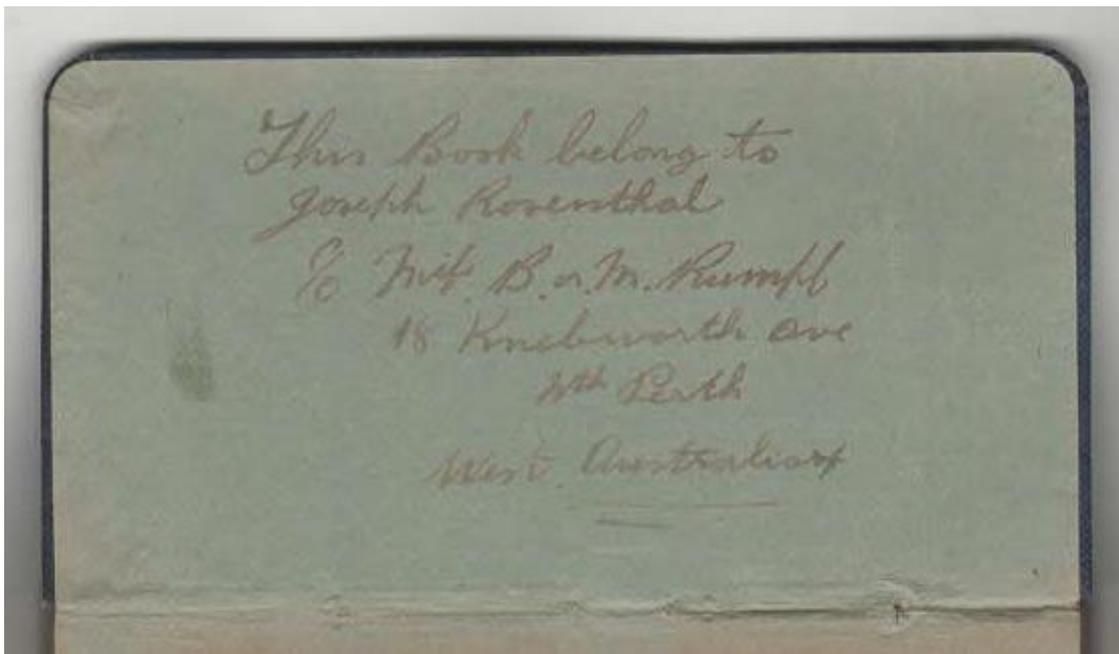


A diary of World War One experiences
written between 1916 and 1919 by
Joseph Rosenthal
of 18 Knebworth Avenue, North Perth.



Inside front cover of diary

As transcribed, illustrated and edited
by Roger Elmitt
November 2023

Joseph's Diary

Introduction

Whilst at the Jewish Historical and Genealogical Society of Western Australia's (JHGS-WA) premises in Yokine, WA in July 2023, I was shown one of their artifacts which consisted of a cardboard box containing various family heirlooms which had been donated to the Society for safe keeping. Amongst the treasures therein was a wooden writing box containing various postcards, (empty) wallets and a small book. This book turned out to be a diary written by Joseph Rosenthal describing his first world war experiences from the day he signed up on the 13th January 1916, "I have taken a day off work", describing the voyage to Egypt, the trials and tribulations of the Western Front, leave taken in England until finally he arrives back safely in Fremantle for a "home dinner" on 8th July 1919.

What a challenge! A diary, over 100 years old, in good condition fairly difficult to read thus in need of transcription.

I don't think that one could "enjoy" reading this diary! It is quite harrowing in parts and graphically describes front line life of a medical orderly during WW1. However, I am sure that you will find it interesting.

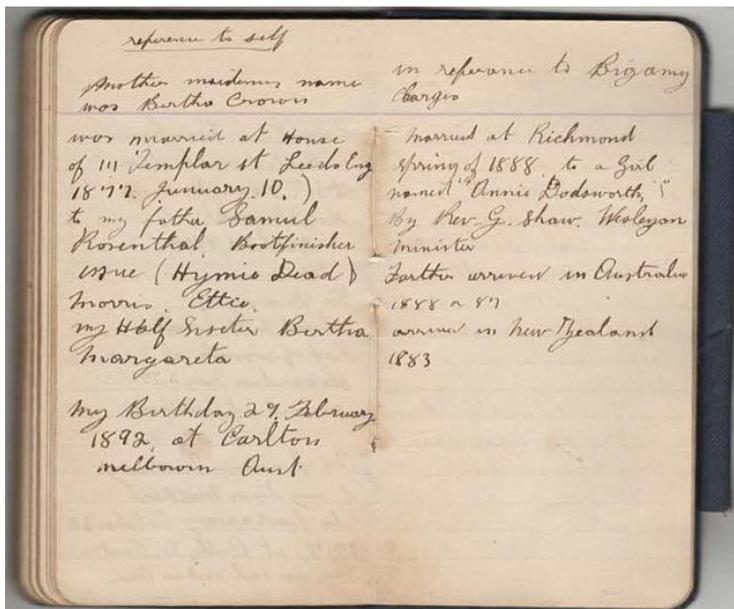
Joseph Rosenthal

At the back of Joseph's diary there is a double page entitled "Reference to Self". The details hereunder are a transcription of this information:

Reference to self

Another maiden name was Bertha Crown.

Bertha Crown was married at house of 111 Templar st Leeds, Eng 1877 January 10 to my father Samuel Rosenthal, Boot finisher. Issue (Hymie dead), Morris, Ettie(sic – Hetty(?)), my half sisters Bertha and Margareta.



My birthday 27 February 1892 at Carlton, Melbourne.

In response to bigamy charges.

Married at Richmond spring of 1888 to a girl named "Annie Dodsworth" by Rev G Shaw, Wesleyan minister.

Father arrived in Australia in 1888 or 87. Arrived in New Zealand 1883.

Further research and, obviously not shown on this page of the diary, are the fact that, after the war, at some time, he went to Melbourne and continued his occupation of picture framer,

married Isabella MacKey (1903-1966) in 1928 in Melbourne and, after a very eventful life, died there in 1964, aged 72.

Note that Joseph sometimes signs himself, and others refer to him, as “Joe” or “Joseph”. I have preferred to be consistent and refer to Joseph as “Joseph” throughout this document.

The Diary

The diary is in very good condition considering its age and what Joseph and the diary had been through – the desert dust of Egypt, the mud and shelling of the Western Front, and the locations and environment that Joseph would have had available to write the diary eg candlelight, tiredness, recalling sad and difficult times.



The Diary measures 8 cms x 13 cms.

It is surprisingly small considering the 92 double pages of entries covering approximately 3½ years. The diary measures 8 cms wide and 13 cms tall – smaller than a smartphone – but small enough to easily fit into a shirt or tunic pocket. The cover is dark blue in colour and the pages white, somewhat yellowed with age, faintly lined and with gold edges. There is a provision to slip a small diameter pencil into the holder on the right hand side of the diary.

What did he write it with considering the preservation of the script? It is not an indelible pencil as that would have smudged if it got wet. There are a few print-throughs and also some print from one page to another which suggests he used a fountain pen. The ink appears to be consistently grey in colour throughout the 3½ years of writing. However there are virtually no blots; it is always neat and tidy.

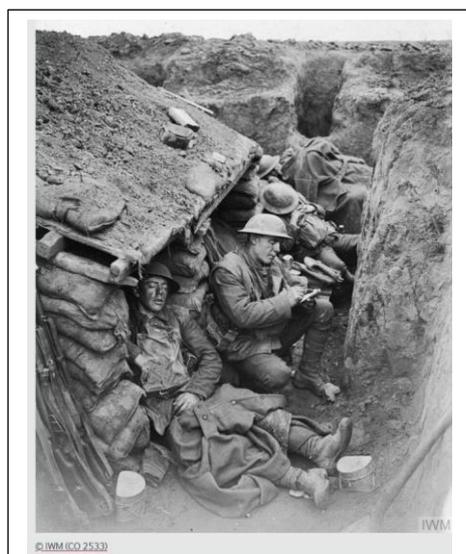


Photo of a Canadian soldier showing typical circumstances of writing a diary in the trenches of WW1 (IWM).

Sometimes Joseph would make entries on consecutive days and at other times miss out a week or more – probably depending upon circumstances and news worthiness. The longest break was between 27 November 1917, when he received notification of his mother’s death, until 19 January 1918. He merely states, “I have not been keeping my diary up to date.”

He doesn’t offer an explanation as to why he started the diary or the ultimate purpose. Was it so that he could relive his experiences? Doubtful. For his family to read when (if) he got home? Did he or they ever read it? We don’t know.

It is also notable that he does not describe his day to day job (that of medical orderly) in detail but does outline the circumstances under which he lives and works, his movements and modes of transport. There are over 70 instances where he mentions the shelling by

“Fritz” – and the numerous near misses.

