OUTDRIVEN BEAN

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598 7

Headquarters
Australian Imperial Force
12th Infantry Brigade
Western Front, France Dec 12

Telephone address
No. 1200

Cable address
AIF 1200

Telephone (circular)
No. 1218

In reply please quote

My dear Beau

The above occurs to me in the middle of time but if you know me
best I don't understand is this: a man what has once been a
Judge's Associate (I suspect at a Bar) must be able to believe evidence -
no evidence, no belief. Even evidence like mine not on 2 cases
no belief to be well & truly reported. The man Johnson has a Brigadier's
fall. Again a man what has worked for a paper knows that
what a reader wishes to believe - that is the truth though it be
a Hoody lie, a gross exaggeration or a joke.

At present the situation is this - I speak as a Roche -

Monash, an apudate, desires to increase his chances of success
promoted reward by any means how foul whatsoever and applies
to a sergeant named Beau whose pen is ever at the disposal
of an unscrupulous Government & its newspapers. Several
notes not about previous treatment to inflame the hearts
of the attackers; this Rot is circulated to the murderers
and the note is given unofficially but none the less
quite definitely - no quarter. After the attack ensuing
in mass as to the unofficial orders being carried out
and compliance proved by a British Command. Letting
God be praised has not enough wit to keep quiet and
blurt the whole truth out. It is true because not one
officer or man of the AIF dares to deny it. Back of all
the best murderers or the fence out who distils his
poison in safety behind the line and who is rewarded
by a soft reward job. Fellow braches - let us kill all AIF
who as a matter either do or appear such things.

My dear Beau - do you believe in the "hysteria
of the man who was there", or not? If you do, why not

M

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can kindly and delicately break their bladders
 Since you can do so by reference to what can be
 fairly believed of the truth and of us, ie. about 2 1/2 %
 Some few men can get as near as 60% of the truth as they
 believe it which in turn may be somewhere about 50% of the
 real truth. And as time goes on the percentage falls & do
 not believe that the average man can tell the same yarn
 twice the same. I don't believe he can tell the Mass
 "unwashed" if he really understood the circus that
 Gibson met D.

Send me home to Tassie à la Gibson - Better use
 a bit locally on the sore spot - put me on to write
 a yarn - and I wouldn't trust myself unless I knew
 of a whole pod full of beans ready to say "look it said
 he really thought these hops happened"

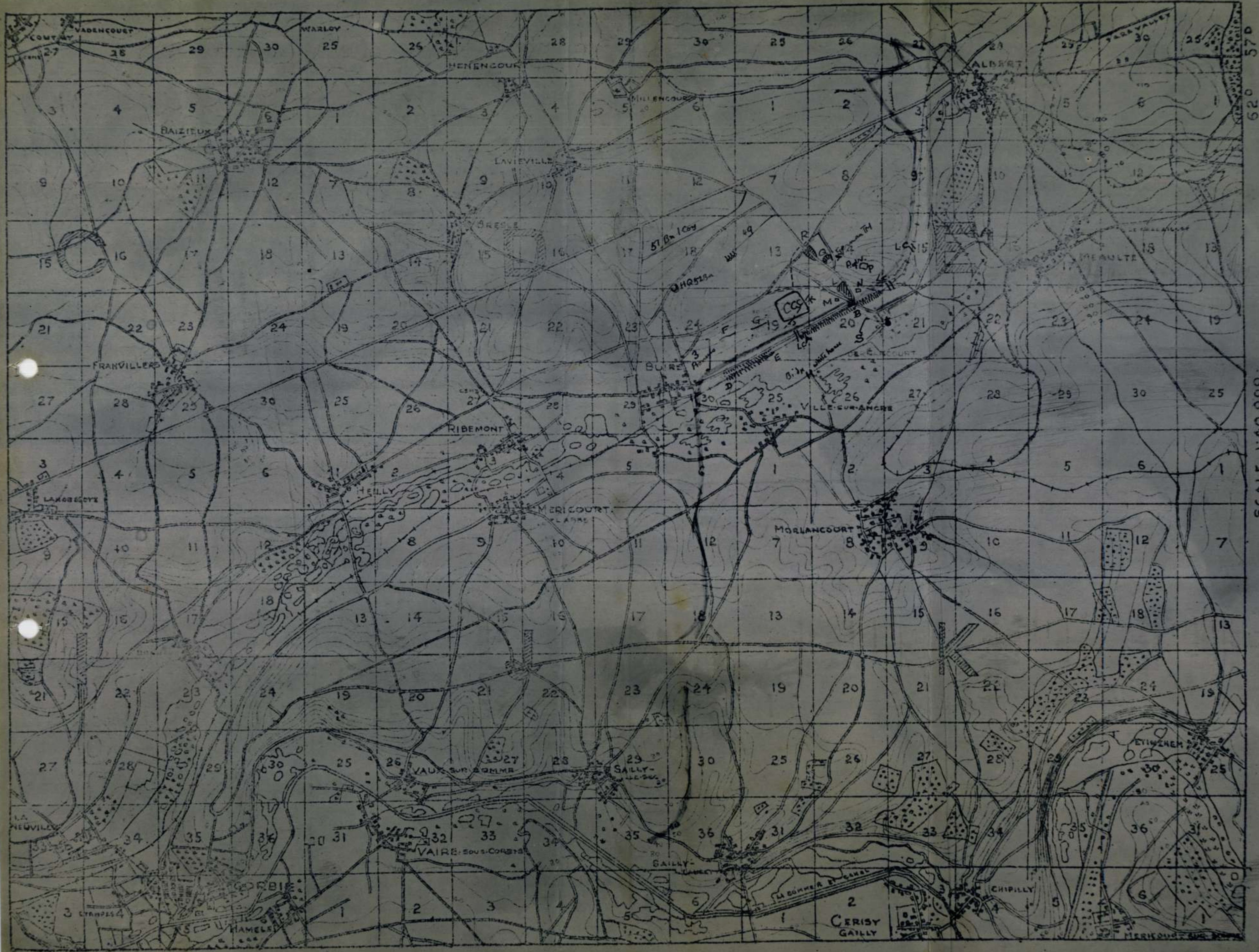
Official action by sensors is of minor value since it
 is temporary in effect, it is the written word that remains.
 I do not for one moment suggest you should take the
 line - merely an essay on the mental condition of all
 soldiers under certain conditions. Now your views are evidence
 later on they will be made in order to reply evidence and of
 no value whatever. And I really don't want to resign my
 commission & compete with you - I much prefer to try and
 lead you to the light touching the charges against us of
 Murder - Venery - Indiscipline.

Believe me these things are of as much importance as all
 the curses words. You know well that I am collecting data
 and propaganda, "cooperating" and "coordinating" the lot into a
 Book which I shall call "Beans and what ought to have been"
 the subtitle being "What I dream I would have done had I been Bean"

This is of course merely a threat.

Yours ever

Belknap



SCALE 1:40,000

ENEMY BROUGHT TO A STANDSTILL.

THE GREAT BATTLE IN THE WEST.

ALLIES' SUCCESSES.

GERMAN ADVANCE BARRED, AND GROUND GAINED.

The great battle on the Western front proceeds, and the fighting has been of the most violent kind, but the staunchness of the Franco-British troops has brought the enemy practically to a standstill.

The following dispatches from our Special Correspondents at the front give a vivid picture of the struggle in which the French and British soldiers are bearing themselves with such heroism.

(From Our Special Correspondent.)

WAR CORRESPONDENTS' HEAD-QUARTERS, MARCH 27.

