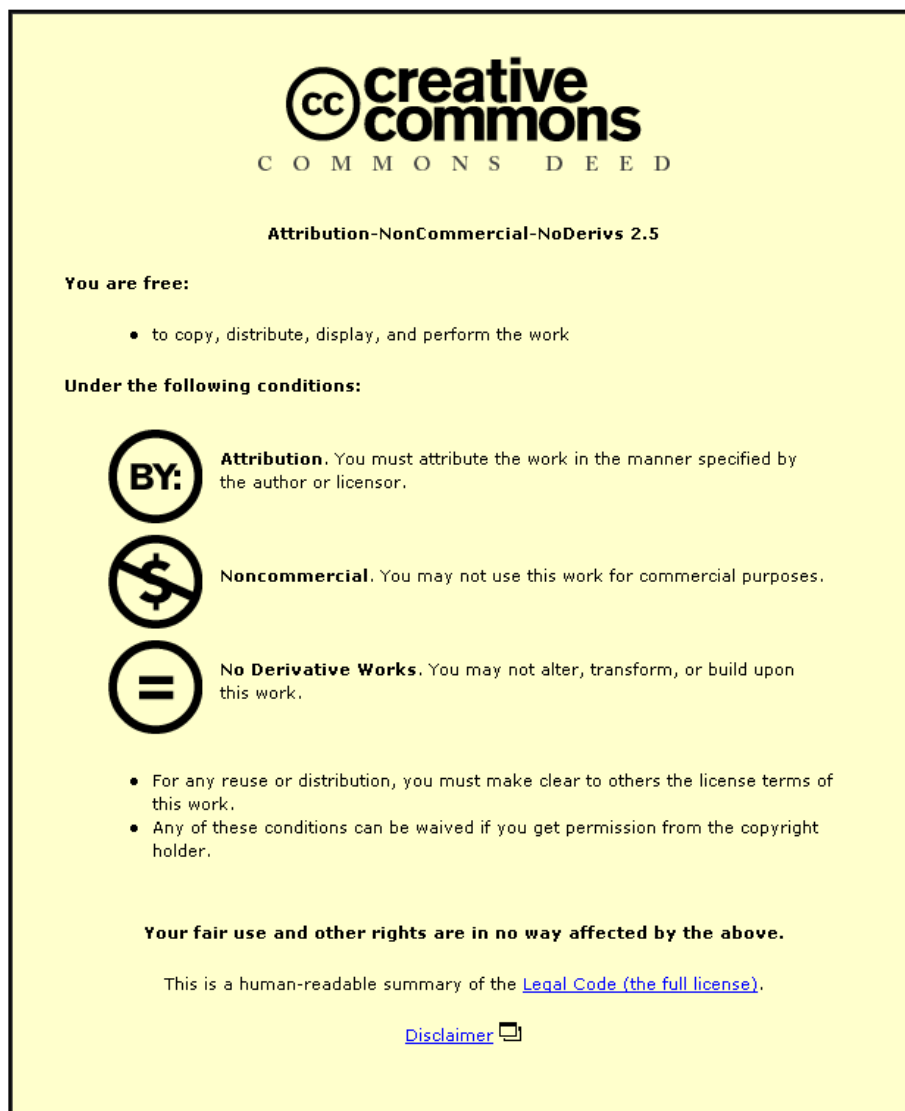


This item was submitted to Loughborough University as an MPhil thesis by the author and is made available in the Institutional Repository (<https://dspace.lboro.ac.uk/>) under the following Creative Commons Licence conditions.



For the full text of this licence, please go to:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.5/>

**LOUGHBOROUGH
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
LIBRARY**

AUTHOR/FILING TITLE

HEWETSON, J E

ACCESSION/COPY NO.

003950/02

VOL. NO.

CLASS MARK

<p><i>date due:-</i> 31 AUG 1984</p> <p>UNLESS RECALLED LOAN 1 MTH + 2 UNLESS RECALLED</p> <p><i>28. 22. 84</i></p>	<p><i>LOAN COPY</i></p> <p>31. JAN 85.</p> <p>14. FEB 85.</p> <p>15. MAR 85</p> <p>03. J. 85.</p> <p>3.00. 1987</p> <p>- 9 DEC 1994</p>	<p>30 JUN 1995</p> <p>28 JUN 1996</p>
---	---	---

000 3950 02



Unofficial Records : A Study of Diaries
with special reference to those kept by soldiers
on the Western Front during the First World War.

by

Jane Elisabeth Hewetson

Master's Thesis
Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of
Master of Philosophy
of the Loughborough University of Technology

© by Jane E. Hewetson 1983.

A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

I am grateful to many people who have, in various ways, helped in the preparation of this thesis. I would especially like to thank:

Mr. E.S.Blackadder, The Boots Company of Nottingham,
Noel Carrington, Miss E.Clarke, William Collins and Sons.
Mr. A.S.Dolden, Mrs.Flitton, Mr.H.Groom, Mr.F.J.E.Hirst,
The Imperial War Museum, Mrs.P.Larrad, Mr.Charles Letts
of the Letts Company, Mr.E.R.Lysons, Mrs.D.M.Lysons,
Miss M.Mackay, The National Army Museum, Mr.G.Palmer of
the Y.M.C.A., Dr.G.Parfitt, Mr.C.Quinnell, Mr.P.Reed,
Mr. and Mrs.P.Scupham, Miss E.Smith, Mr.R.Suddaby,
Mr.E.Summerfield, Mr.P.Tozer, and Mr.J.Wade.

Finally I would like to thank my Supervisor, Professor John Lucas, for all his guidance, inspiration and patience during these past two years.

C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page No.</u>
ABSTRACT	i
PREFACE	iii
INTRODUCTION	1
I. WHY THE DIARY?	18
II. PRISONER OF WAR DIARY OF PTE. SYDNEY JAGGERS	45
III. THE DIARY OF 2nd LIEUT. NOEL CARRINGTON	74
IV. THE DIARY OF PTE. EDWARD LYSONS	108
V. THE DIARY OF SAPPER IRA CLARKE	152
VI. THE DIARY OF LANCE CORPORAL HERMANN BRAUNHOLTZ	174
APPENDIX I. CHARLES QUINNELL'S ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST DAY OF THE SOMME	200
APPENDIX II. REPRODUCED PAGES FROM IRA CLARKE'S DIARY.	204
BIBLIOGRAPHY	208

Loughborough University	
of Applied Science	
Date	Jan 84
Class	
Ref No	003950/02

A B S T R A C T

The Imperial War Museum houses over 2,000 diaries from the First World War alone. This study, with the aid of source material and interviews, examines why so many men of rank and officer class kept diaries during the war, when it was against the King's Regulations to do so.

The diaries utilised range from 1914 - 1918, and illustrate the change in attitude to the war from the Old Contemptible, the eager volunteer, to the war-weary recruit. Each diary is represented as a case study of the soldier, illustrating his family and educational background. Because these studies range from public schoolboy to carpenter, differing responses and styles of writing are used to describe the war.

Hundreds of soldiers have published memoirs and reminiscences since 1918. Today publishers edit selections, but the purpose of this study is not to reiterate what has already been written. Memoirs recall the war years often with fond remembrance of the most important event of their lives and forget the agony of route marches, hunger and battle. After 1918 it was easier to recall the esprit de corps, and forget the suffering.

Published diaries, like memoirs, cannot be considered a true record. Editors select what they consider the more interesting battles and episodes, so that the reader could believe soldiers spent all of their time in France engaged in battle. These unpublished selections illustrate battles, but also the monotony of the days 'in rest', on marches, and on fatigues. Soldiers kept diaries during the

war for companionship, to record the great adventure, and to work out the horrific and inexplicable. They were not, as published material would often have us believe, describing a glorified infantryman's picnic.

P R E F A C E

The scene is a small dimly-lit room. The actors are a man and a woman, and they are acting out their parts in Alain Resnais' film 'Hiroshima Mon Amour'. He says:

HE: You saw nothing in Hiroshima. Nothing.

SHE: I saw everything. Everything. Four times at the museum in Hiroshima. I saw the people walking around, lost in thought among the photographs, the reconstructions, for want of something else.

HE: You saw nothing at Hiroshima. Nothing.

SHE: The reconstructions have been made as authentically as possible. The illusion, it's quite simple, the illusion is so perfect that the tourists cry.

HE: You saw nothing. ⁽¹⁾

This is not a study questioning the justice of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, but the excerpt serves to illustrate that there may well be no adequate medium for expressing the horror of modern warfare.

Today we are like 'She' in Resnais' film. She could read about the dropping of the bomb, see the newsreels, and cry over the fate of Hiroshima. But she could not fully understand because she was not there. When I interviewed the late Stuart Dolden on his published diaries, Cannon Fodder, for information to help this study, he exclaimed: "But you can't write about it - you don't know. You weren't there". The following chapters illustrate that those who were there could not find a medium to describe what they saw, and those who wrote afterwards encompassed the horror of front-line fighting into an acceptable literary style.

One of the most prolific areas of writing during the war was diary keeping. The Imperial War Museum alone houses over two thousand from the First World War. Initially it was my intention to study a collection of war diaries and journals, and not to make any distinction between those unpublished, and those written after the war intended for publication. Soon it became apparent that there was a gap between the two. Unpublished raw material produced very different kinds of responses, whereas published diaries assumed a literary form. Dolden published his diary in 1980, a narrative which has the immediacy of events, with an unsophisticated literary style. But in order to publish, Dolden had to produce an abridged version of the diaries, which resulted in a book of seventy-thousand words. Whilst this is understandable, the immediacy of the diary was lost in the narrative and as a result the authentic entries became distorted.

I found a similar problem with published autobiographies. It may have seemed unnecessary for Vera Brittain's Chronicle of Youth to have been published after the popularity of Testament of Youth, which draws copiously on the diaries. But the autobiography has the benefit of hindsight, whereas the diary portrays the author as innocent and ignorant of the destruction of war, like so many others in 1914. Testament of Youth is retrospective and judgemental; the diary is written without justification or irony. When war was declared, Brittain writes in Chronicle after she had urged her brother Edward to join up:

Daddy was quite angry about the letter being sent to the War Office, but E said that Daddy, not being a public school man or having had any training, could not possibly understand the impossibility of his remaining in inglorious safety while others scarcely older than he, were offering their all. (2)

In Testament of Youth, the situation is described thus:

My father vehemently forbade Edward who was still under military age, to join anything whatsoever. Having himself escaped immersion in the public school tradition, which stood for militaristic heroism unimpaired by the damping exercise of reason, he withheld his permission for any kind of military training. (3)

Nearly thirty years later Vera Brittain uses distance and her pacifism to comment upon the idealistic views of her brother, but the diary entry shows the earlier innocence of the girl who, like Edward, exalted the glorious sacrifice of manhood.

The Memoirs of George Sherston juxtaposed with Sassoon's War Diaries reveal a similar attempt by the author to distance himself from and create a literary style out of the war. It therefore seemed necessary not only to draw attention to this difference, but also to present a random selection of unpublished diaries with their un-literary qualities, to present a truer picture of the First World War. I advertised both locally and nationally and received an unsystematic collection, which reflect the very different kinds of ways in which soldiers on the Western Front looked at war.

Published diaries, like Stuart Dolden's, have suffered in the editor's hands because of their unliterary nature. The five

diaries presented in this study are selections which illustrate not only the first day of battle and lists of horrors witnessed, but also the tedium of route marches, the repetitious parades, the feeling of hunger and the need for warmth. The diarists are not hindered by memory, nor do they try to make sense of a life they do not understand by imposing upon their writing a literary style. In contrast the diarists illustrate through their un-selfconscious writing the ways in which, once at the front, there was no language to express what they experienced.

This selection takes into consideration the ways in which family, education and the Edwardian upbringing played its role in the differing responses to the war. Although each diarist adopts a different style, they each have this in common : they could not find a vehicle to quantify what they saw, and the tone of the diary entries become disenchanted.

There is no definitive style in describing the First World War, but I feel these unpublished diarists come closer to the truth than any post-war publication. Resnais and Dolden are right when they say that we cannot write about war nor really understand it, because we were not there. But in order to begin to understand it, it is necessary to take into account these works which are a random selection of soldier's diaries, with all their unsophistication and tedium.

Soldiers who went to the front took with them part of an inherited tradition to try and make sense of, and record the horrors of the First World War. These unpublished diaries therefore serve as

valuable historical and literary documents, which give an immediate account of life at the front without the blandness of letters, nor the gaudiness of jingoistic publicity. They have to be taken into account.

R E F E R E N C E S

1. (quoted by) Lee R. Bobker, Elements of Film, p.11.
2. Vera Brittain, Chronicle of Youth, p.89-90.
3. Vera Brittain, Testament of Youth, p.97-98.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

We now have a body of very good writing about the Edwardian era, the name commonly applied to the fourteen years before the First World War. It would be pointless in a thesis of this length to rehearse the arguments already dealt with by writers like George Dangerfield, Donald Read, Bernard Bergonzi and Paul Fussell, amongst others. It serves my purpose to pick out one or two salient features of the era, which will help to explain the context in which the diaries I have studied came to be written.

The Boer War.

A number of contradicting moods prevailed in the pre-1914 years. This is in part due to the anti and pro-war feelings which existed after the defeat of the Boers at the turn of the century. In one sense it was a great victory, in another sense it was a defeat. It illustrated the greatest Empire in the world nearly defeated by unsophisticated Boers, and it was also seen by the rest of Europe as England bullying.

After the war, the 'Little Englanders' in Parliament advocated that the Boer War illustrated the need for pacifism, but the Government saw the war as an indication that more money needed to be spent on military expansion. Twinned with the growing hysteria about Germany, the Government believed that an expansion of the Navy and Army was a necessity.

Wealth and Poverty

Superficially, at least, each stratum of Edwardian society appeared to identify with a national mood. Constituent elements of that mood seemed to be happily married families, substantial wealth, and professional respectability. Osbert Sitwell illustrates in Great Morning:

Never had there been such a display of flowers a profusion of full-blooded blossoms, of lolling roses and malmaisons, of gilded, musical-comedy baskets of carnations, and sweet peas Never had Europe seen such mounds of peaches, figs, nectarines and strawberries at all seasons, brought from their steamy tents of glass. Champagne bottles stood stacked on the sideboards And to the rich, the show was free. (1)

Sitwell reminds the reader at the end of the passage that the show was only for the rich; the profusion was only a façade and a terrible waste. Profusion did not take into account the wageless slave labourers, who were taught that they would be rewarded in heaven. Robert Tressall points out in his novel The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists that the poor were kept poor by the middle classes, and they accepted their lot because they knew no different.

Underneath the respectability of the upper class Edwardian society was a hypocrisy. None was better at playing this game than the rich, and the childhood of Julian Grenfell epitomizes the way in which social mores were accepted. Values of sobriety, thrift, chastity, prudery and piety were temporarily imposed, so that the affairs of Grenfell's mother Ettie were shut out from the public view. Grenfell's biographer writes:

....the quiet adoring men at the beck and call of his mother; most women hoping to be like her; husbands going off as if furiously to kill animals and birds.... And then they came home to women who were supposed to be everything to them: but this was not quite true; and so they went out again. (2)

This was the current of deceit and mistrust behind the facade of respectability, and it was this from which Julian Grenfell was escaping, when he went to war in 1914.

Life in pre-1914 England was not all motor cars, golf courses and country house parties. The poor lived in a secure world because it was safe in its poverty. Sepia photographs of idyllic Edwardian days fail to include the thousands that lived below the poverty line. The life endured by the poor has been recorded in Charles Booth's Life and Labour of the People of London, and Rowntree who made a study on the city of York and published in 1910, called Poverty : A Study in Town Life. Each man wanted to show the numerical relation which poverty, misery and depravity bore to regular earnings. Much of the information was gathered from School Board visits, and from Booth's findings he estimated 30.7% poverty in London, and Rowntree estimated 27.4% poverty in York. Commissions were set up to enquire into the plight of the poor, but those like The Report on the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress suggested circum- location, rather than action.

Poverty led to a social discontent. Although the upper middle classes survived into the Twentieth Century because of economic expansion, there was labour unrest amongst the poor. Between 1911 and 1912

there were strikes, rallies in Parliament Square where women gathered to support the Suffragette movement, and in Ireland the people were close to civil war. The outbreak of war cut across the social unrest, and to some as Paul Thompson⁽³⁾ suggests, it was seen as a release from poverty and unemployment, with the promise of the King's shilling. The lure of travel appeared to be a more attractive alternative to sweated labour. Julian Grenfell escaped the circle of upper class distrust by going to war, but for the working classes it might well have been regarded as an escape from poverty.

Jingoism and Liberalism

The middle and upper classes refused to acknowledge the darker corners of society; it was easier to look at the past and try to ignore the tell-tale signs of the modern age. They looked to the liberal dream of Europe, but really knew that the Empire was crumbling.

E.M. Forster suggests in Howards End that the liberal dream would prevail, yet the very insistence with which Forster invokes the dream suggests his deeper unease. That unease can be seen in the novel in his effort to connect England. In contrast, Forster's dream was overshadowed by England's relations with Germany, illustrated by Erskine Childers, when The Riddle of the Sands was first published in 1903.

Liberals like Forster believed that the Empire which made Britain great also made her a bully. But Conservatives who believed in the Empire, capitalised upon jingoism to advocate an increase in British armaments. During the pre-1914 years, there was much talk of

the next war, and in 1895 when Harmsworth stood for Conservative M.P. for Portsmouth, he commissioned an invasion story 'The Siege of Portsmouth', as part of his election campaign.

Just as other facets of the Edwardian era were screened from reality, illusion often obscured the truth in foreign affairs. The years prior to the First World War were taken up by panic amongst the Conservative M.Ps, which led to an arms race between England and Germany. Germany argued that she needed to build up her navy to protect her commerce and colonies. By 1906 concern in Britain reached a peak with the construction of the Dreadnought. News leaked that Germany was starting a new programme for the construction of Dreadnoughts, and the Conservatives estimated that by 1911 the Germans would have twelve ships. These figures were used by the Tories to exert pressure for a British naval building programme. (4)

A battle between the jingoism of the Tories and the comparative pacifism of the Liberals evolved. The Tories, armed with imperial fervour, could not bear the thought of another power challenging their sea supremacy; the media capitalised upon this and produced scare-mongering stories. The Times advocated Britain should keep ahead in the Dreadnought arms race with the jingoistic phrase: "We want eight, we won't wait". But the Dreadnought panic turned out to be bogus. By 1912 Germany's naval strength was found to be nine Dreadnoughts, and the Tories had themselves manufactured the German scare to justify the building-up of their own Navy.

Superficially, relationships with Germany were kept up. In May, 1910, four years before the outbreak of war, there was a show of

friendship after the funeral of Edward VII. The Times leader for May 23rd 1910 (p.11), comments:

At 3 o'clock on Thursday afternoon King George and the German Emperor drove from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Hall to view the lying in state of King Edward... The Emperor carried a beautiful wreath of purple and white flowers, which he placed at the head of the coffin, King George and the Emperor both knelt in silent prayer for a few minutes at the head of the catafalque, and afterwards shook hands.

On the one hand the British public were presented by the jingoists with a dangerous enemy challenging British sea supremacy, and on the other the German Emperor was seen politely shaking the hand of the King. Until the outbreak of war this ambiguity in British relations with Germany continued, and The Times leaders for 1914 illustrate this shifting mood. The following passage indicates how journalists smoothed over the ever-increasing hostile relations between England and Germany:

10th July 1914 Fleets and Friendship (p.9.)

- ...Englishmen of all callings have a hearty admiration for good work, whether it be the work of their friends or of their rivals, and in no class is this generous temper stronger than amongst our seamen. The creation and development of the German Imperial Navy is a first rate example of such work.
- ...The Navy has been a rapid, but not a hasty growth. It has been built up - and is being built up - with the ordered thoroughness which is the mark of what is best in German thought and German manners.
- ...We have never complained of this enormous development of naval force, by the chief military power of Europe, within a few hours' sail of our shores. But we are bound to watch it, and to maintain our supremacy despite it.

Underneath the rhetoric, the message is all too clear. Britain played the game of politics by appearing polite in public, yet behind the amicability, this report illustrates that she was just as prepared to join the arms race.

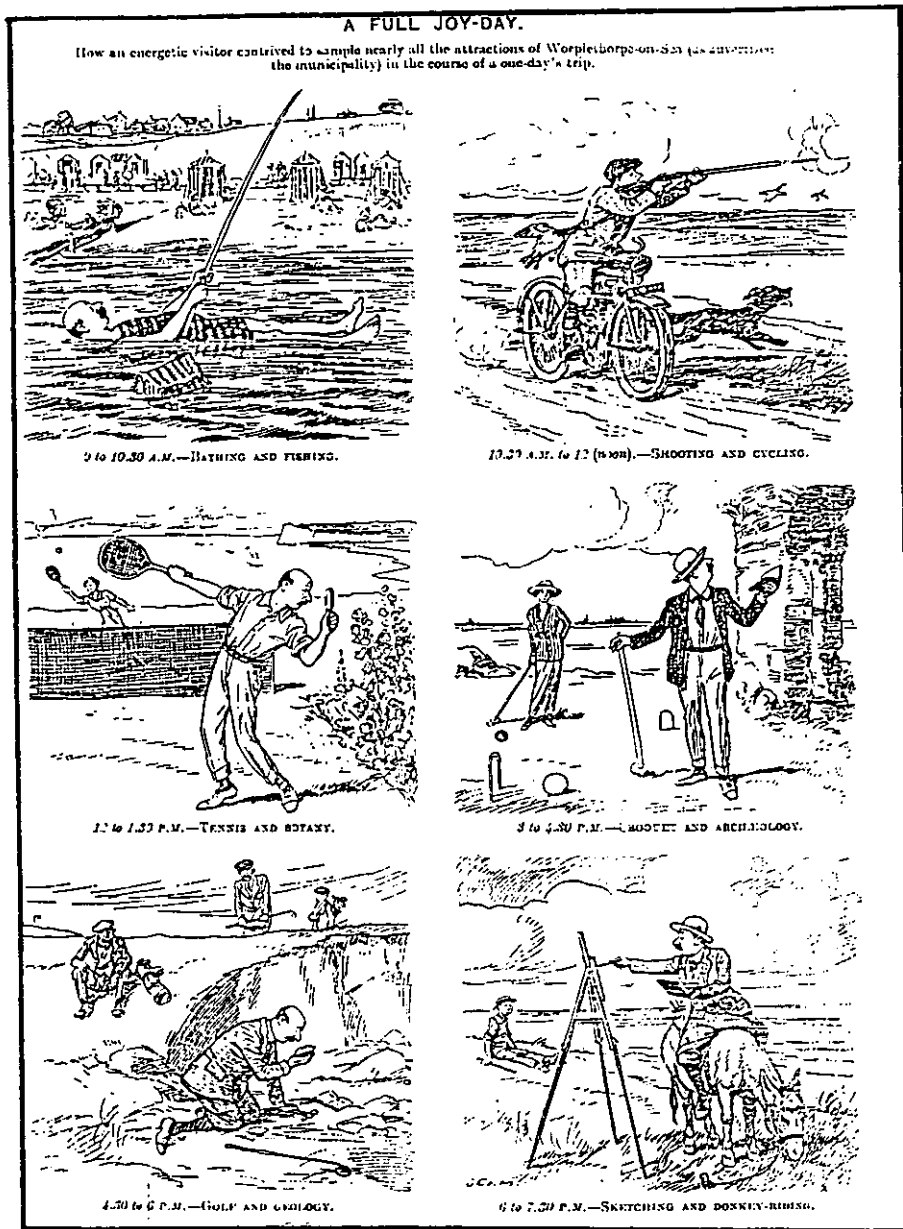
The jingoistic Conservatives clamoured for major army reforms in their efforts to keep the Empire. Military buffs concentrated on the all-important sea power, and kept a relatively small army in operation. But after the Boer War, Haldane who was War Secretary between 1905 - 1912, felt that the army had to be strengthened. A Territorial Army on a county basis was set up in an attempt to appeal to local patriotism, and there was also an Expeditionary Force of regulars for overseas fighting.

Militarism versus pacifism

The average man-in-the-street had only newspaper commentary, politicians and cartoon captions to influence his reaction to the build-up to war. The British press played down the coming of war, and the Punch cartoon on the following page, for July 8th, 1914, reflects British preoccupations one month before war was declared.

War suddenly became a unifying factor, despite the fact that working men were supposed to join together in pacifism through International Socialism. By the first day of mobilisation, regimental depots were besieged by volunteers. This overflow could not be accommodated, and many men slept on barrack squares. When on June 23rd 1982 I recorded an interview with Charles Quinnell, a Chelsea Pensioner, he indicated that all men wanted to do was to get out to France.

PUNCH, JULY 8th, 1914



Quinnell said:

I joined up in August 1914. I was one of Kitchener's first hundred thousand. As soon as war broke out posters were stuck up all over England ... which had the pointing finger, and it didn't matter where you were, that finger was pointing at you. 'Your King and Country need you' it said... I joined up at Francis Street, Woolwich, in the Recruiting Office. I was given the King's Shilling, a railway warrant, and away I went to Hounslow.

Qu. Why did you join up so quickly?

Ans. Patriotism, Patriotism. It was my only motive. It wasn't for the money!... You took it all in your stride, you know. You musn't forget that he who draws the sword, dies with the sword. We were quite prepared to go to France and we knew the Germans were going to shoot at us like we shot at them, but it was all in the game. We didn't resent the Germans. The conditions were horrible, but you got used to it. When you came out of the line, you came back to a village and if you were lucky you had pretty comfortable billets. You got your pay the next day, and have [sic] a couple of drinks with the lads, and the world was a beautiful place - until the next time. Then you had it all over again.

The British moulded themselves on clichés of honour, duty and a deep sense of moral purpose. Suddenly in a country riddled with social and political unrest, the war became the unifying factor.

The Public School was a great source of recruitment, for the public schoolboy had been bred on patriotism, God and duty. Vera Brittain illustrates the atmosphere in her war diary when she, like girls with white feathers, encouraged her brother Edward to go to war. She writes on August 5th, 1914:

I showed Edward an appeal in The Times and the Chronicle for young unmarried men between the ages of 18 & 30 to join the army. He suddenly got very keen & after dinner he & Maurice wandered all round Buxton trying to find what to do in order to volunteer for home service. (5)

Edward had undergone training at school with the OTCs and had therefore acquired military instincts long before the outbreak of war.

There had grown up between 1850 - 1890 a lack of respect for learning in private education, and it was believed that the cultivation of physical and psychological stamina at school was a good preparation for the rigors of imperial duty. Harold Nicolson writes of the new athleticism, and how it affected his uncle:

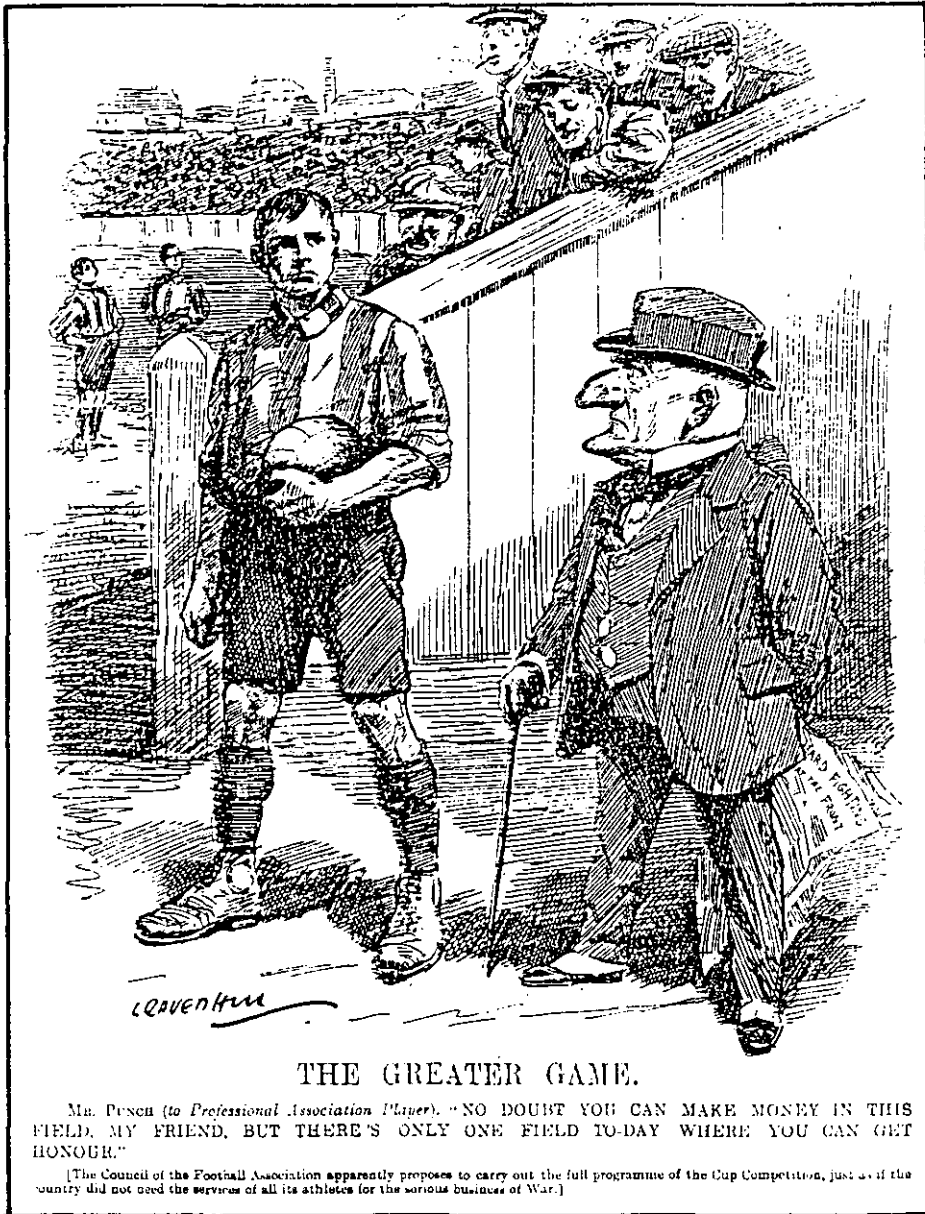
It was taught on all sides that manliness and self control were the highest aims of English boyhood : he was taught that all but the most material forms of intelligence were slightly effeminate : he learnt, as they all learnt, to rely on action rather than ideas. (6)

This was regarded as the recipe for the makings of a good soldier, and there was also the notion that the boy who had good rugby or cricket training, was well on the way to commanding troops.

The Army was, after all, one way of ensuring the continuation of school. Games and battles became intertwined, and propagandists were able to capitalise upon this, as the Punch cartoon on the following page illustrates.

Many young men saw war as the extension of the school rugby pitch, and two such examples are the brothers Borton. War was to the younger brother Bosky, the answer to the plight of someone of the upper middle class without a profession. In 1907 he had gone to the United States to make his fortune. His scheme of buying up lakes to sell ice in winter failed, not surprisingly, and war came as an opportunity to redeem himself in the eyes of his Colonel father. At the end of the war, Bosky writes to his father:

PUNCH, October 21st, 1914.



Now we are in the very back of beyond doing salvage work, but the authorities are VERY PLEASED WITH US and if there is anything doing WE'LL GET OUR CHANCE. There is, however, the greatest difficulty in finding anyone to fight. I'm feeling very miserable and down on my luck, I had such dreams of what I was going to do, AND NOW THE FILTHY WAR LOOKS LIKE STOPPING, and I've got nowhere....

(7)

Bosky was, like Julian Grenfell, unable to fit into any role in Edwardian society. His birth, upbringing and education all made it difficult for him to adjust to a life without war. Instead of being remembered as the war hero that he became, Bosky Borton died aged thirty, an alcoholic, and disinherited.

The average boy must have been influenced by militaristic propaganda. Boys' papers had a remorseless spate of serials which described Britain being invaded. At the famous St. Jim's, some territorials taking cover are mistaken for Germans. One of the schoolboys comments: "It can't be Germans. We know they are coming some day but they have not finished their fleet yet!"⁽⁸⁾ Lord Northcliffe saturated public opinion through his newspapers and boys' journals by tapping the anti-German feeling of those who read what he printed.

The boy-in-the-street did not escape pre-1914 militarism. The Boy Scout Movement, initiated by Baden-Powell in 1907, was a powerful force before the war in training and drilling restless boys. This training could be interpreted as a brainwashing of the discordant elements in society, and a means of subduing them. By 1908 the Boy Scouts had a membership of between 500,000 and 700,000, and by 1914 the majority of boys would be old enough, and sufficiently saturated in patriotism to become the cannon fodder volunteer force for Kitchener's army.

Baden-Powell published a handbook 'for instruction in good citizenship', to assist the Boy Scout leaders. It was more akin to a book of rules, the first of which reads:

Every boy ought to learn how to shoot and obey orders, else he is no more good when war breaks out than an old woman, and merely gets killed like a squeaking rabbit, being unable to defend himself.

(9)

The Boy Scout Movement was intended to be a peaceful organisation, but Baden-Powell made sure his scouts were fighters. The boys were taught that they had to do a duty to their forefathers and to history, and like the Conservative jingoists rallying round the flag after the Boer War, they were taught always to think of Britain and Empire first.

PATRIOTISM. You belong to the great British Empire, one of the greatest empires that has ever existed in the world.... This vast empire did not grow out of nothing; it was made by your forefathers by dint of hard work and hard fighting, at the sacrifice of their lives - that is, by their hearty patriotism. (10)

Baden-Powell's jingoism was drummed into the boys at such an early age that they would learn to believe in fighting, in defending the old values, and playing the game unto the death.

Throughout the guidebook, Baden-Powell gives examples of lessons, activities and games which could be played at scout meetings. He makes a parallel between gamesmanship and fighting, in his dramatization of the Henry Newbolt poem reproduced on the following page. The poem illustrates that far from being a passive organisation, the Boy Scout Movement in the pre-war years was a military training for young boys. When all single men between the ages of nineteen and thirty-eight were called upon to volunteer, Baden-Powell's boys could have had little better preparation for war.

The Boy Scouts was not the first of its kind; indeed other organisations like the Boys' Brigade and the Church Brigade had been in operation since 1884 and 1891 respectively. The Boys' Brigade was

THE DRAMATIZATION OF HENRY NEWBOLT'S POEM. IN 'SCOUTING FOR BOYS'.

380

SCOUTING FOR BOYS.

FIRE DISPLAY.—Evening at No. 5 Suburbi Villas. Fire alarm. Inmates aroused. Escape by the chute. Arrival of fire section with jumping sheet. Life-lines and pompiers ladders. Rescue of remaining occupants.

SYNOPSIS.—The workmen are engaged in their daily occupation when an explosion occurs, causing a fire inside the building and an exterior wall to collapse, which injures a man who happens to be passing at the time. The uninjured workmen attend to their unfortunate comrades, while others rush off for help and return with the ambulance and fire apparatus. Some of the men are rescued from the burning building by jumping from the tower.

PLAY THE GAME!

POEM BY HENRY NEWBOLT.

Scene I.: Tableau of boys playing cricket.

RECITATION.

There's a breathless hush in the close to-night
Ten to make and the match to win—
A bumping pitch and a blinding light,
An hour to play and the last man in.
And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat
Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,
But his captain's hand on his shoulder smote.

[Action: The captain steps up to the batsman, puts his hand on his shoulder, and says to him urgently—]

"Play up! Play up! And play the game!"

PLAY THE GAME!

381

Scene II.: Tableau. Soldiers in a hard-fought fight retreating—a young officer among them.

RECITATION.

The sand of the desert is sodden red—
Red with the wreck of the square that broke;
The gatling's jammed and the colonel dead,
And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.
The river of death has brimmed its banks,
And England's far and Honour a name,
But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks.

[Action: The young officer stands forward pointing his sword to the enemy, and the retreating soldiers turn ready to charge with him as he cries—]

"Play up! Play up! And play the game!"

Scene III.: A procession of all kinds of men, old ones at the head, middle-aged in centre, young ones behind—soldiers, sailors, lawyers, workmen, footballers, etc., etc.—Scotch, Irish, English, Colonial—all linked hand in hand.

RECITATION.

This is the word that year by year,
While in her place the school is set,
Every one of her sons must hear,
And none that hears it dare forget.
This they all with joyful mind
Bear through life like a torch in flame,
And falling fling to the host behind.

[Action: The leader flings out a Union Jack, and calls to the rest—]

"Play up! Play up! And play the game!"

[One in the centre then calls back to the juniors: "Play up! Play up! And play the game!" The smallest of the juniors steps forward and cries to the audience—]

"PLAY UP! PLAY UP! AND PLAY THE GAME!"

a more militant organisation, with its insistence on drill, and the carrying of wooden imitation rifles. But the importance of the Boy Scouts is its reflection of the pre-1914 mood, as John Springhall explains in Youth, Empire and Society:

The actual timing of the appearance of the first Boy Scout may be explained as an outcome of the post-Boer War mood of imperial decline and social reassessment.... While the Boys' Brigade originated, to a great extent, in the social dilemmas of Glasgow during the early 1880s, the Boy Scouts could only have emerged against the real and imagined dangers of pre-1914 England. (11)

Modernity and a sense of the past

By the Twentieth Century, Britain was a fully industrialised nation, but a myth was endured and kept alive portraying England as a rural paradise. E.M.Forster's Howards End conveniently serves to illustrate all these points previously discussed.

Forster portrays new industrial England using the image of the motor car, set against the rural England of Mrs.Wilcox and her wisp of hay. At the end of the novel Forster 'connects' England : the bastard child of Leonard Bast the clerk, unites Germany and England through the marriage of Margaret Schlegel and Henry Wilcox. The novel ends on an optimistic note:

The field's cut! The big meadow!
We've seen to the very end, and it'll
be such a crop of hay as never! (12)

But the liberal dream is a contrived one, Charles and Henry Wilcox are Empire builders, armed with their weapons the telephone, motor car, and the house agent's list. Like Forster, and so many other upper middle class Edwardians, the Wilcoxes were "not concerned with the very poor"⁽¹³⁾ and instead ruled England by the sword. Ironically the way in which Leonard Bast met his death was by the sword in the hand of imperialistic Charles.

