

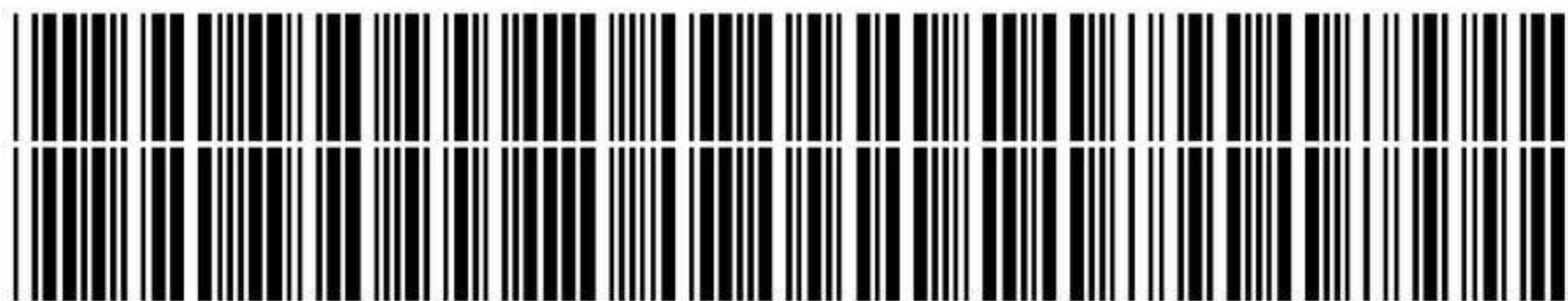
**AWM38**  
**Official History,**  
**1914-18 War: Records of C E W Bean,**  
**Official Historian.**

Diaries and Notebooks

**Item number:** 3DRL606/56/1

**Title:** Diary, August 1916

Refers again to Lt E L A Butler; mentions 14th Battalion and Mouquet Farm fighting in the last week of August 1916.



AWM38-3DRL606/56/1

DIARY NO. 56

3081606 ITEM 56 [1]

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

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

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

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

16 Sept., 1946.

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL C. E. W. BEAN.  
ACCESS STATUS

ORIGIN

As 7 22  
10-29  
1916.

13

96

56

Aug 22  
to 29  
1916

34 div  
103  
near La Basville  
Northwards  
(Tyneside, Tyneside)

8  
Bell.  
Course.  
Course.  
Shell  
Monsieur?  
O.G. 1 shell  
+ wire  
Shell burst  
near Brind  
3 Shells  
in Brind  
on Brind  
Rd  
Rd  
2 of La Basville  
Cribbin

Pipers  
Sellaouale  
Hem Ambulance  
of crates of Cas. Coors  
10 Chalk Pit.  
Panoram

From Poz. SW

2. From S-W. Pozieres IV.

\* Bapaume Rd  
Concrete House

Church  
Brinds Rd

S. Bs

S. Bs

S. Bs.

SW 10 ft

Series of photographs taken by Lt. E. Woods at Pozieres 28/8/16

Aug 22 - (continued later) 2

Aug 26 - 4.45 am. 6 Bde.

8 ~~6 am~~ Bombardment. Bns had to follow the lifts, S & SW of Wounded Farm.

21st Bn attacked from about 33a 81 to 6.55 with B Coy 22nd Bn on their left who went out from 81 S.W. (Skyline 4) to form a defensive flank.

They seem to have gone over their objective - 33a 54.77.27.31 & then bunched a bit abt 50-100 yds in front of it & lost from w.f. fire while they were coming back.

Reports 6.20 am. Line occupied from 27 to 100 yds East of 77.

Point 54 found to be very strong & heavy artillery have not reached it. Consolidate of isolated shell craters now proceeding at 6 am

Capt R.G. Smith - 21st Bn

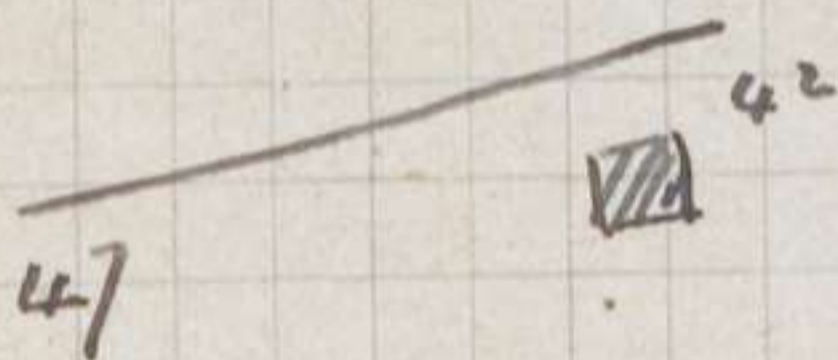
OC killed  
H.E. Smith  
Brother  
in  
23 Bn  
K. also

27D

This first c. attack was from left. Guns were turned on & nothing came of it.

8 6.28 am. Enemy C-attack feared. 4

6.30 21 Bn reports that they are at 77 40 in front of 54. Increased artillery action required at once on green barrage line 47.42 westward of Mouquet Farm.



7 am. 21 Bn (by pigeon). We have been stopped and driven back at various points. Enemy is now shelling & lines v. heavily. Barrage wanted 54. I have manned 1st line as strong as possible as enemy appears to be advancing in some strength.

7.40 21 Bn report they are at 77 in front of 54. Increased artillery action required at once from line Mouquet F. westward.

7.20 line now held runs 31-27- near 77 south of 54 to S.W.