On the northern part of the battle front, the chief fact of importance is that we have fallen back slightly in the neighbourhood of Albert. Between the Ancre and the Somme we have also withdrawn to a line west of Morlancourt. But though there have been light collisions between small bodies of troops in this area, the Germans are coming on reluctantly, either because they are waiting for their guns or because they are tired and more new divisions are coming in. [The War Office announce the recapture of Morlancourt.]

Below the Somme, the chief fighting has taken place about Proyart, Rosières, and Guerbigny. In the Proyart area the enemy has pushed us back a thousand yards or so. [It was officially reported last night that our line had again been advanced to Proyart.] Near Rosières he attacked in considerable strength this morning, and at one time was in possession of his objective. At about 11 o'clock we counter-attacked, and drove him out and re-established our original positions.

Much the same took place below here in the area of Guerbigny, and, on the whole, the results of the day's exchanges on this part of the line have been in our favour, even though we have lost some ground.

Much the same is true of the northern region. Along the section of our line Guémappe-Ablainzeville pressure has been only moderate, and the Germans have made no progress. About Ablainzeville itself, however, they attacked with great determination several times, and were beaten off each time. The ground attacked remains in our hands, and the enemy losses are heavy.

Below here there have been almost similar incidents at Auchonvillers and near Colincamps. At Auchonvillers the Germans at one time got into our positions, and had held them long enough to bring in 11 machine-guns and put themselves in positions of defence. None the less, we reattacked with great dash, and recaptured the positions and took the machine-guns and some prisoners, among them certain officers who insist on wearing nice new yellow gloves, and generally bearing themselves in a thoroughly Prussian offensive way.

At Colincamps the story was much the same. The Germans, by a sudden attack in strength, made us give way. Then we came back, and, by sheer superiority in individual fighting quality, our men won back all the ground.

Give-and-take fighting has since been in progress among comparatively light forces on both sides in the area of Aveluy Wood and Mesnil, but at neither place in the end did the Germans win any ground. Here again we took prisoners, who tell stories of being excessively tired of the war and complain bitterly of the badness of their rations.

In the northern area the German shelling has been fairly heavy and sustained, especially heavy on places south of the river from gun positions on the north side. Otherwise, on the whole, while the day has been fruitful of rumours of large movements and successes on one side or the other, it has been less eventful than any of its predecessors.

The nights nowadays are almost busier than the days, both sides doing much bombing of the other's positions, the Germans choosing towns with civilian populations rather than points of military importance, doubtless from a desire to cause panic among the French people and influence their opinion on the war. The civilians, however, are being methodically, and in gradual fashion, evacuated from the most dangerous areas.

The enemy has been bombing Amiens ruthlessly. One bomb missed the Cathedral by a very narrow margin. I have passed through Amiens twice to-day and have seen most of the damage done, and can testify to the completely reckless way in which bombs were dropped in all parts of the town.

The fine weather continues, and even if it is in favour of the Germans from the military standpoint, one is glad of it for the sake of the refugees from threatened towns, who are passing in considerable numbers along the roads, offering the usual pathetic spectacles of aged men and girls wheeling all their family possessions on perambulators, wheelbarrows, or handcarts, and invalid women borne on improvised stretchers of shutters or planks. Many of the poor family parties are accompanied by cows, donkeys, and goats, and all, it seems, by dogs, while the children carry cages with canaries in them in their hands.

THE BOMB OF THE FIGHTING.

I have myself to-day travelled so far over the area behind the lines and returned so late after starting in the early morning that nothing more than this most perfunctory account of the day is possible. In spite of some geographical gains on the enemy's part, it has by no means been a day to reduce our confidence. Where we have

fallen back, it has been done chiefly without any pressure and undoubtedly on sound grounds. Where there has been fighting we have had the best of it in the great majority of cases.

The scenes which I have witnessed, among men going into the line and coming out alike, make ridiculous the German official statement that the British Army is beaten. It is no more beaten than is the French, and one of the inspiring incidents of this battle has been the way in which, when French troops relieved some of ours when our Allies first began to cooperate in this battle, they percolated into the line between our men, till they were in strength enough for our men to fall back; and there was an interval when the two Allies were standing literally shoulder to shoulder, and whole sections of line were mingled, blue and khaki, almost in alternate uniforms. It was emblematic of what still confronts the Germans to-day.

In the last 24 hours have been trying hard to get forward, but our resistance is now stronger than when the battle began, and, as I told yesterday, in the vast majority of local incidents we have the best of it.

Between the Ancre and the Somme there is no change in the situation. The Germans appear to be somewhere about Morlancourt, and we still bar his way across from stream to stream in the neighbourhood of Méricourt-Bailly-le-Roc. South of the Somme there has been no alteration since I wrote yesterday, where our line then had everywhere held firm against repeated attacks at Rosières and elsewhere, having only given way at that one point near Proyart. To-day, by a counter-attack, we have won back part, at least, of the ground gain which the enemy made there yesterday.

We hear that the French are having very

already smashed by shell-fire or had broken down and were desolates, while others were destroyed by our men before leaving them.

As examples of the behaviour of our gunners, there was the case of a battery of field guns which fired with open sights on the advancing masses of the enemy, beginning from 800 yards range downwards. They went on firing and literally mowing down the enemy in blocks till the Germans were within 25 yards, when the last gun was got away and the whole battery was saved. In another case two batteries of six-inch howitzers, near Marché, completely broke up a heavy German attack. One battery fired from the open at 1,000 yards range, and others from cover at 1,700 yards got on to masses of Germans trying to advance and completely broke them up, and the attack utterly failed.

From all directions one hears the same story of the splendid heart in which the gunners have kept, in spite of almost intolerable weariness, of the utter absence of any demoralization, and of the refusal of the guns ever to get back until absolute necessity compelled.

Besides the almost incredible number of German machines brought down in fighting, the cooperation of the flying men with the guns has been admirable. In addition, there are parts of the front where, in these last few days, we have had literally hundreds of machines patrolling over enemy territory, firing on men on the roads, so making it impossible for them to advance, compelling them to take cover in small parties and chasing them over the open. The casualties inflicted in this way have been very great. Then we bomb all crucial points at night in a merciless way. There is a certain bottle-neck where everything going towards one sector of the front must pass through and a constant stream of transport and guns. On this spot we have dropped some tons of bombs nightly, and the whole area is a scene of dreadful wreckage. The troops in front, as prisoners tell us, have the utmost difficulty in getting any provisions, and the whole contribution of the Air Force to our fighting strength is of the greatest value.

There are individual cases where single British flyers have met parties of nine or 10 enemy machines and have shot down one or more and come triumphantly home. But we have to go far behind the enemy lines to get any fighting in the air, and the most brilliant work of the airmen has been perhaps in the real battle area in attacking any enemy troops.

During the last 24 hours I have said that fighting nowhere has been on a great scale, and on the whole the balance has been in our favour. In the early morning the Germans attempted a fairly heavy attack on the extreme north of the line above the Scarpe at Gavrelle, but it was held and beaten off, and it finally tumbled off into our hands the enemy out of a trench position with bombs.

More serious has been the movement south of the Scarpe, where the Germans succeeded in making some advance on a front of about 2,000 yards in the neighbourhood of Orange Hill, and fierce fighting is raging about Infantry Hill. The attack, which has pushed us back on this bit of the front over the ground of the last stage of the battle of Arras, was preceded by a heavy bombardment shortly before 6 o'clock in the morning. The attack was made in strength, and fighting is still going on. Below here there has also been fairly heavy local fighting about Boisleux, Boiry, Ablainzeville and Moyenneville; and it will be noticed that this is the area where we have been fighting for three days now, so little progress has the enemy made here.

FIERCE LOCAL STRUGGLES.