I have taken on the responsibility of transcribing the diary and will present it to whomever is interested in it – the City of Vincent local history library, the Australian Army Museum of West Australia and/or the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. I don't know, but meanwhile I will satisfy my own ego.

Transcription Methodology Used

This multi-week project was quite challenging and was a relatively involved process.

Experience showed that the best way of reading the diary was to scan the pages, crop them to a consistent size then catalogue each double page.

Next step was to transcribe the diary to Word. I aimed to scan and bash out a first draft of five pages of the diary per day. This was performed by displaying the scanned copy on one computer screen and then typing from the enlarged image. It was not an easy task to interpret the writing due to, (mis)spelling, grammar, use of capital letters, slang, place names and abbreviations used.

From this rough draft another pair of eyes was employed namely my wife Veronica who did a splendid job and was a tremendous help in deciphering/correcting and enhancing the original product.

By downloading the 2nd Australian Field Ambulance War Diaries from the Australian War Memorial website for the relevant period of the diary (all 35 relevant months). The diaries were found to be most illuminating and provided a solid background for Joseph's writings. It was possible to correlate Joseph's entries with the unit's movements particularly useful in obtaining the correct spelling of place names.

It was interesting to research where Joseph was in the history of WW1 ie Pozieres, Bullecourt, Ypres and many other WW1 ANZAC Western Front hot spots. This allowed an appreciation of the circumstances and also to capture relevant photos, maps and background.

The National Archives of Australia has digitised all the army records of soldiers in WW1. By downloading Joseph's record I could relate his diary back to his army records eg sickness, leave, movements etc. which were not necessarily fully described by him in his diary.

Extensive use of Google helped to find and clarify the meaning of some of the WW1 slang words and abbreviations used.

Transcription

Transcription raises a dilemma; should the finished product be a verbatim transcription of the original and include all the spelling and grammar mistakes or should it be an edited transcription with corrections but without restructuring the original text? The latter course was taken. I did not want to highlight Joseph's writing (in)abilities but to faithfully record his thoughts and descriptions and tidying up the formatting to make it pleasing to read. His quaint turns of phrase have been recorded as written!

In transcribing the diary, editorial liberty had to be taken with regard to capitalisation, abbreviation and expansion of abbreviations together with breaking down into sentences. Transcribing has been as near to the original as practicable. Obvious spelling mistakes have been corrected and possibly words added to make it more readable.

Obvious unique spelling has been corrected. Examples are where/were, whent/went, hour/our.

Place names written in italics are “guessed”. Joseph’s writing and spelling are sometimes somewhat difficult to decipher, especially place and person names. By looking at a map, the unit’s diaries and his description of its whereabouts, a plausible name has been guessed but editorial rights have been exercised!

Where Joseph didn’t know something he put a dash. In transcribing this diary I have underlined the word “blank” to indicate where Joseph had put such a dash.

Sometimes it was either not possible to determine the writing or the transcription so it was though better to show exactly what Joseph had written. This has been reproduced as italics and underlined eg *as written*.

Where my notes are inserted within the text these are surrounded by square brackets – [an author’s note].

On occasions Joseph makes comments such as “nuff said”. These have been reproduced as is.

Most of the dates are of the format dd/mm/yy. Occasionally he would put say 15 June 1917 these have been changed to be consistent and to fit the main format dd/mm/yy.

There appears to be a great discrepancy in the months of the dates of the entries starting at 20/6/16. I believe this should appear as 20/7/16. The diary seems to have gone back a month. However, by 23/8/16 the dates appear to be correct again. Rather than override Joseph’s dates I have reproduced his dates with the dates that I think they should be. This discrepancy occurred during the Battle of Pozières – he possibly had other things on his mind – survival.

To make the diary more interesting, and to put it context to Joseph’s entries, I have provided background to the events and people that Joseph mentions by way of footnotes. Where possible illustrations and maps have been inserted.

The 2nd Australian Field Ambulance War Diaries have not been included as they can be referenced directly from the Australian War Memorial at:

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1338699>

Similarly Joseph’s army records can be accessed at:

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=8038052>

Photographs and Footnotes

In order to provide some background to Joseph’s diary relevant photos and footnotes have been entered.

Joseph refers, for example, the “Referendum” or “the boys went over the top”, the footnotes elaborate on the implications or background to such comments.

In the case of photographs every endeavour has been taken to ensure that copyright has not been impinged upon. A citation to the source of the photographs is shown in each caption by a tag eg **BWW**. At the end of this document is a bibliography of sources of the photographs (See Appendix 3 - Photographic Sources on page 199). Care has been taken to ensure that commercial (ie photos specifically attracting fees) have NOT been used.

In some cases the source of the photo is unknown thus the tag is **UKN**. For Australian War Memorial photos there is no copyright only acknowledgement. The bottom right hand corner shows the AWM reference number.

With the captions under the pictures, the text in quotation marks are a direct quote from Joseph's diary eg Fricourt – "everything destroyed for miles around".

Also found in the wooden writing box were some of the original postcards that Joseph had sent to his mother and sisters, mainly for their birthdays. It was considered that being an integral part of his WW1 experience, these have been reproduced, transcribed and inserted in date order.

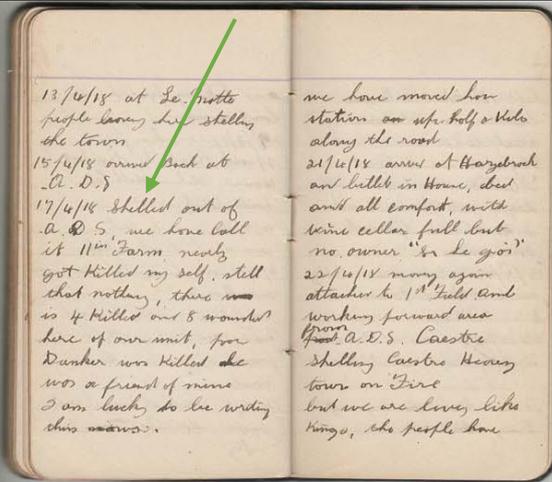
As mentioned before, it is interesting to note that Joseph sometimes signed himself as "Joe" and at other time "Joseph". To be consistent "Joseph" has been used throughout this document.

Examples of Entries

Of the 350+ dated entries that are in the diary I have extracted four which I think will be of interest.

<p>The first entry</p>	
	<p>J Rosenthal 2 Aust Field Amb AIF 1916 My Diary 13/1/16 I have taken a day off from work and went down to Frances St drill hall and passed the medical test.</p>
<p>Meeting Rabbi Freedman</p>	
	<p>20/7/16 Just went to service in Wallon Hut YMCA. Sermon by Captain Rev. D.I. Freeman (sic) [Freedman]. There were English, Scottish and Australians there. We were given prayer books by Freeman (sic). He is doing good work. He has taken all our addresses and promises to write to our people.</p>

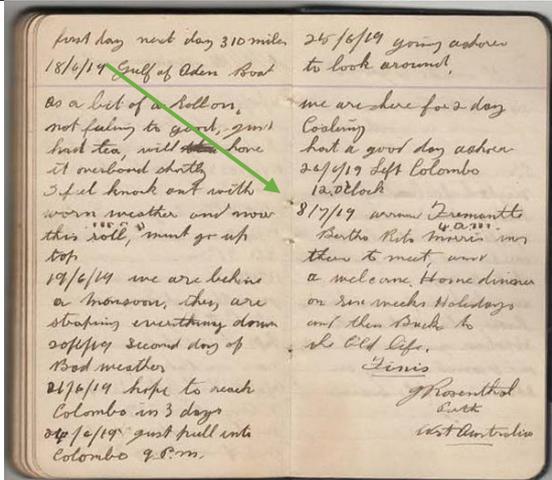
Death of Eric Danker



17/4/18 Shelled out of ADS. We have call it 11th farm. Nearly got killed myself. Still that nothing. There are 4 killed and 8 wounded here of our unit. Poor Danker was killed. He was a friend of mine. I am lucky to be writing this news.

(See page 147 for details.)

Arrival home



8/7/19 Arrive Fremantle. Bertha, Rita, Morris are there to meet. What a welcome. Home dinner. On six weeks holidays and then back to the Old life.

Finis
J Rosenthal
Perth,
West Australia

Background of 2nd Ambulance Unit

The following article was found in the Virtual War Memorial Australia at <https://vwma.org.au/explore/units/353>

It provides a very good background to the work and responsibilities of the unit to which Joseph was posted.

The 2nd Field Ambulance was the one of three Field Ambulance Companies nominally assigned to each of the three Brigades; the 1st 2nd and 3rd. The 2nd Brigade to which the 2nd Field Ambulance was assigned, comprised of the 5th 6th 7th and 8th Battalions, all from Victoria.