5

R27d $\frac{1}{2}$  5 $\frac{1}{2}$   
R27d12

A Coy 22 B2 went to 93 strong  
B ————— 78 strong

8

6

21 Bn. 7.20 am. Enemy reinforcements from 54 towards 42. Barrage broken for. As enemy has been seen about 27. No inf. as to 22nd Bn detachment. Small parties of advanced troops are still occupying shell holes & endeavouring to hang on & supplies are being kept up but carrying parties now dwindling owing to casualties. Shelling still severe.

(31 was lost later (near W. of Margret farm).

7.40 am 21 Bn. Reinforcements arrived. 54 is held by m.g. & is very strong. Unable to state position of our men as nearly all officers are casualties. Are now firing on enemy in left flank 14 to 54 where enemy are





8 Aug 22. (Continued)

9

The whizzbang shell burst 50 or 80 yards to our left, & I ducked.

~~It was~~

I was ashamed of myself the next minute. The man on the side of the trench stood up there with his back to that little spitting shell as if it were no more than rain. They didn't any of them even trouble to look round. About 5 fragments of small size hissed past us & they took no more notice of it than if a small boy were throwing mud. They were busy about their job - getting a heavy burden along over / crest to / right place.

They were stretcher bearers - Australian

8  
stretcherbearers. They <sup>had</sup> their white flag there & I had often heard of their work here before. But, by Jove, I never saw it as we saw it that morning. ~~It was~~ They have been the same from the day we landed in Gallipoli.

We were in K. Trench now. We went down for a moment to Cam. Robertsons H.Q. (9 Bn) & then on. Casey suggested to we should go along K trench - I thought Centre way, because I don't like K - it peters out & catches the barrage in the open.

We went along ~~to~~ K. It became shallower & shallower - & as we went the enemy just happened to turn on his barrage some way ahead of us. He was throwing us by

8 black high explosive shrapnel <sup>11</sup>  
(or rather grey - like the grey  
of a Persian kitten) - some 4.2 or  
5.9 ~~shell~~ percussion shell &  
some field gun shell - all mixed  
about 15 shell a minute I  
dare say but it seemed like  
30 - onto the <sup>part of</sup> trench along  
which we should have in 3  
minutes to pass. We went  
along dodging from crater  
to crater until the craters  
were getting very small  
& some of the shells were  
bursting behind us -  
Dick got a bit ahead but I  
picked him up around a  
bend of trench waiting.

"What do you think Beans?"  
he said.

"I think its too hot to go  
on. How about choosing a  
decent bit of 2y & waiting?"

We got into a good angle -  
 tho' shallow - but some of  
 bursts were falling well behind  
 us. I vote we get back to go  
 round "Centre way" - I sd.  
 "I think we'd miss it there."  
 So we jumped up & ran  
 along the trench like rabbits  
 in & out of craters. When  
 one shell <sup>was</sup> coming ~~to~~  
~~to~~ I took a dive for a  
~~crater~~ crater - tripped  
 & fell head long into it &  
 next instant ~~there~~ some  
 one crashed in on top  
 of me - it was Dick doing  
 a similar dive. Within  
 a minute we were in a better  
~~cover~~ position well away  
 from it. I noticed an artillery  
 officer & some pioneers

8 bending <sup>13</sup>  
~~be~~ crouching down in a sap  
waiting - They had told us  
K trench was alright but  
I noticed they did not come  
out into it themselves.  
We took a breather &  
then went round by  
tramway 2 to the  
Centreway.

In tramway trench  
was a dressing station  
12th Bn. ~~the~~ As we  
got to it two ~~lots~~  
men were clambering  
up on the bank to join  
~~with~~ two other groups  
who were standing there in  
the open up against the  
sky.

They were stretchers bearing  
They were just setting out

to carry their stretchers slowly <sup>14</sup>  
~~through the~~ along a  
 path which would almost  
 certainly lead ~~in a~~  
 straight through that barrage!

I heard someone  
 somewhere - in the trench  
 I think - say "It's bloody  
 murder!"

well - it was a  
 days lesson to me in  
 stretcher bearing, that day,

we went our  
 long detour & then back  
 along Centre way. The  
 barrage was still on &  
 Centre way seemed to  
 head straight for it.

"I begin to doubt if?"

was right about <sup>this</sup> getting  
round it," I sd to Dick.

But it did. The trench  
was very open - blown open  
& tumbled in - but the pioneers  
were improving it. It led past  
<sup>church</sup> the ~~very~~ very close to that  
barrage - 20 yards  
away from it in some parts.  
But 1 german is so consistent  
& so accurate that altho'  
shells burst up to within  
20 yds to the right of us - in  
1 direction of K trench - none  
burst overhead. Many we  
came in past under 1 shoulder  
of the barrage as if it had  
been a solid thing. About  
70 men were filing along our  
trench & there were Pioneers working

8  
on deepening it. Some of them <sup>16</sup> had  
stopped work in certain parts &  
were keeping low - I suppose  
fragments had been flying; but I  
saw no man touched, ~~although~~  
I cut my nose w my ~~of~~ pincer-  
-neg in ducking out a telephone  
wire from a near burst. That  
was the only blood I saw spill.