Between Ablainzeville and Moyenneville is some high ground before Alette, which the Germans have made repeated and desperate attempts to capture. More than once they have been in possession of part of the ground, and have been driven out again. There is a similar local rise between Boyelle and Boisleux which the Germans made a determined attempt to take this morning, and were brilliantly driven back by a counter-attack. Yet a third attack by Boisleux was similarly hampered and beaten back.

About Comneucourt and Hébuterne, Beaumont Hamel and Serre, and all this blood-soaked area of the Somme battle, there have been similar local struggles of more or less fierceness. Nowhere has the enemy made any ground, much of the fighting raging about the actual old German front line which we attacked on the first day of the Somme. Just north of Albert the enemy has been driving against our line in considerable strength. He was badly beaten in attacks on Authuille and Aveluy Wood, and the only point at which he gained a yard was near the village of Aveluy, where he was reported at noon to have been in one small sector of our front.

All these things, however, though the struggles have sometimes been of extreme bitterness, are comparatively small incidents in the whole gigantic drama. In general, the gain that the enemy has made in the last two days has been nugatory, and we still hold the line to which we deliberately fell back.

Even when one recognizes to the full the extent of the gains which the Germans have made and the gravity of the conflict as it still continues, it is impossible not to remember that by this time, after a whole week of fighting, according to German plans they ought to have been rolling up our line at will and ranging magnificently over vast areas in open warfare. Instead of that they find in front of them troops stronger in numbers and as stubborn in spirit as those before them on the first day, and they are compelled to fight hard to try to gain a few yards of ground. If satisfaction be too strong a word to be used yet, we may at least regard the present situation with some confidence.

SOME FAMOUS DIVISIONS.

In the last two days the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief has mentioned a number

EXTENT OF THE GERMAN GAINS.



ARMY'S SPIRIT.

THE GREAT STAND ON NORTH FRONT.

(From Our Special Correspondent.)

WAR CORRESPONDENTS' HEAD-QUARTERS, MARCH 28.

Our Army grows in confidence. It is quite possible that you may hear of further German advances, but, so far as the British Army is concerned, there is a wide feeling that, though extremely heavy fighting is yet ahead, we have gone through an ordeal worse than anything likely to come.

I would not for a moment desire to breed a feeling of security and complacency at home. The trial must yet be severe, for Germany is undoubtedly throwing all her strength into the battle, and that strength is far from exhausted.

At the same time, the German progress has been much less than they confidently expected. The magnificent way in which the north of our line has held against the tremendous weight thrown upon it frustrated, on the first day, the enemy dreams of an immediate break through, which was to be followed by the rolling up of our front from the flanks. Since then their progress, though continued, has been contested at every yard. For days, at large parts of the line, we have not moved from our positions except to throw back the masses hurled at us. Nowhere have the Germans so pierced our front that any process of rolling up can possibly begin.

On the north of our line, especially south of the Scarpe and in the Albert area, the Germans

heavy fighting in the area of Montdidier, but this is outside the scope of the British Army. We have no fear that the French cannot take care of everything the Germans can do. Whether the Germans take this place or that and advance so far or farther, this is not a matter of geography, but of the final strength of armies and nations, and we have even less apprehension now than when the supreme trial began a week ago.

MAGNIFICENT GUNNERS.

To us out here it seems incredible that any one at home should, at such a moment, have any other thought than for the Army and for victory, or that any domestic difference of whatever kind should persist. The Army needs all your thoughts, all your help, and all your prayers. And it has earned and deserves them. Whatever happens on the map, be assured that no soldier ever fought more splendidly than your men are fighting out here now, or than they propose to fight, and will fight through whatever is in store.

In speaking in this way one's mind naturally goes instinctively to the infantry and the man with the rifle, but other men here are just as fine. No troops could possibly have behaved better than the gunners, and in this I would especially say that I do not mean field gunners alone. The Royal Garrison Artillery has borne itself magnificently. The strain upon the men with the heavy guns has been stupendous, and their endurance, their resource, and their courage have been beyond all praise. The German claims of numbers of guns taken cannot be even approximately correct, unless they include the Tank guns taken and the enormous majority of other pieces which were

JAPANESE ACTION IN SIBERIA.

INTERVENTION NEARER.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

TOKYO, MARCH 26.

Both Count Terauchi and Viscount Motono made formal statements in the Diet to-day on the Siberian situation.

Viscount Motono's speech was read in both Houses. It was to the effect that German influence was advancing in Siberia and was causing the gravest concern not only to Japan, but to all the Allies.

Following on Viscount Motono's statement, Mr. Ozaki, the leader of the Opposition, put a series of forcible questions. He pointed out that the Foreign Minister had expressed friendship for the Government of Russia.

The joint intervention of the Allies in Siberia will apparently be forced by Bolshevik excesses at Vladivostok.

MARCH 23.—The Jiji Shimpō gives prominence to an article predicting that a special session of the Diet will be held in the month of May, and that mobilization will follow.

Viscount Kato is of opinion that the fact that the Government has hinted at a special session will be received abroad as an assurance that mobilization has been decided upon.

GERMAN THREAT TO MURMAN LINE.

LOCAL ALLIED AID.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

PETROGRAD, MARCH 30.

In a recent message I spoke of unfounded rumours of an Allied landing on the Murman coast.

The Finnish "White Guard" Army has just dealt the enemy "Red Guards" a staggering blow at the capture of Tammervika, and it is now moving towards Kem.

This new danger has brought about a coalition between the local Russian Bolshevik and Anglo-French authorities for the protection of the Murman line.

The Soviet Government at Moscow was informed by the Murman military "college" that the railway zone was threatened by the Germans and Finnish "White Guards."

The Russian military authorities in the Murman territory have therefore come to an understanding with the British and French representatives, whereby the latter agree to recognize the local Soviet as the supreme authority in that region.

By the Treaty of Brest the cessation of naval operations, the removal of mines and the resumption of peaceful navigation in Russian waters apply only to the Baltic and Black Seas, not to the White Sea and the Murman coast.

Should the Murman railway be rendered unsafe, we shall be restricted to the Archangel route, and that may not be available for the next two months on account of the ice in Archangel harbour.

The German Government, according to a Berlin wireless message received in London

this week, has addressed to the Soviet Government in Moscow the following military protest against the dispatch of Russian Red Guards to Finland:—

According to information received from Finland important masses of Red Guards continue to pour into that country from Petrograd. The Imperial German Government protests against such action, which is contrary to Article 8 of the Peace Treaty.

(Signed) VON BUNING, Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

(Admirably, per Wireless Press.)

FRENCH PLEA FOR ALLIED LANDING IN RUSSIA.

PARIS, March 28.—The Echo de Paris says:—"The great battle should not cause us to take narrow views. The Russian peace and the confusion in that country show that Russia is incapable of lifting herself without external aid."

RUSSIAN BOND COUPONS.

The Press Bureau last week issued the following statement:—

The British Government have up to March 31, 1918, provided funds to meet coupons payable in London on the direct State debt of Russia and on securities having the State guarantee of that country.

Otherwise there would no longer be any security in the relations between States, and it would become impossible to enter into any obligation for a long period if this obligation could be questioned.



impossible to enter into any obligation for a long period if this obligation could be questioned. This would entail the ruin of the credit of States, politically as well as financially.

STIRRING CALL TO THE DOMINIONS.

"THE EAST MAN MAY COUNT."

The following message has been sent by Mr. Lloyd George to the Prime Ministers of Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and Newfoundland:—

We have been inspired during the past week with the constant news of the dauntless courage with which Dominion troops have withstood the desperate assaults of vastly more numerous German forces.

As already announced, we propose to ask Parliament to authorize immediate measures for the raising of fresh forces here.

Before this campaign is finished the last man may count.

THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN.

SIGNOR ORLANDO'S FAITH.

