

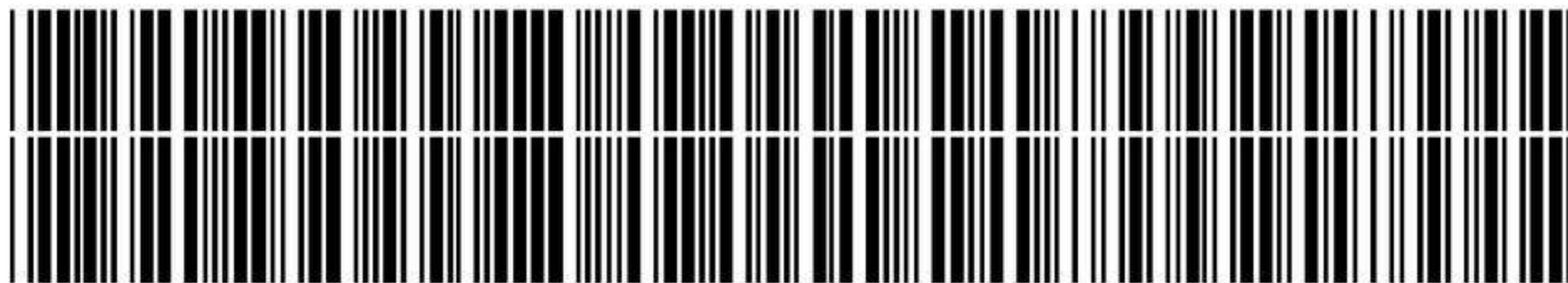
AWM38
Official History,
1914-18 War: Records of C E W Bean,
Official Historian.

Diaries and Notebooks

Item number: 3DRL606/174/1

Title: Notebook, October 1917

Includes references to the 40th Battalion,
Broodseinde, Passchendaele and Sgt L
McGee's VC.



AWM38-3DRL606/174/1

DIARY NO. 174

3 PRL 606 ITEM 174 [17]

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

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

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

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

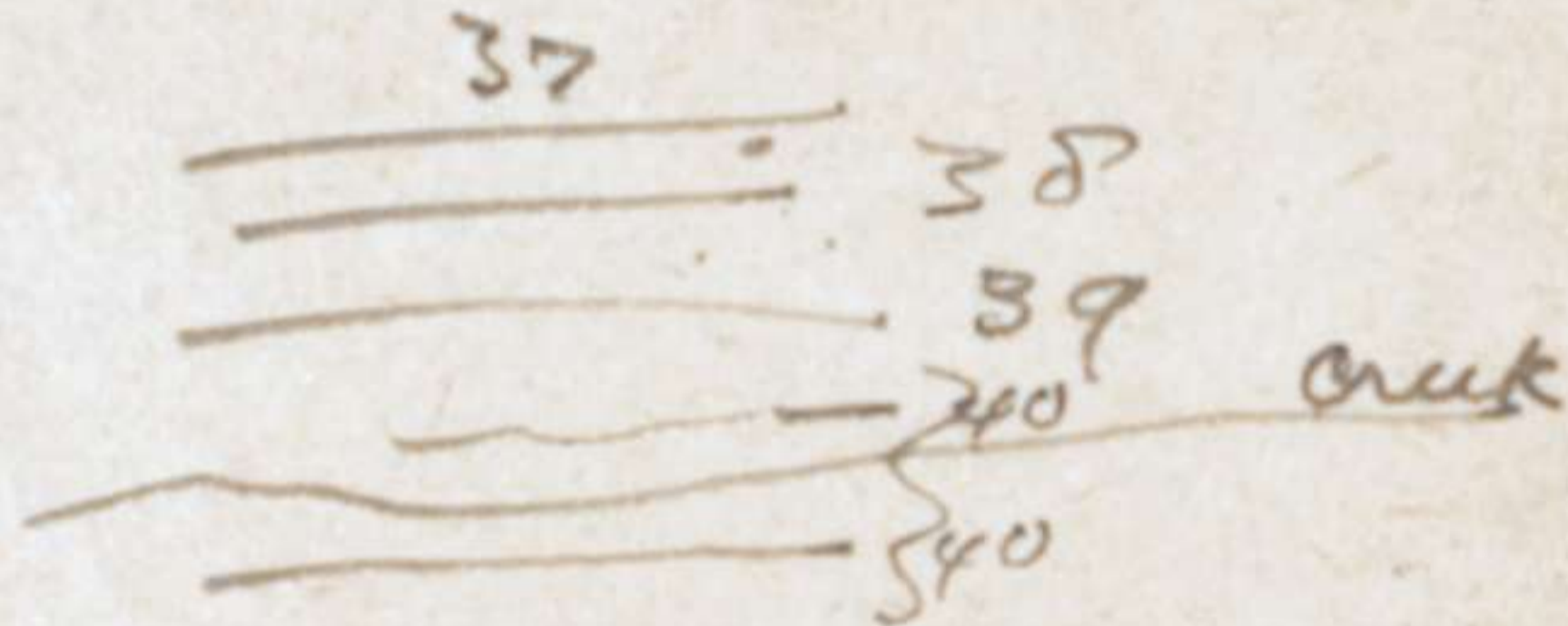
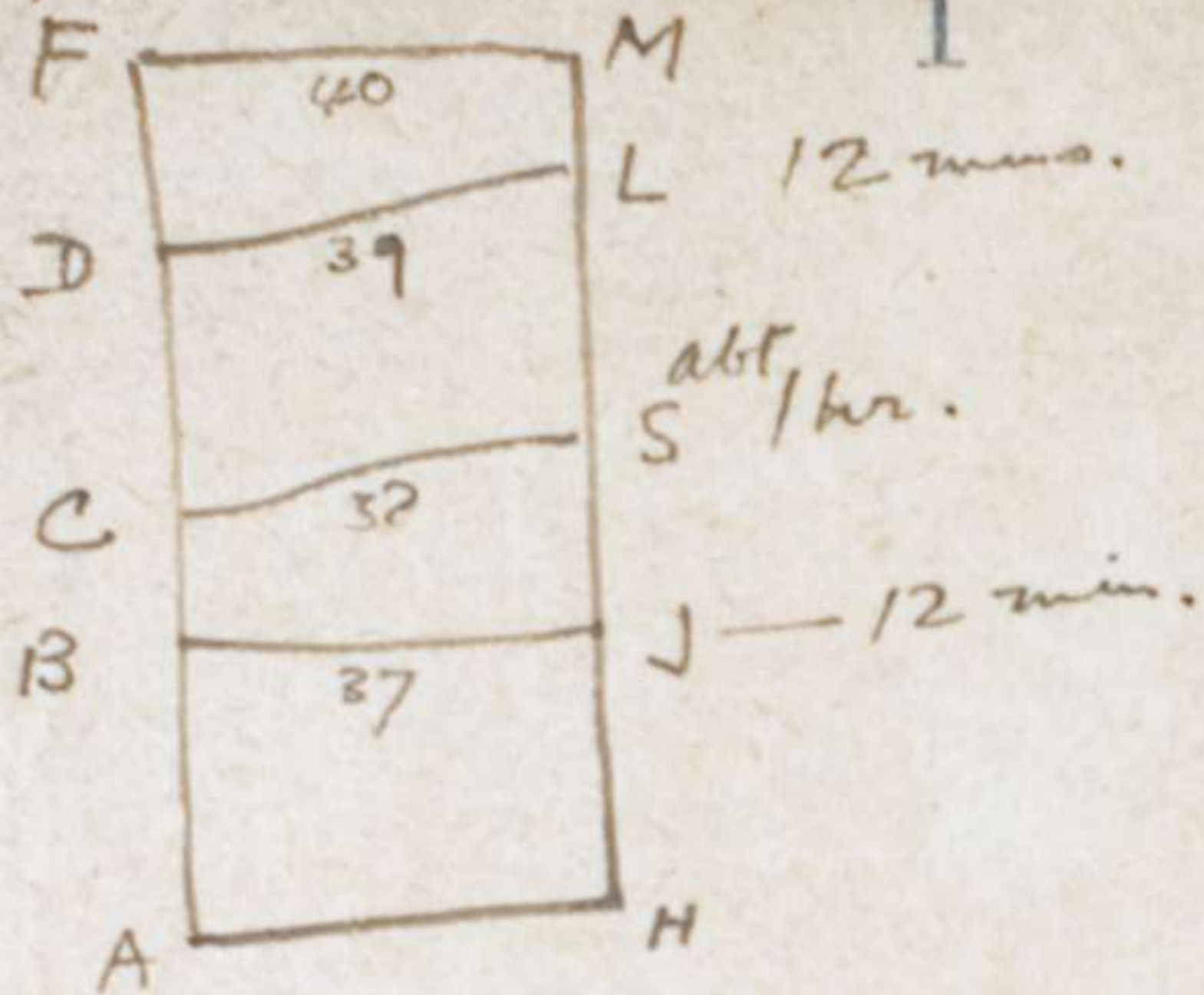
16 Sept., 1946.