I always feel surprised  
when I get alive out of Pozieres -  
I don't pretend to be brave. I  
want very much to write the  
history of this war & ~~write~~  
~~write~~ Every time one gets  
into those hot corners I wonder  
if I am not really doing the  
wrong thing. However, I  
had resolved to understand  
1 country out on that left.  
Going back this morning in  
1 car w Dick past the



8  
ruins of La Boisselle I resolved  
- I will go to Pozieres once  
more, with the official  
photographer, to get the  
pictures the Australian records  
seem to need. And that will  
finish the job.

That day - on my  
reaching the camp in the wood -  
Bayler told me that Jack  
was at Warloy - a few miles  
from Contay. My ~~heart~~ my  
heart sank with a thump -  
not back to the front again  
- there had been casualties  
amongst medics - had they  
posted him to a battalion? (I  
know he wanted the 3rd Bn)  
~~But~~ <sup>When</sup> it turned out he was  
at the special cases hospital

(for abdominal & chest wounds)  
 I breathed <sup>freely</sup> again. I  
 got the ~~the~~ 7th Field Amb. (now  
 in the (barracks) to let me  
 sit on the front seat of one  
 of their ambulances &  
 we went to Warby with  
 a load of poor damaged  
 chaps - some, at least, had  
 seen all the war they  
 wanted to. A French porter  
 begged a ride part of the  
 way - he was in blue  
 grey uniform like all their  
 workers & made a trip  
 for some purpose twice a  
 day from Albert to Contal-  
 maison.

"Our people are very

tired - very tired of the war,"  
 he sd. "The soldiers want  
 it to end." (He <sup>quite frankly</sup> ~~obviously~~  
 was speaking his own feelings  
 too) "The Germans are  
 harder," he said (a  
 word that <sup>seemed to mean</sup> ~~meant~~ "tougher"  
 too). "They are more 'brute'  
 than we." It was curious  
 to listen to a Frenchman  
 admitting this without the  
 least diffidence - The Germans  
 say the same of the French.  
 The prisoners tell me they  
 find the British "Zicher" -  
 tougher.

Stayed the night at  
 Warby with old J. ~~Bl~~  
~~arrived in the morning~~

20  
Wednesday August 23rd.

Wrote my diary at  
Jock's all the morning.  
Lunched with White  
who sent his car for  
me; & later ~~came~~ drove with  
him to D. H. Q.

We were anxious to  
find out the "make"  
of the land on the  
ridge behind Sheepval.  
Were we on the crest  
yet? Which was the  
commanding feature?  
In this ward of trenches  
(tho it is beyond it now)  
- of shelters & holes in  
earth - it is a little  
difficult to realize the  
lie of the land - where

the crest is, & how it falls. ~~Ridge~~ Trenches are much like city streets — you are shut in by walls (or you want to be) & you think little of what is behind the walls. I told him I thought we were over the ridge towards Courcellette, but not yet on the crest Northwards — the crest was ~~at~~ <sup>along the ridge</sup> N. of Mouquet altho there was a flat top & little to choose.

I think ~~that~~ that Birdwood must have undertaken, for Gen. Joseph, to get the command

of the Theipval ridge from  
 the rear before it ~~is~~ is to  
 be seriously attack again  
 from the front. I doubt if  
 they realise what our comm-  
 are — that is all. I told  
 White — how I only ~~and~~ comm-  
 that we have, practically, is  
 round / actual firing line in  
 the North (O.S.C. is utterly swathed  
 up North of the H.Q. by the  
 bell or at least of 10" Bn H.Q.)  
 [The runners, I heard later,  
 simply bolt straight across  
 the open over craters, tumbling  
 swerving, sweating, straight to  
 from the sunken road — &  
 come often sprawling down  
 the mouth of the H.Q. dugout  
 panting, perspiring — but by

The rifle is hardly heard in this battle except during an actual attack. I have been a morning in Pozieres without hearing a single rifle shot. Big guns & m.g. going all time.

24  
Some miracle, unwounded after going straight through the barbed wire. They have red bands on their arms - & it is a most risky special service. They are given a lot of rum & sent to sit down. Presently another message has to go out & a runner is called. He knows what he has to go out into - but up he comes straight without a word - takes his message & is off. He is sometimes asked: "Do you know the way to D Coy?" or "to the Mitchell?" It would be easy to say "no" - but the answer is generally a simple ~~reply~~: "yes".  
We have only one decent

