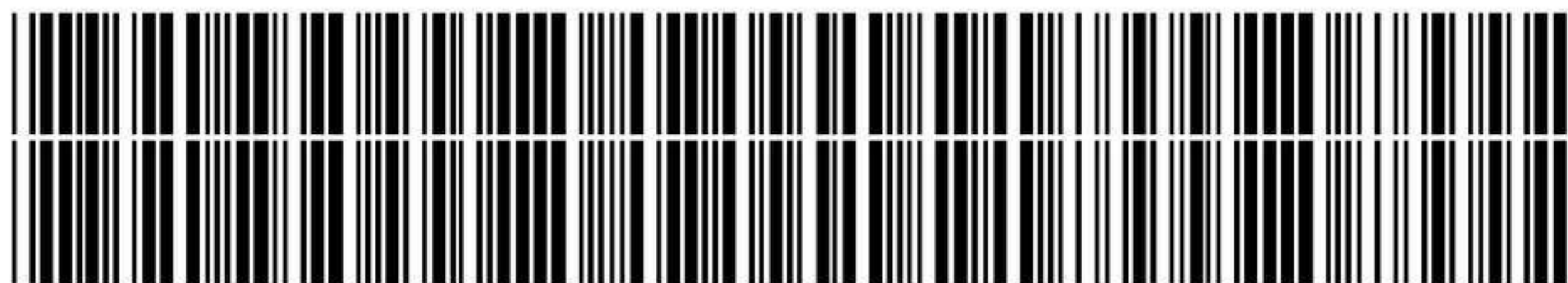


**AWM38**  
**Official History,**  
**1914-18 War: Records of C E W Bean,**  
**Official Historian.**

Diaries and Notebooks

**Item number:** 3DRL606/173/1

**Title:** Notebook, October 1917  
Includes references to the 39th Battalion,  
Broodseinde and Passchendaele.



AWM38-3DRL606/173/1

*Original*

DIARY NO. 173

AM 38

3DRL 606 ITEM 173 [1]

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

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

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

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

16 Sept., 1946.

OPEN

C. E. W. BEAN.

173  
39 B. 1  
Oct 4 1942.  
Oct 12.

33

39. Bn.

<sup>173</sup> 39 Bn 1  
Oct 4 & 12.  
Oct 12.

Line wh Lt Fletcher considers  
of Bde held before withdrawal  
was 12 D 9.9, 12 B. 6.3  
12 B. 0.4, 12 A. 8.4.)  
to Road at 12 A. 6.3 to  
behind Deck wood at  
11 D 9.9. to 11 B 1.2.

39 Bn. D Coy 39<sup>12</sup>  
was attached to 30 Bn  
which was for Green  
line (3rd objective) as reserve  
Coy.

They were in front of  
the Dab 2 wire to start.

53 It was fairly knocked abt  
& they did not have  
much trouble in crossing  
it.

38 Bn were pretty heavily  
shelled on turning into the  
Sunken Road - at abt  
3.47 am. The going had  
been very difficult from 1  
end of duckboards.

37. Bn + 38 were  
ahead of D Coy. There  
was continuous shelling in  
Sunken Rd from 3.50  
am. to 5.25 when they  
jumped off & many men  
were hit. The Coy remained  
in right half of Sunken  
Rd on acc. of shelling till

58

3  
Zero. Then left turned  
& ran down 1 road,  
turned it over.

At first (going as not  
bad but once the hollow  
was reached it was marsh  
all 1 way. The bog  
beyond Augustus wood  
gave a lot of trouble.

Within a short time  
it was all one line.

At 1 start the water field  
dupout caused trouble with  
sniping. The men edged  
up shell hole to shell  
hole, bombed 1 German  
when they appeared  
& took 1 dupout.

The right as then held

53

4  
up by dugouts in front  
of Aug. wood with 2  
mgs. in one of them.  
I went across there, one  
man worked his way  
round & back. As  
soon as I rest got  
near it Germans  
surrendered. The line  
then went on past  
wood (wt were just  
sticks in a bog).

From there they walked  
on subject to occasional  
sniping from left across  
Ravebeck.

The Germans had  
been earlier seen running

back along (skyline  
 of the Belleme Spur -  
 some of our people thought  
 it was N. Zealanders  
 well ahead. (1. v  
 Y 0 6 5 1 ' )

The 9 Bde where going  
 we much better were  
 pushing ahead - 10  
 cd be seen straggling  
 along in groups in  
 the mud of valleys.  
 F. went along + found  
 the Reserve Coy off  
 of 9 Bde (which was  
 to help to take Paschen.)  
 He only had 7 men +  
 F. had one. (The

53. NZs also had a  
reserve Coy). 6

When they got up  
w/ 1 Qd Bde the 9th  
MG Coy had 2 Vickers  
guns up there in front  
of Green. There seemed  
to be a few Germans  
who got down in 1  
direction of Echo Copse.  
Our line was consolidating  
shell holes. No trouble  
was coming from Paschend.  
F. made his way back  
to 10 Bde & told them they  
were in touch with  
9 Bde. — along 1 road



53

you looked right up  
 into Paschendale Ch.  
 It was empty & quiet  
 exc. for 2 Germans who  
 came running down it  
 & surrendered.