(FROM G. WARD PRICE.)

ROME, MARCH 25.

To-day I was received by Signor Orlando and he expressed his absolute confidence that we shall win through to victory.

The help offered to us is being given at a moment of crisis also for Italy. In Signor Orlando's words:—

Two courses were open to the Austro-Germans. They could attack, had they preferred, where the Allies are weakest—in the Balkans.

Signor Orlando expressed great admiration for the British, saying that if he were not an Italian he would be an Englishman.

When I was at the front an Italian peasant told me that an English soldier had offered him some tea. "I didn't like it," said the man, "but not to hurt the Englishman's feelings, I drank it."

Among Italians there is a genuine fellow-feeling with us at this hour. Some of the most eminent Italians have given me messages to England which I reproduce below.

Signor Orlando welcomed the opportunity of greeting the British people at this solemn moment. He declared to me:—

England holds the post of honour in this gigantic struggle. She, who has been the giver to civilized peoples of free institutions, is defending liberty against autocracy, right against force, justice against violence.

Signor Salandra, who as Prime Minister placed Italy by our side, said to me:— This morning, by what seems more than a coincidence, I took up a book of Gioberti written in 1831, and, opening it, found under my eyes these words:—

Signor Luzzatti said to me:— In this tragic hour the destinies of humankind are again being decided as when the Greeks saved Europe from Asiatic barbarism and Rome brought Carthage low and England in the days of the Armada worsted Spain.

THE BRITISH IN ITALY.

The following report, dated March 31, has been received from the Commander of the British Forces in Italy:—

The British troops holding the Montello sector were relieved in the middle of March and have since taken over a new sector on the Asiago Plateau.

Patrols have been active on the new front and a few prisoners captured. The success of the Flying Corps has continued. Ten ea (1 enemy aeroplanes) have been destroyed and four driven down out of control since my last report.

In this total is included seven machines destroyed and three driven down out of control on March 30. On this date a patrol of three British machines attacked 19 enemy aeroplanes over an enemy aerodrome east of the Piave, destroying six of them.

BOMBAY VILLAGERS.

CALL TO REFUSE TAXES.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

An extraordinary situation is developing in Kaira, one of the richest districts of the Bombay Presidency.

Owing to the late rains, the autumn crop partly failed, and, under the rules, the Government suspended their revenue demand where the crop was estimated to be below 25 per cent. of the normal.

RIOTING IN QUEBEC.

CITY UNDER MILITARY RULE.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

TORONTO, APRIL 1.

This morning the military authorities, under the command of General Lessard, took over the administration of Quebec City, but martial law has not been proclaimed.

The ringleaders in the riot have virtually served an ultimatum on the Government demanding that the troops, which include Toronto and Western units, must be withdrawn.

The following statement is issued by the authorities:—

The military have behaved with the greatest forbearance during the last few days and have, in the plain performance of their duty, met insult and attack with patience and discipline.

We refuse to believe that the regrettable disturbances are the beginning and end in Quebec, or have the approval of the mass of the inhabitants of the ancient capital.

Damage to property is estimated at £30,000. QUEBEC, April 2.—Further riots on the part of anti-conscriptionists occurred here yesterday evening.

Losses by submarine. The Admiralty return of arrivals, sailings, war losses, and unsuccessful attacks for the week ended midnight March 23 is as follows:—

LOSSES BY SUBMARINE.

The Admiralty return of arrivals, sailings, war losses, and unsuccessful attacks for the week ended midnight March 23 is as follows:—

Table with 2 columns: Category and Value. Arrivals: 2,471; Sailings: 2,488.

Table with 2 columns: Category and Value. Arrivals: 16; Under 1,600 tons (gross): 12; Unsuccessfully attacked: 19; Fishing vessels sunk: 11.

ALLIED SHIPPING LOSSES.

ROME, March 27.—During the week ended midnight, March 23, 443 merchant vessels of all nationalities, amounting to 286,870 gross tons, arrived in Italian ports, while 412 vessels, of 316,955 gross tons, sailed.

BRITISH DESTROYER MINED. The Secretary of the Admiralty makes the following announcement:—

One of H.M. destroyers struck a mine and sank on March 27, resulting in the loss of one officer and 40 men.

ARMED SHIP TORPEDOED.

The Secretary of the Admiralty makes the following announcement:— H.M. armed boarding steamer Tithonus (Commander F. H. Fitaroy, R.D., R.N.R.) was torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine on March 28.

LIFEBOATS SHELLED BY SUBMARINE.

A story of German savagery was told at an inquest held at a British port on Captain Ingham Knuthson, of the Norwegian steamer Reidar.

The lifeboats, which did not sight a craft of any kind, each carried a bag of biscuits and a small keg of water. Each man had three biscuits and a spoonful of water each day.

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 ~~xx~~ 3. Attacked at 5.15 with 49th. Attacked with 3 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 foard and looked like establishing jumping off trenches. Artillery asked for. Lewis guns and t.m. told to assist in dispersing enemy. Barrage support 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 posishn 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 thik formation M.G. fire cut them to pieces.

Sgt ran from Cumming's potlion (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 ~~xxx~~ 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 sat all during acton, ~~or succ.~~

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 supt coy only 50 men left out of 120. One platoon 45th came up from further back to reinforce these coys. ~~9.40~~ 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 & 15 about, ~~only 250 yds from our~~ 11.20 party about 100 or 200 enemy came into our support line. These supports had no Lewis guns left, all damaged 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 in-tact 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 rly line. 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)

At 11.40 there was gap of abt 1000 yds on 47th right. All details bth hq helped to extend flank along DERNANCOURT road up to AMIENS road. At 2 pm. 52nd left flank bent up hill opposite refused flank 47th. About 3 enemy brought sev'l 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 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 5wo-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 in 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 ordered to prepare for counter attack from E19. 11.15 message that left flank left ~~flank~~ coy pressed back again---this left the flank now approx. on old C.C.S. facing east. Ordered no retirement from that line in D19. Line then rightwards along rly to Buire 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 1 battle they were fighting; Bde & the infantry from time to time gave them all the information wh was going. & they were as excited as could be. Queenslanders backing up the Queensland infy & so on.