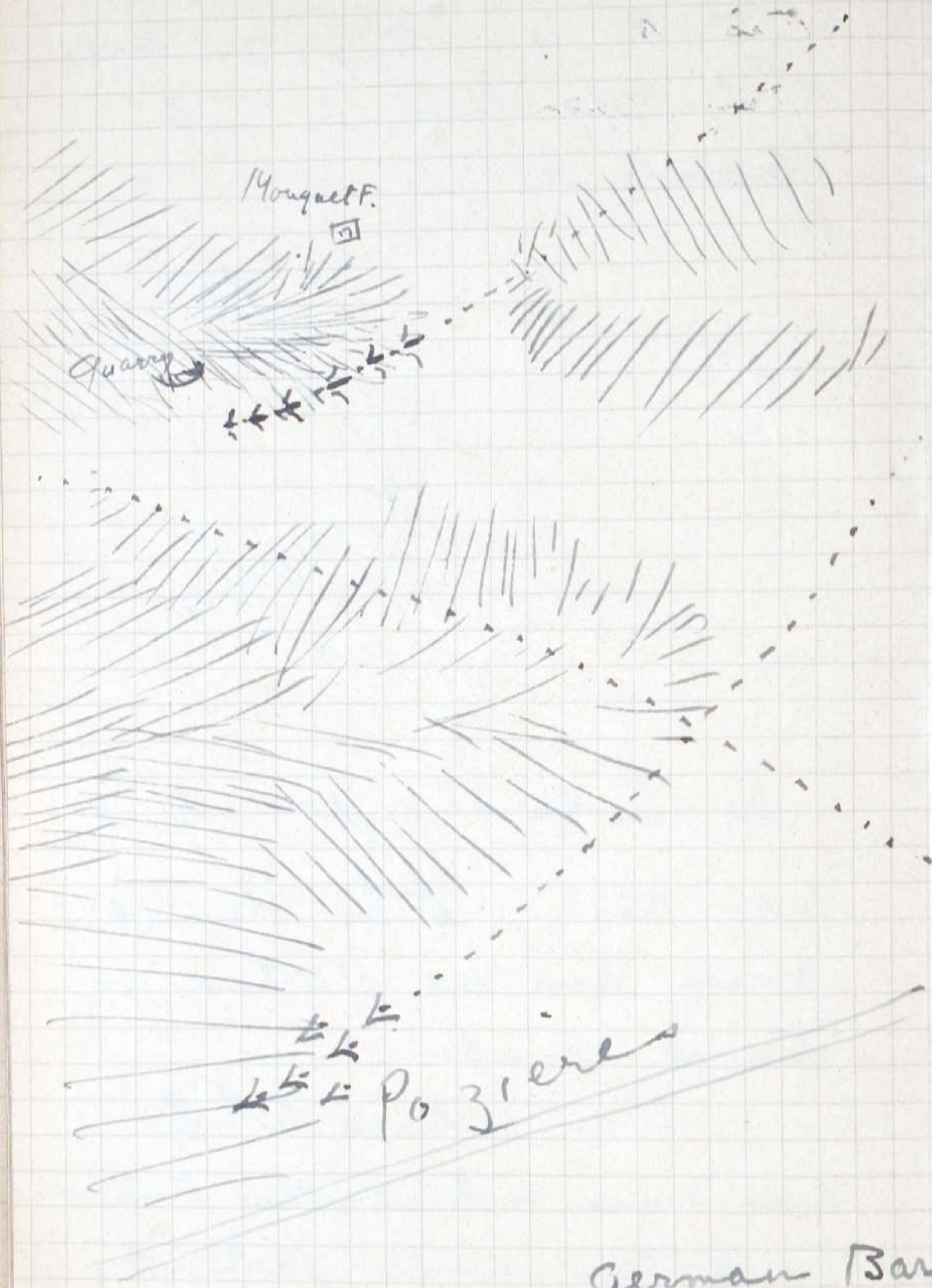
8 trench to front at present  
 — it is O.G. 2. Part  
 of it goes down a hill  
 opposite the German



He looks straight into it,  
 like this. If he blew it to  
 pieces there we should have no  
 trench at all.

I believe White  
 has since ordered other Comm  
 26 to be made forthwith.  
 The 24<sup>th</sup> got cut up going

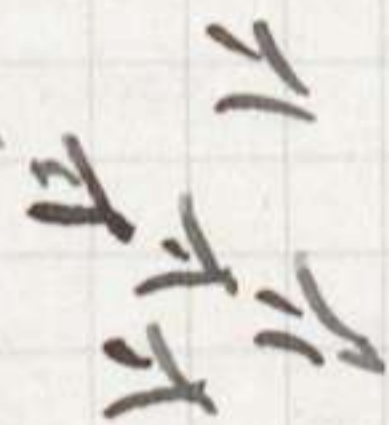




German Barzages at  
Pozieres at present.

8 in to relieve the 3rd Bde  
~~the~~ yesterday afternoon because  
they were seen. They  
would not have been seen  
had I trenches be decent.  
They have to go over / open,  
I believe from Tons Cut!

Tock has tomorrow  
off, so he is coming  
up to me to see  
a little of the  
Battle field.



Thurs Aug 24. Jack came this day. It was 11 or 11.30 before he arrived.

He brought the shocking news that Leo was dead.

It is too sad & dreadful for words. He was hit the ~~same~~ night <sup>of the day on which</sup> ~~that~~ I saw him - the very night they were to come out. <sup>German</sup> Aeroplanes seen to have been over late afternoon - aeroplanes of both sides have been swarming lately - 20 in the air, or more, at 1 same time. They saw there was a move on - Leo told Jack - & turned on their artillery. Leo was hit by a

29  
shell - his left leg cut  
of below the knee & the right  
foot injured. I believe he  
had to compress the arteries  
as best he could for a while.  
He lost so much blood  
that when the poor old  
chap came into the  
hospital where his lifelong  
friend - the mate of over  
so many cricket seasons  
& summer camps down  
Sandy Bay, Guy Bailey -  
was in charge, Guy did  
not recognise him. He  
happened to look at the  
ticket on a patient who  
came in & found it  
was LEO - that is how

30  
 He discovered him. They  
 operated - took <sup>left</sup> the leg off  
 at the hip & amputated  
 a couple of toes of the  
 right leg. Leo seemed  
 well afterwards, tho' very  
 restless (he sd himself) - His  
 voice was quite strong at  
 10 that night; but he died  
 at 11 - 26 hours after being  
 hit.

So Leo - the finest  
 specimen of manhood in  
 Hobart - the big genial  
 kindly chap who used  
 always to come & meet  
 us at the boat when she  
 arrived, & to see us off when  
 we sailed - who was always

in ones mind a man of the  
 open air - the tennis court,  
 the cricket field - Leo is gone.  
 He was never quite suited to  
~~the~~ the family office  
 - a hard man to find the best  
 profession for, splendid  
 generous chap tho' he was.