The 2nd Brigade landed at Gallipoli on the 25th April and the 2nd Field Ambulance served throughout the campaign and followed its parent Brigade to France and Belgium from 1916. Field Ambulances were established close to the beach at Gallipoli and were under constant threat of shell fire and even rifle and machine gun fire on occasion.

The Field Ambulance Company was responsible for 'Second Line' casualty evacuation from 'First Line' Regimental Aid Posts (RAP) in each battalion.

The RAP belonged to the Battalion (or other units) and was manned by the Regimental Medical Officer (RMO), a qualified doctor, generally of Captain rank supported by several non-commissioned officers (NCO) of Sergeant and Corporal rank, with a number of medical orderlies at the rank of Private.

They in turn were supported by unit stretcher bearers, generally drawn from the Battalion's Band. These men would be trained to administer First Aid sufficient to clear airways, staunch bleeding and perhaps splint fractures so that casualties could be evacuated to the Battalion RAP. Casualties would be hand carried - requiring at least four men but more like eight over any distance for each casualty. Hand carts were also used but rough ground generally meant stretchers. When mass casualties occurred, such as through major shelling or an enemy attack, decisions would have to be made about the priority of evacuation. The RMO would assess the casualty and decide whether they were to be evacuated and with what priority. Grievous wounds with little chance of survival would generally not be evacuated.

When an attack or advance was undertaken, the RAP would follow up the units' forward elements and were thus exposed to enemy direct fire (rifles and machine guns) and indirect fire (artillery mortar fire and even gas).

The Field Ambulance would have personnel deployed forward to retrieve casualties from the RAP to the Field Ambulance Advanced Dressing Station or direct to a Casualty Clearing Station (CCS).

They would have to deploy forward to reach the RAP, and thus come under the same risks as the front line combat troops.

They may have had a number of means to assist in casualty evacuation from light rail, horse drawn vehicles and even motor vehicles. Or they could indeed also be stretcher borne.

Once at the CCS, additional Medical Officers and supporting personnel were available to carry out lifesaving surgery. Some casualties might be retained in a limited number of beds - generally to allow more seriously wounded to be evacuated further to rear. The tragic fact was many men would have died here from serious wounds and indeed many of the cemeteries scattered through Northern France and Belgium originally began alongside a CCS.

From a CCS casualties might be taken to a Field Hospital or straight to a General Hospital.

Soldiers with serious wounds who needed surgery have what is called "The Golden Hour" to receive the treatment they need. After that time their chance of survival diminishes rapidly. Conditions were such that evacuation times were extended considerably by poor weather, the predominance of water, mud, the detritus of battle, shell torn ground and enemy action. At the time infection was also a great risk as it was prior to the discovery of penicillin and other antibiotics.

Throughout the diary Joseph refers to his stints as a stretcher bearer. He was a member of the Australian Army Medical Corps, and it was his job to collect the seriously injured men.

Under appalling conditions on battlefields, the stretcher bearers would:

- bandage wounds as part of first aid
- move the wounded away from the front
- deliver the wounded to an ambulance or a Regimental Aid Post

Protected only by their 'SB' armbands, these unarmed men braved artillery and machine-gun fire to get their patients to safety. The troops greatly admired their courage.

This is Joseph's story.

Conclusion

This has been a most interesting and challenging exercise. I have read many WW1 books but they all have been to do with individual soldiers at the front such as infantry groups (soldiers, engineers/tunnellers) or the leaders ie generals.

Never have I read about the medical support staff – the stretcher bearers or medical orderlies. It must have been a depressing, physically and psychologically draining assignment as we see from the entries of Joseph's diary. He gives graphic descriptions and the moving experiences of war - all the slaughter, suffering, destruction etc.

But this transcription task has been a great challenge and I feel that we owe it to Joseph Rosenthal and his comrades for the sacrifice they made and the time and effort that he devoted to writing this diary. It is part of our Australian heritage.

A 161173

2nd Hd. Qtr

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.



A M C
Details

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. 10385 Name ROSENTHAL Joseph
 Unit H6 Depot
 44
 Joined on 13 1 16

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

1. What is your Name? 1. Joseph Rosenthal
2. In the Parish of _____ in or
near the Town of Carlton
in the County of Victoria
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized
British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be
shown.) 3. Yes
4. What is your age? 4. 24 yrs 10 mos.
5. What is your trade or calling? 5. Picture-frames
6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, where,
to whom, and for what period? 6. No
7. Are you married? 7. No
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) 8. Mother Bertha Rumpf
372 William St
Perth
9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power? 9. No
10. Have you ever been discharged from any part of His
Majesty's Forces, with Ignominy, or as Incorrigible and
Worthless, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or of a
Sentence of Penal Servitude, or have you been dismissed
with Disgrace from the Navy? 10. No
11. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His
Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia
Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial
Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving,
state cause of discharge 11. No
12. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? 12. Yes
13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's
Service? If so, on what grounds? 13. No
14. (For married men, widowers with children, and soldiers who
are the sole support of widowed mother)—
Do you understand that no separation allowance will be issued
in respect of your service beyond an amount which
together with pay would reach eight shillings per day? 14. No
15. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against small pox
and enteric fever? 15. Yes

I, Joseph Rosenthal, do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

And I further agree to allot not less than $\frac{two-fifths}{three-fifths}$ of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my ~~wife~~ ^{wife} and children.

Date 13 1 16

Joseph Rosenthal
Signature of person enlisted.

D. 877/1-15—C. 623.

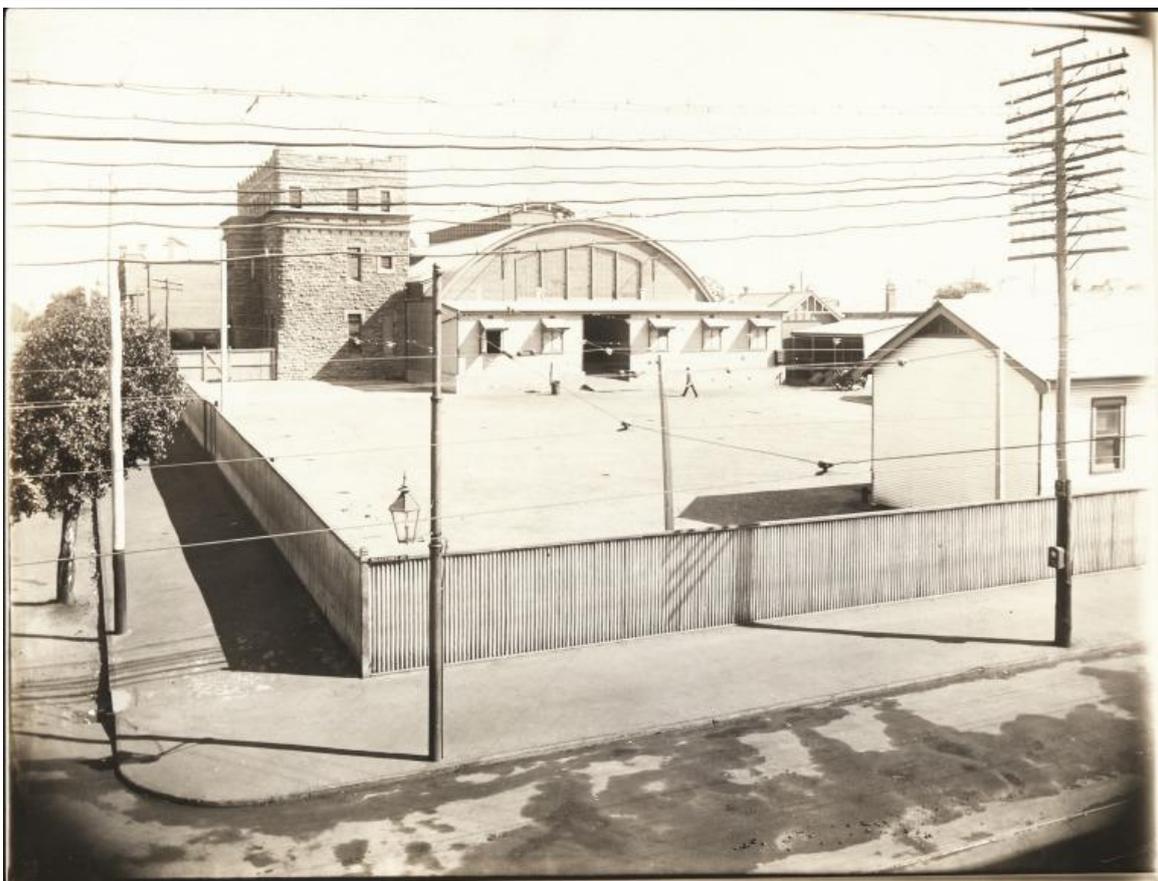
*This clause should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 18 years of age.
†Two-fifths must be allotted to the wife, and if there are children three-fifths must be allotted.