There could be no union between the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes. Forster tries to connect old England with Germany, but by 1914 Germany was aggressive and imperialistic, and old England had died with Mrs.Wilcox. Forster tried to connect modernity with his sense of the past in Howards End, and when Margaret ponders upon marriage, she too recalls old England and sees "the whole island at once, lying as a

jewel in a silver sea."⁽¹⁴⁾ It was, perhaps, this old John of Gaunt England, this sense of the past away from the 'telegrams and anger' and the 'panic and emptiness', which young men tried to recapture when they went to war in 1914.

Howards End illustrates the contradictory impulses which fed into the moment when war was declared in 1914. The world was safe, yet there was a fear of a German invasion. England still ruled the waves, yet there was a build-up of arms in Europe. The working classes wanted to escape from poverty, and the upper classes needed an outlet for their insecurity. On August 4th, 1914 they suddenly had their answer, but the great irony of war was of course, that it was no escape at all. These many contradictions form a context in which the diarists were to write. Before we can study the individual diarists, it is necessary to look at the history of diary writing, which forms the basis of the next chapter.

REFERENCES

1. (quoted by) Simon Nowell-Smith, Edwardian England 1901-1914, p.34-35.
2. Nicholas Mosley, Julian Grenfell : his life and the times of his death 1888 - 1915, p.50.
3. Paul Thompson, The Edwardians : the remaking of British Society, p.172.
4. The Naval crisis between England and Germany can be read in greater depth in a study by A.J.Anthony Morris, Radicalism Against War 1900 - 1914, in Chapter 4, p.122-168.
5. Vera Brittain, Chronicle of Youth 1913 -1917, p.88.
6. J.A.Mangan, Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School, p.106.
7. Guy Slater (ed.), My Warrior Sons : The Borton Family Diary 1914 - 1918, p.204.
8. E.S.Turner, Boys Will Be Boys, p.180.
9. Lt.General R.S.S.Baden-Powell, Scouting For Boys, p.9-10.
10. *ibid*, p.28.
11. John Springhall, Youth, Empire and Society : British Youth Movements 1883 - 1940, p.64.
12. E.M.Forster, Howards End, p.232.
13. *ibid*, p.58.
14. *ibid*, p.178.

CHAPTER I

WHY THE DIARY?

The Genesis

Only a handful of books have been written on diary-writing, half of these repeat what the other half has written. Most writers will rave about or rail against Pepys, call Fanny Burney intuitive or a gossip, applaud perceptiveness, or accept as Kate O'Brien remarks in her less-than-academic English Diaries and Journals, that most diarists were boring people anyway, which accounts for the tedium of their diaries. William Matthews writes in his introduction to British Diaries 1442-1942 that:

The diary and the autobiography have this in common: they are both written by people about themselves. But the autobiography has a history and the diary has none Except for religious diaries and certain literary productions resulting from the reading of Pepys, Amiel, Barbellion, diaries are mostly written without reference to other diaries and without influence from them, and so form has no history except in the most general sense. (1)

No clear cut answer can be offered to the question of why people have kept diaries through the centuries. But the diary does have a tradition, a history and a form which goes much further than Matthews' loose statement, suggesting the diary has no history except in the most general sense.

The Oxford Dictionary publication of 1933 gives the same definition of diary as Dr. Johnson saw fit to do, and it runs thus:

Diary [ad.L.diarum - daily allowance, also
(later) a journal, diary, f. die-s day:....]

- (1) A daily record of events or transactions, a journal; specifically, a daily record of matters affecting the writer personally, or which come under his personal observation.
-(2) A book prepared for keeping a daily record, or having spaces with printed dates for daily memoranda and jottings; also, applied to calenders containing daily memoranda in matters of importance to people generally, or to members of a particular profession, occupation or pursuit.

The Dictionary, therefore, defines the two types of diary, the private and the public. The second definition applies to the original diary, which was a military record kept by the Greeks and Romans. It was not until the Sixteenth Century that the diary changed from the public, to a private journal.

The changing form of the diary cannot be divorced from and indeed goes hand in hand with social and intellectual change. The most common form of diary before the Sixteenth Century was the religious confession or written records kept by monks, who were the sector in society most able to read and write. Of these, Jocelin's descriptions of debates within Bury St. Edmunds abbey over the election of Abbot Samson in 1182, and Prior Herbert in 1200, are renowned for their similarity to the diary form. The history of writing documents is treated in some depth by M.T. Clanchy in his study From Memory to Written Record, (1979), and it is hardly necessary to reiterate in detail here. What is important is the practice within scholarly circles to keep records, instead of simply relying upon memory.

The keeping of a diary became for some people, as with the monks, a religious discipline. The Puritans, Covenanters and the

Quakers used the diary as an intrinsic part of their religious educational process, where they had to observe themselves, correct themselves and mark out a pattern of life. In the early Seventeenth Century the Pilgrim Fathers went over to the Americas to escape what they saw as the corruption of the Church of England, and so they set up in a wilderness their brave new world. These settlers would keep diaries which served a dual purpose : in the first instance it was, as was customary, a religious confessional; in the second it allowed them to keep a record of life in a new land.

The change from public to private

Before the Sixteenth Century it was predominantly the Clergy and the Court who had the ability to read and write, but then increased educational facilities enabled schools to teach the poor gratis. The main form of communication was still by letter and the diary remained a record for monetary accounts. But gradually daily events would creep in beside the figures and so a daily memorandum evolved. This coincided with the public outlook on life, for England during this period was a country ruled by the Church, and private thinking was suppressed.

This changed, as one of the unmistakable features of the Sixteenth Century is an increasing concern with individuality. It showed itself in a variety of ways, and those relevant to this study include the growth of the modern family, and the art of portraiture. At court Holbein and his artists re-created images of Henry VIII and his wives, and this fashion spread to country

houses, where knights stared stiffly, though usually obliquely, out at posterity from the canvas. This public image grew into a private one as the structure of society changed. From an oral culture, and the sense of community illustrated by Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, a self-awareness evolved, and with this, the possibility of privacy.

Children began to grow up not so much with a sense of community, but with actual physical walls separating them from their parents. Laurence Stone talks about this in his book The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, (p.226-228) and he goes on to say that children were - and still are - brought up into a world where throughout their lives their characters had to be worked upon. Diary writing therefore became a middle-class occupation, because the sense of being closed in by walls could only be felt in multi-roomed houses. David Reisman underlines this factor when he notes in his book The Lonely Crowd:

The diary-keeping that is so significant a symptom of the new type of character may be viewed as a kind of inner time-and-motion study by which the individual records and judges his output day by day. It is evidence of the separation between the behaving and the recording self. (2)

The changing nature of society also meant that man was not working, eating and sleeping within the vicinity of his home, which would have previously been the traditional custom. Home life became separated from working life, and man tried to come to terms with this new experience by noting down all the facets of his daily life. Pepys gives a fine example of this when he enters in his diary on 21 August 1660:

This morning I went to Whitehall with Sir W.Penn by water ... We went to Mr.Coventry's chamber, and consulted of drawing my papers of debts of the Navy... So to the Admiralty where W.Hewer and I did them... (3)

Pepys goes on to Westminster, Queen's Court, the Privy Seal and a tavern before returning home to his wife. Never before had man travelled so much in one day, and for Pepys the diary collected these differing roles into one cohesive day.

True to the move toward introspection, Pepys also kept a diary to record his inner thoughts. He obviously did not intend his wife to read his diary either, as the original manuscript was written in shorthand. Not only did he record his business transactions, but also his infidelities. The following entry is typical, and runs thus:

Stood by a pretty maid whom I did labour to take the hand; but she would not but got further and further from me; and at last, I could perceive her to take pins out of her pocket to prick me. (4)

Pepys turned his amorous gaze onto another young girl, but she did not have to rebuff him, as he concluded the entry by writing "So the sermon ended, church broke up and my amours ended also".

Ladies who took up the habit of diary keeping did so not so much to give discipline to their day, but to keep them from boredom. What else did women have to occupy their hours whilst their Lords were away visiting other estates? They too were becoming more self-conscious, and diaries were often utilised as confidantes. Lady Anne Clifford kept a diary between 1616 and 1619. She lived at

Brough Castle, Westmoreland, isolated from companions of her own social standing. It is evident from her diary entries that she spent much of her time lonely and unhappy, but in public she had to put on a brave face. She writes:

being Whit Sunday, we all went to Church
but my eyes were so blubbered with weeping
that I could scarce look up and in the
afternoon we [she and her Lordship] fell
out about Matthew. (5)

What she could not expose outwardly, she could write about in her diary. It may have staved off loneliness and boredom, but the keeping of a diary was also indicative of these, as many of Lady Anne Clifford's entries reveal: "Upon the 12th I made an end of my cushion of Irish stitch, it being my chief help to pass away the time at work"⁽⁶⁾. The bridge between public and private had to be resolved, and the diary acted as a medium to fulfil this role. Social etiquette was all important, and often women in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries would use their diaries to note the latest fashions in dress, literature and art. Katherine Bishopp - later Lady Pechell - started keeping a diary in 1817 and in it she records much of the social life and gossip of the aristocracy, and also her attitude the social world of which she was very much a part. After a dinner ball at Arundel, she records her feelings on the drive home, which epitomises the difference between her public and private worlds. She writes:

...I enjoyed the drive home much more than the
Ball although I liked that very much while
I was there. How infinitely superior are the
beauties of nature to the poor little attempts
at grandeur made by foolish trifling mortals.

What a contrast!! to hear the birds
singing, to view the glories of the creation,
after jogging about on a dusty floor to the
sound of a squeaking Fiddle

and so she continues. But what Lady Pechell seems more self-consciously involved in is an attempt at a literary style. It is very much a matter of refinement, and not an unguarded entry. Although Ponsonby points out that later on in her diary she makes notes on books she has read, and dismisses Mansfield Park as nonsensical, unnatural and absurd, it is ironic that it is the very prose style which she emulates. The drive back from Arundel can only be compared with Fanny Price's view from a window at Mansfield Park (O.U.P.1970, p.102):

'When I look out on such a night as this,
I feel as if there could be neither
wickedness nor sorrow in the world;
and there certainly would be less of both
if the sublimity of Nature were more
attended to, and people were carried more
out of themselves by contemplating such a
scene.'

The diary was therefore also a way of becoming a writer; a profession a woman had open to her. It was a medium for experimenting with styles under the guise of a more intimate journal.

The itinerant diarist

Social pressures demanded increased travel, not only from village to village, but also abroad. The Seventeenth Century really saw the beginning of the Grand Tour, and this experience by travel was regarded as completing a young man's education. It was advocated that visual experience was of more value than book knowledge, and was

more accurate than heresay. Travel therefore became accepted as a part of the educative process, and formed an apologia for fashion. The importance of the Grand Tour in this study is that it was the genesis of the travel diary. Young men were sent abroad with tutors and were encouraged to note down points of interest in art and architecture whilst in France and Italy. John Leyland was probably the first travel diarist, although his notebooks can hardly be called diaries and none is introspective. Nevertheless, it illustrates the diary-writing habit became part of the education of a gentleman.

It became almost the accepted mode that English travellers abroad kept a diary or journal. Many of these diaries contain dry, statistical information or appear like a poor copy of Baedekker. But travel diaries were also kept by settlers in a new found land like the Pilgrim Fathers, or by those who went abroad to seek their fortunes.

Nicholas Cresswell is one of Ponsonby's British diarists. As the son of a farmer from Edale in Derbyshire, he left England for America at the age of twenty-four to seek a new life. Like many soldiers who fought during the First World War and who volunteered to fight against the wishes of their parents, Cresswell started out for America to make his fortune against the wishes of his father. He started his journal when he left England and wrote in 1774 that he was "determined to keep a daily and impartial Journal from this day by which I hope to square my future conduct".⁽⁸⁾ Cresswell therefore used his diary as a rule book, and also as a means of recording his adventures.

The adventures were many, as he was in America at the time of the revolution. As an Englishman, Cresswell was often suspected of being a spy, and so another way in which he was like a soldier at the front was that he had to keep his diary on his person all of the time. He was therefore restricted in what he wrote, on guard against the diary being found and misinterpreted. Divorced from the familiar Derbyshire world and caught up in a war against his native country, Cresswell finds himself isolated, and so the diary becomes a constant companion. He uses it as a confidante, and on his thoughts of returning home he writes:

...returning to my native country in poverty
and in rags and then be obliged to beg
like a criminal to get my debts paid which
I am now contracting... The bitter reflections,
taunts and sarcasms of my friends will be
submitted then upon my conduct. (9)

Cresswell's diary became his only friend because he was not in correspondence with his family whilst in America. Acting as his only link with his past life, the diary is abandoned when Cresswell returns to England having failed in his attempts to set up a new life. He saw little purpose in continuing his diary in England, recording a life where each day seemed the same.

Travellers and colonists kept diaries so that they could make sense of their lives when they were so far away from the ordered, patterned life which they had led in England. The mutineers on the *Bounty* made a record of their life on Pitcairn Island because they, like convicts sent to Australia, were cut off from all civilised life. There was also a psychological motive; men and women who

who travelled away from their familiar surroundings to a foreign land would be spurred by a need to record everything they saw and felt. It would be to them like a Robinson Crusoe tale, and yet with the adventure would also come insecurity and so the diary acted as a link with the familiar, and would convey the feeling that all connections with the old world had not been severed. Diaries were therefore not only kept by the English gentleman travelling abroad, but by those working class people who could write and wanted to make a record and sense of a new life in a strange country.

Explorers would keep journals when discovering new lands often as a means of giving a scientifically exact account of their findings. Cook, Darwin and Scott used this type of record. Cook's voyages around the world sound on the most part like nautical observations, but he also gives descriptions of the places he visits so that his journal becomes more than just a captain's log. Captain Scott's journal is a record of his Antarctic expedition, but it also becomes a personal diary because of the last entry in which he writes:

I do not think we can hope for any better things now. We shall stick it out to the end, but we are getting weaker of course, and the end cannot be far. It seems a pity, but I do not think I can write more. (10)

Scott must also have had a hope when writing his last words that one day they would be found, so that his journal was in many ways self-consciously addressed to posterity.

Filling the educational gap

Changes in education increased diary-keeping. During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries the education of the working classes was improved partially by newly formed Charity Schools. These appeared to have the merit of doing something for all, but in actuality they kept young scholars in their appointed sphere of life to train up a submissive generation. However, it did mean that it was not just the children under private tutelage or who were sent to Public Schools who could read and write. It is too often assumed that the working classes then were all inarticulate or illiterate. But with Charity Schools and self-help agencies which were in operation, diary keeping was not solely restricted to the middle classes.

Occupation often determines literary involvement, and it has been supposed that day-by-day diaries of working class people were either too tedious for publication, or that they did not exist because after a hard working day these men and women had no time or energy to record the events. Obviously those who worked at dull, repetitive jobs were less likely to write about them than people who were engaged in more varied work. Language employed by the working class diarists was usually modelled on their reading of the daily press, penny novelists, the Bible or prayerbook. The language was therefore limited. Often working-class men would use a diary to better themselves through writing, and so the keeping of a journal became in itself a form of education. An example of this is William Tayler, a footman, who wrote a diary in the year of 1837 to improve

his handwriting. In his first entry he wrote:

As I am a wretched bad writer, many of my friends have advised me to practise more, to do which I have made many attempts but I allways [sic] forgot or got so tired that it was never attended to. I am now about to write a sort of journal, to note down some of the chief things that come under my observation each day. This, I hope, will induce me to make use of my pen every day a little. (11)

Diary writing is therefore encouraged as a part of the educational process in rich and poor families alike. The Church often encouraged their pupils to keep some sort of confessional or news book, and ladies taught their daughters, as Ponsonby's reviews illustrate, to keep a journal as a form of discipline and as a way of passing the time. Arnold Bennett saw diary keeping both as a pastime and a task in his essay on 'Self and Self Management'; his words underline the obvious fact that over the centuries the keeping of a diary becomes a recognised form of self-discipline.

Schools have often taught pupils to write some sort of day-by-day account as part of the curriculum. Often nature diaries were kept, so that children could use events to write about drawn from everyday life. Edmund Blunden recalls this practice of taught diary keeping when he describes the curriculum at Cleaves Grammar School. He writes that:

A time was given for writing our diaries, contained in thick books, of abominable paper which nevertheless had the shield of Cleave's School on their card-board covers, and cost only twopence each. Each entry had to begin with a weather report ('Beastly weather' was often enough) and Mr. Williams read and marked all we wrote. (12)

This habit of keeping a daily record in school often led to the keeping of a private diary in later life, and once the habit was formed it was usually continued.

The diary-publishing industry

William Collins celebrated its sixty-sixth year of diary publishing in 1947, and the history of the industry was traced back in Collins Publishing News⁽¹³⁾ of that year. The article states that the word 'diary' in the sense of a printed book is of comparatively recent growth. Its predecessor was the almanack, which evolved from the calender, which in turn came from man's need to reckon time. Egyptians used to divide the year into moon periods, or what are now commonly known as months. Later the sundial was invented, so that man could then divide the day into hours. The Romans invented the calender, but in England the first tangible method of recording time was the almanack.

William Caxton did not apply his printing processes to almanacks, but instead they were started in 1502 by Richard Pynsen, a Norman printer, who came over to England to set up in competition with Caxton. This idea was followed up by Caxton's partner Wynken de Worde who in 1508 produced an almanack of equal size to the pocket diary of the Twentieth Century. There was a proliferation of printers in the Elizabethan period, and their main production was almanacks. Diarists in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries made their entries in plain notebooks. But during the reign of Charles I printers of almanacks left a blank page opposite the calender for

note-making. In 1704 there was the publication of the first 'Ladies' Diary' by John Tipper, and this marked the beginning of the word 'diary' in the title of such a publication.

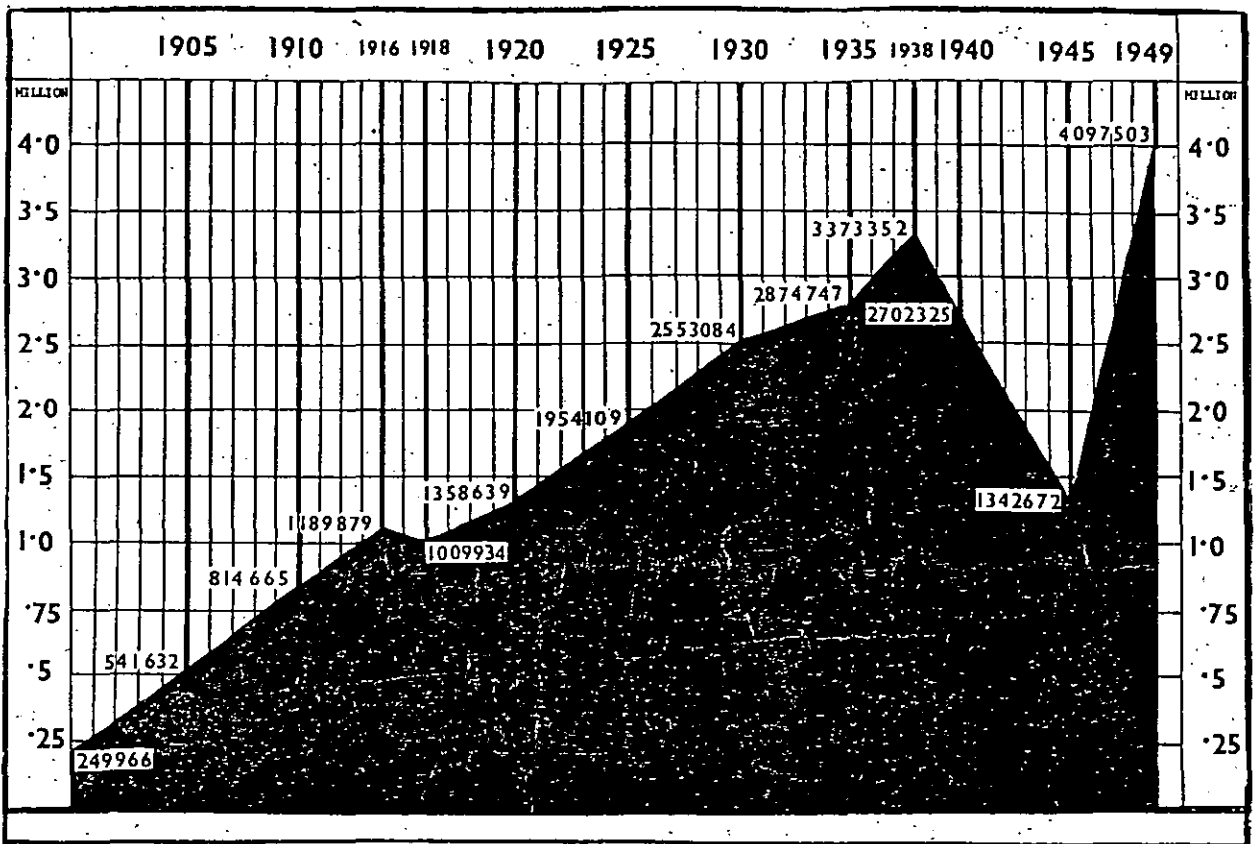
Industrial, social and intellectual change hastened the need for the modern form of diary. As the working day of the middle-class man became more unpredictable, diaries were printed with ruled lines so the modern businessman could enter his engagements. In 1816 John Letts began to publish the 'Letts Diary or Bills Due Book and Almanack'. Letts was soon joined in the diary publication field by other competitors - T.J. and J. Smith was founded in 1839, followed by De La Rue in 1851.

William Collins entered the diary publishing business in 1881. A start was made with five differing models which, during their first year, had a total sale of 17,500 copies. The Collins Publishing News goes on to state that by 1913 the sales had reached three-quarters of a million. In view of the small quota of paper available during 1914 - 1918, Collins abandoned the selections of sizes and bindings, adopting instead a diary with pages reduced to a minimum. One type of diary which was in production in 1900 was the Pocket Diary, $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches by $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches and this continued to be produced during the war, as the size conveniently slipped into the pockets of soldiers' tunics.

Specialist diaries were published before the war; Collins published a 'Sports and Games Diary', a 'Gentleman's Diary', but it was not until the war that a specialist diary was published for soldiers. Letts published the YMCA Soldier's Own Diary which

incorporated military data, and French phrases at the front. Today neither Letts nor the YMCA have any record of this publication, despite the fact that the late Private Horace Holme of Long Eaton, Nottingham, kept such a diary in France, 1918.

CHARLES LETTS SALES FIGURES BETWEEN 1905 - 1949



Although thousands of soldiers kept diaries during the First World War, many of these were written on scraps of paper and not necessarily in a pocket notebook. The diary sales for both Collins and Letts fell during the war years as illustrated by the

preceding graph, but still old notebooks, Soldier's Own Diaries, and Letts and Collins diaries were prevalent in the trenches on the Western front. The Boots' Company, Nottingham, started a printing department in 1892 where they produced the Boots Scribbling Diary and also the Boots pocket diary. The pocket diary illustrated on the following page, was used by soldiers in France and helps add to the evidence that diary-writing was prolific during the First World War.

When the Imperial War Museum advertised in the back of ration books for material from the First World War, the museum was inundated with soldiers or their families sending in diaries or journals. Suddenly the ordinary Tommy had stated his case too, and so this form of diary writing is of value both in a literary and historical sense.

The Military Diary

Statistics show, according to Arthur Ponsonby in his introduction to British Diaries, that after the numerous religious or confessional diaries, soldiers head the list as avid diary-keepers. Many a man in war will keep a diary, although he may not do so again.

Ponsonby writes:

There is a sameness about military movements, preparations, tactics and organisation which no pen can relieve The number of troops he has, the amount of ammunition, the prospect of reinforcements, the reported movements of the enemy and the state of the weather are of over- (14) mastering importance on the day that he writes.

THE BOOTS POCKET DIARY, USED BY A SOLDIER IN 1915

MEMORANDA

1915

31 Days JANUARY

The Transatlantic Company enclosed with this letter, is not valid until your receipt has been officially acknowledged by the Insurance Company.

I succeeded to find bare, about 2 miles from trench, some data called out about 6 pm to go to firing line for General Advance but were held in reserve to the G. Guards.

Monday 28.12.14 (18)

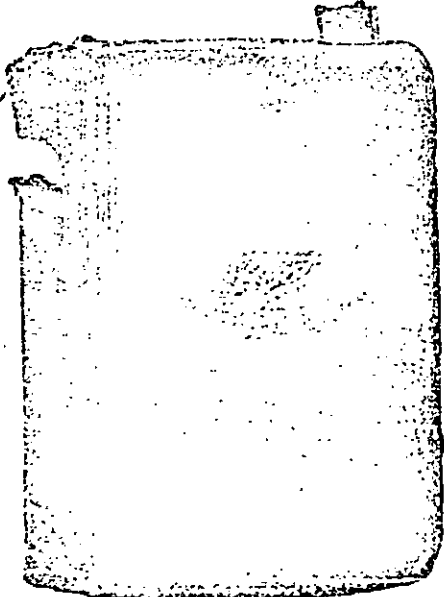
exchanged greetings with the Germans. We met half way between our trenches, which are about 200 yds. apart. Next day I went & exchanged greetings again & also exchanged cigarettes.

1 Fri - Full Moon (22) p.m.
Dog license, and King's Taxes due.
Heads Cash Chemist's dividends payable

2 Sat

Memo

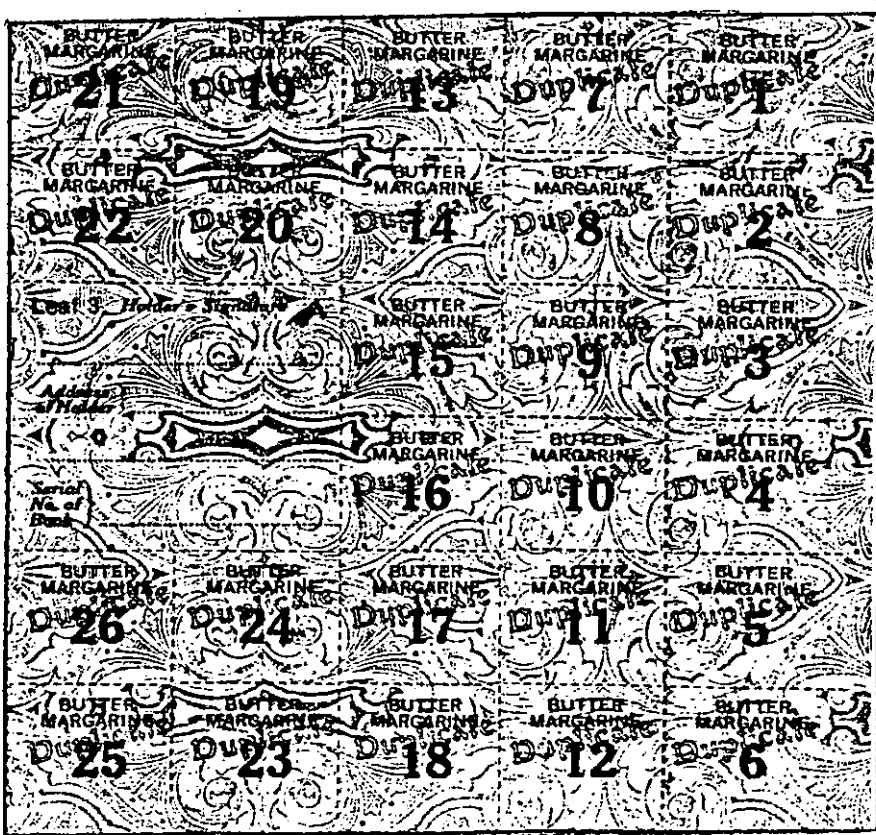
THE SEASON'S GREETINGS
EXCHANGED ON CAMPAIGN



IT will be remembered that twelve months ago the Christmas and New Year seasons witnessed quite a display of amity between the hostile forces engaged on the Western front. This state of affairs was of short duration, but its occurrence was both interesting and impressive. One British trooper made a record of events in a Boots Pocket Diary in his possession. Subsequently the poor fellow was shot, and seriously though not fatally injured; and the diary with its happy human chronicle was found among his effects. A photographic reproduction is here given of the volume and its entry, from which it will be seen that a bullet has passed through the diary pencil holder.

RATION BOOK, WITH THE APPEAL FROM THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

<p style="text-align: center;">IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM</p> <p><i>The Imperial War Museum desires to receive for permanent preservation photographs and biographical material, printed or in manuscript, of all officers and men who have lost their lives or won distinctions during the War; also original letters, sketches, poems and other interesting documents sent from any of the war areas, and all kinds of mementoes, even of trifling character, which may be of interest in connection with the War.</i></p> <p><i>They should be sent to:</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">THE SECRETARY, Imperial War Museum, Great George Street, Westminster, S.W.1.</p>	<p>NAME AND ADDRESS OF RETAILER</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
---	--



Ponsonby concludes that military diaries are predominantly tedious. But it must be remembered that he is basing his knowledge on published diaries up until 1923. Due to censorship very few diaries from the First World War had become readily available by this date. Previously published military diaries were written by officers, who gave a different slant to warfare. The very words Ponsonby uses when he says "number of troops he has" indicates that in his discussion he is talking only about the officer class.

The Boer War diaries, housed in the British Army Museum, are written by the officer class. A bound manuscript diary by Sergeant J. Brammer talks only of short, sharp conflicts with the Boers, and he reveals that:

The troops are beginning to be dissatisfied at being kept without tents in such weather as this. [They are] nearly starved to death at night lying on the wet ground with wet blankets in fact wet through to the skin. (15)

But these conditions were only temporary, and are in sharp contrast to the continual conditions endured by the troops in the 1914-1918 War. Brammer also records that the troops are dissatisfied - it is not until the first World War that the troops express their feelings in their poems, biographies and diaries.

One of the few published military diaries before 1914 which gives both an introspective and critical account of life divorced from companionship and the security of home is the diary of General Gordon. He kept a journal until the fall of Khartoum. Gordon wrote for publication because he wanted the Government and the people of

England to know the nature of events as he saw them, and not how they were reported by the press. Another reason why Gordon kept a diary was that he felt he could not trust anyone, and so he needed a confidante because he was divorced from people whom he could call upon as companions. This left Gordon in a similar position to travellers to the New World, or soldiers on the Western Front. With no alternative form of communication, Gordon, too, turned to his diary. Before the fall of Khartoum (a disaster which he had predicted) he wrote:

What has been the painful position for me is that there is not one person on whom I can rely My patience is almost exhausted with this continuous apparently neverending trial. (16)

Like many officers in the Great War, Gordon felt isolated and betrayed by politicians at home. In a foreign land often surrounded by half-witted diplomats, Gordon's diary was his only medium to exercise his thoughts. In this way his diary can be compared with the diaries of those officers in the First World War who often had to carry out appalling commands issued by their superiors. Often unable to talk of the conflicts with other officers, the diaries were used to voice opinions. Gordon's diary, as with other military diaries written either by officers or troops, illustrates that they become a necessary part of survival.

The universal diary

Diary-keeping became a common pastime in the Eighteenth Century for people in all spheres of life, whether kept for a military campaign, a grand tour, religious discipline or to record social

events. It was also the first kind of journalism which is now part of a world which incorporates the diary. The Spectator, for example, was written for ladies just as much as for men; it was written every day by either Addison or Steele and appeared a social diary although their style is somewhat satirical. Today we find that every newspaper and journal has a column entitled 'diary' whether it is Langham's diary in the New Statesman, or Nigel Dempster's gossip column in the Daily Mail. These daily columns inherit facets of the diary tradition by varying degrees.

In the late Nineteenth Century, the famous Diary of a Nobody appeared in Punch. This supposed diary was sending up a convention of people, it is a pretend diary about plain Mr. Pooter who lives in a plain house with his plain family. The 'diary' has become a literary form, but of course Mr. Pooter simply sees what he writes as his journal, and has no literary consciousness. His summary at the beginning of Chapter 2 illustrates this point:

Tradesmen and the scraper still troublesome.
Gowing rather tiresome with his compliments
of the paint. I make one of the best jokes
of my life. Delights of gardening. Mr. Stillbrook,
Gowing, Cummings, and I have a little mis-
understanding. Sarah [his wife] makes me look
a fool before Cummings. (17)

It is a simple, innocent style with a naïveté of unmalicious humour portraying the small man with his routine existence. Mr. Pooter unconsciously reveals himself in his chronicle of trivialities, and the very existence of such a novel illustrates the point that the diary is an accepted practise by all kinds of people, from the Prime Minister to just plain Mr. Pooter.

As the possibility of publication becomes accepted practice, inevitably the diary entries are more discerning, more selective and therefore further from the truth. This is particularly true of Twentieth Century diaries which differ from their predecessors in that they were always intended for publication. The cartoon strip below, taken from The Guardian illustrates diarists today are self-consciously involved in a world of publication. Much of the immediacy is lost through this knowledge. Diaries also

THE GUARDIAN, 3 MAY 1983



suffer in the hands of editors who cut out what they regard as the more mundane entries, and keep the livelier ones. But the importance of the diary is that it is the nearest record we have of day-to-day events untarnished by retrospection or any knowledge of what is to come. Anais Nin makes this point in The Novel of the future when she discusses the value of the diary against literature. She says

that the diary invites openness and not self-consciousness, and goes on to say:

The very process of the diary resembles that of a painter making a series of sketches for a final portrait. The portrait is only achieved by a cumulative effect because a diary never ends. As the diarist does not know the future, he reaches no conclusion, no synthesis, which is an artificial product of the intellect. The diary is true to becoming and continuum. (18)

Routine entries cut out by editors are therefore as important as the more interesting ones, because they are all part of the growing form.

Matthews was therefore wrong when he said diary writing had no history, and indeed there is some motive behind every record. The importance of the diary is that the writing is comparatively unself-conscious and the only other type of writing which can be compared is the letter. But letters are intended for readers and are coloured by the relationship existing between the correspondents; many a letter-writer moulds himself to the character he thinks the recipient has of him. Disraeli wrote that "we converse with the absent by letters, and with ourselves by diaries".⁽²⁴⁾ But this statement has its flaws, because as a diarist Disraeli wrote consciously with an eye to publication, which would of course colour the way he selected his material.

There is no definitive answer why so many soldiers kept diaries in the First World War. It is surprising any were kept at all, since all old soldiers state that it was against the King's Regulations to do so. Even today old soldiers tentatively hand over

their manuscripts to the Imperial War Museum, worried that sixty years on there may be military repercussions. Hugo Groom of Chalfont St. Giles, Buckinghamshire, answered when asked if he kept a diary "but we weren't allowed". There is no written statement which says the keeping of diaries was forbidden; the nearest document the Imperial War Museum can find is the orders on postal censorship, as seen below. It can only be presumed that the diaries

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S BRANCH : GENERAL ROUTINE ORDERS 2463

27 July 1917, ON POSTAL CENSORSHIP

CONTENTS AND DESPATCH OF LETTERS, PARCELS, ETC.

10. *Forbidden information.*—All ranks will be warned that in all letters written by them they must avoid giving any information which might be useful to the enemy. In no circumstances is specific reference to be made on postcards, in letters, on matter posted in parcels, or in private diaries to:—

(i.) *The place* from which they are written or despatched. Picture postcards which give dangerous information are included under this heading. It is not sufficient to erase or cut off the name.

(ii.) *Plans of future operations*, whether rumoured, surmised, or known (this includes details of mining and bridging operations, railway construction, particulars of new inventions).

(iii.) *Organization, numbers and movements of troops* (under this heading are included hours, dates and systems of reliefs; positions of batteries, machine guns and observing stations; position and description of billets; reinforcements; situation of headquarters of brigades, divisions, etc. See also para. 16 below).

(iv.) *The armament of troops or fortresses*

(v.) *Defensive works.*

(vi.) *Condition of the troops*, moral and physical.

(vii.) *Casualties*, previous to the publication of official lists, or giving particulars not obtainable from those lists.

(viii.) *The service of maintenance*, including position of railheads and supply columns, condition of roads and railways, reserves of supplies and ammunition, shortage of supplies or ammunition.

(ix.) *The effects of hostile fire.*

It is forbidden to write:—

1. Criticisms of superiors, of any branch of the service, of Allied Troops, or of operations.

2. Statements calculated to bring into disrepute the Army or any organization working with the Army.

3. False statements regarding any individual belonging to the Army, or to any organization working with it, the dissemination of which might bring discredit on the Army, or any part of it, or on any organization working with it. (G.R.O. 3416.)

Distinguishing signs which have been adopted by units and formations, and the signs authorized for certain transport vehicles, are secret, and must not be disclosed in correspondence. (G.R.Os. 2600 and 3043.)

10a. *Correspondence through Agents (G.R.O. 2040).*—It is forbidden to disclose information prohibited in the Censorship Orders through the agency of another person.

10b. *Complimentary Cards (G.R.O. 2601).*—Cards complimenting the recipient on his behaviour in action and other similar documents must conform to the Censorship Regulations.

Cards issued by units should not show the battalion or unit number. Regimental crests may be used provided the unit number is not disclosed thereby.

In the case of cards issued by brigades or higher formations, the title of the issuing formation may be mentioned, but intermediate formations and unit numbers are not to be shown.

Secret divisional marks are not to be printed on these cards.

11. *Restrictions in Contents of Letters (G.R.O. 2041).*—It is forbidden to send or attempt to send to unauthorized persons Intelligence Summaries, Orders, Reports, Maps or any other official documents, or to disclose or attempt to disclose their contents, except in the course of official duty.

It is forbidden to send or attempt to send to unauthorized persons any documents captured from the enemy, or found in places occupied by the enemy, or other documents which may contain information about the enemy.

It is forbidden to despatch or attempt to despatch to enemy or neutral countries:—

(i.) Photographs or pictorial illustrations of any kind. This term includes picture postcards, cards with silk embroidered designs, illustrations cut from newspapers, magazines or books.

(ii.) Newspapers, books, prospectuses, etc., except when sent through the medium of publishers or authorized agents.

12. *Communications to the Press.*—All communications to the Press on the subject of the war, or on matters directly or indirectly connected with military subjects, are forbidden.

All ranks are reminded that under King's Regulations, para. 453, they are responsible if persons to whom they write letters publish them. The fact of a communication bearing a censor stamp is not in any sense to be regarded as an authority for publication.

could be potentially dangerous if found by the enemy. But more importantly, the Army would not encourage criticisms of conditions and tactics to be recorded. Letters were censored, but nothing could be done about private diaries except discourage them. This discouragement was strong enough to prevent men like Hugo Groom from keeping a diary.