There seemed to be abt  
 60-70 Bde on line on  
 wh they were digging in  
 - with 6 officers - Maj  
 Sublin, Capt Trebilcock,  
 Capt Latchford, Lt Herring,  
 Lt Fleiter, & Capt Palenon  
 39, 38, 38, 39.

[Capt Stubbs had been  
 up there - 1 man carried  
 him right back in  
 returning till SBs could get him]

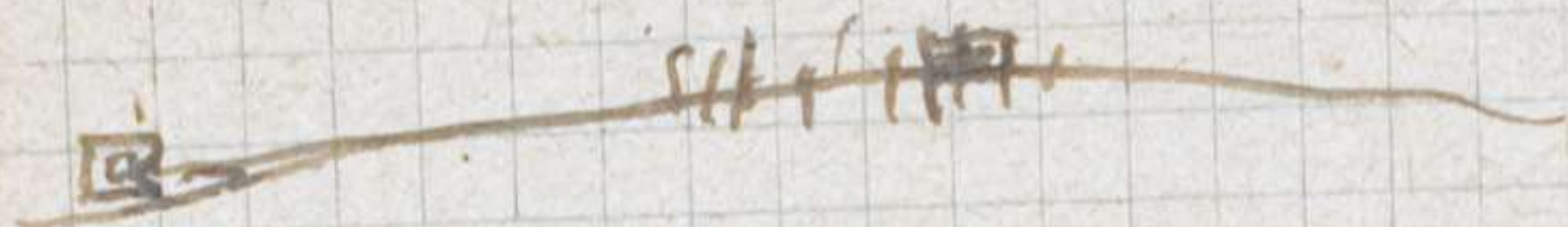
53 To the left of main rd were a number of 9 Bde who had attached themselves to 10 Bde, without officers. The whole ground had been very heavily shelled shells thickly scattered everywhere.

When up with 9 <sup>Bde</sup> Pn. F making his way to left towards road. at abt 12 A 9  $\frac{1}{2}$  9 ~~5~~ on 1 corner of a road with a shell hole with a W-P sheet over it & portion of a mess tin showing.

53

The sheet moved. <sup>10</sup>  
 F. Lt. saw there were  
 men inside it &  
 told them to come out.  
 Two British privates  
 appeared - One had  
 a fractured arm, & the  
 other trench feet. They  
 were very shaken &  
 frightened - calling  
 "Merci" - It took a  
 long time for them to  
 realise that F. was  
 a friend & the Captain  
 (QBde) who was with him  
 were friends. They  
 sd "Alright son we're  
 Australians" : They

sd "yes they knew 11  
Australians wd come -  
& they had prayed hard.  
E. asked if any  
Germans or mgs. had  
been about. They sd  
1 German had bn out 1  
night before & put a  
mg. down alongside  
1 shell hole & fired -  
The men asked if they  
cd go back & were  
told they cd go back  
as quick as they cd.  
They got thro' the QPde  
dressing str all right.  
In the area just S.E. of  
this dead Tommy's were  
found also.



53 It was abt 11 am. ~~Then~~  
 when they got back  
 to TO Bde. From there  
 Lt Freeman 11 M G Coy  
 opened fire & infiltrated  
 a trench containing abt  
 50 Germans on the Spur  
 across the Ravebeek.  
 They got down. This  
 was apparently the trench  
 in 5 C 4. 2.

There was a dressing  
 station of 1 German at  
 the X Rds in 5 C.  $\frac{1}{2}$  5  $\frac{1}{2}$   
 & they used to carry  
 from there to Mestcheels  
 into the wood, each  
 S. B. party carrying  
 a flag.

5:3 Strips of ferns could  
be seen reinforcing from  
the X roads towards  
Bellevue - they would  
get down there &  
disappear.

We never got  
Crest Inn - 4 m. 91  
& snipers were always  
active from there. From  
our line Crest Inn  
was across 1 valley -  
The approach to it  
was bad owing to  
marshy ground in  
front of it.

The ground reached  
the main part of  
our troops was

Capt Heberle of  
15 37 Bn was up  
with some advanced Lt.