C. E. W. BEAN.

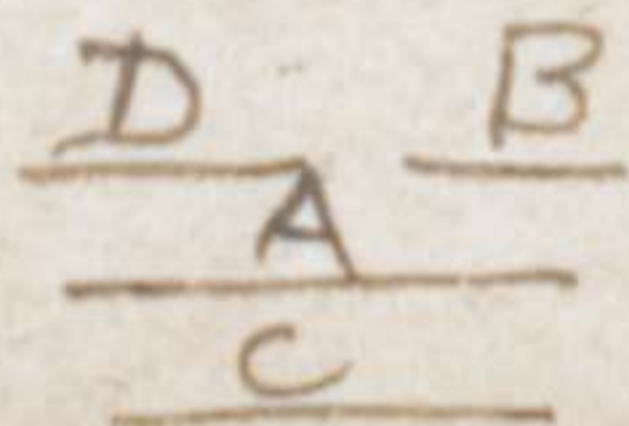
OPEN

ACCESS STATUS

MILLCREST



H.Q. at Bremen in bend of road.



40BN. Boctober 17/4

From Frenenberg Ridge
the track. K. we not
duckboarded. Then
from S. onto Zombekke Rd
& crossed it. Here
duckbds ended.

Point of assembly was
across Zombekke Creek.
There were 4 narrow
duckbd bridges but there
was not room for whole
Bn betw 39 Bn + creek.

Abt 4 am. Germans
started some fairly heavy
shelling, but ^{really} all went over.

The German barrage
at 5.30 did not cover
this part of front.

[Jumping off trench was to have
been from Kochy 7m S by E
to D21A71 but was moved

H.C.

back owing to uncertainty
of position held by
British - The final
J.O line was at in rear
of Van Isacker's Em.]

The going between 1st & 2nd
Objives - (both in valley
behind Seine) was
very boggy. Bn got
split up & the hours
wait in barrow was very
useful for reorganising.

Bn on at, wh had
suffered casualties from m.g.
was reinforced by 2 plus from C.
At the long halt in front of 2nd
Objive - 39 Bn, wh was close
to barrow had to fall back &
all others to readjust themselves to
suit.