World War One was called The Great War within a month of its declaration. It was thought of later as the war to end all wars, but it ended nothing. But because of the sheer numbers involved in fighting, the speedy training, and the adventure of travelling to a strange country, many men were conscious, like Edward Lysons, Noel Carrington, Ira Clarke (whose diaries are studied in the following chapters) that they were involved in the making of history, and therefore wanted to make a record for themselves. These diaries are often routine, mundane and of little interest. The state of the weather, food, sleep are noted repeatedly, but these were the most important factors of existence, these were the daily matters affecting the writer personally.

The past ingredients of religion, boredom, introspection, isolation, order, travel, trying to make sense of a life divorced from England, companionship - the whole history of diary keeping becomes part of the motive and method for writing a diary at the Front. These diarists write cautiously, awkwardly, and have difficulty in finding a language to describe all they see, but the raw daily entries are without the blandness of censored letters, or the gaudiness of jingoistic publicity. The habitual daily entries added to the continuity of a disordered life, and kept the writers sane.

Whether the First World War was seen as a great adventure, a duty, or a sacrifice, thousands of men kept diaries for varying motives. When old people today, like Ernest Summerfield from Sileby, Leicestershire, was asked what his motive was for keeping a diary, he looked back quizzically and said: "But we just did in those days. Everyone kept them at school. We used to hide them from our parents". Whether it was a pocket diary or a scrap of paper, soldiers took with them to the front part of an inherited tradition and incorporated all the factors of that tradition to make sense of and, as it turned out, record the horrors of the First World War.

REFERENCES

1. William Matthews, British Diaries : an anotated bibliography of British Diaries 1442 - 1942, p.ix.
2. (quoted by) Laurence Stone, The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500 - 1800, p.227.
3. Samuel Pepys, The Diary of Samuel Pepys, p.210.
4. Arthur Ponsonby, English Diaries : A Review of English Diaries from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century, p.90.
5. Arthur Ponsonby, Further Review of English Diaries from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century, p.52.
6. *ibid*, p.52.
7. *ibid*, p.172.
8. *ibid*, p.110.
9. *ibid*, p.111.
10. Ponsonby, English Diaries, p.28.
11. John Burnett, ed. Useful Toil : Autobiographies of Working Class People 1820 - 1920, p.175.
12. (quoted by) S.Nowell-Smith, ed. Edwardian England 1901 - 1914, p.466.
13. Sixty-Six Years of Diary Publishing, Collins Book News 1947 p.6 - 12.
14. Ponsonby, English Diaries, p.22.
15. The Journal of J.Brammer, courtesy of The National Army Museum.
16. Ponsonby, English Diaries, p.312.
17. George and Weedon Grossmith, The Diary of a Nobody, p.18.
18. Anais Nin, The Novel of the Future, p.153.
19. Encyclopedia Britannica.

CHAPTER IITHE PRISONER OF WAR DIARY OF PRIVATE SYDNEY JAGGERS1st QUEENS ROYAL WEST SURREY REGIMENT

Dachau, Auschwitz, Belsen ... the German extermination camps of the Second World War are still remembered with horror by those who survived them. Alain Resnais' movie 'Night and Fog' (1955) explores the destructiveness of war, giving a brief retrospective study of a Nazi concentration camp. In the film Resnais effectively contrasts the historical scenes of the camps in operation (filmed in black and white) against the present day scenes from the unoccupied camps (shot in colour). Even the tranquil shots of the abandoned camp buildings remind the viewer of what had happened there, giving chilling evocations of the horrors they once housed.

Television today brings us 'Holocaust', again reminding the world in visual terms of how the Jews suffered under fascist rule. Complaints were made to the television company that the programme was too horrific; too near the truth. After war the human race becomes ostrich-like, desperately trying to forget. Heads are still in the sand when the next war comes along. Better by far to have good old British 'Colditz' where soldiers escaped in every episode. The media has given ample coverage to prison camps and concentration camps of the Second World War. Today the film industry has glamorised Vietnam to jerk the social conscience, although it did take ten years for those stories to be immortalised on celluloid.

First World War prisoners are still waiting for recognition. Poppies became a decoration worn once each year 'least we forget' those who fell, but even during the war there was an out-of-sight, out-of-mind attitude towards POWs. So why remember now? Michael Moynihan edited a collection of prison diaries called Black Bread and Barbed Wire using source material from the Imperial War Museum. Up to date the museum holds twenty-seven contemporary POW diaries written in German prison camps alone. An account of unpublished diaries from the Western Front would therefore be incomplete without mention of those soldiers who suffered under the German tyranny. So many men were buried and forgotten with no record left of their name and number.

Torture and maltreatment in the 1914-1918 camps cannot be compared with the extermination of the Jews, but the diaries must be studied in their own context. Behind the German barbed wire was not regarded as a lucky escape from front line fighting, for the prisoners endured a different type of fight to stay alive. As the war continued, camps improved, and Michael Moynihan implies the treatment was not so brutal. But at the beginning of the war Commandants felt they could ignore the Hague Convention of 1907, because they were confident of an early victory.

Private Sydney H. Jagers suffered under the early prison camp regime after being captured on 31st October 1914. Little is known about Jagers except for records held by the Queen's Regiment, Canterbury. Born in London on 26th December 1880, he was married in 1913 and had a son and daughter. Up until volunteering, he owned his own catering business.

In 1970, the New University of Ulster, Northern Ireland stumbled upon the small pocket diary written by Jagers. They purchased a collection of pamphlets, books and letters relating to World War One from a collection owned by Kenneth Headlam-Morley. Among the mass of papers was a small pocket diary, and written on the fly-leaf was Jagger's name. The diary was a give-away advertisement for the Maltine Company in 1904, but Jagers ignored the days and dates and keeps an assiduous account of the day-to-day events in the prison camps where he was captive.

As a private in the British Army Jagers was given no privileges by the Germans, nor does he indicate that officers received special treatment. But certainly as the war continued and camps grew, a caste system evolved. Michael Moynihan gives one example, in the course of editing the diary of Captain Douglas Lyall Grant. Lyall Grant sees the German prison camps as an extension of his public school days. His ebullient account reflects the letters written home by Biffy and Bosky Borton,⁽¹⁾ for whom the war was a great game. He enjoyed playing football and rugby, studied Spanish, and took leading roles in amateur dramatics. It is often necessary to be reminded that he is writing from a prison camp:

2 August. In the morning our mess had two Russians to breakfast. The meal provided by the Germans consisted of one thin slice of black bread and some washy coffee. Our menu for our guests was Fruit and Cream, Porridge, Fish, Sausages, Bacon, Tomatoes, Various Potted Meats and Game, Toast, Butter,⁽²⁾ Jam & Marmalade - all from parcels of course.

It sounds more like an entry from Parson Woodforde's diary. For Lyall Grant and his fellow officers prison camp was a leisurely picnic.

In contrast, the diary of Sydney Jagers reveals the day-to-day existence of the ordinary British soldiers in the early German prison camps. He might not have had the benefits of an English Public School education - indeed his curious quirks in spelling and capitalisation indicate that he had probably left school by thirteen or fourteen - but he does speak with the voice of the common soldier of the First World War.

Diaries kept in prisoner of war camps were written as a record and a means of passing the time. The majority of soldiers would not have written a journal prior to imprisonment. They were separated from the world for an unknown period of time, and the diary was a means of capturing that time wasted. It must also be emphasised that diary-keeping for POW's could not be undertaken lightly. Greater secrecy had to be employed than was necessary in the trenches because it was believed by POW's that they would be severely punished if caught. Although the Imperial War Museum has no evidence to reinforce this, it can be seen from a few of Jagers' diary entries that he was taking a risk by keeping a journal.

Jagers does not commence his diary until a month after his capture, after the arrival of the first food parcels. He writes:

Have had this little book sent to me in a parcel from home, so I think I will jot down the days happenings as they occur.[sic]. It is two months exactly since we went into action in the trenches in which we were captured. We are now sitting on our Straw Bed in a huge tent at Gastrow in Mecklenburgh. My chum H.Windsor has been very sick this last couple of days. My other chums who were taken Prisoner with me are all scattered about in different parts of this tent. I suppose there are nearly 1200 men in

in this Tent, made up of French, Belgian Russian and ourselves. Some of each Nationality have already gone to their last long rest. There is a piece of ground that has been made into a Cemetery, just outside the Barbed Wire fences that surrounds the camp. There are already about 40 or 50 graves there.

To write down the days happenings would give Jagers a sense of purpose in the life which he was leading. He gives a blow-by-blow account of each little incident in this first entry, as if he is trying to find some direction as a diarist. At the front it was the custom to keep the troops active, in an effort to divert their minds from the awful conditions. They were moved in and out of the line which added variety to the daily monotony. There was no such relief in the prison camps, where endurance became mental strain in the poor conditons. Straw mattresses were continually wet, and no blankets were provided. The view of the cemetery would not have been much of an encouragement to the British troops and the deaths at the prison camps were in the majority thought to be caused by poor living conditions.

Separated from the war, English newspapers and English propaganda, the prisoners had to rely on what the Germans told them. They had no way of knowing if German rumours were true, until more prisoners were brought to the camp from the front. Jagers continues his diary on 3 January 1915:

Life isn't worth living here but I don't suppose many of us will be able to stick it much longer A German told us that they have taken Paris and would soon be in Calais. We don't know if there is any truth in this, but we hope not. We wonder if there is any truth in the Rumour that America is fighting against us.

It is not so much that Jagers is indulging in self pity when he says "life isn't worth living here", but more of an acquiescence to the hopelessness of their position. Although the Germans provided a hospital service, Jagers records at another point in his diary that those in hospital received the same food as other prisoners. The Imperial War Museum have no records concerning the numbers of prisoners who died and from what cause, but it can only be presumed that the deaths were caused by illness and malnutrition. With such low morale, it would not be difficult to believe the stories fabricated by the Germans. The guards went out of their way to antagonise and goad the English prisoners. One of these methods was an attempt to indoctrinate the Irish, as the Germans looked upon them as potential allies. Jagers writes:

There are a lot of Irishmen in this Camp and the Germans are trying to cause trouble between them and us English. They called a meeting in a Big Tent today for nobody but Irishmen, only about twenty men attended. There is another meeting tomorrow — now all Irishmen have been separated and put into a Tent by themselves.

The Germans were opportunists, quick in their efforts to cash in on the animosity between the English and the Irish. When war was declared in 1914, civil war was about to break out in Ireland over the Home Rule issue. By 1914 the Liberals were ready to coerce Ulster into submission in order to grant Irish Home Rule, and the Unionists were equally ready to provoke mutiny in the British Army rather than let Ulster go.

The would-be rebellion precipitated by the Curragh incident⁽³⁾ was postponed until 1916 and many of the Irish did fight for England. But the Germans privileged the Irish in the hope of

antagonising the British and also to gain information. This eventually backfires on the Germans, as Jagers records:

10/1/15

Another meeting was called today for Irishmen only. My chum and I tried to get in but when the Interpreter asked us what religion we were and we told him Church of England he swore at us and called us English Swine They are to live in a separate Tent away from us and one of them told us that they are going to be released. They are not to do any work and are going to get better food than us. Heeney of the Connaught Rangers told me that some Officers asked them if they would like to fight for Ireland and those who consented were to have all kinds of privileges and would not be treated as Prisoners. He says only one offered himself all the rest of the Irishmen hissed and called him a traitor and booed and hissed him and he jolly soon backed out of his promise again.

The Irish were prepared to go along with and take any privileges offered, but they were not prepared to turn against the English. Ironically the Irish troops were caught stealing food the following day from the new camp canteen, so they forfeited all their newly acquired privileges. In his summary of these incidents Jagers bears no grudge against the Irish. His enquiring mind leads him to attempt the gatecrash of the meeting, and finally he comments that the Germans are justly hoist with their own petard when the Irish take advantage of their concessions.

It is such cameos which make the diary of Sydney Jagers so fascinating to read. His style is rudimentary, monotonous and at times lacking in adequate punctuation. But it is unaffected by attempts to imitate fashionable writing styles; pathos is not reduced to bathos, and the injustices are recorded in a flat tone as

if written by a man too exhausted to shout about human rights.

In the following extract he uses this awkward style to portray the brutality of the Germans:

9/1/15

Today one of our sergeants G.Graham by name had a bayonet run into his leg by a brute of a German guard. He had done nothing whatever to deserve this and it was only pure hatred of us English that could account for such a cowardly act. Graham went and reported it to an Officer but he simply laughed at him and told him to get back to his tent. Another Chap in Loyal North Lancs was struck in the back with a bayonet and when he went and showed it to a German officer the blood streaming down from the wound, the brute deliberately kicked him and called him an English Dog.

Whilst the Irish were given preferential treatment, the English prisoners were subjected to physical maiming. The two Englishmen bayoneted by the Germans were injured by a German whim, and the incident reveals the total isolation of the POW's, with no adequate authority to negotiate reasonable living conditions. German guards seemed to relish slow torture - a bayonet here, and a kick there. It is hardly surprising that Jagers continually mentions deaths of the prisoners.

During his five months at Gustrow, Jagers became something of a spokesman for the prisoners. He was not prepared merely to record all the injustices in his diary without making a public stand. But he also acknowledges that any form of protest gains little sympathy from their German captors. When a group of fellow prisoners protested because they were forced to work in coal mines, they received little response and Jagers comments "What's the use of

saying anything in protest we are just prisoners and don't count". But these private comments did not deter Jagers from putting into practice his rights as a prisoner.

On 22nd January he relates the punishment he received after reporting sick and being given two days off work by his own Medical Officer:

This is something I shall never forget. They stood me on a piece of wood about 8 ins. thick with my back to one of the posts that is in the enclosure and tied my hands close to my body and straight down my sides and then tied the rope tight the post. They also tied my legs to the post and then the sentry kicked the wooden block away and left me hanging by the ropes. My God the pain was awful and I wondered how long I had got to suffer that torture. To make it worse the Sentry kept spitting in my face and calling me English swine. I am not ashamed to admit that I cried like a kid and I think if I could have got loose I would have made a fight for it with the sentry. They kept me tied up for nearly two hours & I think I was practically insensible when they untied the cords & released me. I could not stand and I had to sit on the ground until the blood began to circulate again. I remember the Sentry saying it was what he'd like to do with all the Prisoners.

It is possible that Jagers had never suffered to the same extent before, and he therefore found it difficult to describe the harshness of his punishment. The account is all the more acute because of its immediacy - had Jagers written his memoirs ten years after the event, memory would have dulled the pain. In its simple form, Jagers describes the pain with no exaggeration, just the basic facts. Other poor living conditions in the camp could be endured, but this tyranny by the German guards must have dampened the morale of the POW's. Jagers says the guards were 'deliberately making us as

as uncomfortable as possible" which must have led to depression and ultimately a loss of the will to live.

Jagers is defiant in his writing and looks upon the German guards as bullies because they knew the prisoners could not retaliate. To complain to the Commandant was futile; Jagers mentions the Germans believed that prisoners deserved punishment as they had allowed themselves to be captured. In his account of this torture Jagers employs no sensationalism in his style; all is stated in the same dull monotone and this enhances the description of his torture, making it all the more acute. War undermines and tears away at the roots and moral values of human beings, and yet there is no literary medium to describe the pain, horror and torture except the words themselves, which on repetition become hollow. "My God the pain was awful" is hardly adequate as an evocation of what Jagers endured. Yet his omission of expletives gives his description, simple though it is, a poignancy which neither memory nor a novelist can recapture.

Even without torture, the living conditions and food were appalling. Other POW diaries kept by the Imperial War Museum reinforce Jagers' reports that the staple diet was black bread (burnt outside with raw dough inside) washy coffee and watery soup. It would have been difficult to live on German rations alone. It was also impossible for people in England to appreciate the conditions in the camps. Letters were censored, and German propaganda ensured that Britain received a different picture of the camps, from the actualities. In 1915 the Germans published Prisoners of War in Germany which was

written by a Dr. Backhaus for circulation in England. He states in the Preface that by 1915 there were one and a half million British prisoners within the German Empire. Illustrated with pictures of happy, smiling Englishmen, the book says of the food in camps:

...4500 boilers, each of a capacity of 500 litres or 100 gallons, are required for preparing one single meal for 1½ million heads Potatoes, the most important item in the feeding of the prisoners are allowed at the rate of 1000 grammes per head and day, thus making a total of 30000 hundredweight. In order to cover the requirement in meat for all prisoners of war 600 (4) head of cattle must be killed each day.

The following page illustrates a sample menu reproduced in the book. It would appear that they received better food than troops in the trenches, and without any other evidence people in England may have felt that soldiers in German prison camps were more fortunate than the front line troops, which would evoke little sympathy for them.

Sydney Jagers tells a different story. In one entry he remarks: "I am not going out for any of their slops tonight as we are hoping to have something decent to eat in our parcel... For tea there is some sort of rice and water, not enough to keep a child alive on". The troops relied on food parcels, and the tone of each entry is coloured by the expectancy of receiving one. It is one consolation that the Germans allowed the food parcels through, but often they arrived with the contents perished, probably due to bad road and rail communications. He writes on 1st February 1915:

Another lot of parcels arrived today and they were in an awful condition. I firmly believe the Germans are holding our parcels up for the purpose. I had a Meat Pie, or what I suppose to have been a Pie. It was mildew and absolutely putrid & of course I had to throw it away.

MENU PRINTED IN THE PROPAGANDA BOOK

'PRISONERS OF WAR IN GERMANY'

Article of food		Contents in Percents					Total Contents				
		Al- bumen	Fat	Hydro- carbons	Car- bohy- drates	Price p. kg. Pl.	Al- bumen	Fat	Hydro- carbons	Carbo- hy- drates	Price Pl.
Sunday.											
	300 g bread	4.3	0.1	47.3	213.7	12.9	1.2	141.9	641.1	1.1	
m	5 g coffee	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.1	
	10 g chicory	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.1	
	25 g sugar	—	—	99.0	398.1	—	—	21.8	99.0	1.1	
n	120 g beef w. bones	19.1	7.1	—	150.8	19.1	7.1	—	150.8	26.1	
	300 g turnip or carrots	2.1	0.2	6.6	38.1	12	6.6	0.6	19.8	3.6	
	750 g potatoes	1.5	0.2	20.0	89.0	12	11.2	1.5	150.0	9.0	
e	200 g extr. bread allow.	4.3	0.1	47.3	213.7	40	8.6	0.8	94.6	8.0	
	100 g cheese	27.1	23.2	2.1	356.6	120	27.1	23.2	2.1	356.6	
Monday.											
	300 g bread	4.3	0.1	47.3	213.7	12.9	1.2	141.9	641.1	1.1	
m	50 g corn flour	8.0	2.2	69.2	335.7	60	4.6	1.1	34.6	3.0	
	35 g sugar	—	—	99.0	398.1	44	—	—	34.7	1.9	
	100 g skimmed milk	2.9	0.5	4.8	37.9	12	2.9	0.5	4.8	1.2	
n	150 g saltfish	27.1	—	—	130.9	100	40.7	—	—	15.0	
	750 g potatoes	1.5	0.2	20.0	89.0	12	11.2	1.5	150.0	9.0	
	30 g soja oil	—	95.0	—	893.0	160	—	28.5	—	265.1	
	50 g horse radish	2.0	0.2	13.1	64.9	25	1.0	0.1	6.7	1.2	
e	50 g barley	7.6	0.7	73.8	338.5	90	2.5	0.2	22.1	101.6	
	30 g soja meal	37.2	2.8	28.5	319.7	75	11.2	0.8	8.6	95.9	
	10 g margarine	0.5	84.1	0.5	787.5	210	0.1	8.1	0.1	78.7	
	300 g potatoes	1.5	0.2	20.0	89.0	12	6.0	0.8	80.0	276.9	
Tuesday.											
	300 g bread	4.3	0.1	47.3	213.7	12.9	1.2	141.9	641.1	1.1	
m	30 g soja meal	37.2	2.8	28.5	319.7	75	11.2	0.8	8.6	95.9	
	60 g starch flour	0.5	—	78.3	316.2	50	0.1	—	47.0	189.7	
	10 g margarine	0.5	84.1	0.5	787.5	210	0.1	8.1	0.1	78.7	
n	120 g salted pork w. b.	18.5	7.0	—	153.8	175	18.5	7.0	—	153.8	
	300 g green cabbage	2.8	0.3	5.6	36.3	15	6.0	0.9	16.8	108.9	
	750 g potatoes	1.5	0.2	20.0	89.0	12	11.2	1.5	120.0	667.5	
e	100 g rice	0.1	0.5	77.0	344.0	95	6.1	1.2	77.0	311.0	
	40 g sugar	—	—	99.0	398.1	11	—	—	39.6	159.1	
	50 g stewed fruit	1.8	—	48.2	201.2	90	0.9	—	21.0	100.8	
Wednesday.											
	300 g bread	4.3	0.1	47.3	213.7	12.9	1.2	141.9	641.1	1.1	
m	5 g coffee	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.1	
	10 g chicory	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.1	
	25 g sugar	—	—	99.0	398.1	44	—	—	21.8	99.0	
n	150 g beans	18.0	0.5	43.9	206.7	65	27.0	0.8	65.9	400.1	
	25 g bacon	8.7	60.2	—	685.6	310	2.2	17.5	—	171.1	
	600 g potatoes	1.5	0.2	20.0	89.0	12	9.0	1.2	120.0	534.0	
e	600 g potatoes in jackets	1.5	0.2	20.0	89.0	12	9.0	1.2	120.0	534.0	
	150 g herring	18.5	15.1	1.0	237.7	40	27.1	23.1	1.5	356.6	
Total											
						87.5	11.8	471.0	2737.8	40.9	

Disappointments such as this would only increase low spirits among the men, and it is quite natural that Jagers vents his bitterness upon the Germans. But the British received far more parcels than any other nationality, and not only from their families. Jagers

received parcels from his Colonel's wife and also The Red Cross.

In May he received one parcel which contained:

.... a packet of Godfrey Phillips cigarettes
and the person who packed it had put in a
little slip of paper which had written on it -
Good Luck to the Tommy who gets these.

From these entries it is evident that the British were not taken in by the German propaganda, otherwise organisations like the Red Cross would not have found it necessary to supplement the soldiers' diet.

In his diary Jagers suggests that men without food become like animals. The Russians used to fight for scraps including the mouldy meat pie which Jagers had discarded. The German guards took advantage of this starvation, and goaded the prisoners by serving the camp dogs with meat which they were never served. Because the British were so fortunate, and the Russians in contrast received no food parcels, each British soldier adopted a Russian to share their food and cigarettes with. This is a continuation of the camaraderie which coloured soldiers' lives at the front, a human decency which could still be maintained despite their living conditions.

Conditions improved when the prisoners moved out of the tents in which they were housed, into newly constructed wooden huts. What must have lifted the spirits of the men was the bath which each of them was allowed to take. Jagers was most optimistic about a new system which developed, and even though it was a routine, it would give the prisoners a structure to their monotonous days. Jagers comments on these changes:

Everybody is much happier as we are allowed a fire and every man has a straw bed to himself Each day each hut is to provide a certain number of men for work & the rest are to clean up the hut & inside the camp There is a big washing place just outside of our hut & as most of us have had our soap in our Parcels we shall be able to keep ourselves clean and after what we have been through that means a lot to us.

The tonelessness of this commentary is, like the description of the torture, without syntactic climax. But again the understatement affirms the quiet yet sincere joy which all the troops felt with the change of their living conditions. A clear-cut system gave a purpose to their otherwise humdrum existence, and with washing facilities they could look more optimistically towards the future.

Part of this new German system was to allocate each prisoner to a different job. This included work in factories and on farms, for which the troops would be paid. This placed the prisoners in an ambiguous position. Any small amount of money earned through work could be put towards the purchase of food, but the Senior Sergeant Major amongst the English prisoners instructed the men they were not to volunteer for any work. Jagers and his fellow prisoners felt it was against their principles to volunteer in order to help the German cause, and they were also content in taking advantage of the warmth of their new accommodation.

The English prisoners could refuse to volunteer to work for the Germans, but they could do little if forced to do so. Yet Jagers stands up to the Germans for what he believes are his rights as a prisoner:

5/2/15

The German interpreter came into our hut to-day and said that we were all to go on different farms to work and said that we must get ready to be called on at any time and to go away to these farms. We have decided to ask the Commandant to give us some written statement to show that we are being compelled to do this work and are not volunteering for it, for if we volunteer for any kind of work we will forfeit all recognition by our Government. I have asked the Interpreter that if we draw up a written statement to this effect, whether he thinks the Commandant will sign. He says it will be quite in order. We have therefore all put our names to an agreement and sent it in by the German Interpreter. I doubt whether he'll take it to the Commandant, I reckon he will tear it up before he gets far away from this hut.

A soldier returning wounded from the front was a hero, a soldier returning from a German prisoner of war camp received no such acclaim. Sydney Jagers along with the other English prisoners put his patriotism before his own well-being, concerned that he should not be labelled a Bosche-lover. It is also evident from his concern that he still believed he would see England again, and that governmental laws would have some bearing in the tyrannical camp. The issue is treated in a logical manner using the form of petition in order to prevent any misunderstanding with the British government. Sixty years later, no facts or figures have emerged from the P.O.W. camps, other than the diaries owned privately or by the Imperial War Museum. In retrospect it seems unlikely that the British government knew the facts about payment for work, for very little information could penetrate out of the camps.

The petition was a risk on the part of Jagers, for although he held little faith in the interpreter he was forced to trust him.

The interpreter was therefore given a carte blanche opportunity to fabricate a petition to which each of the British prisoners would sign their name. Three weeks passed, and Jagers heard nothing concerning the agreement which he had drawn up. During this time they were subjected to more tales of America joining the war on the German side, and they were also informed that Calais had been taken. The fabricated stories went even further:

22/2/15

... they are going to build an enormous Pontoon in Sections so as to reach right across to Dover & that they will then march their troops right across by Thousands and will soon be in London. We have already been told that they have got to London and again that they have destroyed London, we don't know what to believe.

With hindsight these stories told by the German guards seem ridiculous, but they have to be looked at in the context of 1915. The Germans had been hoping their troops would be home before the autumn fall of leaves, but the war was now in its sixth month. Therefore to boost the morale amongst the Germans these lies were created and then fed to the English prisoners. Even if the German superiority was not showing itself on the battlefield, they could fight their petty battles within the barbed wire fencing of the prison camp.

English troops had no way of disproving these rumours as their letters were heavily censored, and new prisoners were often put into a separate section of the camp. Before the outbreak of war scaremongers had been creating stories of a German invasion with great imaginative flair, so the prisoners would find it difficult to dismiss the German stories as fantasy. Jagers and his fellow prisoners were fortunate in that the German fable-making was not

very consistent so that finally the stories had little credibility.

Two days later, Jagers discovers that the interpreter must have passed on the signed agreement to the Commandant, for he makes the following entry:

24/ 3/15

This may be the last entry I shall make in this book as I am in awful trouble. I had forgotten all about that rotten agreement I wrote which our chaps signed or at least 17 of us who were in the other hut. This morning the German Interpreter had gone round all the huts and asked if any of the chaps were there who had put their names to that agreement for the Commandant. Two of them had gone away but the rest of them & myself were called outside and made to fall in facing the Interpreter. He asked who was the actual writer of the agreement & of course I had to admit that I was. He told me that I was to be Courtmartialled and would be taken in front of the Commandant at 10 A.M.

Jagers employs an awkward and long-winded writing style, writing sentences of equally long length as if he has too much to say in too little time which leaves the diary-entry loosely structured. Obviously Jagers is unused to collating events on paper, so that the entry lacks punctuation and syntactic climax which would have given the writing more vitality, equal to the drama of events.

Despite the fact that each English prisoner adopted a Russian, there is no sense of camaraderie in this incident, where Jagers is left to accept the responsibility alone. His last line of the diary entry reads: "My chums are all wondering whether they will get into trouble as well, but I hope they won't". It is probable that the prisoners disbanded their camaraderie in public, for it probably would not have eased Jager's punishment if more men had volunteered to share the responsibility.

The terrible punishment is never revealed. Miraculously, the night after the diary entry, Jagers was transferred from Gustrow Micklenburgh to Tingleff camp in Schleswig. It is not clear why he was moved nor indeed why the prisoners were rotated frequently. It could be that there was a shift in potential work for the prisoners, and more importantly, the German authorities would not want prisoners to remain in one camp for too long for fear that they might become familiar with potential ways and means of escape.

At Tingleff Jagers was comparatively happy. The camp was situated in Schleswig Holstein with only 1200 prisoners including Belgians, French and Russians. Gustrow was a far larger camp housing between 18,000 and 20,000 prisoners. Although the new camp was an improvement on the old, the change meant that Jagers would be without food parcels for a certain period of time. But Tingleff was run by a humane Commandant who was concerned the prisoners should receive better food.

Jagers illustrates his appreciation of the new Commandant:

We are allowed to write 2 letters and 2 P.cards a month and the Commandant tells us he will see that they are sent right away to our homes. He's a proper toff no mistake. Mrs.Morgan has sent 2 footballs & some tennis Racquets and so we shall be able to have a little sport after work now that the evenings are getting lighter. The other day one of our chaps was being buried in the little Churchyard that is about a mile from camp and after the Sgt had read the service & just as we were leaving, the Commandant came in & he told us to stand to attention & then he said the Lord's Prayer in English. That little incident has certainly proved to us that there is at least one good German.

There must have been a frustration in being rationed to two letters and two postcards each month. Nor could men document their grievances

on paper. Because of the monotony there was a need for Jagers to journalise his day-to-day activities, and his diary reads like a school newsbook. The Londoner in Jagers comes to the surface when he calls the commandant a 'proper toff' and previously where he calls the interpreter from Gustrow a 'rotter', borrowing the public school phrase which understates the actual insult.

What is important is that Jagers is keeping a diary, and not just a list of complaints against the Germans. As an early volunteer he would have been greatly influenced by the pre-1914 and preliminary war propoganda which helped persuade so many men to fight. Up until this point Jagers had come across very little to negate anti-German feeling. But the small gesture made by the Tingleff Commandant persuades him to reconsider his previous judgements which would have been borne out by the experience of brutal guards at Gustrow.

There was a mood of contentment at Tingleff where Jagers and his fellow prisoners were not taunted by guards, and they were at least safer behind barbed wire than fighting in the front line. But this mood of contentment was only temporary. At the beginning of May Jagers makes the following entry:

1/5/15

Since making my last entry I am sorry to say we have lost our good Commandant and also his second in command. I suppose the German Authority somehow got word that they were treating us like human beings, anyway they have gone and a new Commandant has taken over. We haven't seen much of him but if he's anything like his 2nd in command we're in for hell of a time. We have already nicknamed this 2nd officer "Mad Jack" for he's a regular Swine. Every week since we have been here, we have lost one of our men and the other day when we were carrying one to the Churchyard the rotters of Germans laughed at us.

'Mad Jack' possessed none of the milk of human kindness shown by the previous commandant. There is a sardonic tone in Jagers' remark: "they were treating us like human beings" which indicates a confidence in his writing. Jagers is learning how to express himself beyond the monotonous cadences of his previous diary entries, so that his writing assumes a conversational, relaxed tone. He has been keeping a diary for four months, and it is the very fact of writing regularly which has increased the competence.

Mad Jack drilled the P.O.Ws on physical fitness after they had completed their work in the fields. There was little point in complaining to the Commandant, who left the running of the camp to his second-in-command. It is speculative to assume that because of the less-than-basic living conditions and the tyranny of Mad Jack, that one prisoner died each week through these causes. Jagers never notes the cause of death, nor the ailments of those prisoners who were in hospital. The Imperial War Museum has no records of the causes of death or the numbers, indeed it was impossible to recount them. Many of them must have died of war wounds, for Jagers remarked on 9th January: "A fresh batch of prisoners have arrived today, but they can't give us any news as they were captured the day after us.... Some of them are down at the hospital pretty badly wounded". Bad food and inhumanity could only have added to those who were injured, and the German captors must take their share of the blame, especially since Jagers remarks that in the hospital the aspirin was the panacea for all illnesses.

Life improved when Mad Jack left to take over the command of Russian prisoners in another camp. With a little more freedom, Jagers

narrates how they decided to form a band:

We have got a Band here and it consists of the following instruments, 1 Broom the handle of which is rubbed along the floor and sounds like a Big Drum, 2 Mouthorgans, which have come from England in parcels, 2 Combs covered with paper and a couple of pieces of cardboard rolled round like Trumpets with a piece of paper rolled over the end. When these all get going one can better imagine than I can describe, the noise that proceeds from the Practice Room (the NCO's bunk).

The narrative here conjures the image of a young boy describing the new school band to his mother. Jagers creates a comic cameo of the troops trying to make the best of their few resources. The sheer dissonance in sound would inevitably cause more entertainment than the playing of the instruments, and subsequently any singing would be inaudible. This picture illustrates that the prisoners were determined to keep their spirits high, and rise above the restrictions placed upon them by their captors.

Great escapes from prison camps in all wars are part of the P.O.W. mythology. There are no records to indicate the numbers of soldiers who escaped during the First World War, but the number is thought to be relatively small because of the language problem which the majority of prisoners would encounter once outside of the barbed wire. It is possible though not probable that Jagers' band was formed to camouflage the noise of digging an escape route. If incorporated as part of a daily routine and "a bit of a sing-song when we have finished work" the guards would grow accustomed to the noise. To continue the conjecture, Jagers could hardly mention a plan to escape in his diary, for fear of a German guard finding it. Jagers' diary must therefore have been written in a guarded style because of the circumstances in which he was writing.

Coupled with added freedom during leisure hours, each soldier had a job of work to do for which he was paid. This is how Jagers views the new working opportunities:

13/5/15

Today we were paid for another weeks work & would anybody credit it we were actually given 25 Pfennings and some got as much as 50 Pfennings (2½d). We shant hardly know what to do with all this loose cash. Its a pity there isn't a race course near at hand, we could then find an outlet for some of it. One of our L/C has nailed his weeks money to the floor under his bed and says that if he lives here for about 1,000 years he may possibly save enough to buy his Discharge from the German's Service.

Jagers has now found a style of writing uninhibited by the awkward schoolboy rhetoric. The stiffness of his first entries still remain in part, but they no longer dominate. Jagers is beginning to emerge as a colourful, outspoken and witty man, with the confidence to adopt a conversational tone. His comments over the money are probably snatches of conversation made by the prisoners when receiving their wage packets. It is important that Jagers is able to tell the story in a lighthearted manner, which indicates that despite poor wages there still remained a buoyancy amongst the soldiers.

At the front troops moved in and out of the front line, or from one billet to another, they rarely slept in the same place for more than a few nights at a time. P.O.W's enjoyed much more continuity, and the average stay on one camp ranged from one to five months for Jagers. On 28th August he is moved to Osterterp in Schleswig.

Since my last entry we have again shifted.... This is an all English camp there are about 350 English here. The camp itself is about 3 acres in extent and is struck out in a wilderness. The only thing we can see outside the Barbed Wires is a Windmill that stands on the crest of a hill to the north of us. The Guards here are absolute rotters, my God they are continually knocking us about.

The Commandant cannot speak a word of English neither can any of the Guards & we get our orders through one of our chaps who can speak a little German. We all have to go out to work on the land digging and draining the ground. The Sentries keep us hard at it and our fellows can hardly stand as the food here is horrible.

The German Commandants had moved a long way from the Hague Convention of 1907, where it stipulated that humane treatment was obligatory in P.O.W. camps. The morale of the prisoners would be on a downward trend, and Jagers' narrative reinforces this. Numerous diary entries make it plain that the troops relied heavily on receiving food parcels, and it is hardly necessary to reiterate this except that a change of camp meant that the troops were about three weeks without parcels.

The change of camps, the shortage of food and brutal treatment led to a wearing-down similar to that experienced by soldiers at the front. (see Chapters III and IV). There must have been a breaking point for these prisoners, and it seems evident from Jagers' narrative that he has lost his previous buoyancy. This is illustrated in the second half of the diary entry:

The 2nd in command is a big burly brute who has been to the front and he kicks and shouts like as if we were dogs, I wonder how many of us will survive this, we have asked to have our Parcels hustled up but our interpreter says we won't get any parcels here, we've come here to work and they haven't got any time to worry about parcels. We are not even allowed to play cards in the Barracks, and no books are allowed, its "Hell here".

Recreation was no longer a part of the prisoner's routine at Osterterp. Not only did the second-in-command call them dogs, but he also made them each wear a white band with the name of the camp printed on it. Jagers questions how much more they can bear, having endured so much, and any attempt to try and improve conditions would have proved difficult with the language barrier. The only source of amusement for the prisoners was the new interpreter. He had lived in the United States for ten years, and it is obvious Jagers and the English prisoners raised a smile over his accent:

8/9/15

An Interpreter came to camp today, he seems like a proper Yankee & he guesses and Calculates till further orders. He says he has asked the Commandant to allow us to play football, cards etc. He may be able to make things better for us anyhow he can't make them worse.

The Americanised German was not to be trusted any more than the interpreter at Gustrow. One week later Jagers comments that the interpreter was always drunk, and boasted of eating his Christmas dinner in London.

The men had to deal with a tyrannical Commandant who could not speak English, a brutish second-in-command, and a drunken interpreter whose only claim to distinction was that he had spent ten years in America. At this point Jagers had been imprisoned for a year, and conditions were deteriorating together with his mental and physical state. The last two entries in the diary indicate that Jagers had reached saturation point, confined as he was to three acres of ground with his only freedom being the pencil and paper where he recorded his thoughts. He ends the diary:

11/10/15

Today we were coming into Camp one of the Sentries on the gate hit me with the butt [sic] of his rifle and made all my mouth bleed & as I bit a lump out of my Tongue, I feel jolly happy, "I don't think!" I don't know what he did it for he just said English Swine and hit me, I'm going to ask the Interpreter to report him.

13/10/15

....This 2nd in command wants shooting he does all he can to make our lives miserable. Yesterday he had us standing out on Parade for about 2 hours just for sheer spite, I don't know of any other reason.It's beginning to get awfully cold here and we have already had several falls of snow. God are we to spend another winter as prisoners.

It is difficult to fully comprehend Jagers' state of mind during these last two entries. The language he uses and his sentence structure is so awkward and twisted that it seems to indicate he cannot find words to express how he feels. Earlier in his diary when explaining the inadequacy of their wages, Jagers successfully transferred his thoughts to a witty, sardonic paragraph. But in these last entries the language indicates that he no longer has the energy to write in an optimistic tone.