But he found it as a  
 soldier, no question. He  
 was a born leader - men  
 jumped at him - "at once"  
 as Major Rafferty told me,  
 emphasising the words. He  
 was one of the biggest men  
 in the A.I.F. - perhaps the  
 biggest - he, or Arthur Maxwell.  
 He was not the smart sharp  
 rattling type of soldier,  
 imposing though he was. He

spoke in a gentle, even quiet tone - with the gentleness of all great things - And when it came to fighting & being in formidable surroundings they found that he spoke in just the same quiet even way there - He did not shout at his men at any time - He was a gentleman, a very perfect gentleman, ~~the~~ <sup>his</sup> ~~gentleman~~ from the crown of his curly head to the soles of his great boots.

When we saw his coffin - one of the biggest I ever saw, that of a huge man, laid in the ground in a French wheatfield miles behind the battle today, w/ great trees

crowning 1 distant hills &  
 the sun<sup>light</sup> bathing the yellow  
 cornfields & three aeroplanes  
 wheeling above their aerodrome  
~~in the far blue~~ above the  
 blue horizon - with six more  
 or less close friends standing  
 by 1 grave & a passing French  
 farmers labourer leaning on  
 his scythe & a French <sup>farmer</sup> woman  
 with a tin can over her  
 arm dabbing her eyes with  
 her handkerchief - I couldn't  
 help wondering whether  
 it was worth it; whether  
 there is anything gained in  
 this war that justifies such  
 sacrifices. I'd would not  
 have doubted it... not for

one moment would be  
question it. But I don't feel  
sure of it.....

Only one thing I believe -  
the best way to get the thing  
over quick & have done with  
the chance of another is to  
press on with it now with  
all possible strength.

Roumania is in Lord  
Kitchener's ~~ex~~ exultor, who was  
over to see Birdwood, says  
she signed on Aug 19. The  
only question is whether she  
attacks Austria (as she wants  
to) or Bulgaria. Bulgaria  
may "rat".

That may mean the  
crushing of Austria before the



winter & isolation of  
Germany; & the breaking  
of Turkey. Well - they  
have all asked for it - I have  
not a least pity for Germany  
& Austria in this matter - they  
have asked for all they get.  
They are rushing the poor old  
Turks into Austria now as  
fast as they can.

Russia will get Constantinople  
- one didn't like the idea once;  
but thinking it over it is almost  
intolerable for a huge population  
to have its one warm water ice-free  
port ~~closed~~ <sup>barred</sup> at will by people  
like the Turks.

Took & I tried to get a  
wire to Anapa - Leo had told J.  
~~that~~ that anapa was in the 1800s

Field Coy near Bethune.  
 I had two telegrams returned  
 from Bethune undelivered.  
 I went up to the 12<sup>th</sup> Bn  
 this night. They were at  
 Beaval - leaving the Battle  
 of the Somme - to entrain  
 to morrow at Doullens for  
 Poperinghe - where ~~they~~ with  
 the Australians are to relieve  
 the Canadians in the Ypres  
 Salient at once - the  
 Canadians to relieve us  
 here. [The salient is a  
 hot place to go to for a rest  
 after Pozieres - but I fancy  
 it is a bit quieter than it  
 was. The Germans are so to  
 have brought <sup>both</sup> guns & men South.]  
 The 12<sup>th</sup> Bn were in

Beauval - just from  
 the fight - and holding about  
 as much drink as they  
 could with reasonable  
 orderliness. Indeed there  
 was no disorder but  
 a big percentage of the men  
 were very full. I don't  
 blame them - I should have  
 felt inclined to get drunk  
 myself. The people to  
 blame are the French  
 authorities who will not  
 close the estaminets  
 in our areas in spite  
 of repeated requests.

From Maj. Rafferty &  
 others - Johnson the doctor,  
~~the~~ Col. Elliott, - I learnt

see book 55  
at back

learned the story of  
Leo Butlers death which  
I wrote out in full & sent  
to his people. (Copy attached  
here). Slept the night  
at Coutay.

Aug. 24<sup>th</sup> Friday.

Butler told me he would  
make a trip to the lines today  
if I wd come with him. I  
hate Pozieres, but of course I said  
I would be glad - & I was too  
in the end. We ~~drive~~ got the  
car to drive up to the  
Chalk Pit & walked from there.  
It was a very quiet day.  
White had asked him to  
give him an idea (s) how the  
Common trenches were getting

I think I meant - &  
give me a chance to come  
with him.  
This diary (Geo. B.)  
was of course 1917  
written in a hurry.

8 on 1 (2) How the ground lay  
about Mouquet - which was  
1 best place to go for next.  
We went to 23rd Bn HQ  
(where 1st Bn had been, under  
the Bell). ~~They~~ I thought we  
ought to get a good view from  
the hill slope near there - &  
they recommended us a place  
- didn't think you could see  
Mouquet from there but you could  
see Courcellette. They sent a  
youngster with us - a first class boy,  
~~a little jockey~~ as game as  
anything & as bright as daylight.  
He told Butler he was a jockey  
- well, he was a plucky  
one, no mistake. No bending  
or ducking about him - his  
friends had to tell him to  
keep his head down as he passed.

major factory



④ He took us to point 60 - We popped over a high part of trench before getting there - & there was 1 ~~small~~ green country right ahead of us - 1 green country behind 1 german line - trees - distant green grass - a few trench lines. From the observatory post - a nick in trench - we looked straight over 1 nearer slope of 1 hill - straight at Courcellette. I thought we might be able to see our left - & looking over - there they were, clear as day, the line of gun pits on the ridge which marked the right (NE) angle of our northern front. I could recognize the whitish top of one gun -

8 - pit from <sup>recollections of</sup> an aeroplane <sup>42</sup>  
photo of it. I made a  
rough sketch (in the last diary,  
near the end) to show where  
Maugnet Farm was not to  
be seen - the only ~~thing~~ <sup>mark</sup> I  
could notice in its whereabouts  
was what looked like a single  
beam of wood. An old ambulance  
wagon stood abandoned on the  
road nearby, which made  
a very good land mark.