Ruddock vs O.C. D Coy.
 up to 39th position ^{chuff} ~~only~~ art
 fire on 40th Bn. But from
 39th objective onwards there
 was heavy inf. fire. 7 mps
 were taken on D Coy's sector.
 All these had been in action,
 some left w/ belts in them,
 1 field glass lying beside 1
 gun. The crews had bolted
 for 1 pillbox - the m.g. was
 usually on ~~a~~ ^{roof of} ~~top of~~ ^{gunner}
 stood on a veranda platform
 reached by a ladder at
 1 back. One of these on
 Dab 2 was like this.
 There was an old Bldg at
 Hamburg. ^{w/ pillbox & lots of amm.} most of fire
 on 39th objective & from there on
 was from Hamb. & Dab 2.
 D Coy settled Hamb. almost
 all 1 germos here were killed.

On passing 3rd objective after
 long halt Bn shook out
 into extending order.

Dab Trench was pretty well
 smashed up by 1 Pill boxes
 along it were intact.

Hamburg & Dab 2 were
 specially dealt w/ by parties.

By 9.10 am. digging in on
 final objective began.

C. attacks. 10.30 am. Cemetery -
 enemy seen collecting, dispersed
 by art.

7 P.M. Enemy (who had been
 working down apt NZ from
 Paschendaele since 2 am)
 dispersed by art.

We used 3 of germ mps there - lots of amm.
 Our barrage this day v. heavy.

RAPs became crowded as
 cadet got wounded away
 thro shortage of sbs. This drub
 Skelpin & men were w/ 2nd train.

6 The rd in front of Dab 2 was a cobbled road & easily marked w^o

In Dab 2, a German Staff Capt was captured with a very elaborate dugout at road corner in 16 B 7.7. - w^o blown up m.g. He had a periscope thro' roof thro' wh he cd see who country of advance.

NZ did not join up on extreme rt, 40 B occupied part of it & joined them up in front of Dagger 2.

Dab Trench was a concrete lined along a good part of its length & badly smashed. Before it on near side of rd was another newer, wood reinforced & heavily wired. (on firing at Dab 2 as it arrived at objective)

B went out w/ Sgt Barrett of D Coy to dugout beyond left of obj. One German offr cleared out & they shot him as he ran. Later - Boden asked to go out to another dugout w/ Cpl. Kerrison but it was empty. Cpl. Davis, H.F.

7 For 12 hrs there were no evacuations from the R.A.P. (at Levi Cottay on Rd just N of Hill 40).

Relieved on 5/6 Oct. (103 men + 10 offrs had been left at Morbeque - they joined up on 8th Oct.

[Our guns, protecting the Blue line, were at a very long range & were sometimes up to 200 yds short of our front line.]

On after of Oct 4, abt 2 p.m. CSM Boden* (D Coy) with 2 men went out ahead of our front line & mopped up a pillbox abt 100 yds away. He went out to see what was

8 There was sniping for a few hours on final objective but this finished them - 8 Germ. was quiet even from Bellevue - we were sniping him there w Germ. m. g. & getting him running abt.

Germ. plane next morning went v. low along whole line dropping lights.

On Oct 4: Near 1 Cemetery there were Germans moving abt just over 1 ridge. It was hard to see what they were at, whether wanting to surrender or no - arty we called for on them & a special shoot done. No more seen of Germans.

On Oct 5^{abt 7-30 pm} a number of Germans were seen reinforcing Bellevue (not till then looking extra formidable position) & barrage was put down on them (805 put up by 40 RD Coy) a lot of movement was at Bellevue on Oct. 4

9
H.C. there. Before he got there a head appeared at the loophole. He shot at it. a stick w a white rag w wind waved through hole. In 1 Pitt box were a German Pn Comdr & 40 Germans who were all a badly wd. m.g. staff officer brought in - Pn C.O was Captain.]

15 w.g., 2 M.W., a bicycle dynamo. & a lot of papers were captured

200-300 prisoners were sent back from this sector. & many killed around 1 dugouts.

Capt. McVilly who was hit in this fight was the Tasmanian sculler - hit thro abdomen & in thigh.

A Coy. after Meagher &
2/15 Macmillan were hit
Grant became O.C. A Coy.

He did excellent work
at assembly point.

When his unit was being
dug in he took out
a party to cover
B Coy when it was
consolidating on rt.

B Coy. was under McVilly
& Gatenby, when
they were hit was
under 2/15 Boyes.

C. Dumasq - Whittaker
his 2 in C. was with later
& Coy brought out by
Lt Lakin.

D. Capt Ruddock.
Lts Moon & Mills
under him.

5th Capt McVilly B Coy
was hit during advance
from 2nd to 3rd objective by
m.g. in side. He carried
on & was hit thro abdomen
bullet going right thro. He
walked to dressing station
but 1 bullet seems to have
got thro without touching any
vital point from navel to
back.

Lt Meagher a/o.c. A Coy
was k. betw 3 & 4 objective
by a sniping bullet thro
heart (prob from Dak 2,
or Hamburg)

Lt Macmillan } betw 3 & 4
Lt Gatenby } objectives.
by bullets.

Lt Cane, bombing officer, supposed
to be in/c dumps went

12

The NZs on wind left
were very heavily hit all
when passing left of 39 Bn.

Serpt M'Gee.
[Refers also to
Oct 12.]

X 17 A 34

13

up beyond where he ought
to, leaving his party, &
5th
was shot first thro' neck
(graze), then in thigh -

Serpt. M'Gee, B. Coy
during 1 advance (probably
at Hanbury) finding a
m.f. going over a dugout
concrete structure & holding
up 1 attack walked
straight up to the pillbox
& shot the m. gunner
thro' head w his
revolver. M'Gee was on
every wiring pty B Coy
ever put out at Armentau
from 1 very start; He
was in every stunt -
He ~~later~~ ^{and after} settled another
m.f. by organising a
small bombing pty &
getting 1 gun. These m.f.s
were holding up 1 advance

14 Offro. 1 k. 6 wd.

Lt Crosby with T.M.S. was wd
on evg of 5th. just in rear
of front line

15

H.G.
He was recommended
for V.C. & Commission
On Aug. 12 he was with
Lt Garrard, ^{O.S.} Bloy near
Augustus wood when
m.f. from here got
out them. The whole
of H.G. - all signs &
most of runners -
exc. Garrard - who
was left alone.
It was there that the fee,
acting as C.S.M.,
was shot thro' head &
killed.