*Mur
8/9 April/18*

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MAP E2

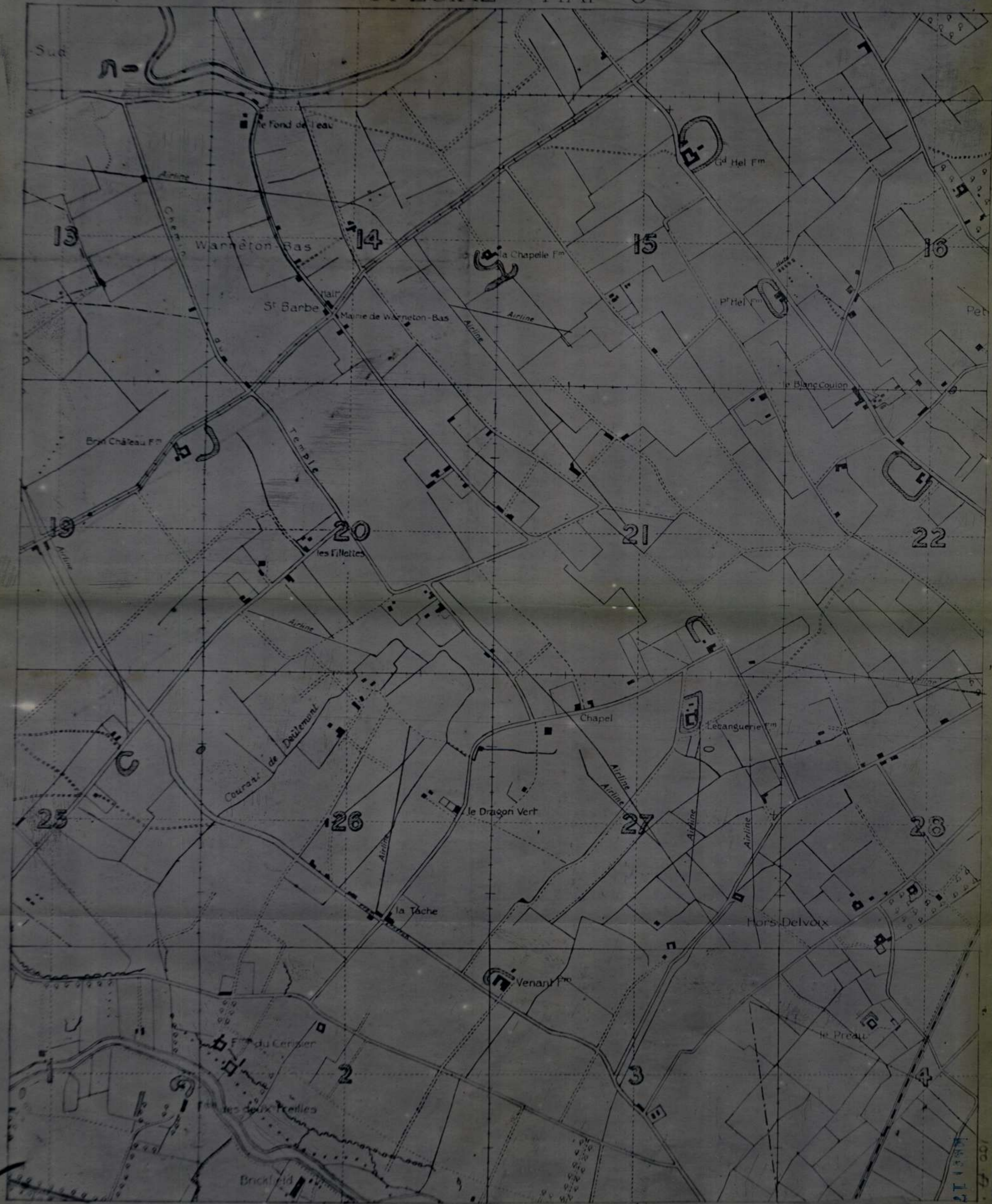


SCALE 1:20,000

□ DIVISION 21-4-18

SPECIAL MAP "C"

Handwritten initials in the top right corner.



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8-18

St. Lazar's Rectory,
 Waterloo, Sydney,
 10th March 1918.

To
 Major Beau
 Australian War Correspondent.

Dear Sir,

I have read your eulogy of my son Phil for which I thank you also for your kindly mention of our baby Dick, but I do not think you have given our brave sainted Owen his rightful place beside Colonel Scott, but have just-mentioned him casually. Owen also won his spurs at Lone Pine & after that dread battle wrote home, - "I do not know how I am able to write this but the Angel of the Lord went with me." Also he wrote shortly before he was killed (17.9.16) "I am quite happy with my family (3rd Battalion) & if I can make myself worthy of the confidence placed in me I am satisfied that I have done my duty & nothing more. Most-people in publishing articles forget that there are plenty of others in the same place, & doing much more glorious deeds. I have seen some things done which would make your blood run cold to think of, & yet-which make you glad to realize you are a soldier alongside such men. It is no use flattery me for

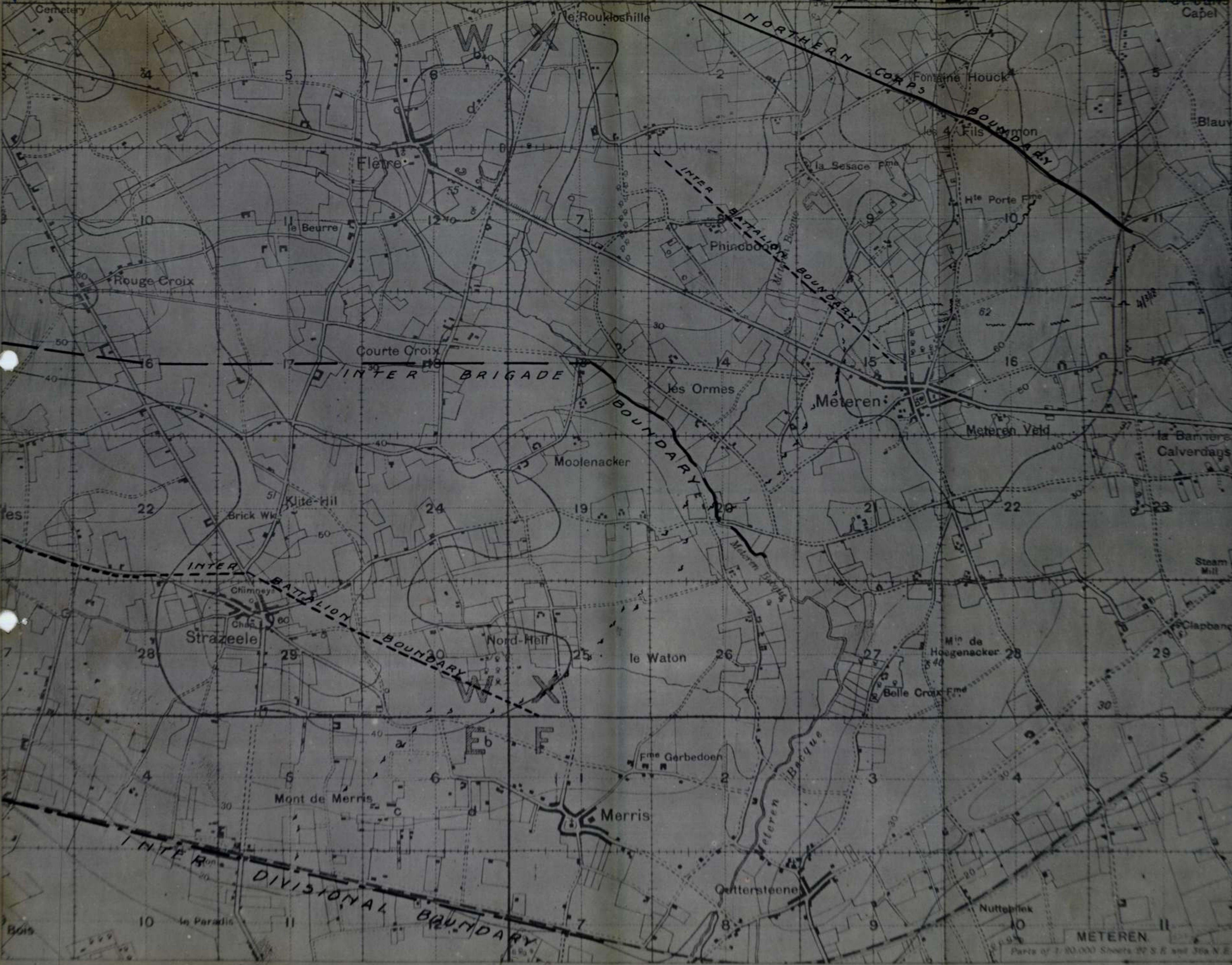
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what measure
in excess I may
have achieved will
be a youngster, & my training
of the "blaw" were who all
arrange to see here did & here would
of his share for him, & because these brothers are equally
I read your articles with the utmost pleasure & closed
my prayer for that Victory we with you all sharing, asking
young lives to help attain
I am yours ever
L. G. G. G.

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SECRET



METEREN

Part of 1:20,000 Sheets 27 S E and 30a N E.