The style alters again in the concluding entry, where Jagers switches from anger to despair. He is angered by the tyranny of the second-in-command, and then despairs because the future looks just as bleak. Whilst Jagers adopted the method of living from day to day, looking forward to the next food parcel, he was able to endure the awful monotony. But the last line is the penultimate page in the diary and he must have wondered how many more diaries he would fill before death or the end of the war. He wrote in May after receiving a

parcel: "I have also got another book that all being well, I shall make another diary of when this one is full up". Subsequent history shows he was determined not to keep it.

Jagers had two alternatives: either to go on the downward curve of depression which was now setting in, or make an escape attempt. The diary indicates nothing, only a terse note at the end which reads: "Escaped on the 15th Nov 1915 after 13 months imprisonment". How he escaped and returned to England remains a mystery.

The majority of contemporary Great War P.O.W. diaries known to be in existence have been re-written as journals. Sydney Jagers' diary contains the immediacy of the hardships which he endured. The colloquial conversational tone would be lost in a retrospective journal, for Jagers wrote without the benefit of hindsight. He was also writing in secrecy, as many prison camp regulations prevented the keeping of diaries. A month after his captivity begins Jagers writes:

This little book is quite a companion although I have to keep it hidden away pretty safely, or I reckon I'd get it pretty warm if they found it.

The Imperial War Museum has no records indicating the punishment given for the keeping of a diary, nor records of any regulations indicating that diaries were contraband. It can only be supposed from Jagers' writing that he was going against camp regulations. He writes in August:

I had a narrow squeak the other day while we were out working the Guards searched all the Barrack rooms and turned everything out of our bags, as this book was in my bag I'm congratulating myself on them not finding it. I'll take care and hide it better in future.

The very act of keeping a diary must have acted as psychological therapy for Jagers, although psychologists have no evidence of such therapy for prisoners. The notebook became a companion as well as a record of events which would help pass the time and give form and purpose to the mundane days.

Military records held by The Queen's Regiment show that Jagers escaped to England, and was discharged from the Army on 14th August 1917, having been awarded the Military Medal, the 1914 Star and the War and Victory Medals. No other details about his life have been found.

A.G.S. Enser's Subject Bibliography of the First World War 1914 - 1978 records a total of seventy-six P.O.W. books published. Of these, over one third were published during the war years. With such a substantial number of accounts it seems unnecessary to reiterate what has been written. One only has to scan the titles: Break out! great wartime escape stories, The spook and the Commandant, A Guest of the Kaiser : the plain story of a lucky soldier - and it can be seen that the mythology of P.O.W. camps has been immortalized in stories more akin to excerpts from Boy's Own Papers. They were written from notes or memory, published quickly to capture a sympathetic audience. Today these books can only be found in The British Library or second-hand book shops.

P.O.W. literature does not boast the names Sassoon, Graves or Blunden, and the novels about prison camps were written by amateurs. E.E.Cummings wrote of his experiences when he was detained on suspicion in a French prison. The Enormous Room illustrates that prison guards whatever the nationality are brutal, and prison food is universally

bad. Cummings was not writing to show the world how badly he was treated by the French, because his novel was more of a 'working out' or experiment for his poems. He presents a rogue's gallery of personalities, conjuring up sardonic images of corrupt characters. These "most people" are disembowelled by Cummings with the sweep of his pen. After being shut up in a cell for he-did-not-quite-know-why, he writes:

It must have been five o'clock. Steps.
 A vast clattering of the exterior of
 the door - by whom? Whang opens the door.
 Turnkey-creature extending a piece of
 chocolat with extreme and surly caution.
 I say 'Merci' and seize chocolat. Klang
 shuts the door.
 I am lying on my back, the twilight does
 mistily bluish miracles through the slit
 over the whang-klang. I can just see leaves,
 meaning tree. (5)

Cummings was not relating point by point to his experience in a French prison, but he was instead trying to work out a literary style.

Sydney Jaggers' diary is not literary artifice, but a simple day-by-day account of his life in a P.O.W. camp. He writes unconcerned with sensationalism, impressing a public, nor does he self-consciously attempt to achieve a literary style. Although the syntax is often awkward and the cadences monotonous, the immediacy of the writing jumps off the page to present an honest account, unaffected by the tricks on memory which time can play.

REFERENCES

1. Guy Slater, (ed.), My Warrior Sons : The Borton Family Diary 1914 - 1918.
2. Michael Moynihan, (ed.), Black Bread and Barbed Wire, p.89-90.
3. Curragh Incident : the General Officer Commanding in Ireland asked the Third Cavalry Brigade whether they were prepared to march against Ulster if so ordered. Fifty-seven out of the seventy officers said they would prefer to send in their papers, and this was obviously a major collision between armed forces and Government.
4. Dr.Backlaus, Prisoners of War in Germany, p.10.
5. E.E.Cummings, The Enormous Room, p.33.

Noel Carrington was born in 1895, the son of a retired railway engineer who had married a governess. His great grandfather had been a Liverpool merchant, but his father left England at the age of twenty-five to build railways for the East India Company. He landed in India in 1857 when the Mutiny was at its height, and Noel recalls:

though he took no military part in the affair, [he] was close enough to fighting and butchery to be affected for life. He became by conviction and religion a man of peace. (1)

One of five children, Noel was educated at Bedford School. The school ran an Officer Training Corps as did many Public Schools, so the routine of army life was not entirely new to him when he joined up in 1915.

The Carrington family was not a close one. Noel's father was sixty-three when he was born and in many ways the war could have been to him an escape from the orderly pattern set by Victorian parents. He writes of them:

He was a devout Christian, his beliefs were based largely on the Bible; he had no interest in either dogmas or rituals. In this he differed from his own relations and from our mother, who had strong inclinations toward High Church, genuflections and pious observances. (2)

Noel's mother brought her children up to be God-fearing, to attend Church on Sundays, and always to dress properly. Her ideals were based on the Victorian middle class view of respectability.

Noel Carrington conformed to these middle class conventions of gentility, but his sister Dora⁽³⁾ would not bow down to what she

felt was hypocrisy. She was an ardent pacifist during the war, and Noel believes this to be in part from the influence of their peace-loving father. This is however, the diary of Noel Carrington, and not of his famous artist sister. Unlike Dora, Noel never kept a diary until the war. In retrospect he says that he probably expected the war to be one of the most interesting experiences of his life, and therefore worth recording. His interest in history would also underline the need to record something of importance.

Noel Carrington was nineteen years of age when the war was declared, and he had just completed one year at Oxford studying history. Along with a group of friends, he hastened to join up. He applied for the Wiltshire Regiment where his eldest brother had served as a regular officer for several years. By October 1914 he was ordered to report to the 3rd Reserve Battalion of the Wiltshire at Weymouth, commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant. Impatience in waiting for this prompted him to enlist as a private in a new battalion of a London regiment. He was determined to fight for Britain as quickly as possible. Carrington's motives for joining up seem to be threefold : the public school background moulded the officer class, at Oxford he was part of a patriotic fervour and many young men would be influenced by propaganda and friends, and finally the Army was not new to him because his brother was already a regular officer.

Carrington eventually re-joined the Wiltshires and went for three months training at Weymouth. Although the training was intensive, Denis Winter remarks in Death's Men that... "it had been the traditional opinion of the territorials before the war that,

while it took a year to make a gunner, twenty days sufficed for the more primitive skills of the infantryman".⁽⁴⁾ The British Government were not prepared for kitting out and accommodating thousands of new recruits. Charles Quinnell, a Chelsea Pensioner recalls:

We were a motley throng because some of us had service hats, our khaki trousers and just a civilian jacket. All of a sudden we had to be kitted out with uniforms and they didn't have them. But the uniforms came in penny numbers. Perhaps one day the tunics would arrive, another day the putties would arrive.

The training too seemed haphazard. One third of the time was given to drill alone, and the other days were dedicated to route marches. Quinnell remembers:

For a start they took us for marches which would be anything from six, seven or eight miles. Gradually they extended the marching till you could do ten miles. By this time you're carrying full pack. We got so hardened that we could march eighteen to twenty miles a day.

Platoon or musketry training was only taught in the final week. It must have been difficult for the soldiers to realise that they were to fight and kill, for drills and route marches bore no correlation to the trench warfare which they were to experience.

Carrington kept a small pocket-book whilst in France, and the pencil entries were written every day. Since the war Carrington has transcribed the diary, and selections from this have been chosen to illustrate both the mundane and more interesting aspects of his time in France. The principle adopted in editing the diary has been to give a spectrum of entries, whilst acknowledging that some

entries are repetitive because the life troops led was one of routine and repetition. The selections also illustrate the development in Carrington's language and style, for at the end the ebullience of the raw recruit is lost in despair.

Unlike the majority of soldiers going over to France, the 'foreign unknown' was not unfamiliar to Carrington because of his associations with India. This is suggested in his confident tone when he writes:

Feb.24

Travelling all day. Merry time. Dined with Capons at Rouen (French school master's family where I had spent holiday)

Initially Carrington treats the journey more as a public schoolboy's trip to the continent in his school holidays, for this was not his first visit to France. The tone of the diary suggests the school prefect, enjoying the privileges of office. In many Public Schools, officials had to check the letters of younger boys when they wrote home, supposedly to correct spelling mistakes. On February 28th he writes: "Censor letters all day". In many ways the war was seen as an extension of school life for the young officers, until they experienced battle.

In his early entries Carrington portrays life in France like a public school club, and he does not seem to connect his social enjoyment with the reason for his presence in France. Away from the trenches, the officers and troops were too far removed from killing to believe it was really happening. Out of the trenches Carrington is like people today, reading about the war but unable to see it. He writes:

Mar 11.

Orders to move up to front. Left camp at 1 with ration party. Left Rouen at 5. Same compartment as Tyson. Comfortable 1st Class.

13.

Made quick journey. Met wounded from Neuve Chapelle (5). Arrived at Wilts mess. Saw Col. Hasted, Gaskell, Penruddock and others. Put to D. Company with Cary Barnard DSO. Went down to farm at Dranout. Found McCleneghan and Gregory. Very bucked to be in same company. Had capital dinner party in spite of depressing loss of Viner Johnson, Hooper and others in attack on Spaubroek. Slept comfortable on straw.

14.

Waited by to go up to trenches. Smith Dorrien⁽⁶⁾ talked to us about attack. Heavy shelling in evening. Stood by and slept at the farm. Gunfire makes awful noise but getting accustomed.

Carrington's language is clipped and economical partly because the size of the pocket-book governed the amount which could be written. Perhaps it is this that makes it seem as if he does not react in a compassionate way to the deaths of his friends. A cosy dinner party isolated from the trenches would remove him from the actual realisation of those deaths. Carrington's reserve is that of the professional restraint of the officer-class, who did not allow themselves to give way to emotional behaviour.

Soldiers who returned to England from the front stated that one thing from which they could not escape was the noise. Robert Graves said when soldiers tried to describe the war in France: "You couldn't : you can't communicate noise. Noise never stopped for

for one moment - ever (7) Carrington states in the last line of his entry for March 14 that he was "getting accustomed" to it. Soldiers had to get accustomed, or else they would go mad. In or out of the trenches the noise was a reverberating constant reminder.

The British Army in France spent much of their time waiting for the next offensive. Time was passed writing letters, playing football or minor betting games. As an officer Carrington was at first unaware of the life men led in the ranks, and until he goes into the trenches the style of his writing is similar to 'Sapper'. Carrington continues:

April 5.

Slacked in billets. Got rather a telling off. Hope to get a bath tonight.

6.

Had a fine bath before brekker, and then a slack day. Nice dinner party.

7.

Broome got a cushy wound night before. Another dinner and bridge party till rather late.

8.

Rode to V- and Y- (8) with the Doc who unfortunately hurt himself in a fall. Rather bucked with ride otherwise. Went up in the evening. A long walk but billeted in the night. Sofas and comfy wood fire made it like home even in the cellars.

It would seem reading this as though he is dining and playing bridge at his club in London. Carrington sketches a cosy social scene

rather than life in France during the First World War. But it must be remembered that up until this point Carrington has been removed from any fighting. Bridge playing seems incongruous, but it would help the morale of raw recruits from England. Soldiers needed a yardstick of normality with which to identify. One method was to try and mirror an officers' mess in England; he also mentions a comfortable billet with a wood fire which "made it like home even in the cellars". The Western Front initiated a type of warfare never experienced before; Carrington simulates a familiar world because he could not find a language adequate to the experience.

The world of the Western Front was estranged from reality, where guns fired intermittently from an invisible enemy. In the following entries, Carrington describes his first responses towards death:

April 9.

Quiet day, and up to the front trenches with the captain.

10.

Tried to improve trench a bit. Poor Fryer hit in head just in front of me. My first horror of war.

11.

In same trench. Did a bit of sniping.

12.

No move till evening when we were relieved by HAC. Got home rather late.

13.

Back in same billets at ——. Digging trenches all night.

14.

Gray⁽⁹⁾ arrived amongst others.

15.

Nothing particular. St.Eloi mined and much bombardment.

16.

Up to trenches. In support but very wet night.

17.

Successful attack on our left. Heard a trench was captured. Hell of a noise going on.

18.

Feeling a bit fed up with sticking still. Quiet day.

19.

Much noise still at Hill 60. Hear we still hold it. Went down to Chateau in evening.

The 10th April is the first time Carrington is exposed to a death. He does not dwell on it either because of the size of the diary, or secondly he would not have the time to think about someone being sniped. But he does report it as a horror, which indicates fright. Up until this point deaths have been related to him by word of mouth, this time he witnesses a death. Carrington does not express in his diary his emotional reaction, for what he writes are little more than notes. From his short economical sentences an overall picture of the war cannot be gleaned; it is more akin to a jerky black and white action film, jumping from one day to another. It must also be remembered that the world of the soldier was a very limited one.

Carrington did not know what was happening. He "heard a trench was captured" and hears that they still held Hill 60. The retrospective accounts of the war give an aerial view of the battle plan, and the role of each regiment. But a soldier sniping in the trenches could only establish what was happening in his immediate surroundings. John Masefield reiterates this in his novel The Old Front Line when he comments:

The soldiers who held this old front line of ours saw this grass and wire day after day, perhaps for many months. It was the limit of their world, the horizon of their landscape, the boundary. What interest there was in their life was the speculation, what lay beyond that wire, and what the enemy was doing there. They seldom saw an enemy. (10)

It was a de-personalised world at the front, where men were expendable and had less value attached to them by the Army than the machines they used.

20.

Nothing eventful beyond a telling off from the captain. Went back in the evening to the farm. Incessant noise still.

21.

A nice quiet day. Gaskell's brother of the KO5B came in and told us a lot about Hill 60. Bucked us up a lot. Peaceful night disturbed by sudden order to pack valises and much gunfire. Cursed all attacks with all my heart.

The ebullience of the young volunteer has already faded. What seemed initially like an adventure has already turned into something far more serious. Young men volunteering at the start of the war had no conception of the type of war they would be fighting. Neither

did the Generals. When writing his diary Carrington was twenty years of age and barely out of school uniform. It is evident from the text that this was not the war he had expected, although he never actually states this. Once at the front there was no escape or release from the war, and the Western Front became a private world of uniforms, punctuated by gunfire.

There were no decisive battles in this new war of attrition. No end could be seen to the continual sniping and trenchwork which went on day after day. Young men might have joined the Army for reasons of patriotism, escape, or adventure, but what they found was boredom indispersed with horror. Carrington continues on April 26th:

Had continual escapes from Shrapnel in going over for meals. Can't wash or eat without being hustled. Up to another fire trench with Mac. Worked all night.

27.

Slept till 10. Then read. Had my hat grazed by a sniper. Too much moonlight to have gone out listening which I would have liked.

28.

Quite a pleasant day with Mac in the trench, such a sunny warm day that neither side did much shooting. Everyone wanting to get a move on. Went back in the evening alright without casualties in spite of being almost as light as day.

29.

Hot as you make them! Only tied down to billets on short notice. The Allemans have spoiled the place by shelling it, one has to keep close to the company all day.

30.

Much the same again,, only I got a little ride round the country with Gray. None too good news from the North. These beastly gas attacks is [are] making war still less delectable.

Carrington illustrates the pressure of trying to stay alive is never lifted, even basic domestic habits such as eating and washing were interrupted by the war. The men like Carrington tried to exist in a way which reflected a civilised way of life, but because of continual warfare this was impossible. It is interesting to note that neither side felt inclined to do much shooting when the sun shone. Indeed it must have seemed incongruous to be destroying when the source of energy and life was shining.

April 30th records a gas attack, and this is of particular interest since it was the first use of gas in the war. The gas was released a mile north of Carrington's section. His use of language is interesting here - the series of gas attacks are described as 'beastly' and the war is said to be 'less delectable'. Beastly is a typical early Twentieth Century boys' English Public School or prep.school word. George Orwell used to write home to his mother from Eton, talking of "beastly weather" and "beastly boys". Carrington only had a Public School language to draw upon. The language he uses is inadequate because of his inability to cope with this new experience.

Wilfred Owen conjures up a far more illustrative picture of a gas attack in his poem 'Dulce et Decorum Est':

GAS! GAS! Quick, boys! - An ecstasy of fumbling,
 Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;
 But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
 And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.....
 Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,
 As under a green sea, I saw him drowning

 In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
 He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

Noel Carrington did not actually experience a gas attack, it was a mile away. Owen admits the horrifying nature of what was happening, Carrington comments that the war is becoming less "delectable" and seems closer to the language of the Brothers Borton, (11) who actually enjoyed the war. Because Carrington has no language to fit the situation, it is almost as if by using a word which means 'delight' he is attempting a clumsy, sardonic joke. For Carrington the word 'delectable' becomes an ironic deflection of the real horror.

Carrington was on the Ypres front when the Germans first used gas. The British and French commanders were warned, but they chose to ignore the warning. The Official History states:

A reliable agent of the Détachement of the French army in Belgium reports that an attack on Ypres salient has been arranged for night 15th/16th April The Germans intend making use of tubes with asphyxiating gas placed in batteries of 20 tubes for every 40 metres along the front of the XXVI. It is possible that the attack may be postponed, if the wind is not favourable, so as to ensure the gases blow over our trenches. (12.)

Nothing occurred on the dates given, and so no precautions were taken. But on 22nd April, soldiers were affected by a smarting of the eyes, and a tingling in the nose and throat. Yellow clouds

of smoke were due to the gas. This reflects an inadequate planning at Ypres, and it was not until May 3rd, eleven days after the first attack, that Carrington received a signal message from O.C.Wilts. It reads thus:

May 3rd. At least once a day practise should be had in putting on respirators AAA. Care must be taken that every man has one and has water close to him an old beef tin is sufficient for each man.

Living out of the trenches became as dangerous as in them because there was no adequate cover. The British trenches were shapeless cavities, offering very little shelter. Carrington comments:

May 1.

Could even smell gas down the street.

2.

Owing to proximity of Jack Johnsons [shell burst with black smoke] we trekked off to a field and spent a miserable day in the rain. Almost a relief to go up, which we did to the front line without mishap.

3.

Did a lot of work. My trench stunk like nothing on earth.

Carrington does not indulge in introspection, but compresses each day's events into a few brief memoés. His style is matter-of-fact and uncompromising statements of fact rather than states of mind. His resumé of incidents may be something to do with his training as an historian, but also his middle class upbringing would guard him against emotional outbursts. This would also account for his stoical acceptance of the conditions at the front.

The continual gunfire was physically and emotionally tiring to men and officers alike, and a reminder that the war was ever present. After periods of rest, with inevitable boredom, Carrington like most soldiers found it almost a relief to go up to the front again. But this relief, like everything in the war, was only transitory. He goes on to record:

7.

Not relieved after all, which made it rather depressing. Had a touch of flu too. Only adventure was attempt to shoot a pheasant. Had 3 shots too.

8.

Took watch from stand-to till midday. Three terrific attacks by Allemans on our left. Must have been costly because of rifle fire. Noise continued all the day. News came in later that it was a frontal attack on Ypres and was repulsed. Glad to go down in evening. Seldom been so tired.

It is evident from these entries that soldiers were going in and out of the trenches without knowing the objectives of battle. Whilst plans were kept secret to ensure the enemy had no knowledge of the Allies' strategy, this secrecy gave the soldiers little incentive to keep on fighting. Carrington watches and waits, desiring to be in the trenches yet when there, he only waits for the moment when he is relieved. The only concrete thing which he can record in his diary is the attempt to shoot a pheasant, and this adventure gave to Carrington more purpose than any "continuing noise" from Hill 60. He was too near the truth in his remark that the attacks must have been costly. The total British losses in the fighting at Hill 60 and the Ypres battles for the period 22nd April -

31st May 1915 amounted, according to the Official History, to 2,150 officers and 57,125 other ranks. The mound was a spoil heap formed by excavated earth from a railway cutting. The importance of it was that if recaptured, it would form a salient and observation post. Hill 60 was lost on 5th May when the Germans sent over gas. The battle was costly taking into account the mound was described as "a mere rubbish heap of shell and mine-torn earth, timber and dead bodies".⁽¹³⁾ It must have been difficult to justify so many deaths for such a piece of ground.

At this point in his diary, Carrington has lost all his initial energy for fighting. Excitement was gained not in making war, but in the camaraderie between soldiers. This attitude is reflected in the following entries:

May 10.

Fairly uneventful day. Having nothing with me found it rather dull.

11.

Not relieved yet. Saw all the company in various trenches. Ypres on fire for the last few days. Turned as sunny and hot as it could. Wicked to make war. Went down to wood.

12.

Fine day in huts in wood, spoiled by sudden shelling of Punch party. Very narrow escape and had to lie low. Carrying at night.

13.

Horrible wet day worse than small shells. Slipped and skidded back to farm billet.

14.

Peaceful day with a Commanding Officer; parade and pretence of much drill.

15.

Real fine day. Borrowed the gunners ropes and organised tug-of-war. My platoon won heavy weights. Pulled in lightweights myself for which I was standard weighing was in see-saw. Lost 3rd pull. Men enjoyed it and Foster a lot.

Carrington reflects a universal feeling when he sees it is 'wicked to make war' when the sun is shining. It became blasphemous, but to those like Carrington, at least the sun emphasised the wickedness of war. It must have reminded officers and men of the happier days they had enjoyed before 1914. Equally the tug-of-war - an ironical game to play - was harmless entertainment which sported winners and losers, unlike the war of attrition which continued at the front. The tug-of-war would be a fair game according to the rules, divided into lightweights and heavyweights. There were no such rules in the other war which they were fighting.

Much of the time in between offensives was taken up repairing badly damaged trenches. In retrospect Carrington reflects that although maintaining the trenches demanded incessant work, it nevertheless "exercised their ingenuity and kept them from dwelling too much on the grim discomfort and dangers of existence." He continues:

May 19.

...Gregory teaches us all kinds of gambling games. I won many matches. In evening to P3. In trenches all day. Wet feet and very muddy. Spent the day getting the place ship-shape.

22.

Chief event a saluting parade. Things don't seem to go well at home.

23.

Whit Sunday. Went to open air H.C.
Had a bath. Fine day in fact.

24.

Up to the dug outs. Making a fine avenue
of them.

When Carrington remarks that they were making a fine avenue of trenches, there is a certain pride in his work. It was better to attend to the construction of trenches, than to meditate on the horrors of war. This is similar to the men on the ship in Heart of Darkness attending to rivets so they could turn their backs on the heads of natives strung on poles. Marlow perceptively comments:

When you have to attend to things of that sort, to the mere incidents of the surface, the reality - the reality, I tell you - fades. (14)
The inner truth is hidden - luckily, luckily.

But the ship did have to sail, and at the front there would be a belief that the better constructed the trench, the safer the soldiers would be.

What was also valued in trench life was the close relationship between officers and men. Earlier in the diary Carrington refers to dinner parties and bridge games, which would only be available to the officer-class. Although officers were given special holes dug back in the trenches, Carrington experiences cold feet and similar conditions to the ranks. He cites the playing of gambling games, which indicates the officers mixed with the ranks whereas in camp or billets, the distinction was amplified by the officers forming a mess.

It was palpable to Carrington that he and his corps were just biding time during this last week in May. At least it was

relatively safe, with very little exchange of fire. He
 comments:

May 26.

Up in redoubt. Quite a good time, no
 whizz bangs even.

27.

News that we're going north. Ugh!

28.

News confirmed. Am still in redoubt.
 Getting a bit stale. Got to stay an
 extra day or two.

Carrington expresses two conflicting attitudes within the space of three diary entries. It would primarily seem that he is content with the status quo illustrated by the negative response to the news that they are moving north. But directly after the expletive "Ugh!" Carrington remarks he is "getting a bit stale". These conflicting entries emphasize the state of mind of a soldier at the front. Uneventful days were safe but monotonous and however terrifying an offensive might be, at least it gave the appearance that progress was being made. Contrast was necessary to the psyche of the soldier, and his innate need for continual change is the reason why Carringtons' entries appear so contrary.

The change came, and Carrington and his company left the St. Eloi trenches to march on the Ouderdoun Road.

June 4.

Started the day with alarms from the Adjutant when half dressed. Nothing serious however. Two companys went up to trenches, poor devils. We marched on two miles or so. Very hot but interesting march past artillery. Indian cavalry, Terriers and K's new lot. Got to another little camp at Vlamerting town. The 'Dia' still damned bad.

5.

At camp till 8. Went to Field Ambulance where a very nice doc. gave me some castor oil. Hear Premyz has fallen to the Huns. Things not very cheery. Hell of a long march through Ypres to the trenches. Damned RF [Royal Fusilier] lost in wood. Got to sleep 4 next morning in the open.

The French commander Joffre was insistent that the B.E.F. should take a greater share of responsibility at the front. It was therefore arranged amongst the Generals that the Second Army should take over the portion of the line north of Ypres. Carrington and the Wiltshire Regiment were part of Joffre's plan. They were no longer sitting stale in the redoubt, yet the tone of the writing is one of despair at the depressing progress of the war. At the beginning of the diary Carrington described himself as being "very bucked" and talked of "capital dinner parties". That was in March. By the beginning of June he has adopted expletives such as 'damned', 'devils' and the word hell appears more frequently, although his tolerance level would be low at this point, with the added problem of diarrhoea. But the schoolboy rhetoric has almost vanished; Vera Brittain described her brother Edward as more distant and much older when returning from the front⁽¹⁵⁾ - Noel Carrington has aged in his attitude to the war in three months.

Carrington goes on in his diary to describe the battle at Hooge in 1915. Its objective was to improve the tactical position of the British line and to keep up the offensive spirit of the troops. Yet Carrington's short entries are now mechanical and disenchanted, as he describes the lead-up to battle:

June 6.

In support dug outs in Zouave wood. Poor B Company were minenwerfed badly. Went up in evening and worked at their trench. Never saw such a labyrinth of tunnels.

7.

In wood until evening when having seen the ground, took up barbwire to put in front of stables and Bull Farm. Worst job I've been on. Was caught and grenaded 3 times. The last time they opened fire and nearly caught us. Only one fellow hit. All worked well, especially Collier (Platoon Sergeant) Clarke & Legg. One Lance corporal broken which was good thing.

Noel Carrington has now become a man with a job to do concerned with survival. This Hooge attack coincided with the offensive at Givenchy, and it was to assist as a diversion there. As illustrated by the map on the following page, the Germans held Bellewaarde Ridge which was situated at the eastern side of the lake, and so this enabled them to overlook the ground east of Ypres. It was the objective of the English to capture the ridge and at the same time strengthen the area between Hooge and Railway Wood. These were the objectives, but Carrington and his corps were ignorant of the plans and could only guess, as the following entries reveal:

June 8.

In wood with A company. Headquarters snooty because I only got out 15 trestles [of wire] All the thanks one gets from them! Putting wire out again. Loose coil stuff. Fellows had wind up rather, but Elliot of 15 worked well with me.

9.

Got back about 4 to Ypres and went to vaults beneath ramparts, nice safe place tho' dingey. Good slack day. Fine concert with piano in the evening.

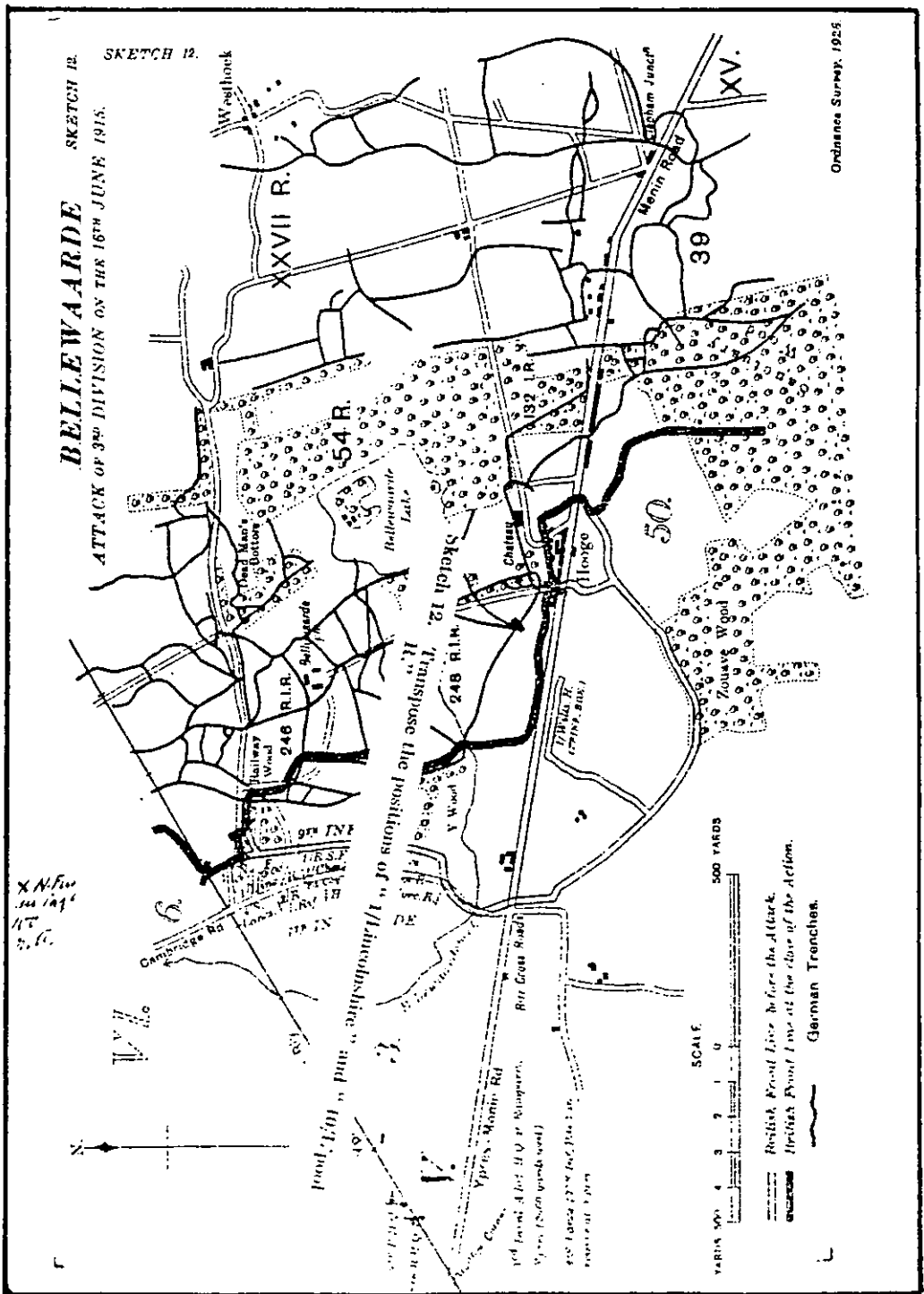
10.

Many rumours. Ended up in orders to march off. Was bathing in moat myself with Gray and had to dress hurriedly.

11.

Quiet day on dug outs in a field near Ypres, but are evidently in for something.

HOOGE 1915 - THE ATTACK FOR BELLEWAARDE RIDGE



12.

Practised grenading in morning. In afternoon poor Stanford Smith killed by bomb he was explaining. Hope to god I never see a sight again as that bloody circle. We 5 had been together for 2 months and we shall miss Smith badly. Many good men lost too. CO buried him in evening. Most dismal day I ever spent.

13.

Quiet day but evident news that we're in for an attack. Practising hard for it.

14.

Bit of a rehearsal in evening. May be quite a good show for us. Anyrate feel quite hopeful.

15.

Had final dispositions from CO in morning. Felt pretty merry somehow. Off this evening anyrate. Lets hope we have good luck and get thro!

There is an evident and perhaps inevitable swing between optimism and pessimism, as Carrington hopes something will happen, and yet dreads what the battle will bring. The death of his friend Stanford Smith would do little for morale and was in a sense worse for Carrington to witness, for in battle soldiers did not have the time to meditate the murderous action, they only saw the carnage of the aftermath.

Carrington uses language which reduces the Hooge attack to a game or show when he says they were "practising hard" and "had a bit of a rehearsal". No amount of training or practising could make much impact in trench warfare. Carrington had already witnessed meaningless deaths, and he must at this point have already realised

that a soldier is lucky if he escapes death. But it is too dangerous for the state of mind to admit that a battle will be little short of a massacre. Instead Carrington draws on a language conditioned by his upbringing, and whilst his phrases have a bland appearance, he himself is clearly reducing the battle to a show as necessary therapy, for he already admits to feeling "pretty nervy". As an officer, he would have the extra responsibility for the morale of his troops, so that however afraid he might be, Carrington would have to set an example, exuding an apparent confidence.

Carrington's account of the battle is lengthy, reported in detail. As usual, G.H.Q. decided to attack at dawn, and the Official History states:

The bombardment was begun at 2.30 a.m. and continued, with pauses, until 4.15 a.m. when the artillery lifted, and the infantry assaulted captured the German front line with very little resistance.

.... About 7.30 a.m. the enemy made a definite counter attack, which was repulsed but at 9.30 a.m., being still under very heavy shell fire and having no bombs left, the attackers fell back to the first line of the German trenches At the same time 1/ Wiltshire, the right flank guard, which had gained ground towards Hooge in the German trenches by bombing, was also forced back to the Menin Road, losing heavily in the open. (16)

It was decided at 6 p.m. to consolidate for half a mile between the Menin Road and Railway Wood, and the area of No Mans land behind.

The enemy still remained in possession of Bellewaarde Ridge and the observation posts, which the British were hoping to capture.

The Official History reads like a well-ordered battle, naming the exact times and mentioning those regiments who took part.

One wonders why the British did not capture Bellewaarde Ridge, since the only real problem was very heavy shell fire and lack of ammunition. The text-book commentary gives a sterile account of a futile battle. The great interest of Carrington's account is that it is personal, on the spot, and inevitably disjointed because of his bewilderment.

Here is Carrington's account of the battle at Bellewaarde Ridge:

June 16.

Having arrived at the assembly trenches behind the Menin Road where we were rather closely packed, we dug down a bit deeper. At 2.40 the bombardment started, at first registering. After the first pause it was awful. One continuous roar of heavies. The 9.2's fearful. God what those Germans must have suffered. The Germans crumpled us back and nearly wiped me out. How I wished for the end of it and the charge. About 4.20 C company went off. Followed by us. Mac's platoon leading. We ran up the hedge with wild excitement. Found Mac and together we ran onto the next trench towards Hooze on our right. We were met by the 9th Brigade who, having gone too far, were retiring thro' our own gunfire. They rushed through our trench and panicked nearly all C company except Barker Mills who with a few men worked along towards Hooze. Having rallied some men of all regiments we manned the trench again and worked along. Mac was killed. I placed him in the trench and had to leave him. All he said was "Don't mind me". When I saw him later he was dead. I went along and found Mills with a handful of men, stuck because none had followed him. D Company leading men and bombers then took up front position and I went back for more men and found Stickey and Knibley driving them back. After this I tried to bank along towards Hooze. On arriving to where the trench diverged we ran into the German bombers and had to barricade. After this a continual bomb fight went on. Went down to the left again and got more Huns out. They were in a miserable funk. Heard Gray was hit. Saw Gregory and Cary Barnard and went to hold centre of the trench and see the men worked at parapet. By now we had got the place pretty ship-shape and most of the wounded in the dug-outs. Hearing no officers were with

bombers, I went up there and met Gregory and found Sgt. Elliot and Phillimore carrying on. It was now about 10 I'm told. Suddenly they threw bombs into our midst. Those that emerged came out without the bombs. No more could be got. We had to retire down the trench followed by these awful bombs. Many were lost and I was twice blown over. Gregory twice tried a bayonet charge which failed. I went down the open, everyone was crowding down the trench each side. The poor wounded had to be left. Cary Barnard could give me no more bombs. So we determined to charge. I got the men out on the right and crawled up. About this time the 9th on our left retired. Most of our men now retired too. A few stayed with me but it was too late to charge. Gregory was hit but crawled back. I continued to bomb with the few I had and then fell back with the rest. The trench was blocked with men and the machine guns were turned on the gap to the trench we had first taken. The entrance to this trench was blocked so I ran round and got in further on. I found it cram[sic] full of men and no room for the rest who were trying to crawl in. Luckily our machine guns turned on the Germans and checked their bombing any further. Finally got this trench in a state of defence. We were now cramped solidly and at 3 after a new bombardment the Lincs tried to retake the 2nd line on the left. Having failed the Germans about 7 counter attacked and bombed us out of a bit more on our left. That night we relieved or rather blocked more trench and left it. We got back, or the remnant did, about 4 and slept. Our company lost over 50. Mac, Sgt. Phillimore and Miles are killed. Gregory, Gray, Sgt. Major and many more are wounded. Webber lay all day with the Huns in the next trench till night when he got back. I am the only one of our happy mess of 5 four days ago. I wish I could have got wounded.

The Official History describes the battle in calculated moves; the map of the Hooze battle is explicit in showing each of the battalions in their strategic positions. Noel Carrington illustrates the real pandemonium. He looked for a decisive battle, and an end to the stalemate, longing for the end of the continual bombardment. He says "How I wished for the end of it and the charge" which inadvertantly illustrates the hatred the infantry had for the artillery.

It is hardly surprising when many of the infantry retreated through their own gunfire.

There was a relief in going over the top after the long wait. Carrington describes his emotions as those of "wild excitement," but the thrill was only momentary, probably nervous excitement. In the heat of battle there was no grand strategy - men fought bravely through panic for their lives. The battle is narrated by Carrington with a dreadful quietistic acceptance of what was happening; there was no time to brood over the death of Gray because he had to keep his sanity in a time of chaos.