372 William St
Perth

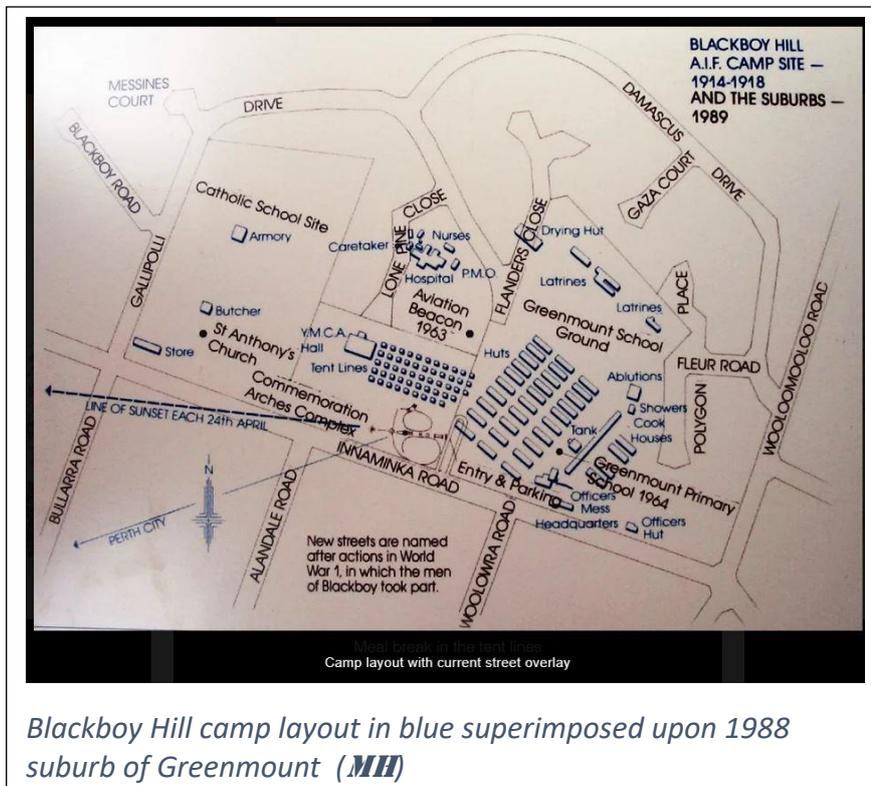
National Archives of Australia

NAA: B2455, ROSENTHAL JOSEPH

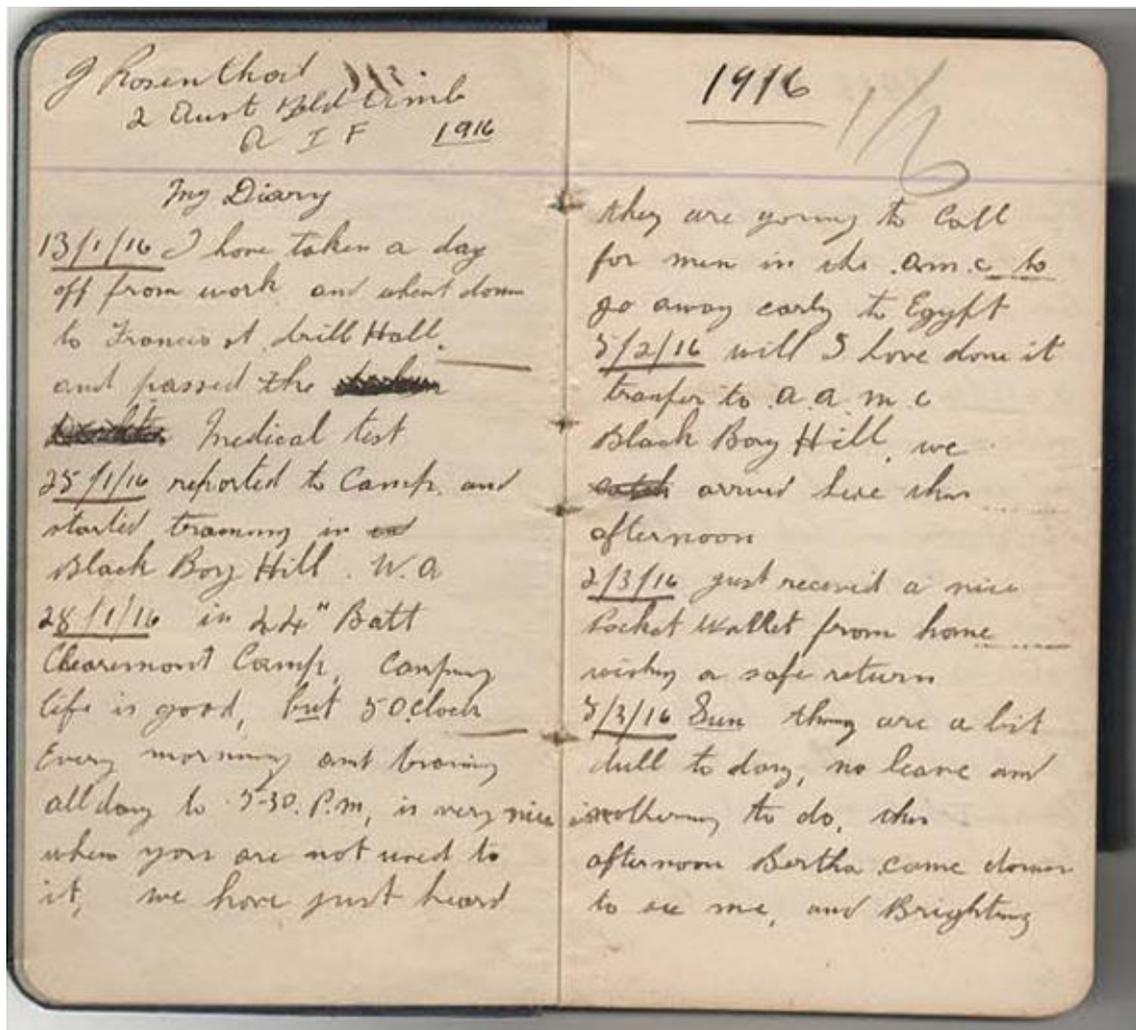
Joseph's Attestation Paper 13 January 1916



Francis Street Drill Hall 1913 taken from Beaufort Street BA1271/233 (SLWA)



Blackboy Hill camp layout in blue superimposed upon 1988 suburb of Greenmount (MH)



<p>J Rosenthal 2 Aust Field Amb AIF 1916</p> <p>My Diary</p> <p>13/1/16 I have taken a day off from work and went down to Francis Street Drill Hall and passed the medical test.</p> <p>25/1/16 Reported to camp and started training in Black Boy Hill¹ WA.</p> <p>28/1/16 In "44" battalion Claremont Camp. Camping life is good, but 5 o'clock every morning and training all day to 5-30 pm is very nice when you are not used to it. We have just heard</p>	<p>1916</p> <p>they are going to call for men in the AMC to go away early to Egypt.</p> <p>5/2/16 Well I have done it transfer to AAMC [Australian Army Medical Corps] Black Boy Hill. We arrived here this afternoon.</p> <p>2/3/16 Just received a nice pocket wallet from home wishing a safe return.</p> <p>5/3/16 Sunday. Things are a bit dull today, no leave and nothing to do. This afternoon Bertha² came down to see me, and brightening</p>
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¹ Blackboy Hill, situated in the Darling Scarp behind Midland, was named due to the number of grass trees (aka as Blackboys) in the area. Upon the declaration of war in August 1914, the grass trees were cleared to make a training camp. Initially there were bell tents but by October 1915 wooden huts on concrete foundations were constructed. Over 32,000 men (of the State's then population of 300,000) passed through the camp on their way to war.