Ordnance Survey, 10 B. 1 April, 1918.

3/5/18

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Ig

Australian Corps.

11th May, 1918.

TRANSLATION OF CAPTURED GERMAN LETTER

Morlancourt.

5th May, 1918.

"We are now in the neighbourhood of ALBERT, and I am in the outpost line with the Englishmen 200 metres away against us. We have the Australians in front of us, and they are very quick and cunning. They glide about in the night like cats, and come right up to our trenches without our seeing them. Last night they were in our trenches, and killed two men and dragged one away with them.

"I am glad that I am so far forward, for at least there is no artillery fire. Our regiment has suffered heavy losses through gas. It is the most horrible death that a man can have when he swallows gas. I am therefore very cautious and always have my gas mask by me. There are many soldiers round here, but I have met only one man I know. They are mostly Bavarians, Badeners, and Rheinlanders.

"The worst here are still the flyers, against whom there are scarcely any means of protecting oneself. I hope God will guard me, and that happily I will come out alive. At Easter we are going to be relieved."

Capt Pear

Compliments from
father
17/11/18
J.C.

87

Dear Pearson,

Am attaching a copy of Travers's report on the bringing down of the "Red Devils' plane" on 21st April.

Travers is a very trustworthy officer & as he had no ulterior motive in claiming the 'plane' for his own unit, I think his statement is quite correct.

At the time of the occurrence the 52nd Para (less 2 comp) ~~plus~~ a section of the 24th MG Coy, 4 guns, & one section 13th ALTM Bty (4 guns) were on the right flank of the 11th A.I. Bde in the valley of the Somme, our role being Right Flank Guard to 11th A.I. Bde & we were under their orders.

Richie's plane, chasing one of ours, passed immediately over our Para HQ (on the schoolhouse at VAUX) flying ~~at~~ very low, roughly about 150 ft & our own people saw the whole occurrence.

Yours sincerely,

J. L. Whitham

HQ. 52/Para
27.4.18

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COPY.

42
23
H.Q., R.A.F.
2nd May, 1918.

Dear Lytten,

General Salmend has been very carefully into the question of the bringing down of Richthofen, and he considers that it is impossible for the R.A.F. to entirely renounce the claim. At the time of the collapse of the machine, three of our scouts were near enough to take part in the fight, and the report that a red triplane had been shot down in aerial combat was sent in before it was known who the occupant was. He is perfectly willing that the R.A.F. should share the claim with the Australians, if they wish, and has made a re-draft of Bean's telegram, which he suggests would meet the case, and which I attach.

Yours ever,

sd. Philip Game.

Major Lytten.

87
C O P Y.

42
21
17
April 23rd 1918.

C. O.

52nd Battalion A.I.F.

Herewith report on Captain Von RICHTHOFEN's plane which was brought down on the 21st April 1918. at about 11.45 a.m. and landed at (Map Reference, Sheet 62.D) J.19.b.3.4. and was hit directly over ~~Map Reference~~ J.19.c.8.5.

On the 21st April I was instructed to report to 11th Brigade Headquarters as liaison Officer, situated at J.19.c.8.5. At about 11.45 a.m. I was laying on the ground ~~unaccompanied~~ by my runner, about 50 yards from Brigade Headquarters, setting my map and having a general look round with my glasses. I heard a plane "or planes" coming at a tremendous pace from the direction of 26 Central. A Vickers gun was firing from a spot situated at J.25.e.8.9. The first plane which came into view was one of our own and less than 20 paces behind was an enemy plane painted "RED". The red plane was overhauling our plane fast and both were flying so low that they almost crashed into the trees at top of hill. Almost directly over the spot where I was laying, the enemy plane swerved to the right so suddenly that it seemed almost to turn over. Our plane went straight on from that moment. The enemy plane was quite out of control and did a wild circle and dashed towards J.19.b.3.4. where it crashed. I went over with other Officers and had a look at the plane and also the driver who was dead, a machine gun bullet had passed from the left side of his face and near bottom of jaw and came out just behind his right eye. His description would be :-

Height about 6 feet.

Age 26 or 28 years.

Eyes- very light blue.

Closely cropped fair hair.

Clear complexion, clean shaven.

The Vickers gun mentioned was the only gun firing at the time the driver first lost control of his machine.

I made enquiries and found the gun was handled by No. 424 Sgt POPKIN CEDRIC BARNETT, 24th. Aust. M.G. Company.

Copies sent to :-

11th A.I. Bde

13th A.I. Bde

24th M.G. Coy

(Signed) Gen. A. TRAVERS, Lieut.
52nd BATTALION A.I.F.

Date 23.4.1918.

Time 2.10 p.m.

Gen. A. Travers Lieut.

Copy for Captain C. E. W. Pearson, as I hear you are anxious to get the "disk" out regarding this. With compliments to C.O. 52/Bde. J.W. 27.4.18

57
62
25
PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL.

13/A/20.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS,
BRITISH ARMS IN FRANCE.
3rd May, 1918.

Dear Beant:-

As I said in my former note to you, on receipt of your letter of 26/4/18 about RICHTHOFEN, I immediately went to H.Q., R.A.F., and I believe General SALMOND has since seen General BIRDWOOD - I enclose copy of General GAME's letter.

With regard to your cable, I have censored one or two passages, but have put in no new matter.

I don't very much like the tone of your letter. You know, I think, perfectly well my personal opinion about the Australians, and you must know how they are regarded by every soldier in the British Army, viz:- as the very finest troops that exist in any Army. They are written up on every possible occasion by all my correspondents British, Allied and Neutral. The feeling in Great Britain generally is, that the descendants of colonists have more initiative, more courage and more brains than those who stay in the home country. All these qualities go to make first rate troops. Furthermore your Corps represents a Nation, and, therefore, there is no doubt the very highest esprit de corps. If every Imperial Division is not up to the standard of every Australian Division, there is nothing to be wondered at, but every Imperial Division has, at any rate, taken its share of hard knocks and more than its share of heavy losses.

As to your phrase "stopping a rot" it is entirely objectionable.

Some of the men whom the Australians relieved & who were no doubt going pretty fast at that time, had been fighting for seven consecutive days. The reserves who came up to save the situation, partly French, partly Australians and partly Imperial, all equally thought they were "stopping the rot", but as a matter of fact, the retiring troops were stone cold, and no wonder.

There is no doubt in my mind that Australia has won immortal fame in this war by the conduct of her magnificent troops. As you well know my sentiments on this point, I think it is odd that you should have written me this letter, quoting German wireless and German opinion about the Australians, as though to convert me to an opinion which I had long since had.

Yours

Major,
General Staff.

C.E.W. BEAN Esq.,
War Correspondent.

A typical "gun valley"; a typical scene on the Beach at Anzac. Our models will be our most interesting exhibits; and besides the models of carts and guns and dugouts, and tanks, and aeroplanes, and all the mechanical aids of war (the broad-gauge railway delivering shells to the narrow gauge railway, and the light-line delivering ~~xx~~ to the tram or the lorry, and the lorry to the ration waggon and the ammunition or pack train) besides all the individual engines and models we might have these big general models, half picture, half sculpture, with a genuine ~~real effect~~ of realism aimed at. And for these we want a capable artist.

Now my idea and Dyson's is that for this work Benson might well be asked to provide. For the present he would only need to make his plans - draw up a scheme of what series of models he was going to aim at, and then make his studies for them - notes as to colour - photographs if necessary; - notes as to figures, the general run of the country, the sort of shelling to which it was subjected and so forth. He would not, of course, have to mould the outline of the hills himself, but he would have to draw up a scheme of what he wanted done, and then contrive the methods by which he would fill in the part that an artist must fill in - the means of representing woods, shellbursts etc. How far it was possible to give a topsphere, how men and objects could be best represented, would be part of his technical work; as would also be the modelling of figures in the models on a larger scale e.g. of a sunken road at Moreuil.