Capt Dumaresq O.C. Coy.
was badly hit after
dark. by shell at ~~the~~ objective
~~but he then took it to~~
Objiv (?) On this being

* just in front of objve
on Rt in No-man's-land
where there were 2 dugouts.
As soon as line got there
a party under Damarney
went out to settle them -

17
carried out a shell burst
beneath him & k. one S.B.
9 filled D. with shrapnel.
His wound was very severe.

H
D. came up to a dugout. As
he came up to it, coming
round 1 corner, a German
offr was coming out with a
revolver. D. hit him
straight in 1 jaw, & practically
killed him - then went
on (leaving this dugout to
be mopped up) & helped
to mop up the other dugout.

["C" had been reserve
Coy - 2 plns were sent to B Coy
at 1st objve to replace casualties
- & the other 2 were put in
here & there as 1 mine opened
up gaps in 1 rank - A Coy
(mopping up Coy) was put in
in same way.

A C 1 wave
 ——— D mopping up
A C 2 wave.
 ——— B reserve.



Oct 12

For attack on Oct 12, 3rd Div. found the ^{British} ~~it was~~ again were not where they were supposed to be.

The line was abt 200-300 yds ahead of the line with 40 BN left on Oct 4.

8/11/12 Oct. 9pm.
40 BN left Hussar Farm
March up Rd slow & blocked.

There was old fernman wire in front of 2nd Coy wh interfered with J.O. Poston.

A unjustus wood is marked on map & was really only low scrub. (A & B)

A wood at C [shown on air photos and mosaics wh had not been in BNS possession] was NOT MARKED

Lt. Heiter M.C. 39 Bn. was
near Crest 3 m.

x This was near
Waterfields -
D 10 D T. 6.

See Chamberlain
See Jackson's Report.

H.C.

The troops took Wood C
(~~which really was water fields~~)
for Augustus Wood's &
Augustus Wood in
narrative ~~starts~~ ^{starts} for
this wood.

Bn formed on left bec. of wire.
T.O see narrative.

One big diffy was to see where
barren actually was as it
was so thin, & there was a
good deal of German shelling.

Heavy mg. fire & sniping
reduced whole attack to one
wave - Troops

One pln of D Coy had to be
sent across the Ravinebeck to
clean up S.P.s in Bellevue
area - abt 9 a.m.

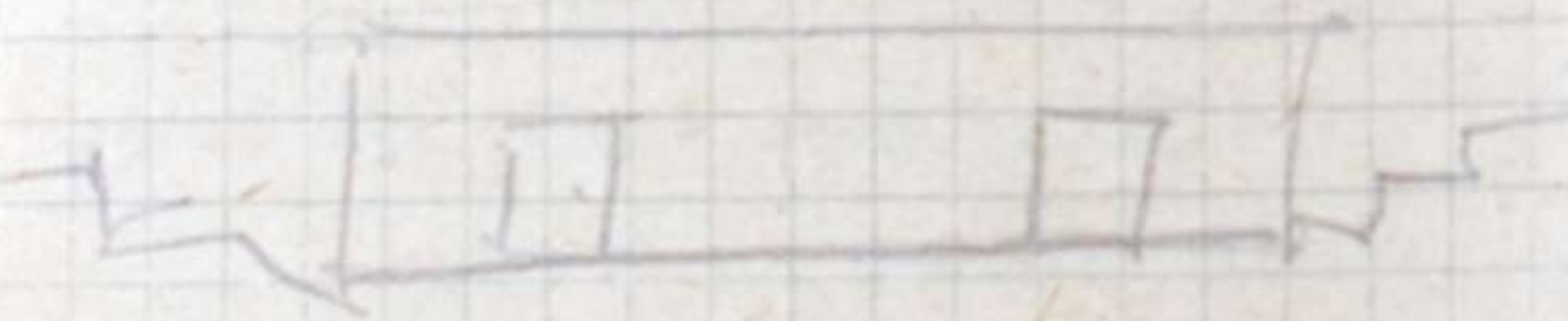
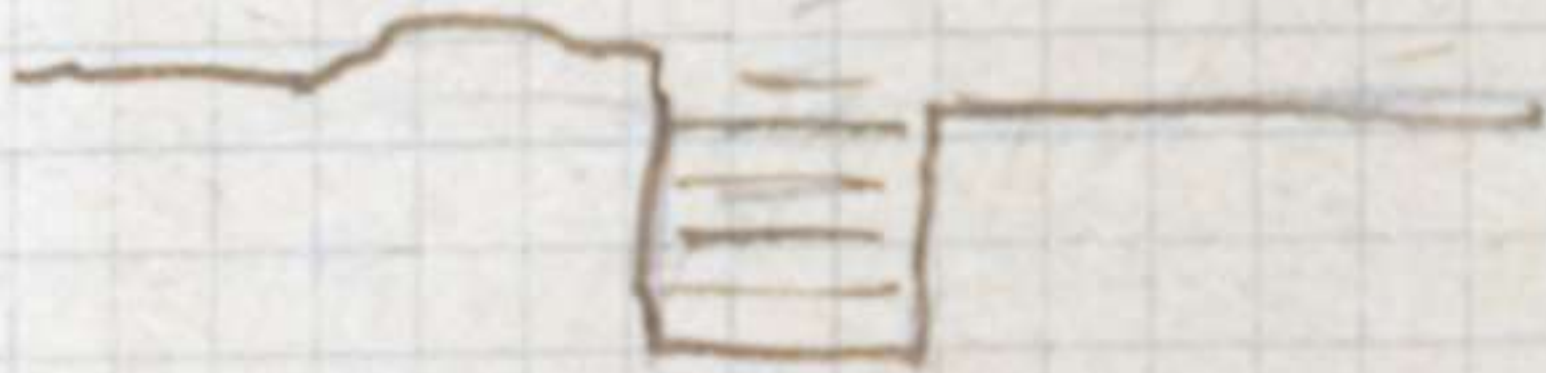
Lt Grant & Lt Chamberlain
were in this party. Grant cleaned
up 2 depots & was rushing
3rd when he was killed.
Chamberlain took this. They
had to return - such as were