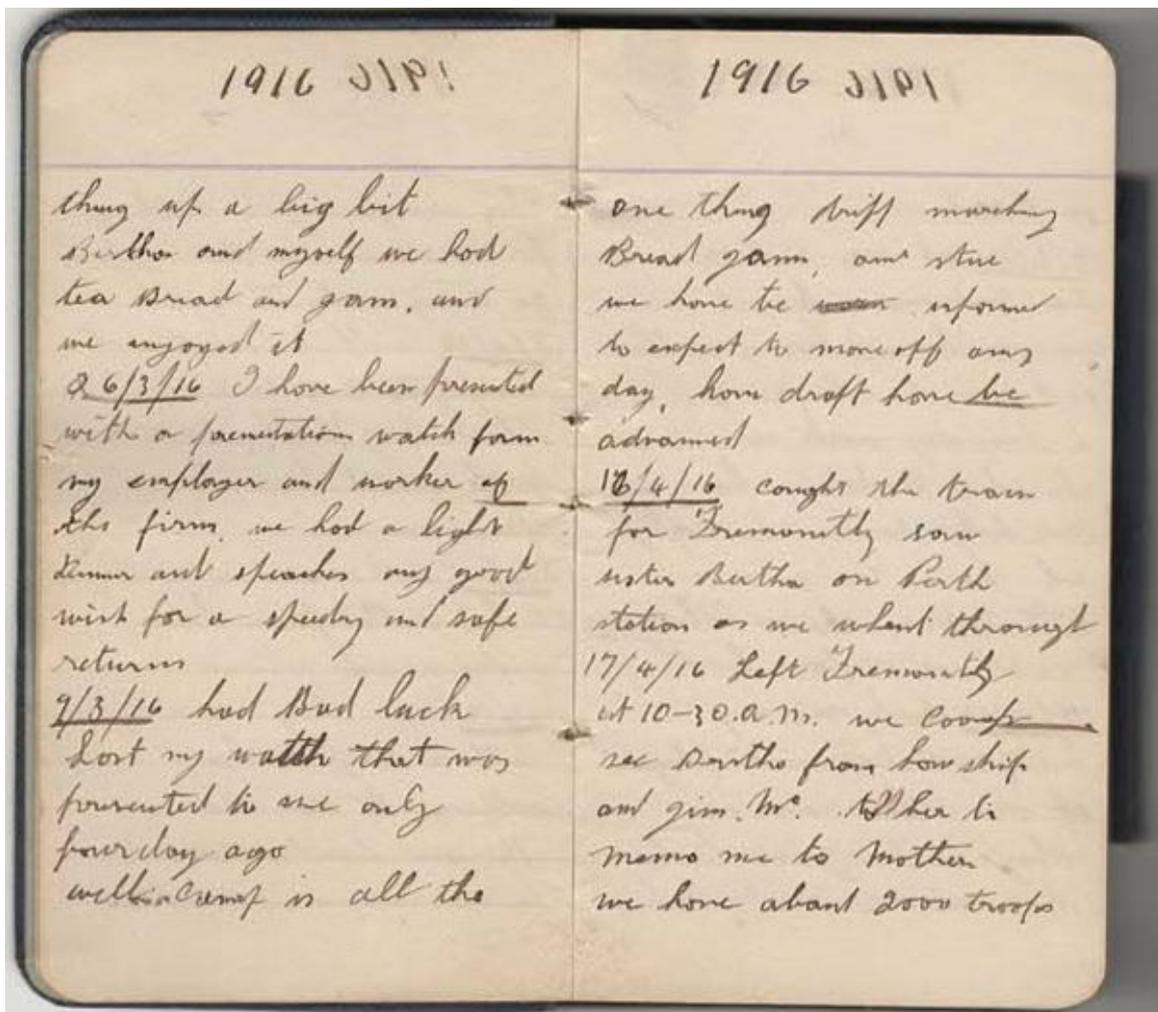
² Bertha was Joseph's mother. However he had a stepsister Bertha. It is more likely that this visitor was his sister.



*Blackboy Hill Camp – typical scene from 1915 - Camp Stew (or stue as Joseph calls it)
(MH)*



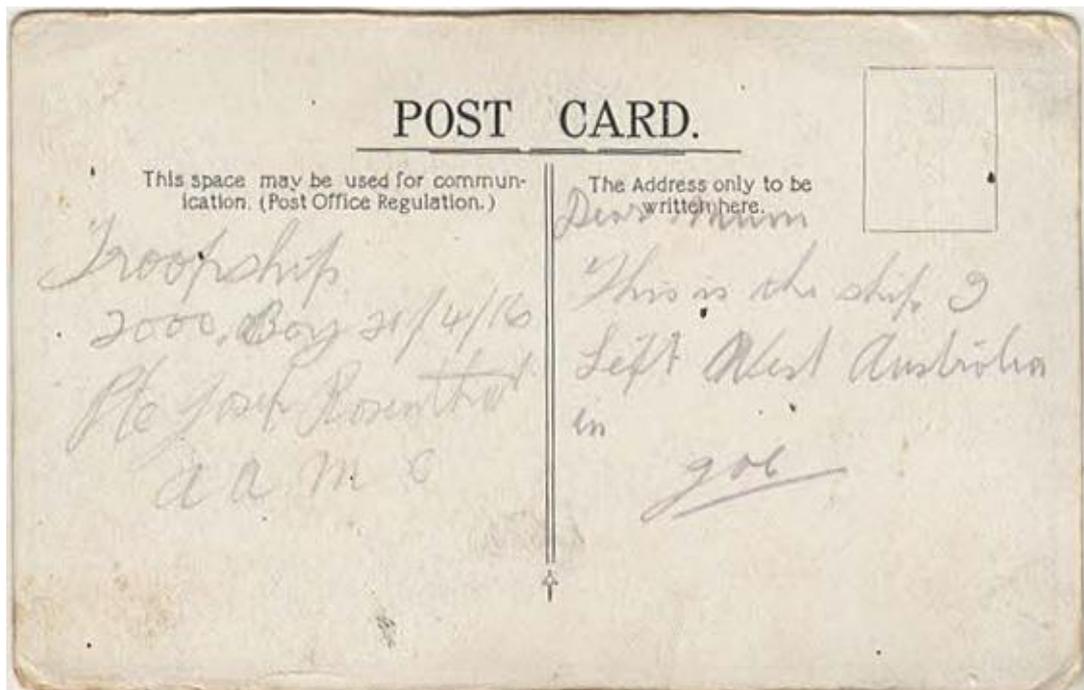
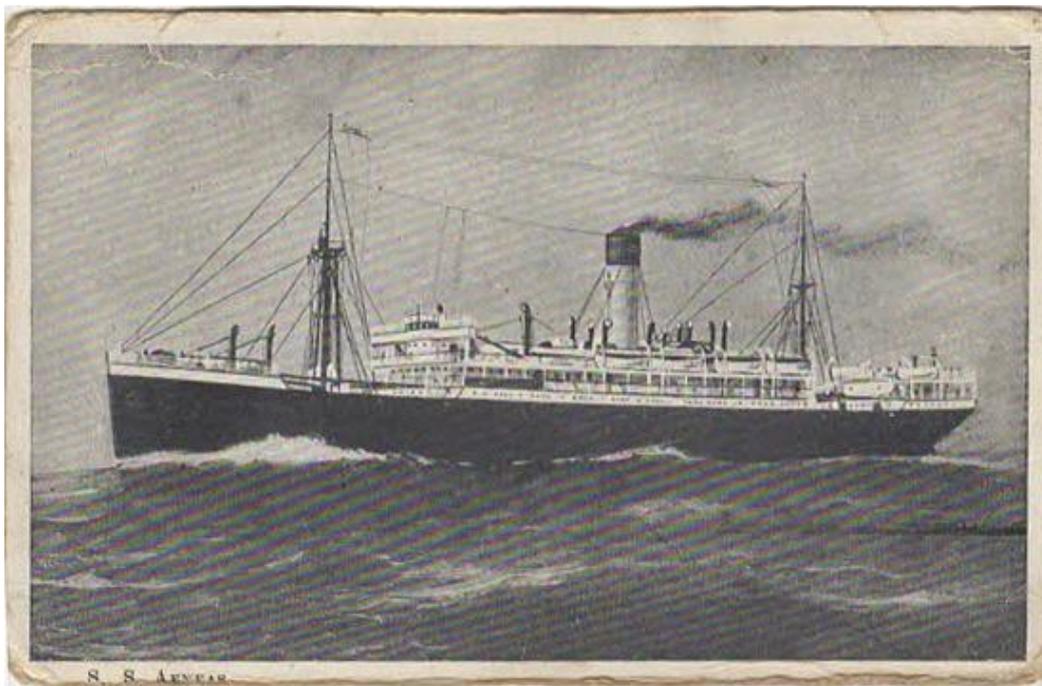
A troopship farewell (UNK)



1916	1916
<p>things up a big bit. Bertha and myself we had tea bread and jam and we enjoyed it.</p> <p>6/3/16 I have been presented with a presentation watch from my employer and worker of the firm. We had a light dinner and speaches my good wish for a speedy and safe returns.</p> <p>9/3/16 had bad luck. Lost my watch that was presented to me only four days ago. Well camp is all the</p>	<p>one thing, drill marching, bread, jam and stue (sic). We have been informed to expect to move off any day. <u>Hour¹ draft have be advanced</u> [Our draft has been advanced].</p> <p>16/4/16 Caught the train for Fremantle. Saw sister Bertha on Perth station as we went through.</p> <p>17/4/16 Left Fremantle at 10-30 am. We could see Bertha from our ship and Jim Mc. Tell her to memo me to Mother. We have about 2,000 troops</p>

¹ As mentioned in introduction, throughout the diary Joseph uses HOUR for OUR. Henceforth I have transcribed hour to our.