Gray doesn't die he's wounded

The narrative has no grammatical paragraphing, as if to reflect that the battle itself was a continual string of unpredictable events. In such a war with no apparent form Carrington found no place for grammatical structure, because there was no literary style to quantify the events. Instead he draws upon the only language available to him, which portrays a war where soldiers are the victims, and bombs become more valuable than men: "The poor wounded had to be left. Cary Barnard could give me no more bombs". There was no time to think about the "poor wounded" because the trench had to be defended. The war left no time for the human element until afterwards.

The style employed by Carrington is a naked, artless language, still maintaining the public school jargon of "miserable funk" but the bravado and buoyancy of the volunteer who saw the war as an adventure has gone. The long flat or short flat expressionless sentences reflect the cool detachment of Carrington when under stress.

"It was now about 10 I'm told. Suddenly they threw bombs into our midst. Those that emerged came out without bombs. No more could be got". These staccato phrases indicate that Carrington is mechanically doing what is required of him.

The battle was chaotic, but as an officer Carrington did his duty. He led his company, helped to clear men out of a crowded trench, held on until the last minute and continued to bomb whilst the others could crawl to safety. Incident after incident shows Carrington to have held on to his sanity in a time of chaos. He saw the 9th Brigade retiring through their own gunfire, he saw Mac killed and other soldiers panic. When he returned for more men he "found Stickey and Knibley driving them back". But he still continued to try and save the battle. It would have been easy for him to retreat, but Carrington does not shirk his responsibility. His background and education brought him up to be a leader, so that despite fear of death Carrington had to survive, and still behaved like a decent soldier and did his duty.

At the end of the battle it is as if the machinery has been switched off for the night, for the narrative through sheer exhaustion, slowly grinds to a halt. The deaths are blunt statements: "We got back, or the remnants did, about 4 and slept. Our company lost over fifty". Carrington would have been drained of energy after all those hours poised on the razor edge of life and death. He would have witnessed so much slaughter that at the end, the narrative is emotionally sterile. They failed to capture Bellewaarde Ridge, and he was only one left from his mess of five. The utter

waste would be all too obvious. But despite his weariness he still had to keep on, for in war there was no escape except through death or a wound. Carrington's last remark: "I wish I could have got wounded" reflects he has no energy or enthusiasm left. The camaraderie which was so important to the morale of soldiers at the front was left shattered after battle; there would seem little reason for Carrington to wish for anything else.

The last six entries in Carrington's diary were written whilst in hospital two months later. With little optimism and no energy, it is not surprising that he was wounded for it was impossible to keep up such vigilance for a sustained period. The average period for a soldier to remain at the front before he was either killed or wounded was three months, if he was in the infantry. Carrington ends his diary:

June 17.

Rested and slept.

18.

Webber reorganised the company a bit. Bad news that we have to go to the trenches again tonight. Poor old Wilts. Marched through Zillebeke. Men were tired and overloaded. Great job keeping connection. We're in the trenches and dug outs North of Zouave Wood.

19.

Badly shelled most of the day by a howitzer down St.Eloi way. Felt a bit depressed. Work up at Hooge cheered me up.

20.

Shelling again at dawn. Headguns shelled. Nasty change of abode. Felt more depressed, still no chance of sleep. Relieved B Company in trench north of the Menin Road. Worked all night.

21.

Very hot. Hard work all day. The artillery registered on back of our trench. News in the evening that the poor old Wilts. are to do another attack tomorrow evening. A company to attack from our trench, B company from Bull Farm. Promptly started to dig down. Men worked day and night like devils.

22.

Helped McClean to fit his company in. The men seemed tired and weary. The bombardment will have to be very good. I am sniped.

Although these entries were written up with hindsight, it cannot be ignored that Carrington's resilience and energy has disappeared. He mentions "poor old Wilts" twice, and also says in two entries that the men are tired and weary which would mean that he was too. There is no evidence of optimism in these final entries. Crawling in and out of the trenches, and then building them up each time they were destroyed only to be destroyed again, must have been tedious and disheartening. Excitement and freshness feeds on change. There was no excitement left for Noel Carrington because he could only see attacks followed by more attacks, on into infinity. There was no apparent end to the war, only the boredom and exhaustion of continually being in the trenches. This war-weariness gnawed away at the soldiers, until it was all too easy to become a little careless. Carrington was lucky he received only a 'Blighty' wound.

Sixty five years later Noel Carrington recalls:

There were more sandbagged parapets than real trenches and in them were embedded a number of steel plates with loopholes for riflemen. The plates were almost certainly of German origin. One of their snipers, observing a shadow pass the loophole, shot me at close range through the right elbow, the impact throwing me to the ground.

The diary ends here, not with any heroic wound but the bullet from a German sniper. It was not the end of Carrington's army service however. He travelled by train to Rouen, where he spent a prolonged period of time in hospital. After six months he was discharged, but still had to have massage and therapy for another three months. He was involved in clerical work in a Recruiting Office, and then returned to France in the autumn of 1916, although not at the front. A Medical Board retained him for light duties in Rouen until the Armistice.

The First World War was no great adventure. Carrington admits today that the stalemate disillusioned him; indeed he states in one of the last entries that he felt "more depressed". He stopped keeping the diary when he was wounded, because his right arm was incapacitated for a year and he claims that he was slow to learn with his left hand. In addition, he felt after his time at the front that there was no longer a purpose in keeping a diary.

A transformation can be seen in Carrington's style of writing during his time in France. The dashing buoyant schoolboy rhetoric fades into the catch phrases of a war-tested soldier. Carrington had attended Bedford School, where Army life was idealised, and this enthusiasm for it is evident in the first few weeks of entries. But when the dinner and bridge parties move into the background, Carrington sees too much wanton death to remain buoyant. After a soldier is blown up by a bomb demonstration in "that bloody circle" the tone changes and hardens, and the enthusiasm wanes. Finally he does his duty, despite the awful realisation of the type

of war which he was fighting. The final entries illustrate his sense of fatalism and despair. "Poor old Wilts... Men were tired and overloaded. Great job keeping connection" but he still kept on with his job, and did his duty. Noel Carrington kept his sanity despite the chaos of battle, and this is illustrated by the language he uses which is in tatters at the end, but it is still a Public School language. Perhaps if he had panicked, the structure of his language would have broken down altogether.

At the end of the war, Noel Carrington returned to Christ Church Oxford, where he had a history scholarship for a year. He later went to India with the Oxford University Press, and then became the editor for Country Life and was awarded the O.B.E. Carrington remained a decent Englishman in the best sense of the phrase, and if the war affected him, he never showed it, just as he never exposed his sense of fear to the troops. His sister Dora and her Bloomsbury friends were pacifists, and she wrote of Noel in December 1915 to her friend Mark Gertler:

Yesterday I walked over to Rottingdean over the downs with Noel. It was lovely country. I am afraid I shall never really get intimate with him; he is so governed by conventions, and accepts the 'public school' opinions. It's a pity, perhaps he will get out of it in time. You would like him, but it wouldn't be any use now because he's so patriotic, that I am sure you would hate him, and he you! (17)

Noel Carrington was brought up in a conventional home which believed in the tradition of gentility. In keeping with his Public School education, he grew up to be a very conservative young man. He was not creating a new literary style of writing in his diary,

but was trying to record what he experienced, given the limits imposed upon him by his family and educational background.

Carrington believed in tradition, patriotism and duty. A representative of the middle class gentility, he left the war bound by the same conventions which lured him to enlist in the first instance. It was an awful experience, but Carrington treats it with a quietistic acceptance. His beliefs are shaken but not crumbled and finally he remains tradition-bound. But his diary illustrates the difficulty he had in trying to use his conventional language to describe something so unconventional. Finally Noel Carrington preserved his stoical facade, because it was so necessary for him to keep his sanity in such a war and in the post 1918 world.

R E F E R E N C E S

1. David Garnett, (ed.), Carrington : Letters and Extracts from her Diaries. p.501.
2. *ibid*, p.501.
3. Dora, or known simply as Carrington, was a painter and intimate companion of Lytton Strachey, a friend of Virginia Woolf and E.M.Forster.
4. Denis Winter, Death's Men : Soldiers of the Great War, p.39.
5. Neuve Chappelle was the first planned British offensive, which lasted from 10th - 13th March.
6. Smith Dorrien, Major General of the 3rd Division.
7. Robert Graves interview, The Listener, July 15th 1971, p.74.
8. This is Carrington's omission, and could be interpreted as self-imposed censorship.
9. Gray was a fellow officer from Weymouth.
10. John Masefield, The Old Front Line, p.89.
11. Guy Slater (ed.), My Warrior Sons : The Borton family Diary 1914 - 1918.
12. J.E.Edmonds, Military Operations France and Belgium 1914 - 15, p.163.
13. *ibid*, p.304.
14. Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness, p.45.
15. Vera Brittain, Chronicle of Youth, p.327.
"I think it was that awful crawl back among the dead which aged him more than anything".
16. Military Operations, Spring 1915, p.100-1.
17. David Garnett, (ed.), Carrington, p.23.

CHAPTER IVPRIVATE EDWARD LYSONS1400 10th PLATOON C. CORPS. 14th ROYAL WARWICKS.Salad Days

Edward Lysons was born in 1891, brought up in an age when it was usual not to question the greatness of Britain. The Boer War had not then been fought, and England still reflected the images of Forster and of Edward Thomas's 'Adlesdrop'. This chocolate-box picture of England would be preserved for Lysons in his profession as a schoolteacher. It was only when he joined up in 1915 that the lights of the Empire would go out for him.

Lysons' widow recalls that he always kept a diary, and he continued to do so until the end of the war. Eight of his pocket diaries and notebooks were stumbled on in a junk shop in Nottingham, where they had found their way from a house-clearing. These diaries span the years between 1915 and 1925. The prolific writing took place during the war years. After 1918 Lysons only makes brief notes of meetings, compared to the previous continuous narrative written whilst in France.

Edward Lysons was not caught up in the patriotic fervour, he did not volunteer as one of Kitchener's first hundred thousand. What comes across so clearly in his diaries is that he was conservative, pragmatic, and had common sense far beyond his years. Lysons probably held the view that, being young and single, he could be of

use to his country. As a schoolmaster he would adapt easily to a daily routine, and also a religious man, it was part of his duty to fight for God, King and Country. He became a Private in the Birmingham City Battalion Royal Warwicks, and spent the statutory three months training in England before being sent over to France.

Volume 111 if the diaries starts in November 1915, during his home leave. Lysons writes with the fluency of a practised diary-keeper, which he was, and he also exercises the language of a well-educated man. In contrast to many of his colleagues in the army, he had spent his formative years at Grammar School. Lysons adopts the traditional methods of commentary in his writing: the state of the weather, his health, food and the daily routine. It would appear as though Lysons wrote for himself, but he also recognised the importance of his commentary, for inside the front cover of each notebook he writes:

If found please send to:

Miss Lysons
11 Queen Street
Stourbridge
Worcestershire
England.

This reinforces his care in ensuring the diaries would be preserved in the event of his death. To safeguard the books whilst in France, Lysons made holes in the cardboard covers so that they could be attached to string, which was in turn fastened inside his tunic pocket.

Lysons' diaries are too long and repetitive to be reproduced here. But the repetitiveness does indicate the tedium for a soldier

who, in marking time and in having time marked for him, had to find some purpose in the routine. Through his narrative, even when edited, there is a whole range of experiences illustrated from route marches, trench feet, night duty and battle. Lysons is often reserved in his commentary, but occasionally he is provoked to write on the justness of war. During his narrative of the Somme Lysons loses his fluency of previous volumes, and he can find no language to express adequately what he experiences. Much of the horror is felt in what remains unsaid.

Whilst in France Edward (or Ned as he was more commonly called) not only wrote a daily entry in his diary, but he also wrote home regularly. His friend Dan used to tease him, his widow recalls, about the quantity of writing he used to do, and the breast pockets of his tunic were stuffed on the one half with letters from home, and on the other with his notebook. In order to amuse his friends who remarked upon his prolific writing, Lysons used to refer to his breast pockets as his desk.

It was obviously no chore but part of Lysons' routine to write a daily entry in his diary. Unlike many diarists during the war, he was not restricted by divisions ruled within the diary, because whilst in France he used Boots plain black notebooks. The handwriting is small copperplate written in ink or indelible pencil, so that the content has been preserved over the years. The content preaches no burning ideological views, indicating that the author has a cheerful albeit serious attitude to life. This is reflected when Lysons is forced to comment (through events) upon what he believes to be right or wrong.

Over to France

Edward Lysons was number 1400 in the 10th Platoon C. Corps. A number. To the British public reading their daily papers and absorbing which battalion fought in which great offensive, Lysons was a fragment of a whole. To historians reading the details of the history of the Great War, he would be mentioned as one of a number of many thousands wounded. What is so important about Edward Lysons, a soldier not mentioned in dispatches, nor a great medal winner? He was none of these. But through his diary Lysons elevated himself from a number to a personality. The point about Edward Lysons is that he becomes somebody through his writing and gives the reader a first hand insight into the war. He does not talk in terms of grand strategies, but thinks of those bare necessities of life which were of more concern to soldiers at the Front.

The cosy world of Stourbridge with Sunday Holy Communions, walks, and family suppers is left behind. Lysons' leave ends as he boards the 'Invicta' ship for Boulogne to go back to early morning parades, inspections and route marches. The contrast between life in England and the private world of a soldier in France is never so acute as when a soldier returns from leave. Sundays are not days of rest, but ironed out to absorb the daily routine. Travel is no longer by train or coach but by foot. Lysons comments on his return:

Tuesday Nov. 23.

We reached Longprès at 12.30 a.m. and marched off to our camp. We anticipated a 2 mile walk at the most -: We got a 15 mile march and fancy it was

purely an endurance march. On the halts I immediately fell asleep. Several fell out but chiefly the latest batch of recruits. We came at last to Vachelle des Quesnoy 8.30 a.m. where we were billeted in a stable. I went to sleep till 4. When we had a rifle inspection. Went to Café at night.

If you were returning from leave, 15 miles was a long way to walk after a channel crossing. It is small wonder Lysons fell asleep when they stopped every fifty minutes. Three months training in England would hardly prepare the new recruits for the physical and mental strain they were about to undergo.

Lysons does not continually complain about the living, sleeping and eating conditions, he grows to accept them. Winter in France, billeted in stables, barns or sleeping in the trenches was a cold which had to be endured, but often it was too cold even to sleep. Cocooned in centrally heated houses in mid-winter, it becomes increasingly difficult to appreciate the extremities of temperature which soldiers in the Great War experienced. Often the only way to keep warm was for the soldiers to sleep together and share blankets to benefit a double thickness.

Harsh temperatures and long route marches in heavy boots led to illnesses and foot sores. Lysons left England with a cold, and also suffered from rheumatism in his left foot. This would interrupt sleep and make route marches very painful. However, he was lucky enough to have the Sergeant carry his rifle, and a Lieutenant carry his pack. The purpose of these continual route marches was revealed when they arrived at the trenches. Lysons continues:

Monday Dec.6th.

We moved off at 2 to another village near the trenches. The roads were very muddy. We were billeted in a huge barn which seems to be well supplied with rats which according to reveille tales seem to perform extraordinary feats during the night. Dan and Jacko [his friends] are billeted some distance away. We all spent the evening in the Corner Café which proved a very poor hole.

Tuesday Dec.7th.

Had an inspection by the C.O. This seemed frantic not considering the roads & the state of our equipment. The N.C.O's & men went up on the way to the trenches this afternoon. Stocks rejoined us in our billets and entertained us with his characteristic merry chatter. Received my first letter from home. Wrote to Harry and home.

Wednesday Dec.8.

Marched from Stinton to the trenches. Quite expected mud but not up above the knees. Was detached on a fatigue on arrival and had a rotten journey down and back.

Thursday Dec.9.

Moved from 49 trench tonight into 48. A trench up to your middle in water. Mud everywhere. Rifles all muddied up. It was a horrible night rain pouring all the night. The huns also poured volleys of whizz bangs across.

Friday Dec.10th.

Spent a shivering day in a muddy dug [out] where we had a biscuit & a bit of cheese. Horrible starvation.

Saturday 11 Dec.

Came out of the trenches in a horrible state at dusk. I shall never forget the journey to the wood. I did not know what "skint" meant till tonight. Fell in shell holes galore & could not get up on my own. I was at last carried into a B.Coy dug out stripped of equipment & coat & then I managed to get to a tent where I lay down to sleep in my muddy wet togs.

Trench foot was a combination of alternate freezing and thawing, lack of exercise, and standing for long periods in freezing water. It was hardly surprising Lysons contracted rheumatism. Mud was one of the ever-present evils of the First World War. Not only did it cover clothing and weapons, but its heavy glue-like effect sapped energy from the soldiers.

Rats not only inhabited the trenches, but also barns where the soldiers were billeted. From Lysons' description it would seem that the troops tried to be light-hearted about their presence. At least one way of being entertained was by watching the rats, a pastime which Lysons had more enthusiasm for than inspections by the Commanding Officer. Although not overtly critical of his seniors in his writing, Lysons was nevertheless commonsensical, and saw little value in a kit inspection when surrounded by mud. But in the army, and especially at the front, rules and orders were there to be followed and not questioned. Lysons was fortunate to have a diary as a mouthpiece in which to vent his feelings.

When relating stories of trench life, old soldiers are usually given a 'poetic licence' for their exaggeration of facts. Lysons quietly comments "Quite expected mud but not above the knees". This understatement only too clearly emphasises the reality of his shock. Mud became like a disease which tainted everything. Often soldiers would carefully cover their rifles to protect them from moisture, but Lysons describes a trench where the men are up to their middle in water, so in these conditions protection would serve little purpose. It would certainly be difficult to engage in fire with the

enemy. Lysons does not comment, but it surely must have been on his mind to question the nature of a war where Generals allowed human beings to endure so much.

The comfort of food became a necessity, but Lysons records "we had a biscuit and a bit of cheese. Horrible starvation". This 'starvation' was not unusual in the trenches. The theory ran that each soldier would receive daily a hot meal, or 'Maconochie Stew' with bully beef and bread. But behind the trench lines communications were inconsistent through bad transport conditions, the inevitable mud, and enemy shells. Biscuits and cheese were better than nothing at all, but they did little for morale.

Lysons was only able to clean himself up when it was time for him to go into the Reserve trenches. It was nearing Christmas, but in 1915 there was to be no fraternising with the enemy as there had been in 1914. Lysons was lucky enough to receive parcels from friends and family in the days leading up to Christmas, to make it more of a festive occasion. He writes a week before 25th:

Sunday Dec. 19.

Felt very tired but tried to clean the mud off my clothes a bit. Church parade at 2.30. Chaplain spoke on the True Peace of Xmas. C.O. read out a list of crimes with the extreme penalty of death. Received parcels from home.

Here Lysons uses an ironic juxtaposition of the Church and the Military. In his warlike mud-covered state he attends a Church parade. Elsewhere in the diary Lysons describes Communion services in detail, but Church parades were more akin to mass military

meetings than introspective Church services. On the one hand, Lysons tells of the Chaplain speaking of the "true peace" of Christmas, ironic in itself in such a war of butchery. Juxtaposed he says "C.O. read out a list of crimes with the extreme penalty of death" almost in the same breath as the "true peace". Soldiers were therefore left in a spiritually ambiguous position. They were asked to remember that Christmas was a time for peace, yet not allowed to exchange greetings with the Germans, and moreover if they deserted or any such act they were in danger of receiving the death penalty.

Christmas Day 1915 was a peaceful one for Lysons out of the trenches:

1915 Xmas Day Saturday Dec.25th:

Rolled out at 6.15 and made my Communion in a café over the Bridge. A goodly gathering in the quaint place. Bar barrels acted as kneeling stools. Breakfast of bacon, tea & apricot jam. Detailed for a fatigue at 8.30. Let off at 9.45. Inspection at 10 & practically free. Dined off some tongue and warmed up some plum pudding. Slept during afternoon. Dinner (official) of chop and chips Concert cheered up evening.

Christmas time left the soldiers contiguously between war and peace. It was also a time of reflection, where men's thoughts would naturally wander to their homes and families. Lysons does not mention his family, but the apricot jam, bacon and plum pudding which comprised the unofficial Christmas feast would be sent by them, and his thoughts of home were probably left in the café where he took Communion.

It would appear that the Commanding Officers were left not knowing what to do with the troops on Christmas Day. With no exchange

of gunfire they would be justified in giving the men a holiday. Yet Lysons rose at 6.15 a.m., had fatigues at 8.30 a.m. and an inspection at 10.a.m. Some semblance of routine had to be maintained not only to keep the military machine in operation, but also to ensure the men did not have too much time to brood about the Christmas they were missing at home.

The New Year of 1916 brought a repetition of the routine in and out of the trenches. Out of the line the Corps was busy with fatigues either digging or carrying slabs to the communication trench. In between these fatigues there were rifle and gas helmet parades. In reality many of these parades, inspections and route marches, tedious though they were, existed to keep the troops active. It was thought to be too dangerous for the psyche of the men to leave much time for them to brood, and likewise it was too dangerous for the army to encourage thinking men and not machines.

There was no offensive during January and February of 1916 on the Western Front. When soldiers went up to the trenches they were concerned only with holding the line. Lysons continues on January 5th:

The whole day was spent in a fatigue clearing up the trenches. A new system was commenced at night when we had to stay out all night. It was a wet night too. One hour sentry one hour mobilised at the listening post and one hour relief. Sleep is impossible under the conditions.

Thursday Jan.6th.

At fatigue again repairing a dugout. I think it quite too much after 14 hours on the parapet. Want of sleep is as bad as want of food. Worked again on the same post but Dearly relieved me

for 3 hours. I felt a little rotten for it rained at times during the night. A very dark night and a strict watch had to be kept as an attack was expected.

Constant lack of sleep as described by Lysons gave an awful sameness to both day and night and led to trench fatigue. War reversed the habitual pattern of day and night where daily chores were completed during daylight hours, but darkness did not bring rest. On the contrary men had to be most alert at night, in order to recognise the tell-tale signs of attack. Lysons rightly comments that with the rota of two hours on and one hour off, sleep was an impossibility. No sooner would he begin to rest, than it would be time to be on duty again.

Much has been written about the terrible slaughters of the Somme, Paschendaele, Mons and Arras, where men were mowed down with machine-gun fire or blown up by shells. What is often omitted is the mental strain which the soldiers experienced, often long before these battles occurred. In between the great offensives there was a general and gradual wearing down of the soldiers. In his narrative, Edward Lysons illustrates that he was a victim of this erosion. The mental tedium of trying to stay alert on the parapet twinned with physical duties during the day could only be endured for so long. Because they no longer had the sharp edge of awareness so necessary in warfare, many men consequently lost their lives in battle through sheer exhaustion. At least the exchange of gunfire broke the monotony of watch.

Leisure time for soldiers in France was limited. The day was heavily programmed with inspections, fatigues and practice training,

as Lysons indicates through his diary entries. He often mentions an evening visit to a café when his Corps are out of the trenches, as it was usual for them to have two hours free time in the evening. But for much of this time Lysons spent writing letters home. Four entries out of ten in his diary mention that he is replying to a friend or family's letter. It was obviously for him an integral part of his existence in the army and also an escape from it, for he could employ his mind creatively in writing instead of letting it stagnate under the dull routine.

One commendable aspect of the army machine was its efficiency in the delivery of letters. The average time for a letter to travel from England to France was four days. This is illustrated by a newspaper article in The Loughborough Echo Friday 26th February 1982 when an official statement was reproduced from Berlin, 1916:

On the night of January 31 one of our naval airships squadrons dropped large quantities of explosives and incendiary bombs in and near Liverpool and Birkenhead, on the iron foundries and smelting furnaces of Nottinghamshire and Sheffield.

Four days later Lysons reports in his diary:

Friday Feb. 4th.

Wet morning, really wet - wonder of wonders no parade! Got paid 5f. & had rifle inspection. Spent morning reading. The afternoon cleaning up my overcoat. Had letters from Parker, Dos, his sister both scared by Zepp. over the Midlands

Previously it must have seemed that a war was being fought in an imaginary place called 'somewhere in France'. The zeppelin raids on the Midlands were the first to take place in Britain according to old people in Loughborough, who still remember the bombings.

It would have been for people in England their first exposure to war in the air, and therefore brought destruction to their cities and towns, instead of just something read about in a newspaper.

Out of the trenches and into rest life for the soldiers became more bearable. There were health problems, outbreaks of measles, blisters on the feet and 'chats' on clothing, but these could be coped with more easily in billets. In his diary Lysons describes incidents and vignettes which coloured the life at the front with a more human touch. Football occasionally took the place of afternoon parade, and this gave the soldiers both entertainment and exercise. By 1917 the British Army issued every platoon with a football,⁽¹⁾ as it was seen as a necessary part of army life. Billeted in French villages, the men had more opportunity to mix with local French people, which must have been a relief to them after living in an all-male khaki world.

By his twenty-fifth birthday, Edward Lysons becomes more introspective in his writing. He is concerned that time and youth are slipping by and that the war is wasting his life:

Sunday Feb. 20th:

My 25th birthday. Felt how little I seem to have done for my age. Hope the war will be over soon so that I can once more get back to work with [blank]. Had a big job in cleaning out the straw from the billet. Horribly dirty job. Jack and I stole off to the café Reynard and enjoyed a bottle of beer which Old Reynard was very proud we struggled through a conversation with the aid of my newly arrived dictionary. In the afternoon had a good wash and shave cleaned my shirt. After tea Jack and I had a delightful walk

along. A glorious sunset. Had a most interesting chat on the economic and financial position of Germany and its effect on the war which Jack thinks will last another winter. Met Sgt. Marsh & Jack Upton & as it was getting dark walked back with them. At the ferry we decided to trespass as far as [word smudge]. Here we went to a café which was full of French soldiers who were just back from fighting in Champagne. We had a most cordial reception. Sang some of our choruses they in reply sang us French love & war songs a jolly good day on the whole.

Lysons employs a quiet philosophical approach to the war, and he is in it as a duty and not because he is ardent about human rights, or hateful of Germans. It is as if he is all too conscious of the utter waste of war, but does not utter it outright. Instead he remarks how it has affected him personally. What is so evident in Lysons' writing is that there was no escape from warfare. His Birthday was an enjoyably different day, when he could appreciate the countryside and watch a sunset in peace. Later they could sing songs. But contiguously with these natural images is talk of war and when it will terminate, and later in the café Lysons and Jack exchange songs with the French of an antithetical nature : love and war. Although there is regret, Lysons does not complain of his situation. Instead he makes a virtue of necessity, and adopts a stoical attitude to life.

As a regular diarist, Edward Lysons was not only concise in his writing, but also he did not omit a single entry. Numerous entries reiterate the cold, the wet, and the hunger and therefore there is little point repeating them here. What is reproduced is a

cross-section of Lysons' observations - the dull twinned with the more horrifying accounts of his time in France.

It is fair to comment that although Lysons had been in the trenches before April 1916, he had not experienced any continual bombardments. Even these skirmishes in April were mild in comparison to the July offensive. Lysons was more often than not engaged at the listening posts, or filling up the sandbags to billet up the firing step. By April there was a little more excitement, but even that was momentary. Lysons records:

Saturday April 8th.

Just as we were settled in last night a mine blew up and shook the dug out but most of the fellows were asleep. A heavy bombardment took place at the same time. Woke up startled by a dream of being bombarded at home on leave, only to find Bish kicking a tobacco & mess tin about in the region of my head. Worked on trench Deepening 9 - 10. Fierce strafing by the guns.

Sunday April 9th.

I thank God for the glorious weather, it means everything to us in the trenches. Washed, shaved and cleaned my rifle by 9 a.m. Went to work on the fire step till about 11 a.m. when the C.O. came round and said work was all wrong. I begin to wonder which side the Germans are. We just sat down & had a grouse & discussed peace prospect in a true fed up spirit. Had a digging fatigue. Had a bacon & sausage supper - fine feed.

What is important in these two entries is not that a bombardment took place, but Lysons' dream of a bombardment. Shell shock in war often produced men who cowered down, frightened of the guns in their heads. This is not to suggest that Lysons is suffering from shell shock. But the dream illustrates that even in sleep (when the soldiers

would undoubtedly prefer to comfort themselves with thoughts of happier days in England) Lysons is still haunted by war. It becomes inescapable so that even his family are involved. This could of course be connected with the Zeppelin bombings and Lysons' fear for the safety of his family, but it would seem more plausible that the fear of war has trespassed into his sub-conscious.

In daylight, Lysons becomes more practical once again. He comments upon the attitude of the Commanding Officer whose criticisms obviously only bred bitterness. It is evident from Lysons' narrative that there was a fluctuation in the men's spirits - an elation from the weather, brooding over fatigues which led to a questioning of war in general. A contrast of moods again, when the food was improved. These peaks and troughs could only add to the instability which was already inherent in men faced by the prospect of death. Relief only came when they moved out of the trenches, but even the periods 'in rest' were only temporary. It is hardly necessary to comment that the average time-span for a soldier at the Front was three months before death or injury interrupted warfare. Lysons was remarkable to have endured the life so long.

The Platoon moved out of the trenches on April 21st. Lysons makes it quite evident in his daily comments during the latter part of April that he is not concerned with becoming a model soldier, he only wants to perform the duties required of him. This is illustrated by his remarks on Saturday 22 April:

Very wet again but Thank Goodness we are not in the trenches. This was a day of wangles as there was a trench digging fatigue on. I managed billet orderly. Wrote several letters.

After tea we discovered a café which sold 'stout anglais' & so we took full advantage & had a jolly good evening. The Captain issues a rum ration at 9.15.

There is in Lysons' tone a sense of trying to live life to the full when he is out of the trenches. Although he never states that his time is limited, the feeling must nevertheless have dominated his attitude and it is reinforced in what he writes. In entry after entry, Lysons almost congratulates himself in his ability to 'wangle' fatigues. Whilst digging a bayonet obstacle he worked only when overlooked. In digging out a shell hole there were more men than tools, so once again Lysons manages a "glorious wangle".

Whilst outwitting his commanders, Lysons was also managing to conserve energy. He utilised as much free time as he could sleeping, because of course in the trenches where there was no definitive line between night and day, sleep was almost impossible. Lysons' 'wangles' were also a blatant shirking of duty. He was fortunate not to be discovered, moreover it was courageous for him to note down such details of his actions. Lysons does not hesitate to criticise his seniors which, if his diary keeping had been discovered, would have been an offence against army regulations.

After many fatuous duties during the rest period, there was amongst soldiers a dreaded excitement at the thought of returning to the trenches. But it does not seem as if Lysons is particularly frightened by the odd whizz bang being sent over by the Germans.

He records:

Friday May 5th.

....We anticipated a heavy grind but in addition we had more than our share of excitement.

Before we had entered the communication trench proper we had a few shrapnels distributing their jagged fragments in our vicinity.

Lysons records the danger to which he is exposed in a very cool academic manner, almost as if he is choosing his words carefully for a pious Church congregation. There is no feeling in what he writes, as if he is attempting to be dispassionate about the war.

He continues to comment on a trench mortar bombardment which continued for three hours, and a mine which exploded directly in front of where he was working. He completes the entry by writing:

....We became very irritable then & things might have become uncomfortable but that Carroll [Sergeant of the Platoon] came in & told us we had to move to another dug out farther back. This we did just in time for Fritz began to send more TM's over & we went to sleep to the music of their thuds.

When returning to the trenches on previous occasions, Lysons has described in more detail his actions and reactions to the events. In early January, he was suffering from cold and lack of sleep. 'Horrible and terrible' and 'rotten' were exclamations which appeared frequently in his descriptions. Four months later Lysons writes with a detachment which appears all too calculated. The weather had improved since January and Lysons had obviously rested well. But the Germans have become Fritz, and when he says of the trench mortars that they went to sleep "to the music of their thuds" it seems as if Lysons is purposely joking about the war in his diary, for fear of what would happen if he began to take it too seriously.

Detachment also enabled Lysons to think of the war in terms of a job, and to put aside the fact that the Germans were human beings. Instead they became an enemy somewhere over the other side of No-mansland, just as to people in England he was part of a regiment 'somewhere in France'. Still in the trenches he continues:

Monday May 8th.

Nothing of importance happened today. Fritz was very quiet considering. Between 7 & 8 whilst Dan & I were on sentry we saw a couple of Huns fooling about on top. Dan potted at them & they soon disappeared. I could not say whether they were hit or not as they were quite 400 yds. away. These are the first Germans I've seen since I've been out here & I'm sure I could not tell whether they were black or white.

It is difficult to ascertain whether Dan was potting a pheasant, a rat, or a Hun. It was their job to kill, but through his light-hearted description Lysons avoids acknowledging the two Germans as people. Initially he states that nothing of importance happened. Perhaps the attempt to kill the Germans merited little mention, but it is important to remember that up until this entry Lysons has never recorded any deaths nor any individual attempts to kill the enemy. He then goes on to state that they are the first Germans he has seen. The all-too-flippant remark "I'm sure I could not tell whether they were black or white" reinforces Lysons' detachment. He really does not want to know.

It is not that the Army have at last made a regular soldier of Edward Lysons. But in an attempt to retain his internal human qualities, he has adopted a hard front to cope with the boredom,

physical hardships, the deaths and the mental strain. In the following entry he remarks that he was able to get more sleep in the trenches than ever before. This added factor would ensure that he had the energy to keep up an external bravado, which he utilised as his personal survival kit.

Despite his apparent lack of interest in the routine of war, Lysons volunteered for a raid at Arras. But he had not been involved in any action for the previous six months. He must have felt a great sense of frustration going in and out of the line achieving nothing. To be involved in a raid, despite the obvious risk, was at least a contrast to the daily routine. He writes:

Sunday May 21st RIP

...Wind in the S.W. weather still fine.
 Moved to I works at night & on gas guard
 between 11 a.m. till 1 a.m. & the
 uncanny silence made me think somewhat
 melancholy thoughts.

Monday May 22nd

Dan & I were detailed after tea for carrying.
 Tonight a big strafe took place all along
 our front. The 2nds were making a bombing
 raid but the Germans were aware of it I
 expect by their spies in Arras. Consequently
 they immediately replied with artillery &
 there were 27 casualties.

There is no daring raid recorded. What Lysons illustrates is that the façade of bravado can only be sustained for a limited period. In the face of danger, Lysons confesses he has melancholy thoughts though whether they are of death, sadness of a wasted life, or of those at home he is not explicit. Silence also bred fear, because the soldiers were unsure of the enemy's tactics. This silence left

the soldiers' nerves to balance on an edge which could often lead to panic when the attack commenced.

Edward Lysons was a religious man, not a soldier. Meditative in the Chapel, his anger illustrated in the following lecture, reinforces that he did not want to become a mindless automaton in the war machine:

Wednesday May 24th

Much to our indignation we were pulled out at 9.30 to parade for 10 was ordered to hear a lecture on bayonet fighting. The lecturer told us we were out to kill. It is a good thing to die for one's country says the old quotation but it's a better thing to kill for one's country. In fact to me the whole tone of the lecture was repulsive. Suffices into the day etc. At night we went to the cinema hall. This had a somewhat melancholy effect on me but the climax reached when I listened to the Divisional Band play selections outside DHQ mess. What a contrast to listening to that horrible bloodthirsty lecture of this morning. It made me long for the time when all this horrible business is over & when we can once more enjoy literature & music in comfort unmenaced by nauseating strife. I ought to have written home tonight but I felt my letter would have been too pessimistic altogether.

Edward Lysons volunteered to fight for England when, like so many others, he was a peaceful man. He was no mercenary. Obviously he did not join up expecting a Parish picnic, but he reiterates again and again he does not want to be made a professional soldier.

Lysons is told nothing new by the lecturer but it is clear it is the man's tone which he despises so much. The lecture reminds him of the awful role which he is expected to play, which is against all his moral convictions.

In making clear his revulsion to the lecture, Lysons also questions his own motives and reveals his hatred of the war. It is also a blatant criticism of his commanders because in being told he has to kill for his country, Lysons uses the adjectives 'repulsive', 'horrible' and 'bloodthirsty' to describe the role of the British Tommy fighting the Germans. Like so many others, Lysons saw himself as helping to bring about the peace of Europe, and instead finds his only use to Britain and her leaders is to become part of a killing machine. Ironically of course, the bayonet which was the subject of the lecture, was a redundant weapon in the First World War. Statistics show that 0.03 per cent⁽²⁾ of wounds throughout the war were inflicted by the bayonet. To ask a line of men to learn the bayonet drill was in itself the 'bloodthirsty' element of the lecture, because against the high-powered German machine guns the soldier with the bayonet stood little chance of survival.

Lysons also reveals the characteristics of the Commanding Officer. They used bullying tactics, which had little effect on Lysons. Instead of cowering under the weight of authority he was repelled by the horror - tactics. Lysons describes the state of his own mind as 'melancholy' and 'pessimistic'. The lecture drew out of him a hatred of warfare which, up until this moment, he had managed to repress.

It was usually Lysons' habit to write home in the evenings. But concerned that his letters should cause no worry, he postponed writing. Soldiers at the front rarely wrote long introspective letters. This was in part because of the censor, partly because soldiers could not explain their lifestyle, and also because they wanted to protect

their families from worry. Letters from the Front were usually cheerful, blasé, and full of questions concerning home rather than a detailed description of life in the trenches.

Into Battle

Lyson's diary writing becomes more irregular and precarious the closer he is to a major offensive. The last entries for May comprise short notes rather than long descriptive passages. It is as if he has lost the enthusiasm for keeping his journal. The sentences are short, staccato phrases. He also repeatedly reports peace rumours, as if he is waiting for the end.

Lysons writes notes in his diary when in 'rest' but once in the trenches he writes pages of detail describing the events of battle. By June Lysons had been in France seven months with no break. There must have been intuition that he was going to be part of a big offensive, and therefore writing his life in the trenches he was recording history. There follows an edited account of Lysons' entry for Sunday June 4th where he has just been reminiscing about Sunday afternoon teas in England:

Both my peaceful meditation and enjoyable tea were abruptly interrupted by a terrific bombardment of our support. This lasted with persistent accuracy for three hours and we stood admiring the gunnery quite unsuspecting of what was really happening and of the part we were finally called upon to play in it.... During the bombardment a fragment of shell dropped with an inch of my right foot and buried itself in the soil. This was looked upon as a lucky (or unlucky) escape from a genuine 'Blighty'.... Everyone seemed possessed with a bloodthirsty desire to "go over the top". Had we only known what was really happening to the Warwicks on our right I fear nothing would have prevented us from carrying on.