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His drawings and notes would be useful records; and these he would make exactly as the other artists, during the continuance of the war. But after the war we could no doubt have him and a number of men under his direction working on these models - possibly in Australia, or possibly here during the period after the war and before deactivation. Most people will agree that these are the most interesting form of exhibit; and there is no reason why an inventive artist should not make them an expression of true art as well.

Perhaps if I explain what I mean by "an expression of art" the importance of it will be clearer. A model of a sunken road, with figures and dugout entrances, is normally employed only as a sort of three-dimension map of the place to explain it to your brain. But I think it could be made to explain it to your sensibility as well - to give you the impression of the utter fatigue, or the danger, the feverish unreality which comes over everyday landscapes during battle times. An artist should be able to do that - and it has never been done yet. If our Museum contains such things, it will become a centre for pilgrimage not only for Australians but for the world. And as for the artists that have a part in making it, I cannot imagine a work that would appeal to them more than that of building up the memorial of the sacrifices and suffering, the daring and the devotion of the A.I.F.

If you agree, it is only necessary to ask Benson if he will submit a scheme, and then decide on it. He has seen everything since the landing. Yours sincerely,

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Interview with Cpl C.W. Lane and Pte Ruschples of 13th M.G. Co.
April 13, 1918 (Notes of F.M. Cullock)

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 alsty 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 pozies 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 ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ 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 ~~xxx~~ 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. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ The 47th batn was all wiped out, either killed or captured (this was told them by a wounded sergeant of the battalion in the German dressing station, not by the German officer).

The food they got was very little---less than the German soldiers. Four oz of ~~xx~~ 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 been 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 station to rly.

10th. Went out to work but did nothing. Night marched to Bray. Slept ~~xxx~~ on road outside Peronne and arrived 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. compound 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 through 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 would leave France and the French would then give in. They would then establish long range guns on the coast at Calais and elsewhere and bombard England. A big new attack had been 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 ~~xx~~ from somewhere in rear.

had no
were
reached
across
it
between
the sentries

The Germans were very nervous of our barrages on the Meaulte road which was very nasty - as was the barrage in Dernancourt. The British ^{heavy} shell with a sensitive fuse was dangerous at 600 yards & made the 5.9 seem silly.

put

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From B-Genl Smith, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ 17/4/18 (Notes of F.M. Outlook)

5th Bde went in night 5-6th. 5th of Villers Bretonneux. 7/4/18 19th and 30th Bns attacked German (eastern) half of Hangard wood. Attack was by two coys and one platoon of 30th 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 a.g. and a large number of eneay 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 300yds 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 a.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 30th 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 13th 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 S of Villers. On night 13th 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 on 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 11 men, 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 a.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

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 ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ 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

asleep

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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. (6.35 a.m.)

Lt Roye was brought in wounded from copse, foot shot off by a.s. 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 reach it.

Saw the lad aged 19 who shamed dead all day near cross-roads (see Murphy's report).

At 3 a.m. morning follg the attack he got up from his furrow to get his. 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 8 9th Bde took over from 5th and held line till night 12th. Order N to S 34th, 36th, French. On 12th enemy had 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. 7 a.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. 7 a.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 them 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 on 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 ~~XXXXX~~ --- "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

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EIGHTEENTH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION

Battalion Headquarters
15th April 1916.

Headquarters,
5th Aust. Inf. Bde.

I submit the following report on operation carried out by this Battalion at 3 a.m. this morning against enemy positions in CARTER COPSE and Cross roads in U.23.d. The conclusions I have formed are subject to modification as a possible result of further enquiries, but in the main, I think they are correct.

Preliminary orders were received at 5'7 p.m. from G.O.C. - I returned to Battalion H.Q. and issued my instructions to Company Commanders, "A" and "B" Coys. who were detailing the troops. All preliminary arrangements had been completed early in the day. The Company Commanders left me at 5'17 p.m. - Lieut. Frewin, "A" Coy., proceeding to HANGUARD to discuss final arrangements with the French. Written orders, confirming my verbal instructions, were issued to all concerned at 9 p.m.

On the night of 13th/14th, a post had been partially completed at U.22.b.70.65. I instructed O.C. "B" Coy. to push on this work and occupy it prior to Zero hour. He was also to construct a post at U.29.b.95.15. and occupy it prior to zero. Both these tasks were completed as ordered, despite the darkness and the hard nature of the soil.

A third post was ordered to be constructed at approx. U.23.c.45. to be occupied by one officer and Platoon with Lewis gun prior to Zero, if possible. If the enemy prevented the construction of the post, the locality was to be taken at Zero hour, but I impressed on the O.C. "B" Coy. that the post was essential and should be completed by Zero unless enemy opposition was met with. The O.C. "B" Coy. detailed Lieut. Thompson for this work and I am satisfied that the instructions were clearly given to this officer.

At 12'55 a.m. (15th inst.) Capt. Cadle reported that the three posts had been occupied, confirming this telephone message in writing at 1'15 a.m. He had seen the officer (Lieut. Jones) at U.22.b.70.65. and N.C.O. at U.29.b.95.15. and was on his way to see Lieut. Thompson when he met a runner from this officer who reported that he "was out and O.K." On this authority Capt. Cadle sent the report to Batta. H.Q.

At 1'30 a.m. Capt. Cadle met Lieut. Thompson near the Cross roads in U.22.d.50.65. when Lieut. Thompson informed him that he had been forward, and had decided to wait until Zero hour before attempting to construct the post. He could give no reason for his delay in carrying out the orders. Capt. Cadle ordered him forward at once and returned to his Company H.Q. to report the matter. The wires were cut and he could not get through for some time. The post was not constructed. Lieut. Thompson waited until Zero hour, and I am strongly of the opinion that the failure on the part of this officer was in the end mainly responsible for the men in the Copse being overrun. Lieut. Thompson certainly made a brave fight against heavy odds and paid the penalty with his life, but he did not carry out my orders.

The parties were in position at Zero - 45 as ordered, and the dump ordered had been established at Copse in U.29.a.

The Stokes mortars opened up at 3 a.m. and their fire was well directed. When the Copse was entered later, numbers of dead bosche were seen and one light machine gun at N.W. corner of Copse was blown out.

The artillery barrage came down at zero plus 10 and though reports are varying, the officers say it was placed as arranged, and was good.

The party of 2 officers and 50 O.R. got to the Copse, passing through a hedge about 150 yards on our side of the Copse. Behind this hedge the bun was dug in, but did not put up much of a fight. A second line was encountered near the edge of the Copse and a fairly stiff resistance was offered. Our men got through to the far side and were there reorganised by Lieuts. Frewin and Cascoigne-Roy and began to dig in under machine gun fire. A patrol was sent towards the Cemetery to gain touch with the French but encountered the enemy about 50 yards

/south of

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South of CEMETERY COPSE and had to retire.

A carrying party, under orders sent back by Lieut. Frewin carried S.A.A. 9000, &c and some shovels to the Copse.

The success signal was reported about 3'22 a.m. from the Copse, but so many different coloured flares were being fired by the enemy that it was impossible to distinguish our own.

At 4'20 a.m. Capt. Gable reported that Lieut. Thompson had been wounded and that heavy fighting was in progress at the Cross roads U.23.a. and U.23.b. He moved forward to reconnoitre. At 4'25 a.m. Lieut. Maxwell who was standing by in rear of the Copse in U.29.a. was ordered forward to Copse where he found Lieut. Frewin wounded. Lieut. Frewin has not been seen since. Lieut. Cascoigne-Roy who was of the party, was severely wounded in the Copse and later was evacuated through the French.