574 left. [Lt Jackson Sig. Oftr.
 went out next ~~day~~ ^{after} w 2
 men. In Pillbox on
 Waterfields - Belleour Rd
 at D 10 B45-35 he found
 2 Australians - Pillb. was underg'd
 3 40 Bn (1 dead 2 unwd)
 1 37 Bn
 1 39 Bn
 1 tunic off badly hit. wd.
 1 wd NZ. wd.
 1 NZ cpl.
 1 Gt Bde. man quite bashed.

40 Bn men had crossed by
 Waterfields Rd. The men
 had no idea wh way
 either line was.

These wd were got away
 abt dusk.

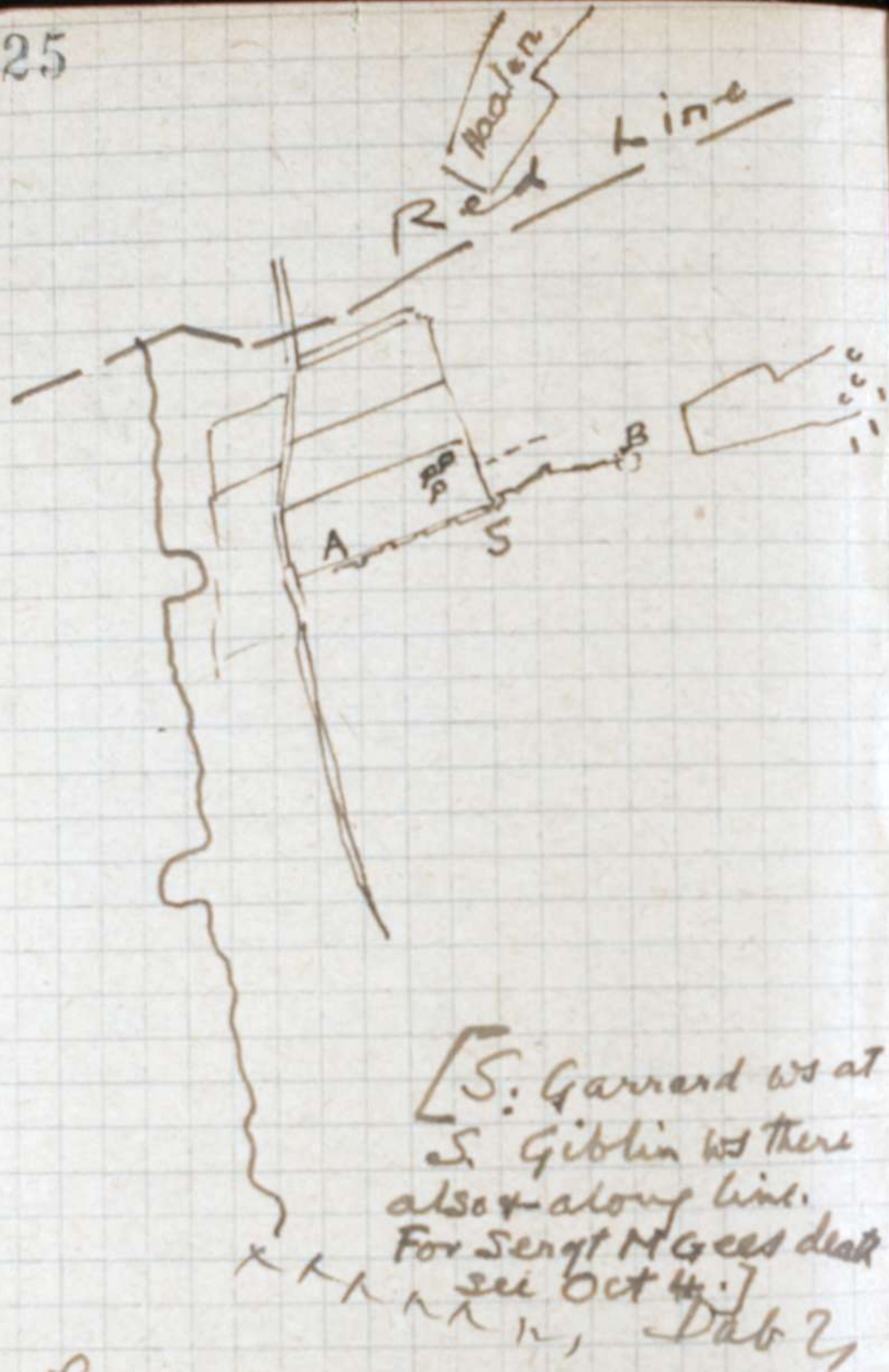
J. went on to Pillbox
 at 10 B44. This wd a
 fine dupout above grd with
 2 loopholes covering 1 road,
 + a platform + railing at
 back full of m.g. empty cart. etc.
 There wd an Australian.



Hg overcoat there. on the
 rt of rd, ^{just at bend} on a willow
 was a msg. position. ^{was a} msg. position
 w steps to it - so I
 went & sit in
 tree w his gun.
 There were empties there
 too.