Edward Lysons might have been at the front for seven months, but he still received a shock when the Germans engaged the British in a heavy bombardment. The image he conjures is one of astonishment because he had had little previous experience of the firing line. A terrible fascination surrounded the act of 'going over the top' as if it was the ultimate goal in heroism. But it also involved a positive move forward, which was something Lysons and his battalion had not done for seven months.

Coupled with this desire was the regret by Lysons that he did not receive a blighty. It was the wish of nearly every soldier to be injured badly enough to be sent back to England. To camouflage this fear of death his narrative becomes dispassionate; the fragment of shell "was looked upon as quite a lucky (or unlucky) escape..." and then he goes on to say

"everyone seemed possessed with a bloodthirsty desire"
 "nothing would have prevented us from carrying on".

Lysons begins to think of himself as part of a platoon and not as an individual as he de-personalises his narrative. The courage of 'the pack' was necessary to blunt introspection; it was probably only possible for soldiers like Lysons to cope with the fighting experience by treating it in a detached manner.

The description for Sunday June 4th continues with Lysons as part of a working party to dig out eight Warwicks who were trapped in their dugout. He notes the experience which followed:

....During these few seconds a party of French mortar officers passed us "for heavens sake get away from this corner you'll get shelled to hell if you stay here". This seemed a most uncalled for warning as the evening seemed most

peaceful. In less than 5 seconds we were subjected to a most terrific bombardment which seemed specially directed on our corner. "Lie down & scatter". I crawled to my right & crouched against the side of the battered truck. Whiz bangs, grenades, trench mortars and shells burst out all round. I expected the party to be wiped out any moment. It seemed impossible to come out of it unhurt.

...Here were a small party of 2nds poor devils. They didn't seem to know what they were doing. One poor beggar fainted but some water soon brought him round. He'd been burned badly.

...Breathless excitement now changed to one of fear. Would they come over? A dug out wasn't very safe if they came over with bombs we stood no earthly chance.

Army training did not prepare men for boredom, and Lysons had been inactive for so long that in battle he would be uncertain of knowing how to react. Soldiers were taught the more traditional battle techniques of an organised fight between two opposing sides and not continual bursts of attack lasting months. The narrative reflects this feeling by running from certainty to uncertainty and from excitement to anxiety.

'Esprit de corps' was often the deciding factor in the risks which soldiers took in the First World War. Lysons did not volunteer for the working party merely for the excitement; his human instinct helped him save the lives of other men. Those men who had been in the thick of the bombardment were not so full of bravado, playing an active part in the war for the first time. Men who were subject to constant fear..."didn't seem to know what they were doing". They were probably in a dream-like state unsure whether the bombardment was real or a nightmare. Despite fear Lysons describes his condition as one of "breathless excitement". But caught by surprise he would have no time to dwell upon his actions.

There was no more action from the Germans. Alternatively Lysons volunteered to help with the wounded; this again was an act of comradeship for no excitement could be found in finding half-mutilated men who had borne the brunt of the bombardment. Lysons continues:

The night was extremely dark & the trenches were in a terrible state nothing but a series of shell holes We then grovelled along & came to another body the lower portion of which was completely burned. We got a spade & dug him out. Some more stretcher bearers came up & identified the body as Lt.Larkins.... Our efforts & searches during the rest of the 2 hours were really futile. Our intentions were however good & our search persistent. We were told we should find plenty of wounded in 104 trench. Unfortunately we were unfamiliar with this sector & had we been so the trenches were unrecognisable. It is impossible to adequately describe our experiences. The dug out with the 3 officers & 5 men irretrievably buried. The dug out with the shaded candle & blood covered forms the dead on the parapet. The young sgt. still on top with his throat thickly bandaged and his bloodstained coat trying to find his bearings & attempting to direct a B machine gun officer. All these are beyond description.

There were numerous ways to die in the Great War. At least if a soldier was caught by a sniper's bullet the chance of a quick, clean death was greater than if he were to be caught by a shell explosion. Lysons describes the aftermath of battle, the earnest search for the dead and wounded men. The scene is a very private one : blanketed in darkness four men desperately searched in unfamiliar places, battling to save the lives of buried men. The lack of detail in his account of the wounded bodies leaves more to the imagination than lurid bloody descriptions of horror piled upon horror.

Lysons had to come to terms with the burned and shattered bodies which he saw in the context of comprehending the destruction of the war machine. Under these conditions events would pass like a nightmare, for Lysons would have no criterion for normality.

The search in the half light must have seemed endless yet in his diary two hours receive the length of a sentence. Chronology and time sequence would also be difficult to recollect because of the incongruous nature of the experience. What is most significant is Lysons' ability to recognise his own difficulty in collating each bloody cameo. He states on two occasions "It is impossible to adequately describe our experiences" and then "All these are beyond description". It is not that Lysons' academic and literary qualifications were inadequate in giving him the expressive powers necessary in war. The point is this : he states that his observations are beyond description because he has no conception from his conservative life as a schoolmaster to cope with something so horrific. Lysons observed both inanimate and human destruction in a few hours, and his dilemma was in coming to terms with this.

The inadequacy of language illustrated in Lysons' diary was the predicament of the civilian population in Khaki, and Regular soldiers during the First World War. Lysons' powerlessness is akin to someone from Hiroshima or Nagasaki describing the effects of nuclear warfare. The task is an impossible one. Lysons' difficulty underlines the unnaturalness of what he saw, and the awful inhumanity of trench warfare. The only course open to the diarist is to use a cinematic technique of stills in flashbacks. Lysons leaves us with

photographic images of blood-covered forms and dead on the parapet, eight men buried in a dugout for a grave, and a sergeant wounded, wandering in a dreamlike state suffering from shell shock. These images - so vivid to Lysons and yet so difficult to express - would not easily be erased from memory.

The Somme

It was late June. Edward Lysons was no longer in the trenches, and his Platoon was marched from one billet to another with no apparent purpose. Rumours told them of a great push, and such stories were embraced as an antidote to the monotony of fatigues and exercises. These included exercises to rid the soldiers of trench slouch, which in theory were necessary, but all they wanted to do was rest. Lysons comments after exercises on June 22nd: "These were followed by chase of an imaginary Bosch army. Oh! for the great push". Unknown to Lysons and the Royal Warwicks this 'great push' had been part of Haig's grand strategy since February 1916. Haig wanted no preparatory attacks but an all out effort in one decisive battle. He felt that given enough artillery and munitions, the capture of the enemy's front line was not impossible.

Haig's battles were waged at General Headquarters and not on the battlefield. The Commanders in the Great War had little idea of conditions at the front lines. His advisor, Charteris, writes:

Here at G.H.Q. in our little town away back from the front line trenches, although we think of nothing but war and deal only with war, there are few visible signs of war. We might almost be in England ... One of the great difficulties of everyone at G.H.Q. is to get away from their office often and long enough to get in close (3) touch with the front.

In view of the miles of trenches it was of course impossible for Haig to see every man at the front. But he failed as a leader to delegate responsibilities, or to keep a close check on the prevailing conditions. Lysons remarks on June 17th: "The Brigadier was supposed to be inspecting the trenches this morning but I suppose the trenches were too bad for him to make a complete tour of the section for he never reached us". Lack of concern would only incite bitterness within the ranks. Moreover the morale and physical condition of the troops would be all important in the 'great push'. Lysons and his platoon should not have been subjected to the yo-yo in and out of battle if Haig was expecting the capture of the enemy's front line in the Somme offensive.

Men might have looked forward to battle as a contrast to the route marches and parades, but paralleled with this was an inevitable fear. As they marched closer to the roar of guns Lysons in particular was tormented by nightmares of bombardments. When up in the front line on June 28, he writes:

Fritz returned the bombardment but we managed to get safely back to our holes for tea. After tea I packed up and lay down for a sleep I was alone in the covey hole & although Dan & Jacko were in the covey hole a yard or two away I felt for the first time in my life I should think the horrible feeling of loneliness. There was a time when I loved solitude & my own companionship but tonight as I lay in the covey hole quite alone I felt like a prisoner in his lonely cell.

Lysons and the Warwicks were holding the line before the offensive. This profound isolation which made him so maudlin indicates the insecurity before battle. His thoughts must also have turned to home and the sense of disconnection from life and time as he once knew it.

Severed from companionship, Lysons' diary has become a confidante, just as the early travellers to the New World treated their journals as a familiar friend.

Before an advance soldiers were usually given a longer period of rest, and extra rations might be provided. Lysons feasted on whisky, coffee and cooked ham although the Warwicks were not involved in the first two weeks of Somme fighting. But they had to live with the knowledge that they were to go over the top for the first time. They were also given the statutory talks from the Commanding Officer and the General. On July 1st Lysons records:

We marched today to our training ground outside Lattre via Habarçy where we had an earholing address from the C.O. on his confidence in us. My sentiments are exactly identical with Jacko's but I will not note them here.

There then followed an inspection by the General. These talks barked out by the Commanding Officers were given to inject last minute patriotism into the troops. Lysons was neither fooled nor impressed by the speech. It is evident from the tone of his writing a sense of disgust with the tactics used by his superiors to mould him into an automaton. Contrary to the discipline of the C.O., Lysons did not find it necessary to think, eat and sleep as a soldier - through his diary he illustrates his fight to remain an individual.

"FORWARD IN THE WEST"

"START OF A GREAT ATTACK"

"FIERCE BATTLES ON THE SOMME"

" A 25 MILE FRONT"

"STRONG GERMAN POSTS TAKEN"

"9,500 PRISONERS"

On 2nd July 1916 The Times announced the start of the new British offensive for which Lysons, the British Army and all England had been waiting. Joffre and Haig had planned the offensive for the end of June, with preliminary attacks to wear down the enemy. It was decided at the last minute to change the zero day to 1st July to complete wire cutting, to take advantage of the favourable weather and to deceive the enemy by concentrated bombardments and night raids.

The first day of the Somme has been recorded by historians, biographers and journalists. Each tell their own story. The Times' special correspondent wrote of men walking back on the first day whistling in unison and laughing at jokes. He applauded British manhood proving itself once again, and Sir Philip Gibbs lists the best of the British schools which were represented on the battlefield. Haig wrote in his diary on July 2:

The A.G. reported to-day that the total casualties are estimated at over 40,000 to date. This cannot be considered severe in view of the numbers engaged, and the length of front attacked. (4)

The chances of survival were not very great, as illustrated by Charles Quinnell an old soldier interviewed in June 1982 [see Appendix]. The Official History romanticises the battle:

From 6.25 a.m. onwards there was an incessant roar of gun fire, with the screaming, whistling and bursting of shells rising above it. Eight minutes before zero the stokes mortars joined in with a hurricane bombardment of 30 rounds a minute. At 7.30 a.m. the crisis came. Under a cloudless blue sky which gave full promise of the hot midsummer day which was ahead, wave after

wave of British infantry rose and, with bayonets glistening, moved forward into a blanket of smoke and mist as the barrage lifted from the enemy's front trench. Almost simultaneously the German gunners ceased their counter-battery work and concentrated their fire upon their assault. (5)

When the infantry went over the top they believed it was to capture German trenches. These should have been destroyed by continual bombardment, the wire shot away and the dugouts knocked in. The Infantry could not penetrate the uncut wire, and also they were faced with a barrage from the German machine guns. The account by Charles Quinnell illustrates the troops did not have a chance.

Joffre and Haig overlooked the fact that the German lines on the Somme frontage were exceedingly strong. They had built up their defensive position for two years with deep dugouts which were left intact after machine-gun and shell-fire coming across no-mans-land. After the bombardment they could turn their unharmed guns onto the helpless British infantry. The battle was a terrible error of judgement by the Commanders. Division after division failed and none was able to regain any ground. The battle was conducted by telephone calls with corps commanders and this led to inadequate communications. Reports from the corps were based on divisional reports which in turn were based on subordinate reports; it was difficult to know which reports were accurate and which were not. No thought of failure was entertained and during the afternoon there was still the hope that the second attempts being made would break through the German lines.

The Times described the first day of battle thus:

....The success of the preliminary attacks of the Allies on both sides of the Somme has caused the liveliest satisfaction here, but everyone recognises that the enemy is strong, and his defences powerful and that his resistance is sure to be desperate. (6)

There is an acknowledgement by the correspondent that there would be no decisive victory on the Somme. But whatever the cost, Sir Douglas Haig wanted no relaxation after the initial bombardment, nor did he make any drastic change of plan.

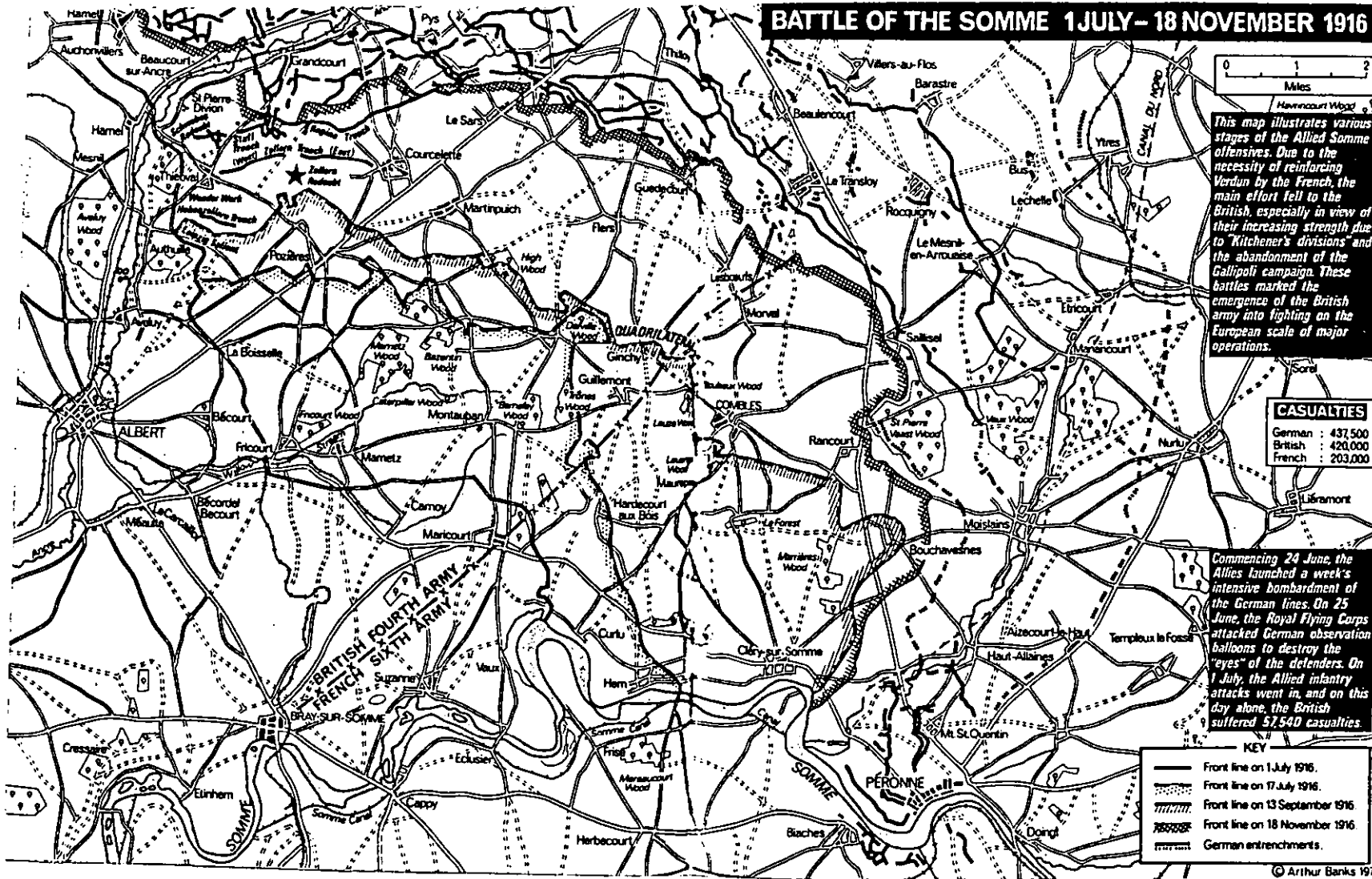
The assault was to be renewed as soon as possible to wear down the enemy's resistance. Whilst wearing down the enemy, the British army was tiring too. Edward Lysons did not move up to the trenches until July 17th, but he had known two weeks previously that he would be playing a part in the offensive. It was during this time of waiting before battle when troops became most introspective, and Lysons was no exception. On July 11 he writes:

....He [Captain Bry] went with the OC to inspect the trenches where we are supposed to be going 'over the top'. Perhaps this will be the last opportunity of receiving the Body & Blood of Christ on this side of the grave.
Training ground as usual.

The closer he comes to thoughts of death, the more Lysons forces himself to come to terms with it. There was a desire to fight rather than waiting in limbo neither resting nor fighting.

The map on the following page illustrates the general pattern of the Somme offensives from July to November. But the first week of attacks were concentrated in Delville, Trônes, Mametz, High and

BATTLE OF THE SOMME 1 JULY - 18 NOVEMBER 1916



This map illustrates various stages of the Allied Somme offensives. Due to the necessity of reinforcing Verdun by the French, the main effort fell to the British, especially in view of their increasing strength due to "Kitchener's divisions" and the abandonment of the Gallipoli campaign. These battles marked the emergence of the British army into fighting on the European scale of major operations.

CASUALTIES	
German	437,500
British	420,000
French	203,000

Commencing 24 June, the Allies launched a week's intensive bombardment of the German lines. On 25 June, the Royal Flying Corps attacked German observation balloons to destroy the "eyes" of the defenders. On 1 July, the Allied infantry attacks went in, and on this day alone, the British suffered 57,540 casualties.

KEY	
—	Front line on 1 July 1916.
⋯	Front line on 17 July 1916.
	Front line on 13 September 1916.
⊘⊘⊘	Front line on 18 November 1916.
⊘⊘⊘	German entrenchments.

© Arthur Banks 1972

Thiepval Woods. It was an error in generalship to attack these woods at isolated points. In theory the British would clear them of the enemy after an intense bombardment. But it was a game of swings and roundabouts where either side who held the woods suffered heavy casualties under bombardment. Delville Wood was renamed Devil Wood by the men who survived the attacks there.

There were a series of attacks planned for the nights of 22nd and 23rd July. On the evening of the 22nd the British infantry advanced in the darkness, and the Official History for 1916 takes up the story:

The first move was made by the 5th Division (XV Corps) with the purpose of securing Wood Lane as a preliminary to the assault of the Switch Line east of High Wood. Even before the barrage lifted at 10 p.m. the 14/Royal Warwickshire and the 1/Royal West Kent ... made a considerable advance, being protected by the lie of the ground. When, however, they appeared over the crest and could be seen by the light of German flares they were taken in enfilade by the machine guns fringe from the eastern corner of High Wood where a well-wired strongpoint had defied (7) the assault.

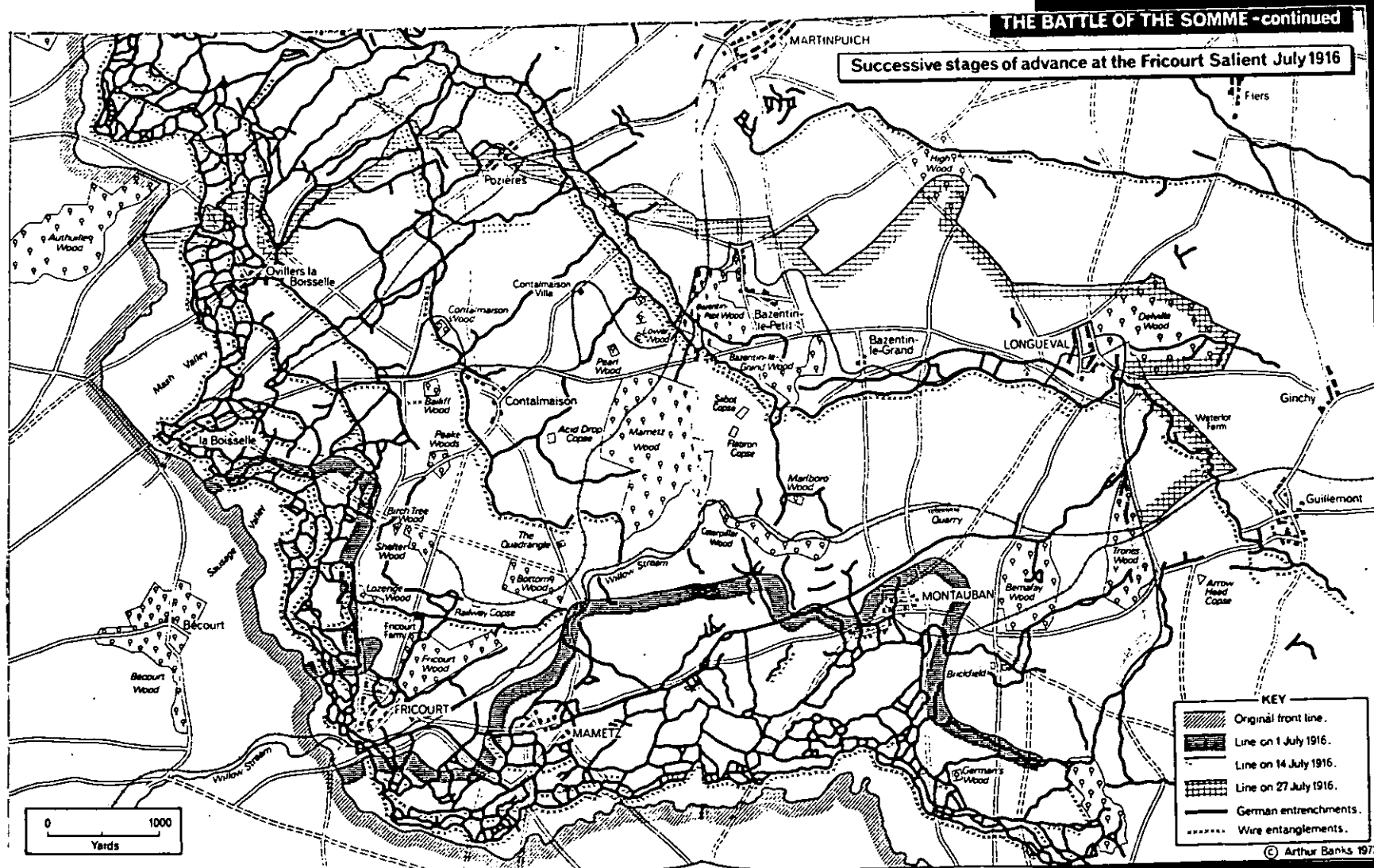
The Gordons and Royal Scots joined in the attempt to move forward, but German fire was too heavy and so the West Kents and the Warwicks had to retreat. The attacks were a scramble, where men fell over trees and shell craters, deceived in the darkness by the shadow of trees. Machine gun fire appeared from positions which could not be located, which also caused considerable losses.

According to The Times the British drove the enemy from High Wood. This attack by 14th and 15th Royal Warwicks was part of

an attack along the whole front from Pozieres to Guillemont. The artillery were active for twelve hours, and on the Saturday morning The Times reported that six enemy planes were destroyed and one British aeroplane shot down. The newspaper also said the Germans were offering 'desperate resistance' yet if one looks at the Role of Honour for the last week in July, it is clear the attack was an attempt by the British which cost hundreds of lives.

Edward Lysons was part of the night attack on High Wood illustrated on the following map.

ADVANCE OF THE BATTLE, JULY 1916



The following extract is his account of those night battles:

Tuesday July 18th

Spent a strange day here. Saw the wounded coming down & the guns rolling up. walked up towards Mametz & watched the Artillery battles. One suffered from strange feelings at times wondering what the end would be. Lieut Turner addressed his platoon but he said too much for my liking. Deeds not words at times like these.

Wednesday July 19th

Move up line from Meault - Marmetz. Fricourt Contralmain. Halt on the way - Dinner. Tea. Shrapnel. Cpl. Ward wounded. The valley - High explosives. Horses - wounded - face of the hysterical. Trenches - A Stand to - The attack in the wood - another stand - a move - German prisoner - Another part of the trench.

Thursday July 20th

Our guns heavily bombard all day incessant din - plenty of sleep. Get the hot tea up alright. Plenty of sleep. Aeroplane scrap - burning bosch - Move to the front line - shrapnel - rough way - dead men & horses - horrible stink - On the road - digging in - Jacko & I outpost in the green corn another move forward Digging in - wounded Scottie.

Friday July 21st

Digging in all night - tried to move to support line under cover of mist a sleep some tea - Jones goes down with shell shock, Dan & I together - Go down for water 'Happy Valley' - Strafe on Delville Wood - noise in valley - Dressing Station - Dr. wounded - Stock the water cart. Return safely - covey hole digging. Disappointment separated from Dan. Letters from Bert & A Amy read them. Midnight stand to. Sleep again.

Saturday July 22nd

Plenty of sleep near Oiseau & Jacko. fair amount of shells. Heavy barrage in the afternoon by the Bosche in the valley. We are going to attack tonight - Plans altered. A & B attack C & D support. Carried ammunition up to our front line - got heavily shelled. Moved across valley to support. Heavy shelling - Advance. Shells & machine guns - Carrol's coolness - Front line trench - two wounded men - two attempts to charge.

SUNDAY July 23rd

machine guns still going - our men must not be able to hold on. Fire on both woods - A huge hell. Capt. B. refuses to attack with the men he has left - only 3 platoons - 10 platoon changes to advanced trench on right. Jacko Johnson & I fetch in wounded with Sarge. Shelling heavy on both sides machine guns still going expecting counterattack - Dawn comes - Dan & I make covey - sentry - sleep - Dan & I volunteer for patrol - get some distance out - Bosches bringing ammo. Shrapnel above us - Dan hit on the head I in the thigh. Crawl for our trench - first field dressing - attempt to crawl down to dressing station - path shelled - 2 others - turned back to our trench by 2nd Sergeant - Hy Clarke redressed wound wound-thirst. Moved by 15th stretcher bearers about 5... taken carried on to Mountain road - Red Cross Motor to Heilly dressed put to bed. 10 pm off on hospital train to Rouen.

Edward Lysons gives a picture of disjointed cameos, where names, faces and small incidents make up his overall view of the war. Had he read the reports in the Official History he probably would not recognise the same battle. Before the action at High Wood, Lysons was introspective, dwelling on death and the action to come. His writing retains a fluency until the onslaught of battle, and at this point the sentences transform into monosyllabic phrases at some moments, reflecting the machine-gun-stutter which surrounded him.

Enclosed in a blanket of exploding shells it would have been impossible for Lysons to keep up the daily entries in his diary. It appears as if he kept notes from 19th - 23rd July perhaps with the notion of filling in the details at a later date. But this was not the first time Lysons had been under fire. The previous occasion on June 4th he kept repeating: "It is impossible to adequately describe our experiences". On the Somme Lysons does not even try.

What he illustrates is a lack of continuity in battle. So much is happening - much of it too awful to describe - that the only way to illustrate this chaos was to present images. The line "The valley - High explosives. Horses - wounded - face of the hysterical" can only leave to the imagination black and white stills of horses and men fighting to survive. Each phrase seems to represent one second - the measure of time which was the razor edge of life or death to the soldiers.

What must have been so acutely obvious to Lysons was the helplessness of soldiers and horses engaged in battle. The only continuity in the passage is through the camaraderie described, and this selflessness is illustrated by Lysons' brave act in volunteering for patrol. At this moment his writing becomes a little more fluent where he writes as if in a dream-like state, unaware of a world around him. There must also have been a desire to be part of the action; Lysons had been detached and it was important to belong to the advance and to achieve something, however dangerous.

There are no retrospective thoughts on the High Wood attacks. Lysons describes it as "a huge Hell" but the images he produces are reminiscent of a kaleidoscope turning, with each move conjuring a different picture. It is almost as if Lysons is the one looking into the kaleidoscope and the war is continuing, uncontrolled, all around him. The war seems to be passing him by, in a world where Lysons is not responsible for his own safety or in part, for his actions.

This dazed state continues when Lysons is injured. There is no cohesion in his writing. Where was he going to patrol and for what

purpose? Only three platoons remained. The patrol would probably be an exercise in receiving information about the enemy. This was so often the case during the course of the war, where tactics were worked out but in practice communications collapsed, and it became impossible for platoon Captains to know the best course of action. The attack on High Wood took place in the dark where troops were blind to the enemy forces and indeed had no hope of dodging enemy fire. It became almost like a game of hide-and-seek, where hundreds were killed and nothing was achieved. In these conditions it was hardly surprising that there was a continual swapping of land on the Somme between July and November. Soldiers were either hindered by a blanket of darkness, or they could not see the enemy for smoke and dust.

Despite the public optimistic reports, the attacks on High Wood could not be hailed as a success. Official reports state that on Sunday July 23rd the Infantry was to creep forward to the Intermediate trench. This attack never took place because, the report states, the Warwicks were not ready to take part. But according to Lysons: "Capt.B refuses to attack with the men he has left - only 3 platoons". At least the Captain did not lead his men to unnecessary slaughter. The Official History fails to mention the Warwicks did not take part in the attack because they had already lost too many troops.

Conclusions

Edward Lysons was wounded in the hip on July 23rd and the following day he learnt that he was marked for Blighty. This was

probably because of the shortage of space in the field hospital rather than the serious nature of his wound. He would never have to serve at the Front again.

Lysons was sent to the East Leeds Hospital in England where he was nursed back to health and could appreciate the comforts of sheets to sleep in, and good food to eat. He continued his diary during this period, but the entries have not been made regularly as there was little to relate. Lysons never returned to active service, but saw out the war commissioned to a non-combattant unit.

After the war, Lysons went to St. Stephens House, Christ Church Oxford as his initiation for the Church. Far from turning away from God during his war service, Lysons' time at the Front only confirmed his ambition to do something for mankind. The Church postings took him from Stourbridge to Nottingham, where he was a vicar of St. Martins Church, and later became Chaplain of Sherwood Borstal Prison. In 1955 he retired as Honorary Canon of the Southwell Diocese.

Like so many men who had experienced the war, Edward Lysons never forgot what he and his comrades had endured. As a Parish vicar he spoke to his congregations about the war. Pauline Larrad, who was baptised, confirmed and married by Lysons, fondly remembers:

He was proud of his war service but he did not fail to impress us with its evil. He was a patriot to whom the second world war caused much grief, seeing these young people leave, some never to return, and his curate killed in Normandy.

He used to return to France for holidays and visit the villages where he was stationed. Up until his death he kept in close contact with his two friends Jacko and Dan, and each year they met at a Regimental dinner held at the Imperial Hotel, in Birmingham.

The war left Edward Lysons with a limp caused by his thigh wound, so the memory of the Western Front could not be erased. Eight months in France with no leave must also have aged him; those months must also have influenced him to follow the Church and in choosing to leave the secure world of a schoolmaster. His diaries, which he had hoped to convert into war memoirs, reflect the response of a man thrown into an intolerable situation, yet he refused to be defeated by it. On returning to England from France he writes: "oh, the sweet homely glimpses of the country which I caught through the open door (we were on stretchers in a luggage van)" Green fields, friendly porters and policemen, it would seem that the chocolate box England had not suffered from the war.

Country walks, Red Cross Nurses, and the evensong on Sundays could not erase his experiences. Lysons had been a part of the modern push, he had endured bombardment after bombardment. The "burning bosch" the "face of the hysterical" the smell of death and hundreds of dead men - all these images recorded in his diary could not be forgotten. Edward Thomas wrote in Richard Jefferies:

Let us get out of these narrow modern days,
 whose... hours have become somehow shortened,
 into the sunlight and pure wind. A something
 that the ancients thought divine can be found
 and felt there still.

(8)

Edward Lysons could not and indeed did not escape all that he had experienced during the war, instead he came to terms with the modern world. No longer could England be thought of as the heart of an Empire on which the sun never set. She too was not impregnable. Lysons used his experience to give what he could to the modern England - the past was buried with those ebullient volunteers who fell and died in Flanders fields.

REFERENCES

1. Denis Winter, Death's Men, p.156.
2. ibid., p.40.
3. (quoted by) John Terraine, Douglas Haig : The Educated Soldier p.178.
4. The Private Papers of Douglas Haig 1914-1919 ed. Robert Blake p.154.
5. Sir J.E.Edmonds, Military Operations in France and Belgium 1916, p.315.
6. The Times Monday July 3, 1916.
7. Military Operations, p.136.
8. (quoted by) H.Coombes, Edward Thomas : A Critical Study, p.31.

CHAPTER V

IRA CLARKE : SAPPER,
SECOND RESERVE BATTALION, ROYAL ENGINEERS



It was 1917. The seeds of the Arras offensive had been germinating for six months. General Joffre, Commander-in-Chief of the French Army, proposed the frontage of the old Somme battlefield should

be broadened. Joffre's suggestion was that the French should attack between the Oise and the Somme, and the British between Bapaume and Vimy, leaving in the centre a gap of about eight miles which would be held defensively.

The Arras offensive was to take place on Easter Monday 1917. The attack was considered one of the most successful in the First World War. The Official History for 1917 states: "The first day's operations of the Battles of Arras were among the heaviest blows struck by British arms in the Western theatre of war".⁽¹⁾ Vimy Ridge was captured, so that in one sense something had been achieved. According to the War Lords, the first day at Arras was the most important breakthrough since the start of the war. The Official History goes on to say that 9 April:

... marked the longest advance made that day (by the 34th division) and the longest made in a single day by any belligerent on the Western Front since trench warfare had set in; it was a distance of 3½ miles. (2)

- Even for an eggshell. Arras may have been an important battle if seen in the context of a military strategy, but when it is seen in the context of 150,000 casualties which were incurred between April 9th and May 3rd by the British alone, it would seem the War Lords applauded the success of Arras without waiting to count the cost.

Ira Clarke was not actively fighting at Arras. He was in the Second Reserve Battalion of the Royal Engineers. Posters, post-cards, photographs and poems usually illustrate the classical image of soldiers leaping the trenches to go over the top. Indeed the assumption could be made that soldiers stayed in that static climbing-over position, reminiscent of John Nash's painting 'Over the Top'.

Not every soldier was involved in combat. The army machine of railways, roads, water supply and telephone communications was run by the Royal Engineers, and without them opportunities presented by early successes would be lost.

Although Ira Clarke was not directly involved in combat, he was responsible for water supplies reaching the front line during the Arras offensive. Born in 1888, Clarke was brought up in a small village in the Midlands between Nottingham and Eastwood, called Giltbrook. According to his niece, Miss E. Clarke, he received only an elementary education. His father had his own joinery and undertaker's business, but in spite of this it is thought by his family one of his motives for joining up was a financial one. The Official History states in talking about the Royal Engineers: "As their casualties were relatively light, they also had a fairly good opportunity to profit by this training and experience."⁽³⁾

Clarke volunteered for the army, as his paybook illustrates, in December 1915 at the age of 28, and he received one shilling and fivepence daily. It is thought that Clarke had no previous experience of diary-keeping, but as a carpenter, he was practised in keeping ledgers stating the costs of funerals, mails, and how much Church collection he gave weekly, so that he had a little experience in a primitive form of diary-keeping. His diary is only a fragment, which is written in a notebook used formerly for addresses. It is not known whether he wrote anything more, or whether his motives for discontinuing it were through injury, or indeed why he decided to write down anything at all. It would seem as if the notes he kept turned

into a diary because he had to try and stamp some form upon something which had no pattern or reason at all.

Clarke commences the diary in a very business-like and economical manner, only noting down the names of places and the dates which he passed through them. Perhaps he felt that there was little of interest between August 26th 1916 and April 5th 1917 to warrant noting. But it seems more plausible that it was at this point he had mentally decided to note down names and places, and similarly to his business ledgers where he remarks on the Church offering, he began to expand on points of interest.

The first note reads thus: "Rouen. Aug. 26th 1916". but two months later he writes:

From Frevent via St. Pol. to Erin Nov. 5.
erecting banks at Erin for Mobe Machine
Gun. Batt. at Erin.... From Erin to
Ramecourt 14 kilo. Nr. St. Pol to make
internment camp for German prisoners
Nov 22 1916. (4)

Up until April 7th when the Arras bombardment begins, the entries are quite factual, impartial observations. From the entry: "April 26th shelling workshop at Doisans" there is an abrupt shift from the cold objective notes to introspective narrative. Clarke breaks from the diary form of one kind, and commences a personal view of the offensive. It could be that he realises the importance of the battle and therefore notes it down for posterity. Far more likely however, that this is the first major bombardment he has encountered during his time in France. The constant blast of guns would be a terrifying experience, and it is as if from this moment onwards the notebook becomes a confidante, because the horror of it all could not be borne alone.

Certainly the first few sentences endorse the plausibility of the second argument concerning the shift in style. Clarke's commentary is one of incredulity. He writes:

I never known anything like it no living
thing could stand it the station at this
time seemed to be the prominent object
the enemy fired at.

The lack of comprehension and the failure to express what he sees is evident. Clarke appears to be so amazed that he omits all punctuation. It is also important to note that his language is de-mystified from Army jargon like that of Noel Carrington. (See Chapter III). There is no mention of the Germans being called Hun or Bosche, no talk of the attack being a 'good show' or 'performance'. Clarke relates as an observer, as if unconcerned with winners or losers. There is no 'stiff upper lip' approach characterised by the Public School diarist; in contrast Clarke shows immediate sensitivity. His reference to: "no living thing could stand it" indicates that his attitude to the English and Germans respectively is that they are human beings, not just cannon fodder.

Poetry, novels, paintings and biographies of the First World War all illustrate the problem of trying to describe something divorced from their range of experience. Despite the fact that Clarke is neither academic nor literary genius, his simple narrative illustrates the common problem: no-one could describe the Great War adequately. On Monday April 10th Clarke comments: "I never witnessed nothing like it" which is almost an exact repetition from his previous entry. Stunned by what he saw, Clarke is like a child acquiring his basic language, reproducing a phrase because he knows no adequate alternative.

As a Sapper in the Royal Engineers, Ira Clarke was not involved in the advance, but was instead part of a back-up team in reserve mending pipes. He was therefore in a position to comment on all he saw, whereas a soldier actually involved in the fighting would not have the time to observe in detail. The combattant would be too busy trying to keep alive himself, without stopping to make a mental note of all around him.