At 4'42 a.m. Sgt. De Raxe reported that he was being strongly counter attacked at cross roads in U.23.d. The enemy had been encountered in large numbers at both cross roads in U.23.c. and d. and had previously been driven in the direction of the BOIS de HANGARD but had reorganised in gully in U.23.b. and advanced again. Heavy casualties were inflicted upon him but our men were driven in and the bus swung down from cross roads at U.23.d. and attacked our men in the Copse. Had the post at U.23.c. (cross roads) been established, this attack would have possibly been broken. As it was an attack case from the direction of U.30.a.50.50. and the garrison practically surrounded.

By 7 a.m. the troops were back on their own line with the exception of the posts at U.22.b.70.65 and U.29.b.90.15. which are still held.

In the attack on the cross roads Lieut. Thompson's party got to the south of the road and entered a sunken road about 15 yards east of a row of poplars. (approx. U.23.c.40.35.) and found it heavily manned; three machine guns were seen there. Later, three stretcher bearers counted 78 enemy dead around cross roads in U.23.c.

Our casualties definitely ascertained at 7 p.m. to-day are -

<u>Officers:</u> -	1	Died of Wounds.	<u>O.R.:</u> -	7	Killed in action.
	1	Wounded & Missing.		38	Wounded.
	3	Wounded.		7	Unaccounted for.

7 probably some in front line.

Battn. R.C.
8 p.m.

Geo. E. Murphy
Lieut.-Colonel
Commanding 18th. Battalion, A.I.F.

Battalion Headquarters 34
 16th April, 1918.

Headquarters,
 5th A. I. Brigade.

In continuation of my report of operation of 15th inst.

The party at Cross Road in U.23.c. held out under Sgt. De Saxe until daybreak. Most of the enemy were asleep when our men entered the sunken road, and their shelters were bombed and the enemy fell back towards BOIS DE HANGARD. At about 4.15 a.m. a strong force moved down from the direction of the white house. One officer with a very commanding voice was heard giving orders. Our men, originally 1 officer (N.C.O.) and 20 O.R. held out here until daylight when the N.C.O. in charge found he was being surrounded by increasing odds, withdrew his men in good order, bringing in his wounded. It was in this spot that 78 dead Huns were counted. It is certain that the enemy's casualties here were particularly heavy since no count could be made of dead in the road itself. The N.C.O. is of the opinion that he could have hung on had the post been dug in. As it was he had to depend on the road for cover from machine gun fire and could not command any approaches overland.

The party for Cross Road in U.23.d. came under heavy machine gun fire at some 25 yards range. The rifle section of 8 men lost 5 killed and 1 wounded and of the party - of total strength 1 Officer 30 O.R. - the Officer was wounded and there were 22 other casualties. One rifleman was out all day and part of the night of the 15th shaming dead. He was within 15 yards of the Hun post, and states that at daylight he counted 50 Huns come up the sunken Road into the post. Our party appears to have been discovered owing to a flare falling into their midst. From that on the enemy fired flares along the ground in their direction, and subjected them to grazing fire from 5 light machine guns. The Lewis Gun Section were knocked out except one man. The enemy managed to get a gun well down on our left flank, and enfilade fire from it inflicted most of the casualties.

The position of the party at the copse is still obscure. Two officers and 50 O.R. attacked here in two waves and were followed by the carrying party. They appear to have met two lines of the enemy - the first line about 200 yards on our side of Cemetery Copse and the second about 70 yards in advance of copse. The carrying party found a number of Huns shaming dead behind a hedge with two machine guns. These Huns were mopped up. The troops passed through the Copse and began to dig in beyond as ordered. Lieut. Gascogne-Roy was severely wounded about 4.45 a.m. and brought in later on. Lieut. Frewin took some of the carrying party to assist him. The Copse is not in view from our lines, but he appears to have hung on until about 6.25 a.m. when the Hun was heard shouting and charging. Lieut. Frewin had been wounded severely early in the morning but refused to leave his post. A party tried to get forward but were driven back by heavy machine gun fire from the left flank. The Hun appears to have enveloped the Copse at about 6.20 a.m.

Of the 2 Officers and 50 O.R. the 2 Officers were wounded - one missing - , and with the carrying party of 40 and reinforcing party of approximately 35 our casualties here were,-

3 O.R. Killed.

22 O.R. Wounded.

29 O.R. Missing.

A board is still sitting and it is certain that 8 were killed. I do not think that many were captured but that most of the missing were killed by machine gun fire, fighting to the last. The board has not finished taking evidence yet.

A patrol on the night of the 16th inst found the Hun strongly dug in about 200 yards in advance of copse.

Two guns were brought in. Lieut. Walters saw five in action near the Copse during the morning. N.C.O.s with the carrying party saw six light machine guns and two Lewis Guns knocked out apparently by

the Stokes Mortar bombardment. This was confirmed by Lieut. Maxwell, M.C., D.C.M.

Our force engaged was,-

- ② Lieut. Thompson and 20 O.R.
- ② Lieut. McLaren, M.M. and 30 O.R.
- ② Lieut. Frewin
- ② Lieut. Gascoigne-Roy) and 50 O.R.
- ② Lieut. Duncan and 40 O.R. as carrying party.

In addition 35 O.R. under an officer were used for counter attack.

Our casualties were,-

Officers ② . One D.O.W. 3 Wounded (one missing).

(In addition Capt. Lowther was wounded whilst organizing the right party.)

Other Ranks. Three K.I.A. One D.O.W. 35 Wounded. and 31 Missing. (Of these 8 are now known to be K.I.A.)

The enemy losses were undoubtedly heavier for large numbers of dead were seen.

Geo. Ed. ...

Lieut.-Col.
Commanding 18th Battalion, A. I. F.

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War Correspondents Headquarters
France.

20/4/18.

Dearest Mother and Father,

I am writing this in the room of one of the very hospitable American correspondents at the Headquarters of the British Press on my way through from one portion of our force to the other. It has been a very anxious time, as you may imagine, in France, but also very interesting. I have just spent three days with a detached part of our force - they were good enough to put me up at the Press Chateau the first night after I left the cottage in which we are located in the south (Cutlack, Wilkins the photographer, and I) and the second night I slept in the messroom of the G.O.C. of the Australians whom I was visiting. The third night, after a trip round the front, which took me to the first little village that we stayed in in France, where I found the house of my little landlady vacated, and only the old dog there with some men of a British regiment - as I was very late back from the line I went up to our photographers hut. The photographers have moved all their gear except their personal kit etc from there in case of anything that might happen as it was not very far behind one of the points of German attack. But the Germans are still seven or eight miles away and the place is a first rate little headquarters. One of the photographers men was there, a nice youngster from Sydney. And there we slept and listened at night to the enemys planes buzzing on their long journeys, in the happy consciousness that we were as safe as in Devonshire or Yorkshire or Sydney, for that matter.

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I must say that I thoroughly enjoy this picnic life, if it were not for this senseless slaughter which we are forced into. If only the people of Germany had a mouthpiece, had the least voice in what their Government did, I am sure that the whole affair could be over in a week. That is after all what we are fighting for, and have been all through, to eliminate that monstrous German Government from the world. If this offensive of theirs falls, that will accomplish this object more surely than any other means - of that I am sure.

Well I must off to Cutlack, for I have kept the car away from him for three days.

With best love to you both and to the aunts and uncles

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Officers' Mess,
Military Hospital,
Bulford.

Much love old boy - look
after yourself. Received your
note re arrival of pictures - Have 75
letter in my bag book

Took

Get a week off I think from
next Saturday. Hospital
Almost empty now