I went along Dad trench
 abt 20 yds - no ferns there
 but they were in Bellevue
 in what looked like a trench -
 abt 4 of them - it was from
 here they had been firing
 across at our ridge day
 before. I waved a ration
 bag - Germans waved
 back a rifle. (It was then dusk).

I went & ed get no
 stretchers short of 9th Bde -
 but took them back from
 there. Grants body was in
 ditch on rd side just S.
 of first Pillbox.



[S. Gannard was at
S. Giblin was there
also along line.

For Sengt McGees death
see Oct 4.]

X X X X X, Dab 2,

From A to B was an old
German 1/2 way wired & well
defined (no sign of Rd in valley)
It was in this thick dug in.

Hg
54

The main idea

The Big dugout on 1 hill
was what had defeated
Chamberlain's ptg —
after taking the two first
dugouts.]

At 7.45 troops were abt on Red
Line — abt 150 of all Bns
with some of 9 Bde. Rest
had mainly gone on. There
was prac. no barrage &
many guns had ceased firing.
Crest Fm was being shelled
at this time —

The line rested on hedges
some west of Maalen, ^{abt} D 11 A 8.45,
& these hedges were marked
by a big tree. This was
apparently a German ranging

mark & they shelled it 27
H.G. & heavily at abt 9.10 am.

Impending Retirement was reported
to B.H.Q. abt 1.33 pm.

The new line dug was abt
150 yds in front of J.O. place.

The great pity of 1 day was
the fate of wounded men
& horses were stuck in
mud & exhausted. Rifles &
L. Guns were covered & choked
w mud.

Between 8 & 9 am., when
barraque was due to lift, men
were seen around Crest
In & Germans coming
out of it with their hands
up. These men were beyond
our barraque.

Info evidently from
Major Giblin:

X The thick wood on
left

H.G.

The German m.g. fire
started almost immediately
after our J.O. The dugouts
in Augustus Wood especially
& also X water fields (especially
the woods) were avoided &
passed at first so off
were firing & doing
much damage.

When this was noticed
& they were mopped up (they
did not give much trouble
to take) it was found that
a lot of fire was coming
from across the valley.
As light grew it was
carefully aimed & in single

shots.

The woods were mopped up after they were passed, while I troops were not very far on.

By 1 time this excitement was over the advance was being made by parties of all Bns, pushing on from shell hole to shell hole & keeping very low from 1 fire from Bellevue. There had been many casualties, no visible barrage to keep 1 line straight, & I troops pretty well scattered by m.f.

54 A man was very puffed
in heavy shell holes &
learned to avoid the
old shell holes & get into
the newer ones.

They had been told
to depend on 1 barrage &
consequently were at
a loss as to what to
do. It was impossible
to tell when 1 barrage
stopped.

Some instinctively
went for 1 fire, & crossed
the Ravebeek towards
Laambeek - This
slope contains many
dugouts & besides, snipers
posies - into which you wd
see one German dive -
not regular dugouts. Three
Some of them got back at dusk.

54 A good many reached parties or joined them in shellholes, & not knowing what to do there, finally drifted back to original line.

Those who pushed on, pulled up abt on 1 line before mentioned, on 1 impression that it was near 1 Red line; it was on a crest, & drove them further on, - abt 200 yds short of Red line. Maj. Gibson found them on this line at abt 7.30 am. They had been there some time - This was abt 1 time when 1 barrage shd

54 halt on 1 Red line,
 wait (hrs) halt to
 come in 1 Barrage.
 Maj. J. got 3 or 4 off of
 40 Bn + prospected a bit
 to see who was there -
 a few were still coming
 but soon they stopped &
 no more arrived. There
 was no shelling but
 inf. + sniping fire
 active from - left &
 some from Crest Farm
 way. It seemed to be
 left or left rear - G. saw
 one man in front of him
 hit in back.

At 100 men were
 found there - there
 may have be 150 really -

5H all boys of 10 Bde
well mixed up. 34

It was decided that the best thing was to dig in & wait for instructions. They could connect as 9 Bde on it, but there were not enough to make a front continuous.

On 1 left 1 German could be seen all over the ridge. The NZ could be seen rather round the corner ^{westward} opp. Bellevue. They made at one time a sort of a scattered advance & it disappeared - it was difficult to see what had happened but it was clear they were not there.

5th Later 1 German got
shelling onto our line
esp. near a prominent
tree. The line was pulled
back here abt 50 yds
to make a loop round
it. It was cold & the
men dug well & got
pretty good shelter. The
men who had gone
across 1 Ravine
were elsewhere in rear.

Other men had
gone thro 1 Barrage &
well ahead at an
earlier stage - nothing
cd be seen of them
at this time. Pardonable

5H

Wunder ill etc cd
be seen from there,
& Germans filing
out from Paschaedale

It was most puzzling
to make out 1 barrage
- later during morning
~~at Paschaedale~~ there was
a fair amount of arty
fire near Crest Farm.

This was probly where
1 barrage was due to
be there.

The 9th Bde's position
was not exactly known -
it was sd they had been
further ahead, had
come back a bit, &
that their rt was in 1 air.

5th By 1.30 pm, there
 was no answer to
 a message of 8.30 -
 they were apparently an
 isolated line, rt
 & left, 1 two Bdes.
 It was decided to go
 back slowly & get
 touch w/ NZs on
 the left.

The Germans were
 getting down 1 hill to
 near Snipe Hall -
 there was something (it
 was thought to be a 'E')
 which hid them near
 there. The men were
 sent off from 1 rt to
 1 left in files of

5th

4 or 5 at a time.

This we well done.

2 offrs went to 1 first
one to arrange a
line on wh to dig in.