Clarke saw dead everywhere. The tone of incredulity in his writing illustrates that the warfare was different from that which he had imagined. Enlisting and going off to war conjures up images of chivalrous knights fighting for honour and glory. Perhaps this was Clarke's illusion, reflected in the following lines:

We hadn't been at work very long when up
came the cavalry, a sight for anybody to
see, such well trained and noble animals
they had got.

But however well-trained the men or horses were, this was of little use in a warfare against machine guns. Clarke goes on to describe men and horses who had been hit - there was little room for nobility in such a description:

Tuesday April 11 after the long advance it
was a [sic] advance too. it made your heart
ache. we went out in the morning another
party of us. the station was our destination again.
there was a dead Gordon Highl looked as if he had
been left there to die. and another and more awful
spectacle there was a [sic] ammunition waggon that
had been hit with a shell. killed six horses and
the six drivers, one piled up on top of the other
fragments strewn all over the place some of the
fellows no-one would recognise them. also the
exploding of a ammunition dump blowing up the
railway bridge killing the mayor. and wounding
18 others. a very senseless trick to do in my
opinion to put a battery in a prominent place
like that.

The Generals would count the miles or yards gained, but this is how Clarke saw the big advance. He does not comprehend (if indeed the Generals did) its strategic importance. Today it is difficult to imagine a bombardment from dawn until dusk, and to find a language to accommodate the sight which made Clarke's heart 'ache' so much. It is easy to blandly skim over the Arras casualty lists, but the importance of Clarke's description is that however awkwardly he describes the aftermath, he does justice to the dead and injured by acknowledging them as human beings. He even goes so far as to mention all the dead horses, perhaps all the more poignant because they had no choice but to be a part of the war. By 1917, with the introduction of National Conscription introduced in 1916, many of the men at the front had no choice either.

What was obviously so horrific to Clarke was the killing, yes, but the way in which this war obliterated any semblance of humanity. Finally it seems as if he has to acquiesce to the loss of individuality in war for he says: "some of the fellows no one would recognise them". His remark reflects C.R.W. Nevinson's painting 'Marching Men' (1916) illustrated below:



Once in Khaki, men become faceless and dead long before they are physically killed.

It is as if Clarke wants to note down all that he sees, but there are just too many dead. Civilians like the Mayor of Arras are killed along with the soldier casualties. Clarke calls the blowing up of the ammunition waggon a "senseless trick" a remark better suited to a schoolboy prank, than an incident in a series of senseless killings. He does not question why, or for what reason, the deaths themselves are probably overwhelming enough. Yet the very fact that he writes in such detail seems to indicate his lack of comprehension. Clarke holds no banner in his writing for King and country or freedom - but then he was not a volunteer of 1914. All he can see is one dead man after another; it is not a cynical description but a very touching one where he shows pity in the lines: "there was a dead Gordon Highl looked as if he had been left there to die". Clarke only comments, he can do nothing. Such mutilation cannot easily be explained away, and he does not even try.

Clarke uses no paragraphing, with limited punctuation and no capital letters for the beginning of sentences. An elementary education would in part be responsible. But in a war with little apparent form, it is almost fitting that the syntax too is disjointed. Because of the enormous number of killings Clarke does not relate what he sees in chronological order but as he remembers the images. He continues:

On the Sat before we had been in Arras 15 min there was a shell burst in the barrack yard where we were billeted. killing one horse and wounding one R Scot. The same night there is or

was a small Wood standing just on the Cambrai Rd this also was a very sorry spectacle. they had been shelling the place and it was covered with dead Horses and remnants of other articles.

Clarke illustrates in this description his loss of sensitivity for time when he muddles his tenses in describing the small wood. It also shows the immediacy of the diary entry, because for a moment he forgets that the wood no longer exists. The war was not concentrated between the patch of land between the English and German trenches, no-mansland. Arras was no haven of safety, nor was the wood safe from enemy shellfire. Again Clarke would have heard the barrage, but he was only a part of it in so far as he saw the results. There is pity in his tone, and it can only be presumed that the "remnants of other articles" were the remains of men to whom no human description could be given.

On reading the diary fragment it would on first rendering seem as if Clarke relished listing death after death. The following days he comments upon as dull because nothing happens at first:

Wed Thurs Friday & Sat their [sic] isn't much to say. Only an occasional shell coming now & again, one very close to where we were working in the — [word missing] overturning a Field Kitchen killing the cook & wounding another fellow blowing his leg off and a wound in the neck.

Again death raises its ugly head. In his first entry Clarke was very obviously horrified at what he observed. But it is as if by this point in the diary he has seen enough to itemize it stating the facts of the injuries and no more. Clarke has now become factual, but not necessarily callous. In his first description of death he was

incapable of finding the words to define what he saw. Through experience he is able to neutralise the shock so that the explicit is his only means of coming to terms with death. Clarke could not react emotionally to every soldier who fell at Arras.

Ira Clarke did not have to endure the hopscotch in and out of the front line. In the following entry he is able to relax a little as he spends an evening at the Y.M.C.A., listening to stories about the Arras caves. He continues:

the caves he told us dated back to the Normans when they used to trade in them fearing to come out as the country was always at war so they have come in very useful in this war and which I have had the pleasure to look in. and the Cathedral I am sure has been a magnificent piece of work. but it has been brought down to ruin and desolation same as the rest of the place.

It was necessary for human sanity to try and escape from the holocaust. In describing a little of the Arras history, it is as if Clarke tries to become part of a timescale and a moment in history. But the caves had always been associated with upheaval and fighting, even in the Norman era. This brings Clarke back full circle in his thinking to the present predicament, as if there is no escape from the war. Similarly, he admired the beauty of the Cathedral, but it too has fallen victim to the destruction.

It is not apparent that Clarke is writing for any particular person in his diary, not even consciously for himself. He does not conceal what he does not understand, instead he writes down events to try and make sense of the war in relation to history. The diary becomes a vehicle used to weigh up complex issues which he does not understand, and this is illustrated in the following passage:

One very touching incident occurred which almost sounds like fiction but yet it is the gospel truth. A young fellow all bandaged up was walking down the Rue Gambetta that is from the firing line, and a Chaplain stopped him he looked the picture of misery and yet in his eyes he had still got a smile left. he started to ask him about the things that was going on up the line and to cheer the fellow up the best he could and when he had finished the young fellow said to him. "Yea God even if thou slay one. yet will I trust thee. which is found in Job. I am sure a young fellow that can say that when he has undergone all those hardships & endured all that pain what bigger trial can a man have than that, to make him give up all hope.. but he still trusted. that fellow is what I call a martyr & hero.

All very fine sentimental stuff. It is as if Clarke is preaching a sermon, or relating a sermon preached to him, where the vicar is taking pains to convince his congregation that war is not so bad after all. If the story was related by a man of the Church it must be 'gospel truth'. There must have been a reason for Clarke entering this story into his diary. It really matters little whether it is fact or fiction, but in trying to reason with himself that despite Christian ethics he has to fight in the war, he chooses a story to give himself courage. It is as if Clarke does not have the faith to fight for a cause which for him does not reflect anything near to the Christian faith on which he was brought up, the story is employed to bolster up his fading conviction for the cause in which he is involved.

Clarke uses guilt therapy to convince himself that there are others less privileged than he and yet with more spiritual courage. The diary is not used to sentimentalise war, but it renews a sense of hope when it seems as if Clarke had started to question why God allowed such killings to take place.

Although lack of secondary education must account for the punctuation omissions in Clarke's diary entries, it must be acknowledged that he was writing in the midst of a war. He may have written notes crouched in a billet, or snatched moments during a pipe-mending expedition. He continues his diary, relating an incident when he and his friends went on a pipe mending task up to the trenches. He writes:

Monday April 16 repairing water pipes, Tuesday
Apr 17 up to the Sal. nothing much doing only
an occasional spell now and again. only on the
Thursday I & W.Sartit Seed went up to the trenches
to have a look round. we went as far as we
thought we dare go, the shell holes well nothing
could really live, not even a fly, we found a
dead German terribly mutilated down one of the
dugouts, which they was just commencing. Saint
brought his bayonet. We went through the Cemetry
to the trenches.it was blown into bits was the
Tombs & Vaults. such pieces of work that I have
never seen before but the most prominent feature
of the lot was a crucifix standing about 12'
high & never got a bit knocked of it. shell holes
all round it.

Exploring the trenches after battle was daring, intriguing, and depressing for Clarke and his friends. He does not describe battles or 'going over the top' but instead he lives on the edge of war in a twilight world where he sees very little fighting, only the remnants of it. Clarke retained a curious yet horrified reaction to what he observed, a response often dulled for front line soldiers because in an awful but necessary way they had to become accustomed to the death which surrounded them. Clarke comments on what he sees, yet again he is limited by his language because he does not know how to describe what the shell holes were like. The reader is not adequately informed except when Clarke writes: "the shell holes well nothing could really

live". The size of hole created by the explosion of shells was out of Clarke's range of vocabulary.

Ira Clarke previously noted the shattered bodies of men and beasts alike, and the human form made unrecognisable by shells and machine gun fire. In England, daily newspapers and periodicals like the Daily Mail, The Times, Punch and The War Illustrated churned out anti-German propaganda to the vulnerable British public. From dreadnoughts to Belgian atrocity stories the press ensured an anti-German feeling prevailed. The cartoon from Punch below illustrates that even children were not immune from the propaganda.

APRIL 7, 1915.]

PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.



Charles. "MUMMY, I LOVE YOU MORE THAN LOIS DOES. I LOVE YOU 100 AND 1,000 AND 100,000."

Lois. "I LOVE HER MILLIONS—I LOVE HER THE WHOLE WORLD."

Charles (in a disgusted tone). "I DON'T LOVE HER THE WHOLE WORLD. I DON'T LOVE HER THE GERMANY PART."

The print below shows a typical contrivance to depict the Germans as monsters instead of ordinary men.

THE WAR ILLUSTRATED, 27th MAY 1916

Three Grenadiers: Civilisation at Lowest Ebb



In actuality soldiers like Clarke did not agree with the German propagandists. In one sentence, he shows a compassion for a dead German: "we found a dead German terribly mutilated down one of the dug outs". Clarke does not use the word Bosche or Hun, nor does he make adverse comments because one of the enemy has been killed. The English have done their job in killing the man but there is no pride in Clarke's simple words, instead he is full of pity. To kill a man in fair battle was one thing, but to leave him desecrated like a broken toy was not justice to humanity. British soldiers at the front regarded the Germans as men who, like themselves, had been sent to do a job of work. They were not beasts to be slaughtered, and Clarke's compassion illustrates this.

After the war, Ira Clarke is said to have attended Church every Sunday until he died. Today he would probably be regarded as a religious man, but in 1917 this regularity would have been commonplace. Clarke goes from one day to the next witnessing carnage so terrible to him that it obviously throws into question his theological beliefs. How can there be a God when thousands of men are killed every day? It is as if he finds some sign in the cemetery: "the most prominent feature of the lot was a crucifix standing about 12" high & never got a bit knocked of it shell holes all around it". In the cemetery Clarke describes the destruction of the tombs and vaults, and then focuses on the cross emphasising that it is the only piece of stonework left intact. The cross is above the carnage of war for Clarke, like a sign which does not explain away the slaughter, but it gives him faith in God's presence for at least another day.

No sooner is Clarke consoled by a symbol which indicates he is not living in a godless universe, he witnesses more death. Although he and his battalion were not subjected to continual barrage, they could not afford to be off their guard or be complacent enough to think that they were safe. In the following entry Clarke acknowledges the carelessness of some soldiers who, by their folly, became targets for the enemy. He relates:

My 1st near the Station. G.Dutton F.Nudd Vauraldy, Aor received fatal injuries. by a shell brushing they never ought to have gone in the direction they took, being far too dangerous a spot. 2 of them being interred at Arras and 2 at Dousans. G.Dutton & Vauraldy later while we was staying at Arras occasional shells & Bombing raids by the Germans.

Clarke was not a man who took risks for he states that the men who were fatally injured were in "far too dangerous a spot". A propagandist might have railed against the enemy for killing four British soldiers. In contrast Clarke acknowledges their foolishness in risking their lives. What therefore emerges in his writing is an honest and simple narration of what he perceives. This style comprises two poles from which Clarke oscillates. In his ethical form he relates each death he observes in an impartial manner. Clarke was neither mere observer nor an active fighter; this left him in an ambiguous position and one which he tries to resolve through keeping a journal.

Some sort of a contrast had to be found to the continual warfare, and soldiers needed to realise that a world did exist beyond the twilight world which Clarke had experienced at Arras. He writes:

I was very pleased when we had to move on 10 June to Hermin marching all the way and feeling entirely done up when arriving there. starting

10 am in the morning clearing up as we got on the way a distance of 22 kilos nearly all the fellows being drunk at night. June 11 from Hermin. to Burbaie VIA Divion a small mining village which put me very much in mind of home and stopping there for lunch, a woman informed us that they didn't have miners in France with five children & over, we had some coffee & Bread made things a bit better than biscuits.

Clarke had been at Arras for a month and it was necessary for his peace of mind to move on. It was also a relief from the German bombing raids to which they had been subjected at Arras. As a native of Nottingham, Clarke enjoyed his brief visit to Divion, and it is also important to note that this is the first allusion in his diary to an existence other than his life in France. This indicates that the journal has matured from the note jotting to a more personal record. The mention of home is more intimate than a public observation. He then follows with the fact that miners in France did not have more than five children, a social comment and probably a relief for him to note down after all he has experienced.

Life at the front was a separate world of bully beef, biscuits and bombs, and where the limits of that world were very narrow. Finding a mining village which reminded him of home, and to eat food divorced from army associations gave Clarke the swing of the oscillating pendulum which he needed. But he was becoming tired, and the enthusiasm was limited. He does not describe the coffee and bread in an enthusiastic manner, he merely remarks that they "made things a bit better than biscuits". As it has been illustrated previously (see Chapters III, IV) that when men became tired at the front mistakes started to be made, and they became more vulnerable to the enemy.

Clarke, it would seem, would fall foul of this inevitable giration downwards sooner rather than later.

This weariness continues as they walk from one route march to another right up until Clarke's last entry. He is now even too tired to make sense of the war, lacking energy in the Macbeth-like tone:

Tomorrow and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
 To the last syllable of recorded time,
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
 The way to dusty death. (5)

It is this total apathy, almost a numbness which Clarke shows at the end of his diary. Macbeth has become machine-like, lacking human emotional responses because he has slaughtered so many, and has had to become an automaton to erase his conscience. Clarke's energy has been drained because physically he has done so much marching, and mentally because he has seen so much death. Finally he no longer tries to fight what he feels about the war, he has to accept it.

The last fragment of Clarke's diary follows:

From Burboure to Hazebrouck a distance of about 23 kilos we had another march, sleeping in the orchard for the night which was very acceptable after such a weary tramp. From Hazebrouck to Poperinhge another march on the 11th of June enough to roast you on the march and feeling terribly tired and worn out. after 4 days on the road and covering in all about 70 miles rest the night and 2 days afterwards having a well earned rest in a big warehouse near the station. To finish the journey there was three left in our section and not many more in the others I never thought I could stick it same as I did. I only wished the march had been home instead of where it was. up to date I don't know what we are going to do.

Old soldiers today still curse route marches, where men fell out frequently. Clarke's diary reflects this. Suddenly what concerns him is surviving the long marches, and not now dodging machine-gun fire. Any optimism has diminished from his writing, he is very tired and what he conveys is a lack of concern.

It is difficult to visualise through Clarke's economical language just how awful the route marches were. They had a heavy kit to carry, and Charles Quinnell recalls: "We used to say, what are soldiers for? To hang things on. All your equipment - gas masks were another". Rifles and kit were carried by the soldiers, and with a blazing sun it is hardly surprising the route marches became poor relief to battle. The complete exhaustion gave the soldiers a numb reaction towards everything. Utter weariness dominates Clarke's last entry when he talks of "a weary tramp" and "feeling terribly tired and worn out". There is no looking ahead or expectation of an improved lot; all Clarke celebrates is rest. When more men have fallen out and died at the end of seventy miles he says: "I never thought I could stick it same as I did" which indicates that he did well to survive. Moreover where were they marching to? He comments despairingly that he wished the march was home, as if he had lost all faith in the cause in France.

The First World War was one of attrition where there was a slow wearing-down of the soldiers' spirits. It was only possible to absorb so much marching and fighting. The rests were not long enough, and what Clarke ends with is a note of despair: "up to date I don't know what we are going to do". Clarke was the perfect target for a

German bullet. It can only be presumed that the diary terminated there because he was wounded before he could continue.

Ira Clarke was left in 1918 with a gun shot wound in his thigh and his face, and he was lucky. His notebook, brief though it is, traces the inevitable wearing down of a man put under both mental and physical strain. The first entries illustrate the shock and inability to express what he observes coupled with his strong belief that despite war, God still existed for him. But when he is subjected to death all around him, he increasingly questions his own moral and theological stand. He becomes involved, marching aimlessly from one place to another longing only for sleep. At this stage there were too many deaths to mention individually; what he does say is this: "To finish the journey there was three left in our section and not many more in the others". Clarke had to keep himself alive, to keep marching and not become distracted by those who fell out. It is not that he felt any the less for the victims of the route marches than he did for the dead German described earlier in the diary, but he had to become hardened in order to survive.

After the war Clarke continued his father's business as carpenter and funeral director, and continued to live in Nottingham until he died. The Ministry of Pensions assessed his war disablement and gave him a life pension for the facial wound, but no compensation for the thigh wound. He received eight shillings per week from 7th November 1923, and the allowance for his wife was two shillings whilst she was eligible.

The diary of Ira Clarke is a very simple yet poignant account of his struggle during the 1917 Arras offensive. The importance

of it is only too clear when put side by side the views of the
Generals. Haig wrote to Robertson on 8th April

Very many thanks for your kind thought
in writing to wish me 'Good Luck' on
the eve of battle. I appreciate this very
much. Yesterday I was all round the Corps
in 1st and 3rd Armies who are attacking -
I have never before seen Commanders so
confident, or so satisfied with the preparations
and wire cutting. Today is lovely weather
- so I hope things will turn out all right. (6)

After the first day of battle, Haig records in his diary

Monday 9 April Our casualties are
estimated at 16,000. This is small con-
sidering the three successive strong
positions, each one deeply wired, which
have been taken. (7)

A mere 16,000 in one day. Haig's concern was for strategy, he
did not see the dead Gordon Highlander, the blown-up ammunition
waggon or the German with no grave when he received reports at G.H.Q.
Ira Clarke views each soldier, whether English or German, with the
respect they deserved as human beings. To the War Lords, Arras may
have marked an important advance, but to Clarke it was a series of
deaths and the gradual wearing down of his spirit. Haig would con-
tinue to plan another offensive, but Clarke had had enough: "Up to
this date I don't know what we are going to do". For Clarke and the
rest of his shrunken section, Haig's victory was rather a hollow one.

R E F E R E N C E S

1. C.Falls, Military Operations in France and Belgium 1917,
The Battles of Arras, p.201.
2. *ibid*, p.231.
3. *ibid*, p.546.
4. Ira Clarke's diary is reproduced in the Appendix.
5. William Shakespeare, Macbeth, V.519 - 23.
6. (quoted by) John Terraine, The Road to Passchendaele:
The Flanders Offensive of 1917, p.66.
7. *ibid*, p.67.

CHAPTER VI

THE DIARY OF LANCE CORPORAL HERMANN

JUSTUS B&HUNHOLTZ, 495518, R.A.M.C.



Hermann Braunholtz was a non-commissioned soldier in the Royal Army Medical Corps. Born of German parents, he and his three brothers were placed in a difficult position when war broke out in 1914. Although he had been born in Britain and educated at Oundle near Peterborough, he bore a German name, reluctantly spoke German at the dinner table, and kept in contact with his German cousins. It was therefore inevitable for the Braunholtz boys to refuse commissions, and to join non-combatant units so that although they were actively helping the British cause, they would not have to fight against their relatives.

Braunholtz joined up in 1915, prior to conscription. He may have felt it necessary to volunteer rather than wait to be conscripted because of the anti-German fever in England, although in conversations with his daughter Mrs. Scupham, she states that he was not exposed to any hostility from the troops whilst he was in France.

Braunholtz's parents came to England from Gossler, Hanover in 1870, where his grandfather was a tobacconist and chemist. The family was connected to the academic world of Cambridge, and after his education at Oundle Braunholtz went up to Cambridge where he studied classics at St. John's. In 1913, he became the keeper of Ethnography at the British Museum.

Braunholtz was a scholar who had always kept diaries, most of which contained dry, factual notes recording the weather and the level of precipitation. His war diary, of which only one book remains, is much more detailed but it is still written with the narrow emotional sense of a scholar removed from front-line fighting. The small black notebook was written between 31st May, 1918 and 25th January 1919, when

on his return to England Braunholtz was fortunate in continuing his work for the British Museum, until his death in 1963 at the age of seventy-five.

The climate in which he writes was one of intense fighting and immense losses, which continued in France until November 1918. The German Commander Ludendorff achieved a concentration of firepower in March 1918, so that in a week the Germans had penetrated the Allied line of defence to a depth of forty miles. In April the Germans struck farther north, and in May they brought the campaign back to the north and threatened Paris. The Allied armies were weak, and the British front was unable to take the strain. It seemed evident to Haig that the victors would be the side which held out the longest. He said in his famous speech issued on 11th April:

...There is no other course open to us but to fight it out! Every position must be held to the last man : there must be no retirement. With our backs to the wall, and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight on to the end. (1)

All the armies were tiring; supplies and ammunition were in short supply, and the British constantly needed more men. It was American, Canadian and Australian troops who replenished the Allied army, so that it could eventually bring about the penetration of the Hindenburg line.

This obstacle was the continuous line from Switzerland to the sea, and once it had been formed by the Germans there was no way around except by surprise attack, followed by a gradual wearing down of the enemy. After Amiens in August 1918, Haig wanted to end the war

in the shortest possible time. Three months later the Armistice was announced, and after four years of war troops treated the news with weary indifference. It was, perhaps, the impossibility of grasping the knowledge that the end of the war had come, as if they could not imagine life without war.

Braunholtz illustrates this apathy not only on Armistice Day, but in his whole attitude to the war. The commentary in his notebook encompasses names, places, adventures, sketches of people and splashes of colour; he writes like an impressionist painter with war intruding intermittently. This can be in part explained because as a store keeper for the ambulance Army Service Corps he was removed from the fighting. He heard the noise of the shells exploding and comments upon these, but with no emotion. Braunholtz reports those things connected with the war in a dispassionate style, whereas his first aeroplane journey is written in detail, with a breathless excitement jumping from the page.

Braunholtz's diary is part of a continuous narrative, and probably started in 1915 when he first volunteered but only the one book remains. When Siegfried Sassoon wrote Sherston's Progress after the war, he removed himself from his actions during the war by writing a vision of himself into a novel. In one sense Braunholtz does a similar thing in his diary; he escapes reality by focussing his attention on landscape and on anecdotes removed from the war.

But the difference between a diary and a novel written ten years later is that in the diary, war continually interrupts what Braunholtz has to say. He writes on 1st June 1918:

Broke up camp. Looting cherries in orchards.
 Dep. Epernay 6.0 p.m. in column (glorious
 weather) Captured goat in Canteen car (38)
 (not by my wish) Thro' Pierry & Moussy to
 Crossroads 9 Km. from Epernay. Dust and
 traffic. Camped in field by wood.
 (French bivvies)
 ...Slept out by edge of wood in open.
 aeroplanes (ours) out after dark. Passed
 right over us low down & caused some
 excitement at first as not sure whether
 Jerries.

Braunholtz typically writes a dry, factual prose. He projects facts rather than creating a narrative, but each sentence is expressionless, with the "captured goat in Canteen car" reflecting the same rhythm as "camped in field by wood". Braunholtz writes notes rather than a literary paragraph, and the juxtaposition of so many packed facts - the cherries, the goat, the dust and the aeroplane - all add to the colour and evoke an atmosphere of the unexpected. His clipped style emerges with the use of the telegram and newspaper headlines, illustrated by the phrase "dust & traffic". This kind of prose was taken advantage of by E.M.Forster (amongst others) in his famous "telegrams and anger" phrase in Howards End, and is inevitably the by-product of telegrams and captions which came into use at the turn of the Twentieth Century.

Braunholtz's style is perhaps dictated by the limitations within the diary form. But no special emphasis is given to his allusions to the war, they are instead blended into the notes. What is so evident in the diary is not the violence of war, but the distances which Braunholtz had to drive in the Army Service Corps. An extract from Saturday 8th June follows:

Perfect weather. *Trip to Paris. Said Lieut. Galpin "You've got plenty of money; come to Paris". $\frac{1}{4}$ hrs.notice. So we went, for spare parts & canteen stores. Dep.9.30 2 cars.... to fetch tyres from depot at St.Denis. thro' Montmart, Montmiant ... breakdown, tyre came off & bowling along road on opp. side Very comic - La Ferté Trilport (Lunch) Meaux, Clage, Gousse St.Denis arr.2.45p.m. Tea picnic in YMCA Heard La Grosse Bertha² a few Km distant....

It is unnecessary to offer other examples, but throughout the notebook there are similar entries where lists of names are cited, which again give a sense of movement quite in contrast to the soldier's diaries written from the front. Braunholtz was continually driving either to fetch or carry supplies for the hospitals, dodging enemy shells. Missing tyres became a comic interlude, indeed French roads were in such a state of disrepair from shells so that punctures were commonplace.

Braunholtz illustrates in the notes his attention to detail, to times, and to the naming of places, which give the diary a credence in comparison to a vagueness often apparent in journals written up after the war. At the end of this diary entry he refers to 'La Grosse Bertha' the German big gun as if it was just another place name. Yet it must have been a constant reminder that they were not removed from the danger of gunfire.

The entries directly concerned with the war lack any emotional expression; with their stiff accuracy they read more like a military report or captain's log book. On Monday 10th June he comments: "Shelling of Ablois St Martin @ 3.5 Km, continuing intermittently day & night. V.loud at times; sounding closer". The sentence has a military tone which could be in part due to his training as a diarist,

but it is as if he can only capture events and the atmosphere of war in note form. The entry continues:

- (a) Walks to Monthelon, view down valley onto Forêt de la Mont de Plains & blue plains beyond -
- (b) to Ablois St.Martin with Smithurst; house smashed & shell craters by crossroads - bombarded on Tuesday (NB no direct hits on cross road; all craters beyond in field adjacent) to Cuis near Avize & bought whiskey [sic] for O.C. O.C. out last night to Dormans with S.M. & Cpl.Hunt. lost Talbot (driver) & car smashed. arrived next day on foot & announced laconically "Hunt's dead"; After S.M. putting flowers on his grave.

In keeping with his note form Brauhholtz divides his commentary for 10th June into two sections; one a brief description of landscape, the second a description of destruction and death. The diary form helps Brauhholtz partition beauty which he values, from the war which he despises. He makes no personal commentary in part (b), the tone lacks expression although he does emphatically use the word "smashed" twice. He reports that the death of Hunt was announced "laconically" in keeping with the terse style adopted by army officers. He too reports the death in his telegraphic style, as if the only way of coping with death is to isolate it from his other existence. This diary entry graphically illustrates Brauhholtz's concise, ordered description which is the style he adopted in order to make sense of the war.

In contrast to this sharply ordered style, Brauhholtz's writing takes on a lyric quality when he has the time to appreciate the French landscape. Soldiers fighting at the front lost all sense of appreciation for beauty when they were continually faced with gunfire and death.

Braunholtz saw shelled villages, but on his drives he often found countryside unspoiled by war. He writes on Sunday 30th June:

Perfect day. cloudless, French N.breeze
delicious temp, not too hot. Slept out
on fallow land in grass, amid a sea of waving
corn fringed with poppies and marguerites &
corn flowers. Glorious. Sgts. & mess dinner,
noise of singing. Americans as guests.
Routed me out for cigs. after midnight.

The tone of the diary has shifted from cold, calculated reports to a carefully balanced entry and language chosen with discrimination. This entry illustrates a sensitivity to landscape, colours and movement, a tranquil scene interrupted by the noise from the mess. It is not that he feels nothing for the death of Talbot, in the previous entry, but that he cannot afford to react emotionally to it. By the cornfield Braunholtz can draw upon a traditional style of writing because he is familiar with what he sees. It is the unfamiliar which he finds so difficult to describe.

It is evident Braunholtz adopts two styles: an ordered, log-book language for all his references to the war and official duties, and a more highly detailed prose to describe those things removed from the war. The latter style is used when Braunholtz sketches the Villa des Fleurs:

Had a talk with Mme & an elderly lady of the house (her mother in law?) one evening outside the V. de F. in French...Her name was Mme Pinard or Pinant. Every morning Madame used to come down to the vegetable garden & water, generally accompanied by her 2 little girls "Jacqueline & Monique" in pink frocks (aged about 3 & 4 resp) - 2 of the prettiest children I ever saw, & with manners to match. Madame herself was prob.about 30, slim and pleasant-looking, neatly dressed. I quite looked forward to their daily rounds. I wondered whether Monsieur had been killed. There seemed to be an air of sadness.

The Villa des Fleurs was at Faux Fresnay, and Brauholtz intimates he was based near the town. It must have been of psychological importance to him to record in his diary cameos of civilian life because he was so far from home, and he may have felt there was a correlation between these French villagers and himself. Born of German parentage yet brought up as an Englishman, he was part of, but did not strictly belong to the British soldier's way of life; Madame Pinard and her family were living in their French village peopled with British soldiers, allies yet of a different culture.

In contrast to the diary entries directly concerned with the war effort, the Villa des Fleurs passage illustrates Brauholtz's fine attention to detail in his commentary upon the manners of the little girls and the observation of their pink frocks. The description reflects a deep interest which he must have had for people, which, because he was not directly involved with the fighting, had not been stifled. Diarists discussed in earlier chapters did not have the time nor the opportunity to describe in detail those people who became a part of their lives. In these diaries the language indicates that it was too dangerous to think and write in humane terms, and instead soldiers at the front often wrote in the curt style which Brauholtz also adopts for his war references.

The affectionate cameo is coloured by shadows of the war. Brauholtz says "I wonder whether Monsieur had been killed. There seemed to be an air of sadness". Removed from the fighting it was possible for him to perceive a sense of loss or worry at the Villa des Fleurs. He could use a conventional style of writing when distanced

from the war, and react in a natural human way to an ordinary family. But in his previous reaction to the death of Talbot, it was only possible for him to resort to note form because he knew no style of language to cope with what must have become an everyday occurrence.

The Villa des Fleurs was for Brauholtz a memory which he cherished. In conversations with old soldiers, I found that the majority preferred to recall the esprit de corps amongst the men, rather than the numbers killed at a particular battle. The memory of the people who had given Brauholtz pleasure took him back to the Villa des Fleurs thirty-eight years later, in June 1956. He made a special trip on the return route from holidaying in Switzerland, as if his curiosity compelled him to see what had become of the people who had given him a sense of normality during the war. Brauholtz recorded the more recent visit on a spare page in his war diary:

...Little change: except that the walnut tree was gone or cut down (a small lopped tree there)
A pleasant woman tanned (40 years old?) was standing in the same little garden veg. Canterbury bells etc. I spoke to her and explained my visit. She said Mme Pinard was in Paris only coming to Fresnay tomorrow. House closed. I asked about Monique & Jacqueline. She said Monique did at age of 12 but Jacqueline married.

The tone of the narrative indicates that Brauholtz had expected everything to be the same. A tanned woman stood there instead of the two little girls in pink dresses, and Monique was dead. The earlier description of the Villa portrays a domestic scene unscathed by war, and the language used to illustrate this is a pre-war pastoralism. But the war and time had affected them: the tree was cut, the house was closed, and Brauholtz's attempt to recapture a pre-1914 life

collapsed with the absence of Madame Pinard and the dead Monique. The old world had gone forever.

Braunholtz illustrates through his diary entries an inquisitiveness and curiosity about people, places, and new experiences. War continued for him as a backcloth to his other experiences. One of these was his first flying experience on Wednesday 3rd July. It is as if Braunholtz needed greater escapism, and sought it in the skies. The log-book detail exists in his record of the flight time, the altitude and the speed of the plane. The war is referred to incidentally when he says: "Fuselage painted mustard yellow; black cross on tail where Bosch bullet hit it (hit 3 places & pilot in arm". But after this reference, it is as if Braunholtz transcends day-to-day events. He writes:

Rose rapidly looked down through the square hole in floor (for camera) like a cinema effect. Looked at wings & tail - how frail! & yet apparently perfectly sure. Little sense of movement, no landmarks, only rise & fall, & a little upward lurch every now & again (gusts). Pilot looked round & smiled & nodded. I nodded back & spoke - c'est bon - but my voice inaudible to myself - whistle of air in ears & buzz of propellor ... Our cars now in sight, passed Faux then over cook house saw our boys having breakfast & looking up, a row of white faces at plane (Pretty low here, 200 or 300 ft, & descending) I waved handkerchief & looked over side The spiral turn produced a curious sensation as of pressure on the head thrusting me down from above. Pilot looked round with a cheerful smile. Rose to our highest level (500 metres) which we maintained for some time, passing over a brook, Watched our shadow skimming across the fields below. Bright sun. It seemed incredible that wires etc. did not snap with tension & strain.

There would be a greater compulsion for Braunholtz to write in detail describing his first aeroplane flight, rather than another routine drive

to collect stores. As a driver in the A.M.C. there would be little sense of adventure, so the aeroplane flight became an emotional outlet as well as an escape from the war routine. Three hundred feet in the air looking down on the soldiers eating their breakfasts, must have momentarily put the war in a different perspective. But it was only a temporary escape, and he too would have to join the war machine once the aeroplane landed.

If writers during the First World War could not find a language to quantify what they witnessed, it is not surprising that Brauholtz looks towards other vistas to cope with his experiences. The language which he adopts is naturalistic, and has a lyrical ring to it. It is ironic that if the journey is in part an escape from the machinery of war, that his mode of escape is a machine with Bosche bullets on the fuselage. But Brauholtz thinks of the aeroplane as an elegant bird and not a machine; the wings and tail are described as "frail", the whistle of air and natural scenery are given more emphasis than the noise of the engine. The aeroplane journey allows his language to revert to a pastoral style, again he attends to detail as he refers to the shadow of the aeroplane darkening the fields below. There is also a hint of the Twentieth Century Icarus, soaring above life, yet commenting on the bright sun and wondering whether the wires on the plane would snap. But the wings did not melt, and the aeroplane landed safely.

Brauholtz's sense of adventure gave him a flying experience which justified more than a few lines in his diary. His daughter Mrs. Scupham owns a letter written in 1946 which he wrote after flying

for the first time in a Dakota. This flight to Nigeria took him over the edge of the Sahara, and the style he adopts is a similar one of fascination and excitement.

For the remainder of the diary which is concerned with the course of the war, Braunholtz reverts to his old clipped, economic style. The contrast must only indicate an acknowledgement of his present precarious existence. The notes continue on 7th August "10.0 a.m. 2 section cars called out on Amiens front offensive". Haig had planned what he hoped to be the final push for August 8th, where he wanted to capture the old Amiens line, and to put it into a state of defence. The Germans in 1916 had held a carefully prepared defensive position, but by 1918 they were aligned along a fluid offensive front. Again Haig planned an element of surprise, but as chance would have it the Germans made an assault on 6th August, two days before the Allied attack. At Amiens the Allies advanced albeit slowly, and both sides proved to be weary, although it was the German morale which was breaking up. After Amiens it was Haig's plan to end the war in the shortest possible time.

Troops at the front saw little beyond each day of fighting; soldiers removed from this would be more aware that the war was drawing to a close. Braunholtz received his information from newspapers rather than his Commanding Officer. He continues:

Frid. 9.8.18.
Great offve. announced in paper. v. fine.
nearly all cars away.:

It must have appeared to him a mythical war; he saw the preparation, the wounded and dead, and heard the shellings, but saw no fighting.

There must have been a feeling of unreality in this, as if the war took place across the black and white pages of a newspaper.

Whilst Churchill and the politicians in London saw the war continuing through until 1920, the last of the wearing battles were taking place in late August and early September, so that the Allied armies could make their final push. The following entries by Braunholtz were written in mid September, prior to the Allied storming of the Hindenburg line:

15 Sunday - Fine

Walk Mont.St.Eloy S open
ruined renaissance church view of Arras,
Vimy Ridge, Reservation cellars etc.
Scotch brand - Back 6.0 p.m. Raid 9.0.p.m.
4 bombs over, 2 within 120 yds.. of canteen

25.9 Wed.

Fine evining. $\frac{1}{2}$ moon (too bright)
raids 3 Jerrys in
searchlights - 1 town in flames near Arras
Arras sta. bombed.

26th Holdeway called out & all cars
shelling v near at night
comm.assault on "Nan" the goat
Lt.Galpin on leave

27th Concert.

The storming of the Hindenburg Line was the last major battle of the First World War. Braunholtz makes no mention^{of} the German defeat, and the victory which led to the Armistice is commemorated by one word 'concert'. Braunholtz and his comrades did not have an overall picture of what was happening, only the events of their little world. That the soldiers were left in ignorance is probable, but it is also possible that he thought it too dangerous to mention the surprise push in his notebook, for fear of it falling into the wrong hands. It is clear

that he realised the significance of a bright moon "(too bright)" if an attack was to be made, but this seriousness is mingled with lighthearted allusions to the goat. Brauholtz's writing is somewhat reserved, and this could be a guard against any over-emotional reaction to the tense atmosphere which must have been prevalent within the Allied forces.

Brauholtz saw only the destruction of battle. The following commentary is factual and without emotion. The war was an awful fact and that is how he presents his notes, sparing no details. He writes after the Allied breakthrough:

2nd Oct.

I to Aubigny & St.Pol. Picked up man shot thro' stomach dying.

2 Sund.

"Jerry" over flying low and piece of shrapnel just missed here, falling in stream.

7 Mond.

grand plane

Out with car to Viseu Artois, on Arras Cambrai rd. where Hindenburg line crosses it. shell holes broken tanks; Jerry notices. Big dug out at Viz, 100 steps down, Electric light. Had lunch there, after on to Villers Cagincourt ... an old Jerry R.E. depot barbed wire etc. shells... Westphalian "tins" Dead horses, gunners, Tannery, shelled 2 days before & 2 of our cars riddled. Sgt. Miller wounded in foot.. Watched shells bursting 1 or 2 m. away, also smoke of Douai burning
Back about 10.0 p.m.
German offer of Armistice.