Post card sent to his Mother dated 21/4/16.



POST CARD.

This space may be used for communication. (Post Office Regulation.)

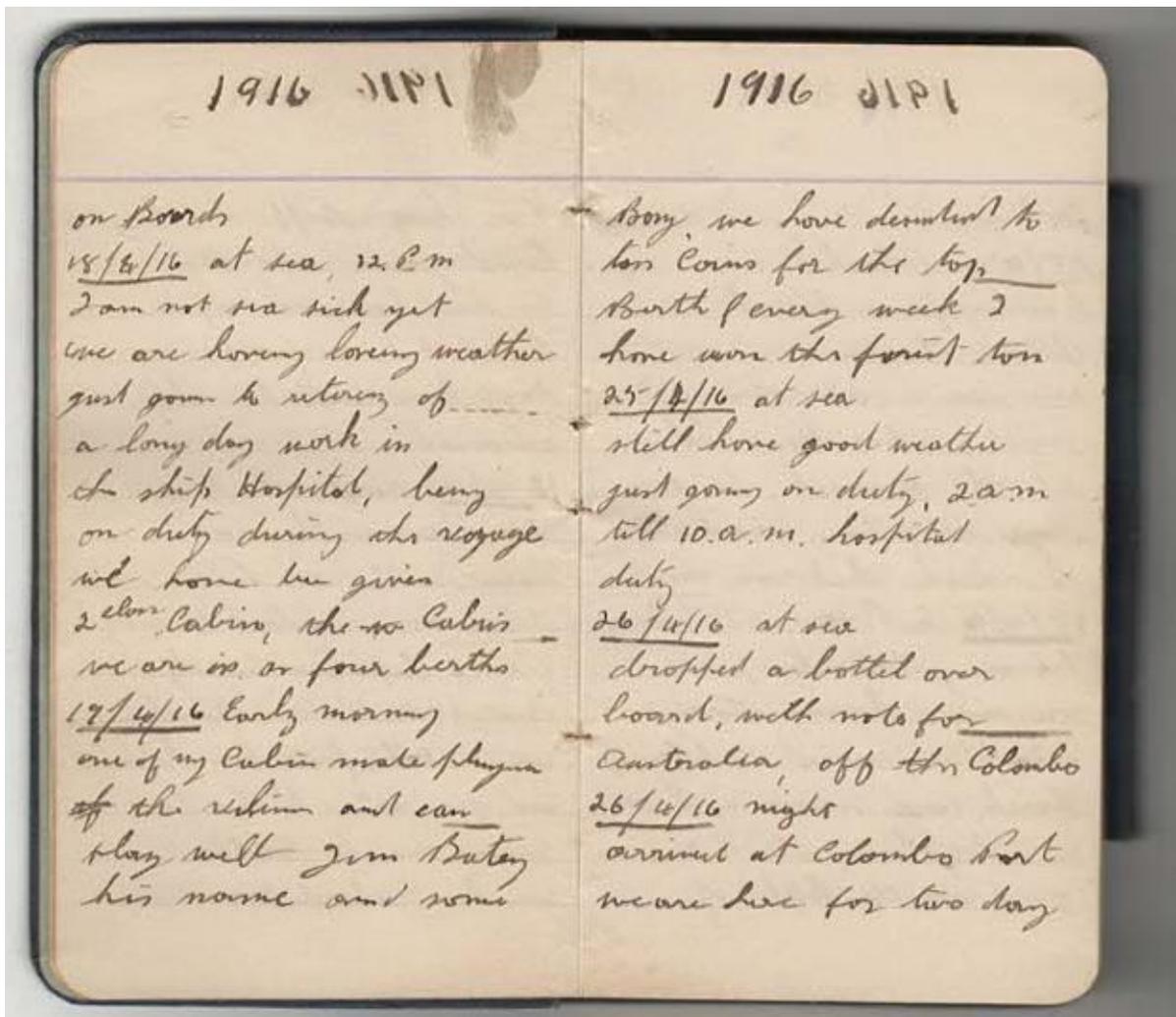
The Address only to be written here.

Troopship
2000 Boys 21/4/16
Pte Joseph Rosenthal
AAMC

Dear Mum
This is the ship I
Left West Australia
in
Joe

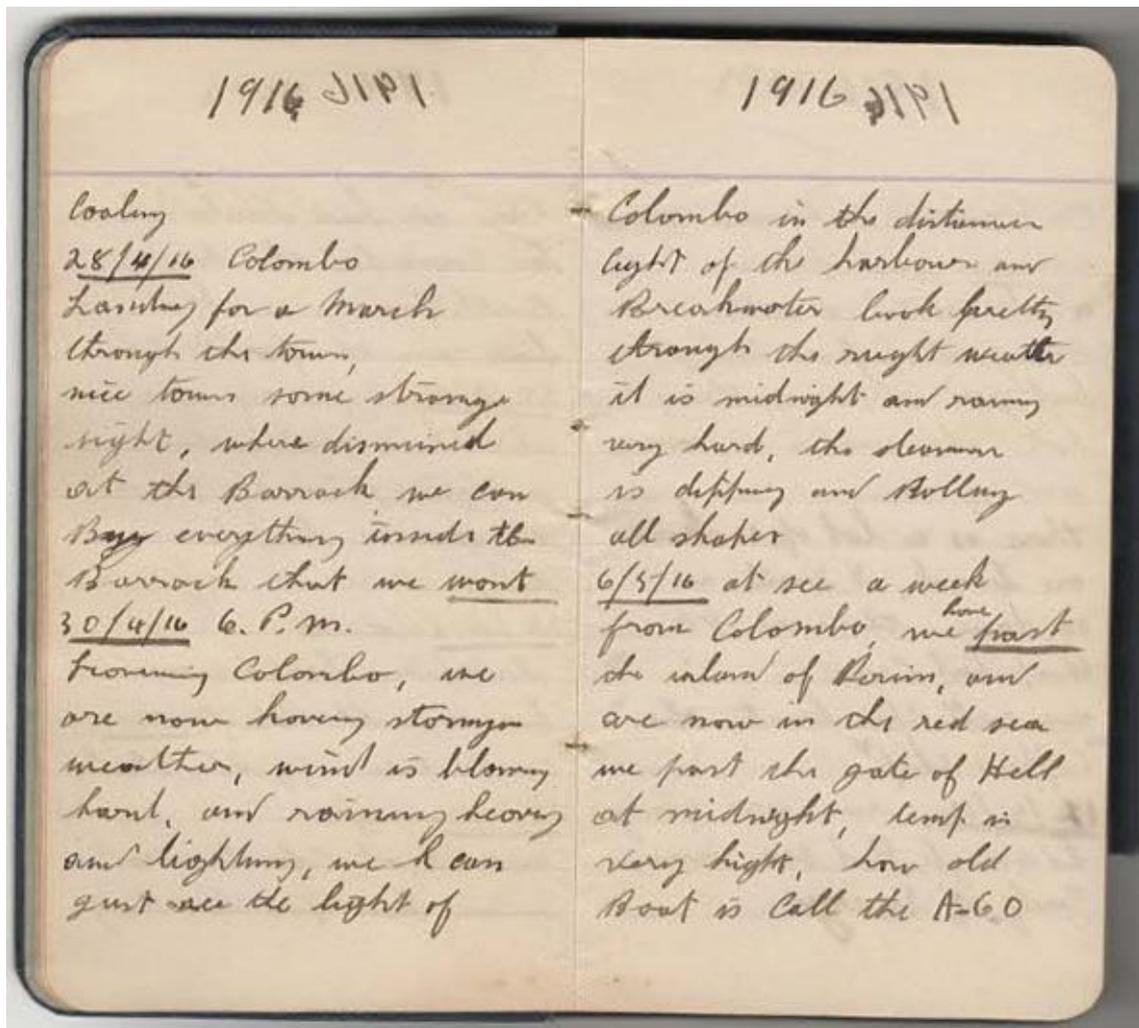
Troopship
2000 boys 21/4/16
Pte Joseph Rosenthal
AAMC

Dear Mum
This is the ship I
Left West Australia
In
Joe



1916	1916
<p>on board.</p> <p>18/4/16 At sea. 12 pm. I am not seasick yet. We are having lovely weather. Just going to retire after a long day work in the ship's hospital. Being on duty during the voyage. We have been given 2nd class cabins. The cabins we are in are four berths.</p> <p>19/4/16 Early morning one of my cabin mate plays of the violin and can play well. Jim Batey his name and some</p>	<p>boy. We have decided to toss coins for the top berth and every week I have won the first time.</p> <p>25/4/16 At sea. Still have good weather. Just going on duty, 2 am till 10 am hospital duty.</p> <p>26/4/16 At sea. Dropped a bottle overboard with note for Australia, off Colombo.</p> <p>26/4/16 Night. Arrived at Colombo port. We are here for two days</p>





coaling.