This we began abt 2

→ finished abt 3.30 pm

The German was very
alert - & used to snipe

these parties of 5

with H.E.; he put us
strapped onto them -

→ got scarcely any results.
(possibly a N  hekampf)

When abt 1/2 doz. were
left he gave 1 line where
they had to a heavy
padding for 1/4 hr.

5th

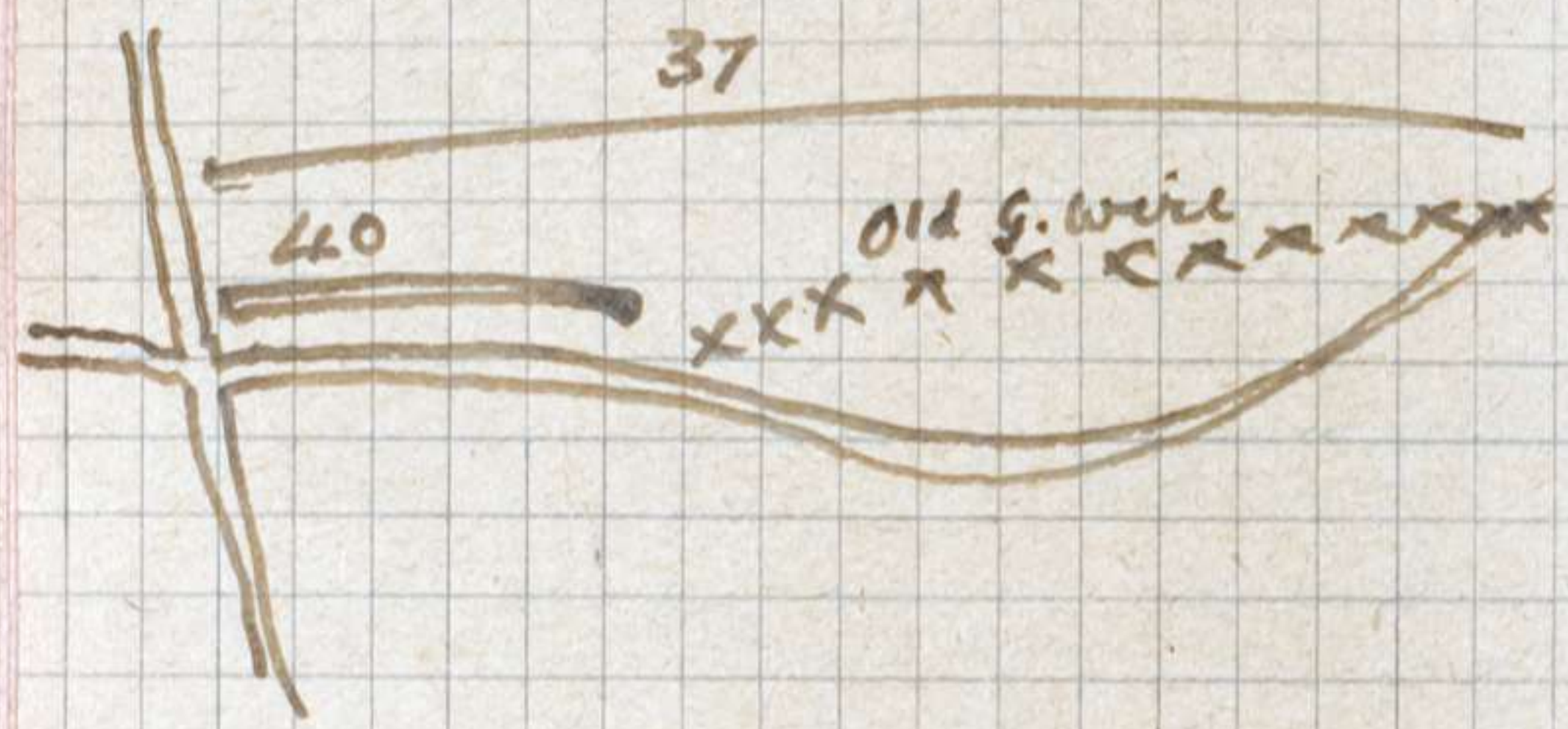
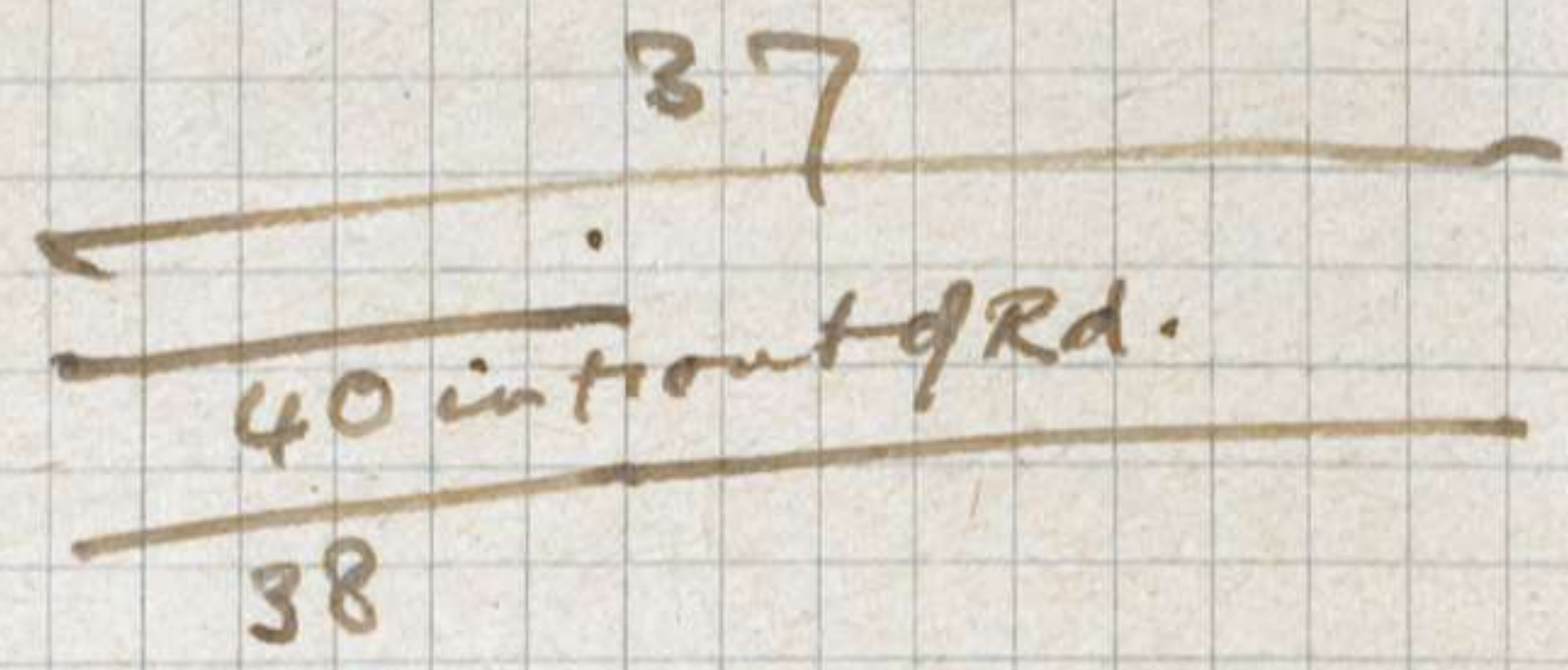
39
He did (something)
once or twice more
before dusk, after all
were back.