There were shells of  
ours - isolated field gun  
(18 pr.) shells - spitting about  
every minute or two just  
beyond our trench (a forward  
line was being dug 50-80  
yards down the slope).  
The Germans were flinging

back a salvo of four shells every few minutes - they burst about 30 yards to our right straight into the face of the trench, & made one very careful. We were looking straight down on the interior of the German lines (their front line is that marked ~~xxxxxx~~)



& their men were completely open to view in this area <sup>just</sup> as ours wd be <sup>if the Germans overlooked</sup> the Chalk Pit valley. Butler cd see Germans walking about there - I didn't see them my look was too hurried & I was tryin to identify our line on the Mouquet Ridge. I saw our big shell bursting in their hinterland just as theirs bursts in ours - tickling up



the rest areas or the batteries.

The green country comes closer to their lines because we are pushing them back on it all the time.

One felt as if he could walk out over there & lie down on those green slopes under the trees & enjoy the sun .....

We went on to the H.Q. of the 24th Bn. to get the landmarks on the Mouquet ridge identified for certain - Nicholas, acting colonel, said it was a "damned crime" that our men were being sent straight from here to the Salient - It seems to me a silly way to talk.

Good troops have to go there as they are taking the Canadians out.

The men deserve a rest but what's the good of talking about deserts in war time. The Germans

45  
won't leave off fighting because  
we deserve a peaceful time.  
This rubbish about "rights" is  
all very well in a trades Hall  
debate, but what is the use of  
talking of the right to rest when  
the enemy won't let you rest?  
He's a gallant officer but foolish to  
talk in that way before his officers &  
men.

~~I heard the Angles had~~  
~~seen~~ On our way back in the  
23rd Bn H.Q. dugout under the  
bell I found, of all men, my  
friend Herbert Alsop, now  
doctor of the 23rd. Herbert is a  
gallant little chap but he hardly  
got to this place was too much for  
him. He couldn't sleep for  
two nights on coming in.

On getting back to Dion.

heard th Angus had not got  
 either of my messages, & so  
 decided th I must wire to  
 Father & Mother the news of Leo's  
 death, & try to see Angus  
 myself. Later I had a wire  
 from him saying th news  
 too late for funeral but  
 asking me to write particulars.

I borrowed a 2nd Divn  
 motor car to Contay & White  
 lent me his car there to  
 go & see Angus & do what I  
 liked with. Went into  
 Amiens & saw the Colonel  
 & Gibbs & Russell - & asked  
 for Brooks to come out & get  
 some photos for record.  
 Russell sd I was looking tired  
 & gave me a whisky wh  
 sent my head whirling  
 in circles. Gibbs told me that

he thought it was for the  
war correspondents to clear  
up idea that they had objected  
to my articles from ~~some~~  
any sort of motive, & so  
he would write to Lloyd  
George himself - I told Russell  
I was dead sick about it  
but was taking no steps at  
all. Then the driver &  
I had our dinner  
& drove north looking for  
Angus. We got to Bethune  
at about 1 a.m. I had heard  
of the 180th ~~th~~ Field Coy  
was attached to the 5th  
Divn whose H.Q. was at  
Chateau des Pres South of  
Beauvry. We crept into

48  
Beaumont There a traffic  
control ~~post~~ man with  
lantern at crossroads,  
who made us put out our  
head lights, told us / H.Q.  
of the 180<sup>th</sup> Coy was in a  
back lane quite close by.  
We stole along - running an  
imminent risk of being <sup>smashed</sup>  
into by motor ambulances  
2 or 3 of which dashed ~~past~~  
past in / dark without  
lights. There were lights  
in many cottages windows  
& I frequently knocked &  
made them open - They  
were always French  
civilians who apparently  
keep their bedroom candle  
burning all thro the night.

8 They didn't seem to mind being  
roused - they came to door  
always in their shirts & bare  
legs - so it is evidently how they  
sleep. They knew of some English  
soldiers living near by. We  
found 1 soldier at last - but  
they were a labour battalion  
or some peaceful unit & knew  
nothing of Engineers.

Then we went back to  
Control post - having <sup>backed</sup> crept w/ 1  
car down dark roads & side  
lanes for half an hour or more -  
& 1 control post sd he didn't know  
if it were the BOE Field by - he thought  
there was some Engineers about  
there some days back! We  
went straight on towards the Divn!  
Headquarters & in 1 next village  
passed a camp w/ letters CRE.