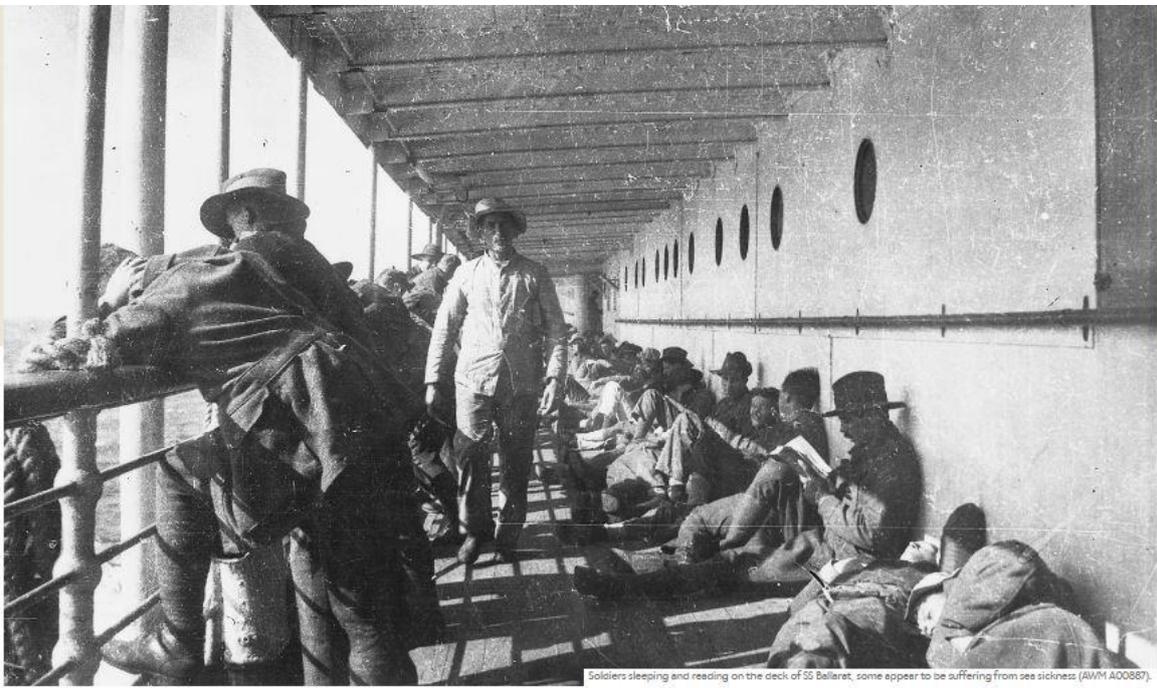
28/4/16 Colombo. Landing for a march through the town. Nice town. Some strange sights. When dismissed at the barrack we can buy everything inside the barrack that we want.

30/4/16 6 pm. Leaving Colombo. We are now having stormy weather, wind is blowing hard and raining heavy and lightning. We can just see the lights of

Colombo in the distance. Light of the harbour and breakwater. Looks pretty through the night weather. It is midnight and raining very hard. The steamer is dipping and rolling all shapes.

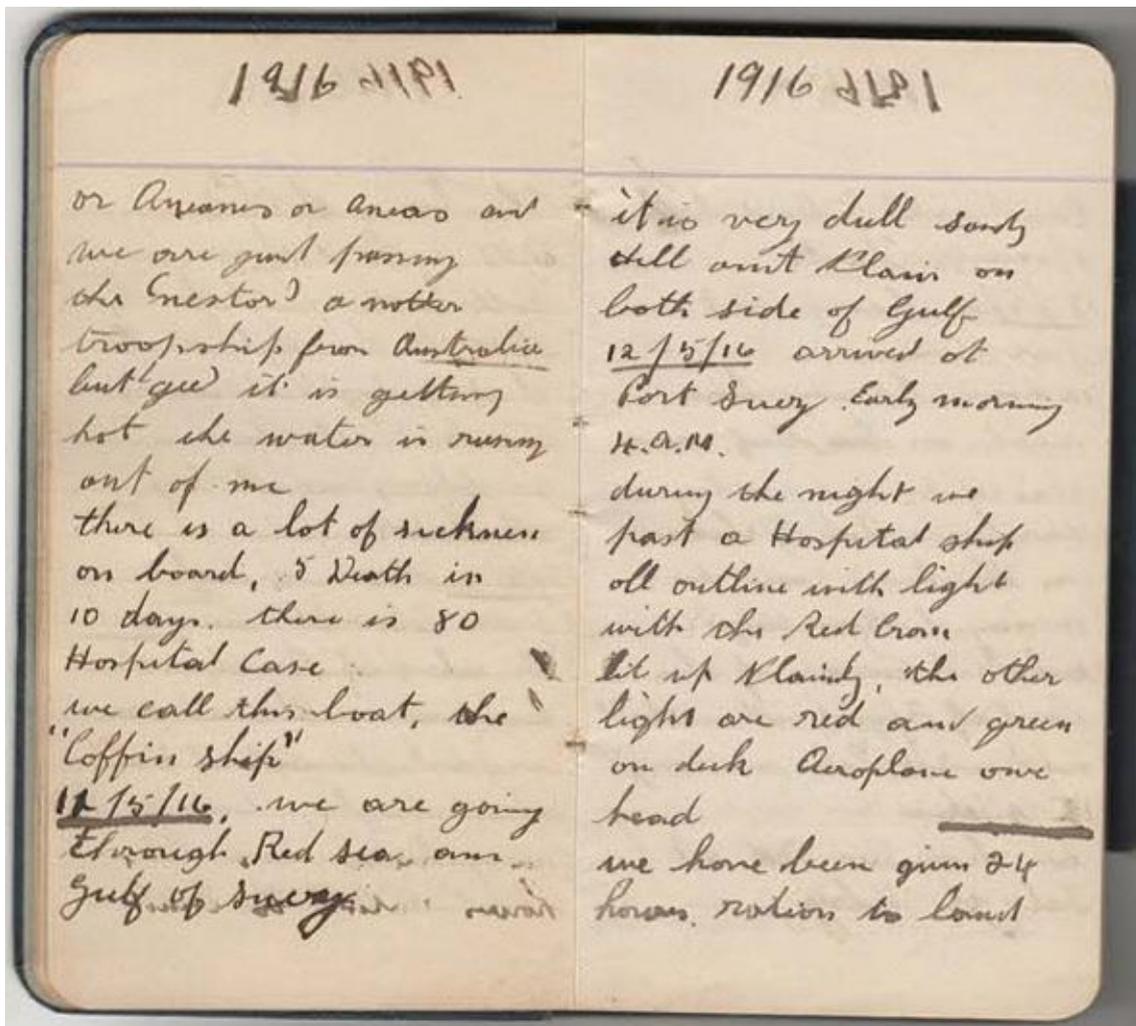
6/5/16 At sea. A week from Colombo. We have past the island of Perim and are now in the Red Sea. We past the Gates of Hell¹ at midnight. Temperature is very high. Our old boat is called the A-60

¹ The straits of Bab-el-Mandeb is sometimes referred as the Gates of Hell. The strait is the narrows at the southern end of the Red Sea between Yemen and Djibouti where both shores can be seen.



Soldiers sleeping and reading on the deck of SS Bellaree, some appear to be suffering from sea sickness (AWM A00867).

"At Sea" - Typical life aboard a troopship (SJMCI)



or Aneas or Anas and we are just passing the "Nestor"¹ another troopship from Australia but gee it is getting hot the water is running out of me. There is a lot of sickness on board. 5 deaths in 10 days. There is 80 hospital case. We call this boat the "Coffin Ship".

11/5/16 We are going through Red sea and Gulf of Suez.

It is very dull sandy hill and plain on both side of Gulf.

12/5/16 Arrived at Port Suez early morning 4 am.

During the night we past a hospital ship all outline with light with the Red Cross lit up plainly. The other lights are red and green on deck. Aeroplane overhead.