Plies were got out to
get wd in, but it
took far longer than
we expected & went
on all night & next
day. One journey
necessitated, w most
men, a good spell at
1 end.

The ground was
so rotten that they had
to go further back than
intended - right to
Dab 2, & dug part
of way towards 1 Ngr.

5th ~~For~~ Throat o / way 40
in / valley mud, they
patrolled. Most o /
shelling went over onto
/ road. The night was
quiet.

In / morning the
German s. to w. flaps
came out along
Bellevue Ridge & towards
Bellevue. We went out
too. M. Gs. all shut
up tho' arty kept on.
The men who were
closest had no doubt
abt the German stretcher
bearing being *Bona Fide*.



5th

The 37 Bu had
 formed up in front of
 the wire in Det 2nd

There was no room
 behind them, so others
 had to form up on the
 left. There was only abt
 1/2 of this ground that you
 could sit on ^{away back} if no formation
 was possible & if you turned
 round you scarcely
 knew where was your
 front.

The men rolled up in
 their waterproof sheets &
 lay huddled, dozing.

57H

In the first 50 yds
several offrs. were hit
by w.s.

Lt Walters was hit in
this way (B Coy), thro chest

Lt Baldwin (Command)
C Coy) same way - hit
in ankle tho abt 7ft high
- also in thigh.

Capt Chisholm (O.C. A Coy)
w.s. thigh, was hit
away on the right
during 1 advance, but
lateral.

Lt Penny, bombing offr.
in/c of dumps (m.g.) abt
same time as Chisholm.

~~Capt~~ Lt Sharland (D Coy)
(Hobart son of padre at
Bellerive) killed down

Certainly
Probably Crest Farm
here is Meetchelle
or Bellevue.

574 near Ravebeck,
Lt Grant A Coy was
k. across Ravebeck
abt 8 am.

Lt Whitaker ^{C Coy} - Hamaston
- was hit by m.f.
bullet in thigh in
the advance.

2 Plws worked
across the Ravebeck
as this seemed to be
1 most obvious
opposition - Lt Grant
was with one of these.

[Abt 7 am. when ^{protective} barrage
gave no indication of
line & small parties
were going ahead.

Hg The barrage was difficult
to follow. Some were ahead
& 1 barrage didn't affect
the parties at all.

While they were
consolidating with 37 Bn
they'd see small parties
coming up behind & they
were heavily sniped
from Crest Tm. Supt
Dennis was sniped here
& those who went out
to him were sniped too.
(He was brought back at
dusk by Lt Jackson. As
he was being dressed he sd
"Well, I'd take of my hat to
1 Hun sniper too").

Lt Swan was with one of these.
They were able to ^{advance} ^{pieces}
straight ahead ^{walking} - the sniping
going behind them - one
Lt of 38 Bn captured a

Certainly
Metchell
& Bellevue
→

X probly along
waterfields Bellevue
Rd.

57X

Germs. on rd past
Crest Fm in a little
Y in a hedge. One man
tried to run. They shot
him. This offr took the
gun, turned it along
Ridge apt 1 germs
there hurrying up to
Crest Fm. from Paschen.

~~when the NZs came.~~

At an early stage 1
Germs ran from Crest
Fm. The NZs were held
up. Men were on 1 road
SSW of the Fm trying
to get up & dropping X
By this time 1 Germs
had reinforced the Fm.
Swann was E of this Rd
but the main rd on 1 crest

5th was out of view to them.

There was a S. Pt on the ridge rt of him before Paschendale. The Austns got this & sent back some prisoners, but when they saw no support coming they came back. The Germ. returned & made it hot for them retreating.

J. thinks Crest I'm was never taken by our people.]

Swan says a party of men got over 1 Crest somewhere into 1 village & he thinks they never got back, were probably prisoners. ^{Metched} ^{near} ^A ^{Cherry} 1 lot we saw

see also end of book

54

50

4th Ruddock. C Coy.
~~Foster~~ Green.
9

12th Chamberlain. A
Selbie D Coy
Garraud B
McIntyre.

120 13th Coy.
McIntyre
Garraud B
Selbie D Coy
Chamberlain A
Ruddock C Coy.
Foster Green.