16

53 nowhere green - on  
lway abt 2 blades  
of grass were seen.  
Someone sd look at the lawn.

~~A~~ human planes came  
over ~~to~~ our own  
contact plane Lt  
called for flares; these  
were lit where they  
had them.

The Germans at Bellvue  
were throwing flares  
all day.

Later - at 1.30 pm  
the decision was come  
to to withdraw the  
line as 1 left flank

(had previously been  
 who was already wd early  
 in the Messines fight — near  
 1st Objive.)

23

as so much in  
 air, & the 9 Bde  
 were withdrawing from  
 the right. Crest Fm &  
 Bellevue were giving  
 trouble & C. Fm gave  
 more trouble during  
 retirement. As  
 men were retiring to  
 right of Augustus wood  
 the German shelled them  
 heavily also, in the  
 bog.

Capt Southby<sup>x</sup> commandy  
 D Coy 39 was wd  
 by a bullet almost ind.  
 after the start. He was



Advanced  
a line of abram consolidated  
was on spur-crest  
H B 1. 2 - D 4. 9. & then  
as described by Fleiter.

The note in Records of  
40 Bn is clearly wrong  
as it puts line in the  
valley.

placed on a stretcher  
& he & both bearers were  
k. by a shell.

<sup>H.A.F.</sup>  
Lt. Miles (son of Chaplain)  
was wd in the abdomen  
near the start.

Capt Trebilcock was  
near B Lt Fleiter for  
some time after this.

One of Serpts Jamieson  
of D Coy on 1 way up  
saw a German sniper,  
& finished him, in a shell  
hole. Then something  
decided him to go over &  
search him. He found  
a medal won by a  
British Tommy in Sports,  
& a photo of his mother  
& girl & some letters etc

(200)  
K. Capt Southby  
& Lt Nicholles - we sent  
out by C.O. to look after  
some men who were  
around pill boxes ~~to~~  
~~early~~ abt 8.30 am. &  
we not heard of apt  
till his identity disc  
was sent in.

Wed.  
Lt Ayres - wd in ~~rear~~  
in the Sunken Rd in  
front of Hamburg.

Lt Edwards was wd  
going forward from  
Sunken Rd.

Miles as above.

Capt. P. went forward to ~~map~~  
Giblin & also a few men of  
all bus on slope of Crest Inn Hill.  
These men came back - few remaining  
all night mostly 9 Bde.

Line of Consolidation decided on from Aug Wood Cemetery

Round rear of Aug Wood Cemetery 9 Bde on rt. after consolidation  
40-39 - 38-37. no one was lost.

53  
Enabled him to  
send them to the  
man's home.

Many Tommy wd  
were out there & were  
brought in from in front  
of Aug Wood & in it.

39 Bn in this fight had 2  
Reserve Coys, B & C in  
Sunken Rd <sup>before</sup> zero hour.

D Coy went with 38 Bn

A Coy was carrying Coy.  
Capt. Patterson took  
forward the ~~L Gs~~ reserve  
Coy mainly consisting of  
L Gs at abt 7.30 am.  
up to line of consolidation. Men  
were left near Aug Wood (to rd dit)

37
38
39
40

C	B
D	
A	

m.o.  
Res.

In usual formation of  
Coy attack.

39 Bu Oct 4.

The German bombt. did not fall directly on 10 Bde route or assembly pt - only the splash at fringe of bombt.

They cd hear it & see 6 or 7 minutes. bombs in air at a time. It was thought Germans had tumbled to our attack. These cd be seen on / rt flank.

The first opposite noticed was from Tudah



Galleries at 21 B 60.75  
 M.S. fire was coming from  
 here. abt 40 Germans  
 were got from here -  
 mainly by 37 Bn.

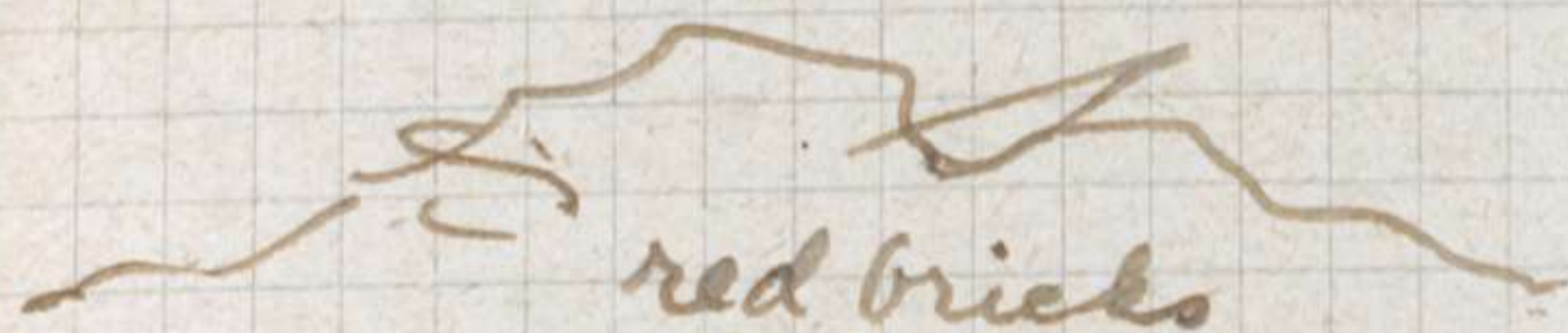
This did not hold them  
 up for more than 5 mins  
 They were able to keep  
 onto 1 Barrage 1 whole  
 way.