8 (Officer Commanding Royal Engineers) 50  
shining through it. I jumped off,  
borrowed 1 drivers matches  
& explored 1 house. Down an  
officer in his bed upstairs (I  
guessed he was a junior officer  
by 1 pictures above his head) I  
got a sleepy direction back to  
Branvry near the Church. We  
pushed back. A sentry with a  
fixed bayonet ~~stopped me~~ was  
guarding some lorries - & I  
found we were there. The servants  
at the mess might know  
where Angus was. The kindly  
sentry & his bayonet came along  
w me & called up 1 kitchen  
stairs - a sleepy voice answered.  
I went up & found a man  
sleeping <sup>on a chair</sup> by a couple of burning

8  
candles. Did he know Lieut. 51  
Butler? He sd Lieut. Butler  
was sleeping ~~at~~ there, pointing  
to a door opposite him. I borrowed  
a candle & knocked &  
Augustus came to the door.

Poor old Augustus - he had  
got my telegram on coming back  
from the mines that morning at  
11 o'clock. It must have knocked  
him quite out - the younger  
brother, he has always been; devoted  
to Leo & intensely proud of him.  
They were / only two, Augustus the  
cleverer of the two, Leo in some ways  
the bigger. Augustus being a mining  
engineer had had to leave home &  
find his work first in Manchuria  
near the Amur; later in West  
Africa where the tin mines have to



get Tasmanian miners as the methods used there are only elsewhere employed in Tasmania. He has fought in 1 Cameroon first & had just come over to France & was hoping to meet Leo in England on his next leave if they cd arrange it - he had on 4 1/2 yrs away from home.

"I know, of course, th he wd be hit," Angus sd, "I made up my mind to that; but I ~~did~~ always hoped he wd just be wounded - not this." The boy had been crying his eyes out - I could see that. "The old Dad, I'm thinking of," he said. "I'm afraid of how it will affect him when he hears it."

I told him all I knew. While

53  
we were talking we could  
hear every now & then the  
bang of a big gun, the singing of  
a shell for a part of its journey  
overhead; then a little later a  
heavy shaking report. It  
must have been a very big  
shell - either 12 or 15 inch -  
wh the Germans are throwing  
at Bethune market place or  
perhaps at the Station. I dare say  
they have ordered troops entering  
here to come down South. I  
believe they dropped a message  
a few days ago from an  
aeroplane warning the  
inhabitants that they were going  
to shoot.

We left at 3.30 on our  
way back - The sun did not

send a shell anywhere near us, anyway, although several sentries held up our car; one sd they had orders to stop 'all civilians' - so suspected spy about, I suppose. By 6.30, in daylight, we were back at Contay. I started again at 7.30 & reached Becourt about 8.

Aug 26<sup>th</sup> (Saturday).

It turns out that the 6<sup>th</sup> Bde attacked W. of Mouquet this morning at dawn & did not do badly. They got ~~most~~ all that they went for, except ~~two~~ two points, 27 & 54. [I believe <sup>later</sup> "54" was not at 54 but in front of it].

This day was very showery.

<sup>8</sup> The outlines of this attack <sup>55</sup> are ~~not~~ noted on the first page of this note book.

The 22nd (wh had only 300 men altogether - not having recd. its reinforcements) was in reserve but half of it was put in to this fight. Gelly took his H.Q. up in to the Cemetery near the First Aid Dugout. As he was on 1 spot attack we almost bound to be

partially successful. They are being relieved <sup>this night</sup> by 41st Bde. (I had not heard of this attack coming off.) Wire from Censor to say Brooks coming to stay night Aug 27 work on Aug 28.

August 27th, Sunday. Today towards evening has been miserably wet - so much so that I scarcely expect Brooks

would come. But he did,  
in the evening - turned up  
in a Super Car. [Not a word  
from I was Office about mine,  
asked for 4 months ago].

Aug 28<sup>th</sup> Monday.

Got up fairly early  
& went with Brooks, his chauffeur,  
& Bazley, to Pozieres. We  
had a wet day but were  
lucky in getting fine intervals;  
& he got almost exactly  
the photos I wanted him  
to. It was a little hard  
to get him to do this, at  
times, & arrangement  
is utterly unsatisfactory. Still  
we got two' somehow &  
1 photos, I hope, are there.

I have attached a list. 57  
Brookman is a gamey chap  
by far than I am - he  
wants to poke round, &  
wait for an hour or  
two to get certain views  
wh pleased him in / proper  
light - but Centreway  
isn't / place I like to wait  
in. One thing I am glad  
we got the stretcher bearers  
coming in w their white  
flag & the German barrage  
behind them - so now it  
stands on record. I  
asked the men how they  
found it: "He doesn't ~~shoot~~  
snipe if you've the white  
flag"; they said. "We started  
it by not sniping on them

When they had 1 white flag,  
& now they don't snipe at  
ours. Of course we have  
to chance the artillery -  
that isn't meant for us -  
which is very fair. I am  
particularly anxious  
that the newspapers should  
not use that shell fire as  
an example of "how the  
Germans fire" on our stretchers  
bearers." It is an example of  
what our S. Gs. come through  
voluntarily. The white flag  
saves them from being sniped  
at by m. g. The German wd  
also often turn on a ~~barrel~~  
field gun if he saw a party  
of this size without 1 white flag -  
but he does not snipe ~~them~~

stretchers bearers with fieldpans  
any more than 15 rifles.

I had my usual row  
w Brooks. I sent <sup>to Col. Wilson</sup> a <sup>list of</sup>  
1 photos he had taken. ~~Col.~~  
~~was~~ He objected to this - if any  
were spoiled the Col. wd think  
he was concealing them, because  
the Col. is a suspicious little  
man. I couldn't help - some  
of the photos wd be dangerous  
to publish now & it is only  
right the Censor shd know  
Exactly what they are. Brooks  
is very game in getting shell  
pictures. Some big ones fell very  
close & he was up in an instant  
to get the burst. I am  
attaching the list.