13/10/18

Move to Cambrai

I with Cambrai stores left behind. German reply to P. Wilson
(Armistice?)

14/10/18 No guns audible at night. Ceasefire?

15/10/18 I move to Cambrai with boxes in spite of S.M's veto. after dinner I installed at train depot. German notices about.

16/10/18 Wed. to Escardonnerres in quest of of piano. Looked over the empty houses, looted saw 2 dead Germans, one with skull blown off, lying in the house, partly gnawed by rats. Saw them buried in field later.

This was the debris left after the great victory for the Allied armies. Braunholtz's original diary entry has been reproduced on the following page. Previously he has shown that he is not a man who lacks compassion, but his factual account must indicate his numb reaction to wholesale slaughter. The lyrical style which he previously adopted was not an adequate medium to describe dead horses, mutilated Germans, a wounded man, and the sheer mass of wrecked metal and iron. He knew no style to describe the waste, and so felt compelled to reduce the landscape to a series of notes.

The war put Braunholtz in an ambiguous position as part of one army, yet with the heredity of another. Although no comment is made, he does refer to German notices, Westphalian tins, and two dead Germans whom he saw buried. It must have been both strange and awful to belong to both countries yet in many ways part of neither. His clipped commentary must only reflect his difficulty in knowing how to react to a war which divided many of his loyalties. Braunholtz reveals this sensitivity when he saw the two mutilated Germans buried, and shows that he wanted to see the decent thing done, no matter where his allegiances lay.

AN ENLARGED PAGE FROM THE ORIGINAL DIARY

- 10/10/18. Birthday parcel + (63)
letter arrive from home.
- 13/10/18. German peace proposal
Move to Cambrai
with canteen + stores left
behind. Semireply to the Allies
(Armistice?)
- 14/10/18. No guns audible
at night. Ceasefire?
- 15/10/18. Move to Cambrai
with boxes in spite of Lt's veto
after dinner. Installed at
train depot. German notices
sent.
- 16/10/18. Wed. to Escandoves
in quest of pianos.
Looked over empty houses, looted
Saw 2 dead Germans, one
with skull blown off, lying in
house. Saw them buried in field later.
partly ground by rats
- 17/10/18. to Quéant, via Marquis
Div. Canteen
for stores. Got nothing.
- 19/10/18. to Fontaine, Quéant.
Draw blank again.
Saw Hindenburg line of
dugouts.

All through October heavy fighting continued, and the British Army lost 5,438 officers and 115,608 other ranks whilst statesmen discussed Armistice terms. The war dragged on through October because the powers, politicians and militarists could not come to any decision. Whilst the British Government put war on a par with winning the forthcoming General Election, the militarists tried to avoid expending more British lives. Ironically at the time of the Armistice an influenza epidemic swept through France and England, where supposedly more men died than in the entire war. There were 12,000 influenza patients in army hospitals, and one in twelve died. (3) Brauholtz reflects these figures:

28 Oct.

Owing to many cases of flu & forming of sick ward,
I moved into a train.
Felt seedy & weak.

8 Nov. 1918 Friday Rain dull mild

Walk to Cambrai 22 CCS & 17th Corps. Hospl.
Heard Germans envoys arrived for armistice;
strong rumour armistice with G in force
this p.m. Heard "Jock" Kemp (18) died of
"Spanish" flu on 5th.
Move to Valenciennes tomorrow.

There is little anticipation in the tone of the diary entry, partly due to the fact that Brauholtz felt 'seedy' and in part because the war had become a way of life. Soldiers were not going to trust rumours; there had been rumours of Armistice for four years, ever since the German Commanders promised their men they would be home before the first fall of leaves. It was not until the Armistice was publicly announced, and no more guns could be heard, that Brauholtz allowed himself the luxury of announcing it in his diary.

"UNFIX BAYONETS"

"STAND BY FOR FURTHER ORDERS"

The Times on November 12th 1918 announced the Armistice longed for by Europe. Their French correspondent reported:

In the course of the morning the guns started firing, and Paris went charmingly off her head. Along the boulevards processions at once formed. Every happy possessor of a flag immediately became the leader of a gloriously happy band, and the whole city resounds with cheers of the Marseillaise.

There was a sense of relief throughout Europe, but uncontrolled rejoicing was reserved for the civilian population rather than the soldiers in France. With the 'flu epidemic many men felt too weak for celebrations, and many found the idea of the end of the war too difficult to grasp. Braunholtz's narrative follows:

11. 11. 18 Monday
 I left Cambrai with Canteen at 10.30 on Arnes' car. Noticed flags out at Escadocoeuvres (or?) at Scotch canteen enquiries & told news of Armistice. ARMISTICE signed @ 5.0 a.m. to day with Germany, to take effect from 11.0 a.m. Hostilities over.
 Bavaria declares a republic
 Kaiser fled to Holland
 Revolution in Berlin & many towns, & Kings of Bavaria, Hesse, Saxony etc. restored or in flight. Even President Reichstag asks for food for parts of Germany starving.
 ...to Valenciennes 12.30. Walked to Square & Hotel de Ville gaily decked with flags & read brief dispatch de Armistice. No demonstrations. Practically no damage in square & centre of town.

The diary entry for 11th November 1918 is presented as a list of facts, devoid of any emotional reaction to the news. He writes the word ARMISTICE in capitals, as if by so doing he is trying to convince himself that it is official and not just another rumour. Braunholtz states

the exact time of the end of hostilities, and what he writes reads like headlines from a daily newspaper, as if he is unable to express for himself the end of four years war.

The war had gone on for too long. Brauholtz reports that there were no demonstrations at Valenciennes, which indicates an apathy amongst the troops. Suddenly a whole pattern of life collapsed at 11.A.M. where guns ceased to fire and the end must have seemed so calculated, that this would just add to the apparent unreality of the situation. Denis Winter indicates in Death's Men that front-line troops were even more sceptical; they expected guns to fire on them any moment after the Armistice.

What is so remarkable about Brauholtz's entry on Armistice Day is that the tone is identical to all his other notes directly commenting on the war. The news must have been of greater relief to front-line soldiers, but for any soldier the announcement must have been difficult to grasp. Vera Brittain writes in Testament of Youth:

When the sound of the victorious guns burst over London at 11 a.m. on November 11th, 1918, the men and women who looked incredulously into each other's faces did not cry jubilantly: "We've won the War!" They only said: "The War is over". (4)

Vera Brittain's sense of exhausted relief reflects a reaction common to many soldiers and civilians at the end of the First World War. But inevitably the way she describes Armistice Day illustrates that she was writing after the event. In her biography, as with other post-dated war literature, she could find a language to make sense of what, at the time, seemed senseless.

Demobilisation for the Armistice had been planned for since 1915. Men in the professions of mining, transport and agriculture were demobbed first, along with the hospitalised and the men over forty-one. Demob. suits had been specially manufactured, and there was a pension of twenty-four shillings per week for the first year, if men were unemployed.

Braunholtz had a job to return to, and he had played his part in the Army, and it is evident that after the Armistice he was not about to curry favours from the Officers. Indeed it seems that he released his emotional strain of war not by dancing on the streets, but by abusing Army regulations. Towards the end of November he records:

19.11.18 Whiskey [sic] stunt

20.11.18 Trouble with Lt.Alec.

27.28.11.18. Put under arrest by S.M. for
selling bar in canteen (none for Sgts.mess)
Under arrest 3 days, remanded twice.
Monday "Admonished!"
(Request to be relieved of Canteen, also of
stripe. To carry on till end of month.

1.12.18. Handed over accts. to O.C. & checked
Routledge takes over.

3.12.18. I went to rank of Pte. at my own
request.
Scrubbing cars.

After the war Braunholtz rarely talked of his experiences, and never in any detail. There were two comic incidents he enjoyed relating; one was an occasion when there were only four ambulances left out of a fleet of twenty, so the drivers drove round and round the block until it appeared as if twenty had gone by. The second story concerned the whisky stunt. Braunholtz was in charge of the canteen, and therefore

looked after the provision of liquor for the officers. His action indicates a resentment of privileges, and an attempt by him to make an adverse impression against the Army, once the war was officially over.

Braunholtz's action was not mutiny, but it is worth noting that contrary to statements made by Official Historians, mutinies did take place in the British Army. ⁽⁵⁾ British troops were not immune, and certainly The Times reported post-war demonstrations in 1919. Demobbed soldiers often had no jobs to which they could return, which led to demonstrations in England. The Times reported from Folkstone on January 6th 1919:

....over 10,000 soldiers left the rest camps on Friday, marched through the town and assembled at the Town Hall. All approaches to the Town Hall were blocked so that no traffic could pass. Several soldiers climbed onto the portico of the Town Hall and delivered speeches ... many of the men had put in applications to be demobilized, so that they could return to work which they had left, and their remarks were greeted with cheers. The Mayor ... arrived on the scene, and informed the men that if they went back to camp they would hear good news, a remark which was answered by the singing of "Tell me the old, old story".

Most of the jobs available (not already taken up by women) were filled on a first-come-first-served basis. Officers along with 'other ranks' found it difficult to secure any type of work, especially those with disabilities from the war. It is hardly surprising therefore, that many soldiers bore a resentment to politicians and militarists, and wanted their grievances to be known.

It was not until soldiers reached England that they began to realise the war was really over. Braunholtz was under orders until

he reached Cambridge, where his family lived. He records:

20/1/19

Demobilisation Mons - Camb.
Monday fine frosty
dispersal papers signed by Capt. Chapman 11.0 a.m.
March to Cavalry Barracks with full kit

24/1/19 Fine sharp frost

parade 1.0 p.m. for embarking
1.0 p.m. Parade
2.0 p.m. March Dieppe Harbour (4-5 miles) a
trial for me with full on O & kitbag with flint
implts, books, lamp etc. one halt
arr. 4.0 p.m. (?) Wait for boat
embark 4.30 ("goodbye")
dep 5.0 p.m.
Fine view of coast....

Sat 25/1/19 dull mild

Disembark on tender 10.0 a.m.
Recd. bun, choc, tea, meal (pie)
(Army & Navy Canteen)
Bunting "Welcome Home"
Dep train 10.30 Fenchurch St. 11.30.
Rush Liv St. just miss 11.50 by 1 min.

Prior to his demobilisation Braunholtz spent time in Mons, in charge of rations. For much of December he made the most of his free time in France exploring ancient sites, from which he collected flints, which were the cause of his heavy pack mentioned in the diary entry. Braunholtz's narrative suggests that he tried to make the best of his situation whilst in France, and his dislike of the Army was compensated by an interest in history and landscape. The diary continues in note form until his last entry written from Cambridge, which reads: "Natural waken" as if he is acknowledging the end of the unnatural life he has led. With the end of Army life, Braunholtz could also terminate his note form and adopt a language fitting to his way of life.

Braunholtz did not have to join the ranks of the unemployed demonstrators. But post-war life was a difficult adjustment for any soldier. In the Army, troops had to bear little responsibility, and they followed the routine either in and out of the trenches, or from one billet to another. They travelled not knowing where they were going, or whether they would be alive the following day. Braunholtz's diary was his method of remarking on time passing. Peace came so suddenly many soldiers were disorientated, slowly realising that they had new responsibilities. Many men craved isolation, others wanted to re-live the years they had lost during the war. Braunholtz seemed to keep his sense of perspective through keeping a journal, which was at least one habit from his civilian life which he could continue - however secretively - in the Army.

There are no details, nor a remaining diary to indicate how Braunholtz coped with living in a post-1918 world. For him there was a sense of security in returning to his old job, but he did not return to England the same young man who had left in 1915. No soldier did. In conversation with his daughter, she indicated that he never liked to talk about the war, which may well suggest that he tried to forget, or like his attempts in his diary, he could not explain what it was like. His return to the Villa des Fleurs shows that thirty-eight years later, those events which he had experienced were still deeply embedded in his memory. The language adopted in his private notes suggest the difficulties which Braunholtz tried to overcome in his experience of such a war. The fact that no language nor style could express those experiences adequately, is illustrated all too

clearly by the constant use of note form. The pastoral style adopted in his descriptive entries was hardly an appropriate reflection on the rigid machinations, which were the make-up of Army life.

R E F E R E N C E S

1. John Terraine, (ed.), Douglas Haig : The Educated Soldier, p.433.
2. Big Bertha, known also as the Paris Gun, was the German number one gun.
3. Lynn MacDonald, The Roses of No-Man's Land, p.257.
4. Vera Brittain, Testament of Youth, p.460.
5. see William Allison and John Fairley, The Monocled Mutineer, the story of Percy Toplis, who was at the centre of mutiny in the British Army, threatening Haig's autumn offensive against Passchendaele in 1917. Toplis was shot and killed in 1920 by the Military Police, labelled as a dangerous criminal. Indeed he was too dangerous to the authorities, for he had a first-hand eye-witness account of a mutiny which 'officially' never actually happened.

APPENDIX 1

An account by Charles Quinnell, transcribed from an interview, describing the first day of the Somme:

We detrained outside of a town - we didn't know where it was in the dark. We found out afterwards it was Amiens, and in the darkness we were marched off with a guide and when we finished, we were in a tiny copse or wood of young trees, and these trees were no bigger than about three or four inches in diameter. But we had orders that on no circumstances were we to leave that wood because of aerial observation. And next morning, which is now 1st July, 1916 when the battle of the Somme started, we didn't know where we were. We didn't know 'till we marched through the town of Albert where there was a leaning Virgin on the flat roof. Then we knew where we were. But daylight had to come before we knew that even.

Now. We were on high ground. I know now we were in Thiépvall Wood - we didn't know anything - never heard of the name before. We were three hundred feet high, and we got a wonderful panoramic view of the whole of the Somme battlefield, as far as you could see there were eighteen pounder guns, there were about fifteen or twenty yards apart, they had a little bit of camouflage netting over the top. About a quarter of a mile behind them were the 4.5 howitzers - they're the boys that throw the shell up and you get the plunging fire. The eighteen pounders were supposed to cut all the German barbed wire, the howitzers were supposed to obliterate the German trenches, and so it went on.

When we woke up in the morning, the bombardment started round about quarter past four in the morning - beautiful summer's morning, quite tranquil, quite quiet until the bombardment started - as though the bandmaster had taken up his baton, they all started together. It was a wonderful sight.

Then about twenty minutes past eight everything stopped, all the gunfire stopped, and you could see the battlefield. The whole battlefield was obscured by smoke because when the shell bursts you get the smoke from the shell plus the dirt. All you could see was a few men emerging from the smoke into the cloud of dust. P'raps you'd see four men, then the next second they'd gone into that smoke. Now all these tales you hear and read - especially Sir Philip Gibbs - about the boys going over cheering, it's a lot of hoey. Sir Philip Gibbs was in Haig's headquarters about fifty miles behind the line, but he had to write something. But I'm telling you the truth of what happened in the battle of the Somme.

As soon as those boys went over, the German machine guns - all you could hear was tut-tut-tut-tut-tut - the noise would diminish, then it would come back to you. Then you knew the boys were coming through. Well we waited and waited, all ready kitted up, ready for this wonderful dash of five miles to attack this slag heap. We waited all day long until it was dusk. At last we got the order to move off. But in the meantime we had seen droves and thousands of wounded men coming back, what with motor ambulances, walking wounded being marched off to Albert. They made that their headquarters. Well this went on until half past eight in the evening, it was now dusk. And by the time we

get in the front line there was two men in the old British front line, and they were the only men holding the line. Out in front, there were dozens and dozens of wounded men.

We spent that night getting these wounded men in, and it was a night of hard work. All the time we were collecting those men, the Germans never fired at us, unless we got too near their barbed wire, all that wonderful barbed wire that was going to be obliterated. And believe you me it was not obliterated, it was still there. It had been punctured with lots of holes but it was still there. We got these wounded men in, with the exception of the men who were still in the barbed wire, and we couldn't get them out or we'd have been killed. We brought these wounded men back, we posted our sentries in our own front line, where we stayed the night.

We were moved out of that front line to another part of the front line. The third division took over. They had a go at it on 3rd July, they failed. We were brought back to it; we had a go at it on 7th July. I'm now a Platoon Sergeant. We were forty-three strong when we moved into the line that night. And we went over next morning at about a quarter past eight in the morning. I was in the 9th Battalion Royal Fusiliers, 12th Division. The eighth and ninth our sister Battalion went over on our right flank.

We went into the line forty-three strong. Well we had to put up with a four hour bombardment, lost about 20-20% of our men killed and wounded before we went over. We all synchronised our watches, and at the precise moment we all went over together. As soon as we were over the top the German machine guns were on us. Now we found

out too late that the German machine guns were five and six hundred yards behind their line, and they opened fire on us and they traversed and they did a lot of killing.

We couldn't get through their barbed wire. I spent that day in a very deep shell hole - seven wounded men and myself - and there we stayed until it was dark. We had 250 yards to go. The German barbed wire, instead of being obliterated as we were told, (and believe you me it was not) it was still there. There were three of us left out of forty-three. A private, one Lance-Corporal, and myself.

APPENDIX II

The reproduced pages from Ira Clarke's diary

Power. Aug 26th 1916.

Dankelauge. Sept 18th 1916
Building Artillery School.

Trevent. Sept. 29th 1916
at Hospital.

Trevent to Souasne. Oct 12th 1916
Making Huts.

Souasne to Sailly. Oct 24th 1916.
Water pipes up to trenches.
& sinking wells.

Camp Roseland.

Nov. 5th Travelled: From Sailly
to Souasne. Nov. 4. Marched
from Doullens to Trevent. 14 Kilo

From Trevent, via St. Pol. to Brin
Nov. 5. erecting ^{huts} at Brin for
motor machine gun. Batt. at Brin
Received the first Green
envelope. Nov. 7. at Brin.

From Brin to Permecourt
14 Kilo. Nov. 8. St. Pol. to make a
winterment camp for
German prisoners. Nov. 22nd
1916.

Permecourt to Blaucourt.
Dec. 14th 1916. 14 Kilo. Blaucourt.
Nov. 21. erecting huts.
Billboard at Souasne St. Martin.

Blaucourt to Permecourt
Jan. 8th 1917.
Building shed for G. H. Q.
Machine gun. Corps.

April 5/16. From Brin to
Spisano via St. Pol. Auction. 6th Kilo
on day April 6th shell hole worked
at Souasne.

April 7. Good Friday. From
Louvain to Arras. Without
load. From 7-30 A.M. to 11 p.m.
Saturday in character all
day. Arras. Fire raining water
pipe near station, while waiting
the station. Sunday night
the bombardment of the
German trenches. I did not see
anything like it. No firing
along could stand at the
station at this time seemed
to be the prominent object
the enemy fired at. Monday.

Apr. 10. I never witnessed anything
like it. Prisoners coming from
all directions, wounded also.
we happened to be at the other
side of Arras at this time, we
hadn't been at work so very long
when up came the cavalry, a
sight for anybody to see, such
well trained and noble animals
they had got, in the morning then
into a young M.G.C. fellow got killed
with a shrapnel right through his
head, and straight through his
heart, this one was the first I had

over the fence, some of the
fellows, no one could recognize
them, also the exploding of
a ammunition dump, blowing
up the railway bridge, killing
the negro & wounding 18 others,
a very senseless act, it is in
my opinion, to put a battery
in a prominent place like
that. On the 12th before we
had been at Arras 15 miles.
There was a shell burst in
the barracks yard, where we
were killed, killing one horse
and wounding one P. Sgt.
The same night there was a
small wood standing
just on the Cambria Rd this also
was a sorry spectacle, they
had been shelling the place
and it was covered with
dead horses & remnants of other
articles, killed. Some Friday &
Sat there isn't much to
say. On an occasional shell
coming from 9 again, one very
close to where we were working
in the

7th 2. Col. Sec.
177 Burgon St
Bathurst
7/11

seen, three of us went toward
the pipe what the shell had
broke in, killing the young
fellow before mentioned &
wounding another one. Monday
April 11, after the big advance
it was a advance too, it
made your hair ache, we
went out in the morning
on other part of 100, the station
now our destination as a rule.
There was a dead Gordon Highland
looked as if he had seen his
where to die, and another &
more awful spectacle was a
ammunition wagon that had
been hit with a shell, killed
the six horses, and the five
drivers, one piled on top of
the other fragments strewn all

a field kitchen, killing the
cook & wounding another
fellow blowing his leg off
and a wound on the neck.
On Sunday Feb 15 I spent
a very pleasant evening
at the Y.M. having a
meeting lasting two hours
when the speaker told
us some very interesting
stories about Arras & the
war, he caves he told us
dated back to the Normans
when they need to be
in towns, being to come
out as the country was
always at war, as they have
come in very useful in the
war, and which I have had
the pleasure to look in. And
the Cathedral I am sure has
been a magnificent piece of
work, but it has all been
brought down to ruin & destruction
same as the rest of the place
but the people of Arras and
those that have lived there
have started a fund to build
it up again. The station master

which was very acceptable
 after such a means
 of travel. From Langelands
 to the next, another
 march on the 12th of
 June enough to reach
 you on the march, and
 feeling terribly tired &
 worn out, after 4 days
 on the road and covering
 me all about 40 miles I
 rest the night and 2 days
 afterwards having a
 well earned rest in
 a big warehouse near
 the station. To finish
 the journey there was
 three left in our section
 and not many more in
 the others & I never thought
 I could stick it any
 longer. I only wished
 the march had been
 homeward instead of
 where it was up to this
 & don't know what we are
 going to do.

Letters during ¹⁹¹⁴ Apr. 19th from R.
 Howard. 2 from home. 1 from ~~the~~
 1 from home.

B I B L I O G R A P H YPRIMARY SOURCESA. Publishedi. The Diarya) Histories, bibliographies

BENNETT, Arnold, Self and Self Management : Essays about existing, Hodder and Stoughton, 1918.

BURNETT, John, (ed.), Useful Toil : Autobiographies of Working People 1820 - 1920, Pelican, 1977.

CHILDERS, R.Erskine, The Riddle of the Sands : a record of secret service recently achieved, Elder, 1903.

CLANCHY, M.T., From Memory to Written Record : England 1066-1307, Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd., 1979.

COLLINS, William, (ed.), Sixty-Six Years of Diary Publishing, Collins Book News Number 3, 1947.

ENSER, A.G.S., A Subject Bibliography of the First World War : Books in English 1914 - 1918, Fakenham Press Ltd., 1979.

FOTHERGILL, Robert A., Private Chronicles : A Study of English Diaries, Oxford University Press, 1974.

LETT'S, Charles and Co.Ltd., The Romance of the Business of a Diary Publisher, 1949.

MATTHEWS, William, British Diaries : an anotated bibliography of British Diaries written between 1442 - 1942, Smith, 1967.

O'BRIEN, Kate, English Diaries and Journals : The British people in pictures, William Collins, 1943.

PEPYS, Samuel, The Diary of Samuel Pepys, ed. Henry Wheatley, Bell and Sons, 1962.

PONSONBY, Arthur, English Diaries : A Review of English Diaries from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Centuries, with an introduction on diary writing, Methuen, 1923.

PONSONBY, Arthur, Further Review of Diaries, the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century, Methuen, 1927.

SPALDING, P.A., Self Harvest : A Study of Diaries and the Diarist, Independent Press, 1949.

b) First World War Diaries

BRITTAIN, Vera, Chronicle of Youth : Vera Brittain War Diary, 1913 - 1917, Victor Gollanz Ltd., 1981.

BRUCKSHAW, Horace, The Diaries of Private Horace Bruckshaw, (ed.), Martin Middlebrook, Scholar Press, 1979.

COPPARD, George, With a Machine Gun to Cambrai, Crown Copyright, 1969.

DOLDEN, A.Stuart, Cannon Fodder : An Infantryman's Life on the Western Front, Blandford Press, 1980.

GARNETT, David (ed.), Carrington : Letters and Extracts from her diaries, Oxford University Press, 1979.

GAUNT, F., The Immortal First : A Private Soldier's Diary of his experiences with the original BEF, France, MacDonald, 1917.

HAIG, Douglas, The Private Papers of Douglas Haig, 1914 - 1919, ed. Robert Blake, Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1952.

LINZELL, 2nd Lt. H.H., Fallen on the Somme : the unpublished war diary, Aycliffe Press Ltd., 1981.

MOYNIHAN, Michael, (ed.), Black Bread and Barbed Wire : Prisoners in the First World War, Leo Cooper Ltd., 1978.

SASSOON, Seigfried, Seigfried Sassoon : Diaries 1915 - 1918, ed. Rupert Hart-Davis, Faber and Faber, 1983.

SLATER, Guy, (ed.), My Warrior Sons : The Borton Family Diary 1914 - 1918, Peter Davis Lgd., 1973.

VAUGHAN, Edwin Campion, Some Desperate Glory : The Diary of a Young Officer, 1917, Frederick Warne, 1981.

WEST, Arthur Graeme, The Diary of a Dead Officer, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1919.

ii. Other Material

a) Memoirs

BRITTAIN, Vera, Testament of Youth : an autobiographical study of the years 1900 - 1925, Virago, 1978, first published by Gollanz, 1933.

CUMMINGS, E.E., The Enormous Room, Penguin 1971, first published by Boni and Liveright Inc., New York, 1922.

GIBBS, Philip, The Pageant of the Years : an autobiography, MacMillan, 1946.

GRAVES, Robert, Godbye to all that : an autobiography, Cape, 1929.

SASSOON, Seigfried, Sherston's Progress, Faber, 1944.

THOMPSON, Thea, (ed.), Edwardian Childhoods, Routledge Keegan and Paul Ltd., 1981.

b) Contemporary Records

BADEN-POWELL, Lt.General R.S.S., Scouting for Boys : A Handbook for Instruction in Good Citizenship, Horace Cox, 1908.

BANKS, Arthur, A Military Atlas of the First World War, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1975.

BRIGGS, Asa, They Saw it Happen : An Anthology of Eye-Witnesses accounts of Events in British History 1897 - 1940, Blackwell, 1962.

HIRST, F.W., The Six Panics and Other Essays, Methuen, 1913.

H.M.S.O., The Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress, 1909.

PUNCH, selected volumes, July - December 1914, CXLVII
 January - June 1915, CXLVIII
 January - June 1918, CLIV
 July - December 1918, CLV.

READ, Donald, Documents from Edwardian England 1901 - 1915, Harrap, 1973.

ROWNTREE, B.Seebohm, Poverty : a study of Town Life, Macmillan and Co.Ltd., 1910.

THE SPECTATOR, Volume of 1710, London.

THE TIMES, Leaders and editorials between 1900 - 1919 were consulted but special reference was made to the following:

May 1910
 July 1914
 July 1916
 November 1918
 January 1919

VANSITTART, Peter, Voices from the Great War, Cape, 1981.

c) Novels and Poetry

- BENNETT, Arnold, Hilda Lessways, Methuen 1911.
- BENNETT, Arnold, The Pretty Lady, Remploy Ltd., 1980,
first published by Cassell, 1918.
- FORSTER, E.M., Howards End, Penguin Books, 1979,
first published by Arnold Books, 1910.
- GALSWORTHY, J., The Forsyte Saga, Heinemann, 1922.
- HOPE, Thomas Suthren, The Winding Road Unfolds, London, 1937.
- JAMES, Henry, Within the Rim and other Essays 1914-15,
Books for Libraries Press, 1968, originally published
by Collins, 1918.
- MOTTRAM, R.H., The Spanish Farm Trilogy, Chatto and Windus, 1924.
- OWEN, Wilfred, The Collected Poems of Wilfred Owen,
ed. C.Day Lewis, Chatto and Windus, 1974.
- TAWNEY, R.H., The Attack and Other Papers, George Allen and
Unwin Ltd., 1953.
- TRESSALL, Robert, The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists,
Lawrence and Wishart, 1965, first published
New York, 1914.
- WELLS, H.G., Mr. Britling Sees it Through, Macmillan 1916.
- WEST, Rebecca, The Return of the Soldier, Nibet, 1918.
- WILLIAMSON, Henry, A Patriot's Progress : Being the Vicissitudes
of Pte. John Bullock, Geoffrey Bles, 1930.

B. Unpublished Sources

- JAGGERS, Private Sydney Herbert, a copy of this diary was loaned
to me by F.J.E.Hirst, Librarian of the New University of
Ulster. It is now part of the Libraries' Headlam-Morley
collection, is written in the pages of a Maltine Company
Diary for 1903, and has 124 written pages.
- CARRINGTON, Noel, a typescript of this diary was sent to me
after I put an advertisement in the Times Literary Supplement.
The diary was written by Carrington in a small pocket-book,
and comprises 110 entries.

LYSONS, Edward, eight diaries by Lysons were found by Pauline Lucas in a Nottingham junk shop, and were passed on to me by Professor John Lucas. Five of these were written during the First World War, the last written in 1917 after Lysons had been relieved of active service.

- (1) Volume III, written between November 16th 1915 - March 5th 1916 is written in a black notebook with holes at the top. Here Lysons attached it with string to his tunic. The diary comprises 86 pages of writing.
- (2) Volume IV, written between March 6th - May 24th 1916 is an identical black book, with 104 pages of writing.
- (3) Volume V was written between May 26th - June 20th 1916. The cover of the notebook is missing, the paper is chequered, and there are 33 pages of writing.
- (4) Volume VI was written between June 21st - October 14th 1916. Again it is written in a black notebook; there are 49 pages written in France, and 42 pages written after July 26th 1916, when Lysons returned to England to convalesce. The final diary entry written during the war years was entered in a Collins Pocket Diary for 1917, and the entries are spasmodic.

CLARKE, Ira, Clarke's diary was sent to me by his niece Miss E. Clarke, after she had seen my advertisement in the Nottingham Evening Post. It is written on a few pages of an old notebook used formerly by Clarke for addresses, and there are 12 pages of diary entries. This has been reproduced in Appendix 11.

BRAUNHOLTZ, Hermann Justus, this was loaned to me by Mrs. Peter Scupham, Braunholtz's daughter. The diary entries are written in a small black notebook, with 72 pages of writing.

Various other diaries were consulted, including:

HOLME, Horace, the diary contains only two war entries from 1918, and was loaned to me by his daughter Mrs. Rosling of Barrow-upon-Soar. The diary is a Soldier's Own Diary and Notebook for 1918, published by Letts on behalf of the Y.M.C.A. It contains a money table in French, soldier's tips, and a soldier's guide to French covering daily needs.

SMITH, Claude, the diary was loaned to me by his son, and is written in a Letts Soldier's Own Diary for 1916. The diary entries were written between January 1st - August 12th 1916.

Numerous diaries and journals were also consulted with the help of Mr. Roderick Suddaby and Mr. Philip Reed of the Imperial War Museum. The National Army Museum was consulted with reference to diaries written during the Boer War.

SECONDARY SOURCES

These are texts which I have consulted, but of which I have not made constant use.

i) Histories of the War

ANGELL, Norman, The Great Illusion : A Study of the Relation of Military power to national advantage, Heinemann, 1913.

BARNES, Major R. Money, The British Army of 1914 : its History, Uniforms, and Contemporary Continental Armies, Seeley Service and Co.Ltd., 1980.

BERGONZI, Bernard, Heroes' Twilight : a study of the literature of the Great War, Constable, 1965.

BOULTON, David, Objection Overruled, MacGibbon and Key Ltd., 1967.

CADOGAN, Mary, HAIG, Patricia, Women and Children First, Gollanz, 1978.

CLARK, Alan, The Donkeys, Hutchinson and Co.Ltd., 1961.

CLARKE, I.F., Voices Prophesying War, Oxford University Press, 1966.

DANGERFIELD, George, The Strange Death of Liberal England, MacGibbon and Key Ltd., 1935.

EDMONDS, Sir J.E., Military Operations : France and Belgium 1915, (Volume 2) Battles of Aubers Ridge, Festubert and Loos, Macmillan, 1928.

EDMONDS, Sir J.E., Military Operations : France and Belgium 1916 (Volume 2) Sir Douglas Haig's command to 1st July, Battles of the Somme, Macmillan, 1928.

EDMONDS, Sir J.E., Military Operations : France and Belgium 1916 (Volume 2) 2nd July 1916 to the end of the battles of the Somme, Macmillan, 1938.

EDMONDS, Sir J.E., Military Operations : France and Belgium 1918. (Volumes 1-3), Macmillan 1935-1939.

FALLS, C., Military Operations : France and Belgium 1917 : The German retreat to the Hindenburg Line and the battle of Arras, Macmillan and H.M.S.O., 1940-1948.

FUSSELL, Paul, The Great War and Modern Memory, Oxford University Press, 1979.

- GRAHAM, John W., Conscription and Conscience : a history 1916-1919, Allen and Unwin, 1922.
- GRAVES, Robert, 'Robert Graves Interview', The Listener, Number 86, July 15th 1971.
- HASTE, Cate, Keep the Home Fires Burning : Propaganda in World War One, Allen Lane, 1977.
- HYNES, Samuel, The Edwardian Turn of Mind, Oxford University Press, 1968.
- MACDONALD, Lynn, The Roses of No-Man's Land, Michael Joseph Ltd., 1980.
- MARWICK, Arthur, War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century : a comparative study of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States; Macmillan, 1974.
- MASTERMAN, C.F.G., The Condition of England, ed. J.T. Boulton, Methuen, 1909.
- MORRIS, A.J. Anthony, Radicalism Against War 1906-14 : the advocacy of peace retrenchment, Longman, 1972.
- NOWELL-SMITH, Simon, Edwardian England 1901 - 1914, Oxford University Press, 1964.
- TAYLOR, A.J.P., '1914 : Events in Britain,' The Listener, July 16th, 1964.
- TAYLOR, A.J.P., The First World War : an illustrated history, Hamilton, 1963.
- TAYLOR, A.J.P., War by Timetable, MacDonald, 1969.
- TERRAINE, J., The Road to Passchendaele : the Flanders offensive of 1917 : a study in inevitability, Cooper, 1977.
- THOMPSON, Paul, The Edwardians : the remaking of British society, Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1975.
- THOMSON, David, England in the Twentieth Century 1914 - 63, Pelican history of England, 1965.
- TUCHMAN, Barbara, August 1914, Constable and Co., Ltd. 1962.
- WINTER, Denis, Death's Men : Soldiers of the Great War, Penguin, 1978.
- WOLFF, Léon, In Flander's Fields, Penguin, 1979.

ii) Biographies

ALLISON, William, FAIRLEY, John, The Monocled Mutineer,
Quartet Books Ltd., 1979.

MOSLEY, Nicholas, Julian Grenfell : his life and the times of
his death, 1885 - 1915, Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1976.

TERRAINE, John, Douglas Haig : the educated soldier,
Hutchinson and Co.Ltd., 1963.

iii) Novels, Poetry, Plays and Reviews

AUSTEN, Jane, Mansfield Park, Oxford University Press, 1970.

CAMPBELL, P.J., The Ebb and Flow of Battle, Hamish Hamilton,
1977.

CONRAD, Joseph, Heart of Darkness, Pan Books, 1976,
first published in Edinburgh, 1902.

DELANY, Paul, 'Playing fields, Flanders fields,' London
Review of Books, 21st January - 3rd February, 1982.

GROSSMITH, George and Weedon, Diary of a Nobody,
Folio Society, 1969, first published in 1894,
serialised in Punch.

HYNES, Samuel, 'Ignorantly into War', Times Literary Supplement,
30th October, 1981.

HYNES, Samuel, 'The Irony and the Pity', Times Literary Supplement,
December 18th, 1981.

JERROLD, Douglas, The Lie about the War : a note on some contemporary
war books, Faber and Faber, 1930.

LUCAS, John, 'For Ever England', London Review of Books,
16th June - 6th July, 1983.

MUNRO, H.H., The Complete Works of Saki, Bodley Head, 1980.

REED, Talbot Baines, The Willoughby Captains : a school story,
Hodder and Stoughton, 1887.

REILLY, Catherine, (ed.), Scars Upon my Heart : an anthology of
women's poetry and verse of the First World War, Virago Press,
1981.

SAPPER, Men, Women and Guns, Hodder and Stoughton, 1916.

SHAW, George Bernard, Heartbreak House, Penguin, 1964.

iv) Other

- BELL, Michael, (ed.), The Content of English Literature 1900-1930, Methuen and Co.Ltd., 1980.
- BOBKER, Lee R., Elements of Film, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc., New York, 1974, first published 1969.
- COOMBES, H., Edward Thomas : A Critical Study, Chatto and Windus, 1956.
- ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA, Volume 6, 1970.
- GATHORNE-HARDY, J., The Public School Phenomenon, Hodder and Stoughton, 1977.
- GODSDEN, P.H., J.H., How they were taught : an anthology of contemporary accounts of learning and teaching in England, 1800 - 1950, Blackwell, 1969.
- THE GUARDIAN, 3rd May, 1983.
- HOLMAN, B., English National Education : a sketch of the rise of elementary schools in England, Blackie and Son, 1898.
- THE LOUGHBOROUGH ECHO, February 26th 1982.
- MANGAN, J.A., Athleticism in the English Public School : the emergence and consolidation of an educational ideology, Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- MOYNIHAN, Michael, (ed.), Greater Love : Letters from home 1914 - 1918, W.H.Allen, 1980.
- NIN, Anais, The Novel of the Future, Macmillan Publishing Co., New York, 1968.
- THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY, Volume 111, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1961.
- PIKE, E.Royston, (ed.), Human Documents of the Age of the Forsytes, Allen and Unwin, 1969.
- REISMAN, David, The Lonely Crowd, Yale University Press, 1974.
- SPRINGHALL, John, Youth, Empire and Society : British Youth Movements, 1883 - 1940, Croom Helm, Ltd., 1977.
- STONE, Lawrence, The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500 - 1800, Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1977.
- STOYE, J.W., English Travellers Abroad 1604 - 1667 : their influence in English Society and Politics, Cape, 1952.

- THOMPSON, Paul, The Voice of the Past : oral history,
Oxford University Press, 1978.
- TREVELYAN, G.M., English Social History : A Survey of
six centuries, Chaucer to Queen Victoria, Longmans,
Green, 1944.
- TRILLING, Lionel, Sincerity and Authenticity, Oxford
University Press, 1974.
- TURNER, E.S., Boys will be Boys, Michael Joseph Ltd., 1948.
- THE WAR ILLUSTRATED, 27th May, 1916.
- WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION, Stand to! The Journal of the W.F.A.
Winter 1981 - Winter 1982.