Part of 1 Bde  
 swerved a bit left &  
 began to mix w  
 NZ - It was rather  
 dark - but on  
 38th Objec  
 they were  
 checked by compass &

directly connected.

At 38 Objic beyond  
Bordeaux In the van  
halted a while. While  
waiting there there was  
a ~~blast~~ from 16 A 10.0  
a Pillbox ruined  
Jann shattering 2  
moss. As they were  
in 1 ruins they cd  
not be picked up  
at first.

One of men then  
spotted some germs  
moving in the red  
brick dust heap &  
this gave a clue to it.



red bricks



X  
 A message was sent  
 to the New Zealanders  
 during the halt to tell  
 them of this by runner  
 from M.

Rifle grenades were  
 put on - & as soon as  
 1 barrage lifted it was  
 rushed & captured.  
 Middleton left some men  
 there to go thro 1 place -  
 The Serjt. <sup>Gottard</sup> in charge there  
 we wd but 2 guns  
 had bn captured & some  
 Germans.

Heavy oblique inf.  
 fire came from Abraham  
 Heights, from 2 Pillboxes  
 on 1 hill top. These were  
 rushed by NZ as soon  
 as 1 barrage lifted &  
 this ceased.

29

2 tumbled farm bldgs  
w portion of one wall  
standing.

30

5-9

BEECHAM Farm<sup>x</sup>  
offered no opposition  
tho there were a few  
germs there. The barrage  
had been picked up at  
the halt & was being  
closely followed.

On the 39 Bn  
objective they got a lot  
of trouble from mg  
in pillboxes along  
S. portion of Dab  
21 firing through  
the ~~proposed~~ barrage  
wh 40 Bn was following  
(halt at 39 objvce at  
only 12 mins)

03

The 39 got into shellholes  
while 40 Bn was  
passing through —

39 reinforced them to  
help them take these.

They were just over  
the bend & ridge.

(These are the Pillboxes  
you see from abt Seine).

While consolidating & allowed

39 Bn got trouble from  
Berlin woods (Stumps  
of trees). Several men  
were shot from there

— beyond NZ obvie.

Abt 11 am. NZ probly  
died w this for }



53 it ceased altogether.  
 This trench D-L was  
 support of two made  
 into a continuous  
 line & wired.

It linked up NZ  
 on left; but on rt  
 was 120 yds of  
 morass separating  
 10 from 11 Bde.  
 The line we made  
 in shape of a figure  
 ~ & very few  
 casualties occurred.  
 Water was struck but  
 of us dug to abt 3'6"  
 with parapet.

Lt Speering (B Coy) was  
killed abt 5 mins after  
start by a shell.

Lt Grant (C Coy) was k on  
approach march  
by a shell.

Lt Mc Cay (B Coy) <sup>2 of w.</sup> was  
sniped very early, on  
right.

---

Wd.

Capt Cumming } wd  
Lt. Maxwell } wd  
from mis. fire from  
Dab 2 dugouts just  
after reaching objective  
during start of digging  
in.

? J.W. Grayson

Sergt. J.W. Grayson  
got the D.C.M. in this  
fight + Capt Middleton  
the M.C.

Grayson got the DCM  
for setting the W.G. in  
the lowest portion of  
Dab 2 (right). He went  
forward during the lull  
in the barrage with a  
section - into our  
own barrage. This W.G.  
was annoying the 39 during  
consolidation.

(now Capt) O.C. Dloy  
Lt Barker was hit by  
piece of H.E. and  
after start

Lt Howson (Bomb. Offr.)  
in/dumps  
was hit by a sniper  
from Berlin wood and  
after objective gained.

Dloy.  
Lt Becksoff<sup>n</sup> was  
hit on way to 39 Objective  
after passing 38 Objective.

- A Capt Cumming wd.
- B Lt Speering k.
- C Capt Middleton -
- D Capt Lt Barker wd.