The 14th made an attack last night - I think I know on which trench. "They went over & got 1 trench but there were a terrible lot of Germans & they could not hold it!" is the account that was given to me <sup>by a batman</sup> by a padre told me: "It was not successful as an attack but most successful as a raid - Two companies went over - they had 23 casualties - none killed - all wounded I believe - but they were overpowered by numbers & forced to retire after being in half an hour."

That is simply meaningless to me & I am not going to write up as a successful raid what was a failure as an attack.

How anyone can claim that 2 Companies (say only 250 men) are "overpowered by numbers" & "forced to retire" when they have only 23 wounded, I cannot see. It is giving us the standard of Greek soldiers. I must hear more - The 14<sup>th</sup> has lost its daredevil young officers, Jacka, Appleton, Dobbie & the like; if they had been there I'll be bound it wd not have given up the trench it was told to take & keep - after 23 men had been wounded.

This Becourt wood is more like the Australian bush than any place in Europe. It is the men who bring their country with them. They camp under!

A Bavarian Corps, I believe,  
has relieved - & they were  
throwing quite a lot of ironmongery  
about. This point is rapidly becoming  
a centre of ~~fitting~~ activity.

8 trees - build their little 63  
tents or shelters, chop their  
trees (wh they ought not to do)  
sit round their camp fires  
exactly as they do at home in  
1 bush - with their long  
limbs & wide felt hats &  
their pipes & slow movements  
in their mouths. At night  
w/ 1 fire amongst 1 straight  
tree trunks (the slight  
of 1 trees makes 1 place  
more Australian) you'd  
swear you were in 1 bush. We  
had 5 padres at dinner  
last night; & as the officer of  
burial party is a little Baptist  
minister also, in civil life,  
that made 6! We yarred till  
nearly midnight.

Tues. August 29th. <sup>still</sup> Raining at  
daybreak, but finer.

Tonight's objective:

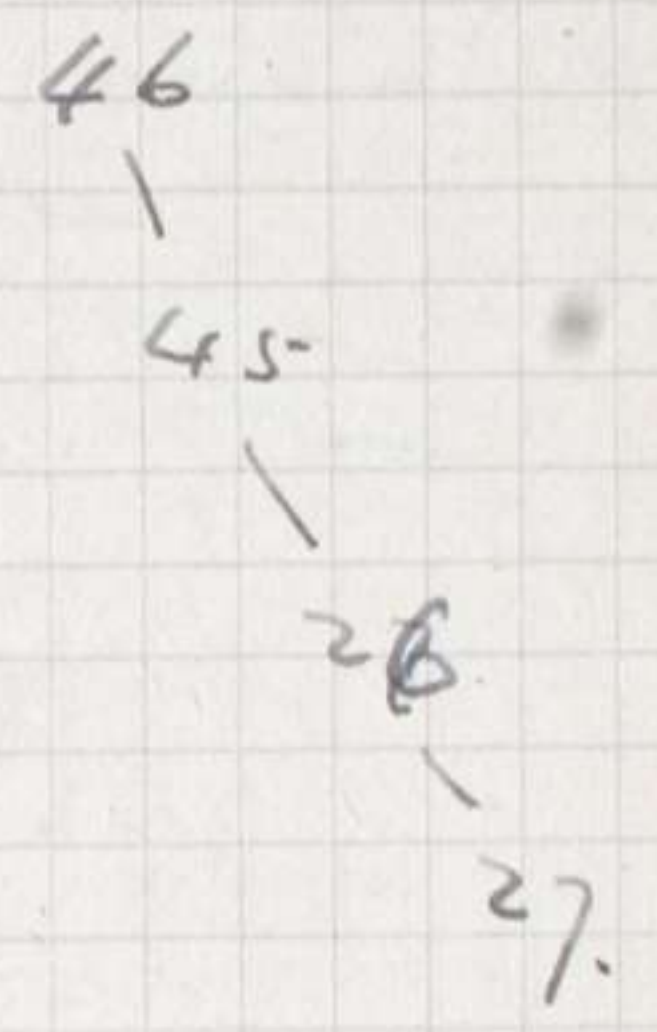
16<sup>th</sup> Bn. <sup>33c.</sup> 79. - 33 a. 54 - 77 - 29 -  
27d. 12 - 42 - 73 - 94 -  
13 Bn. 28c. 03 - 36 - 66 - 95.

54.

Monquet

2 N of W during day.

Smoke if possible.



8 4<sup>th</sup> Divl Engrs.

66

May 6 Cairo recd.

|                      |   |       |
|----------------------|---|-------|
| H.Q.                 | — | 42    |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> F.C. | — | 68    |
| 12 <sup>th</sup>     | — | 59    |
| 13 <sup>th</sup>     | — | 80.   |
|                      |   | <hr/> |
|                      |   | 249   |

Aug 1916

Later.

|                         |   |                 |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------|
| H.Q.                    | — | 3.              |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> F.C.    | — | 70              |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> Coy RE | — | 11 <sup>x</sup> |

<sup>x</sup> On 30/6/16. Lt Grassick of A.I.F. H.Q.  
Staff Pay Office  
Letter 2772 acknowledged notes  
receipt of £1.15.0 by Field  
Cashier for Aust. Div

Have any of books been pd  
for by these units.