We have been given 24 hours rations to land

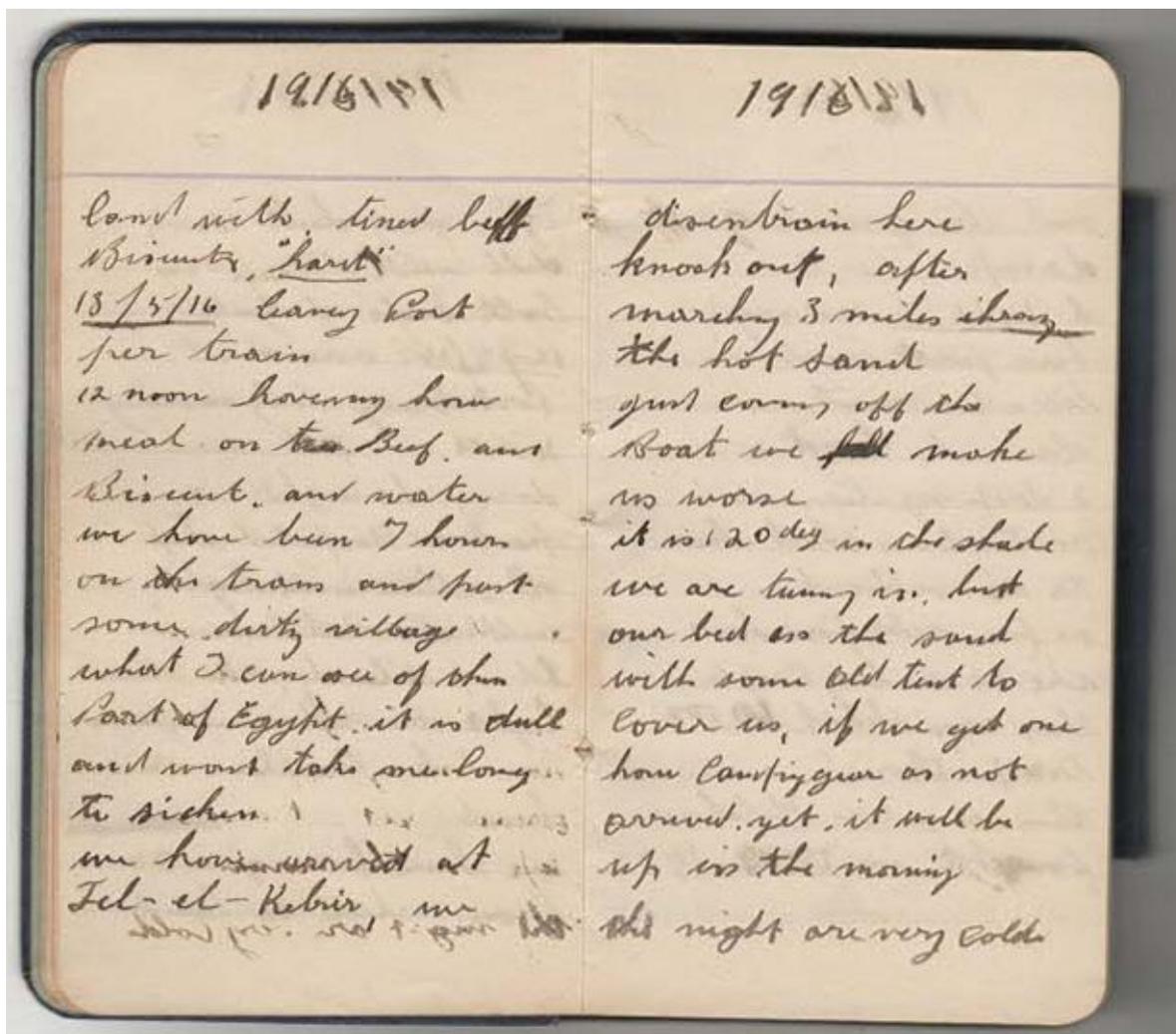
¹ The tss *Nestor* was a similar size ship to the *Aneas* and known as HMAT *Nestor* A71.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

C00207

"We have arrived at Tel-el-Kebir Camp" (AWM)



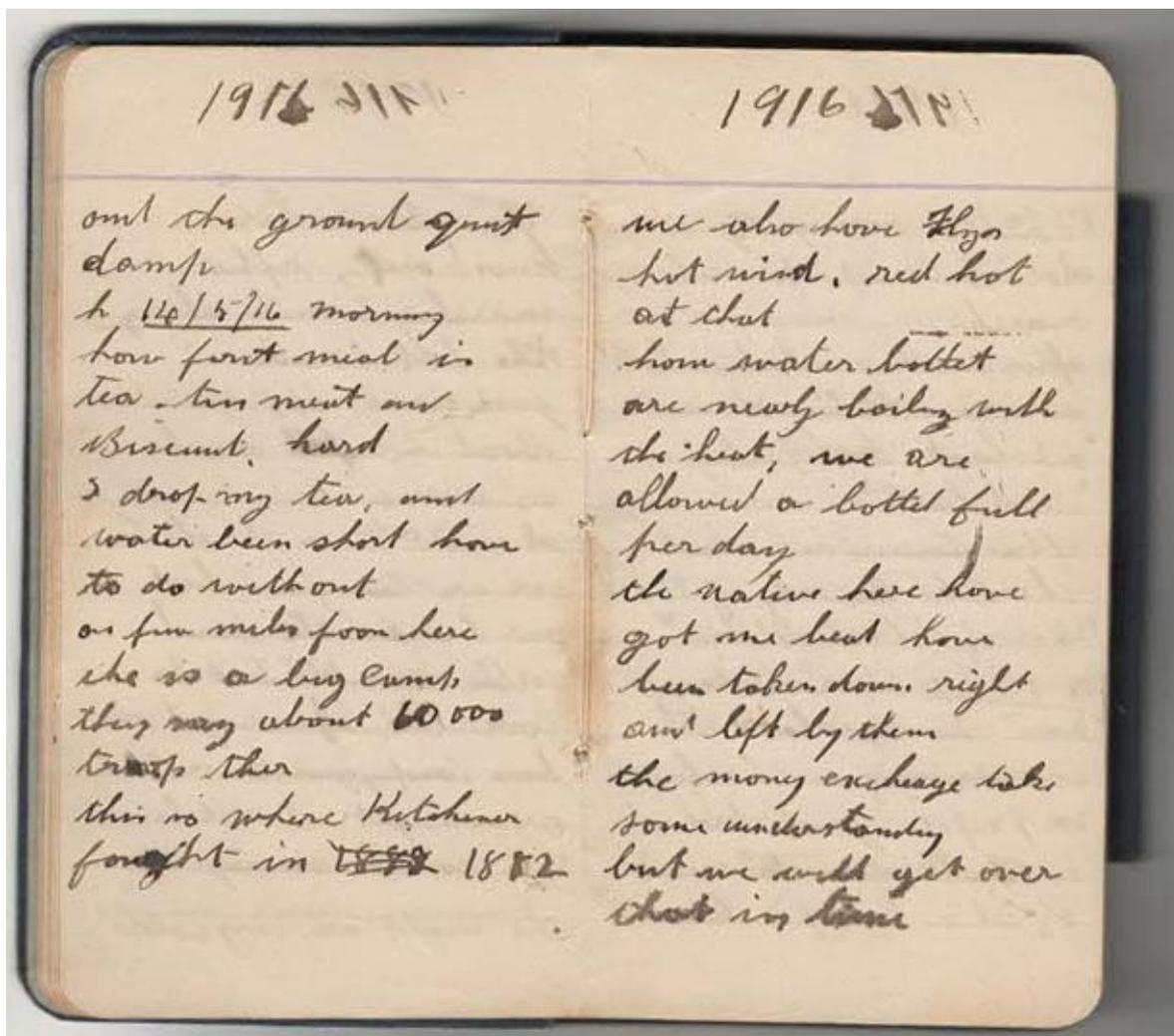
Land with tinned beef biscuits "hard".
13/5/16 Leaving port per train. 12 noon.
 Having our meal of beef and biscuit and water.
 We have been 7 hours on the train and past
 some dirty villages. What I can see of this part
 of Egypt it is dull and won't take one long to
 sicken.
 We have arrived at Tel-el-Kebir¹. We

disentrain here. Knock out after marching 3
 miles in the hot sand. Just coming off the boat
 [makes] us [feel] worse. It is 120 deg in the
 shade. We are turning in but our bed is the
 sand with some old tent to cover us, if we get
 one hour. Our camping gear has not arrived
 yet. It will be up in the morning. The nights
 are very cold

¹ From Wikipedia - During the Gallipoli landings and the Sinai and Palestine Campaign of the First World War, Tel-El-Kebir was a training centre for the First Australian Imperial Force reinforcements, No 2 Australian Stationary Hospital, and also a site of a large prisoner of war camp.



Battle of Tel-el-Kebir. Painting by Alphonse-Marie-Adolphe de Neuville (UNK)



and the ground quite damp.

14/5/16 Morning. Our first meal is tea, tin meat and biscuit – hard. I drop my tea and water been short have to do without. A few miles from here there is a big camp. They say about 60,000 troops there.

This is where Kitchener fought in ~~1882~~ 1882¹.

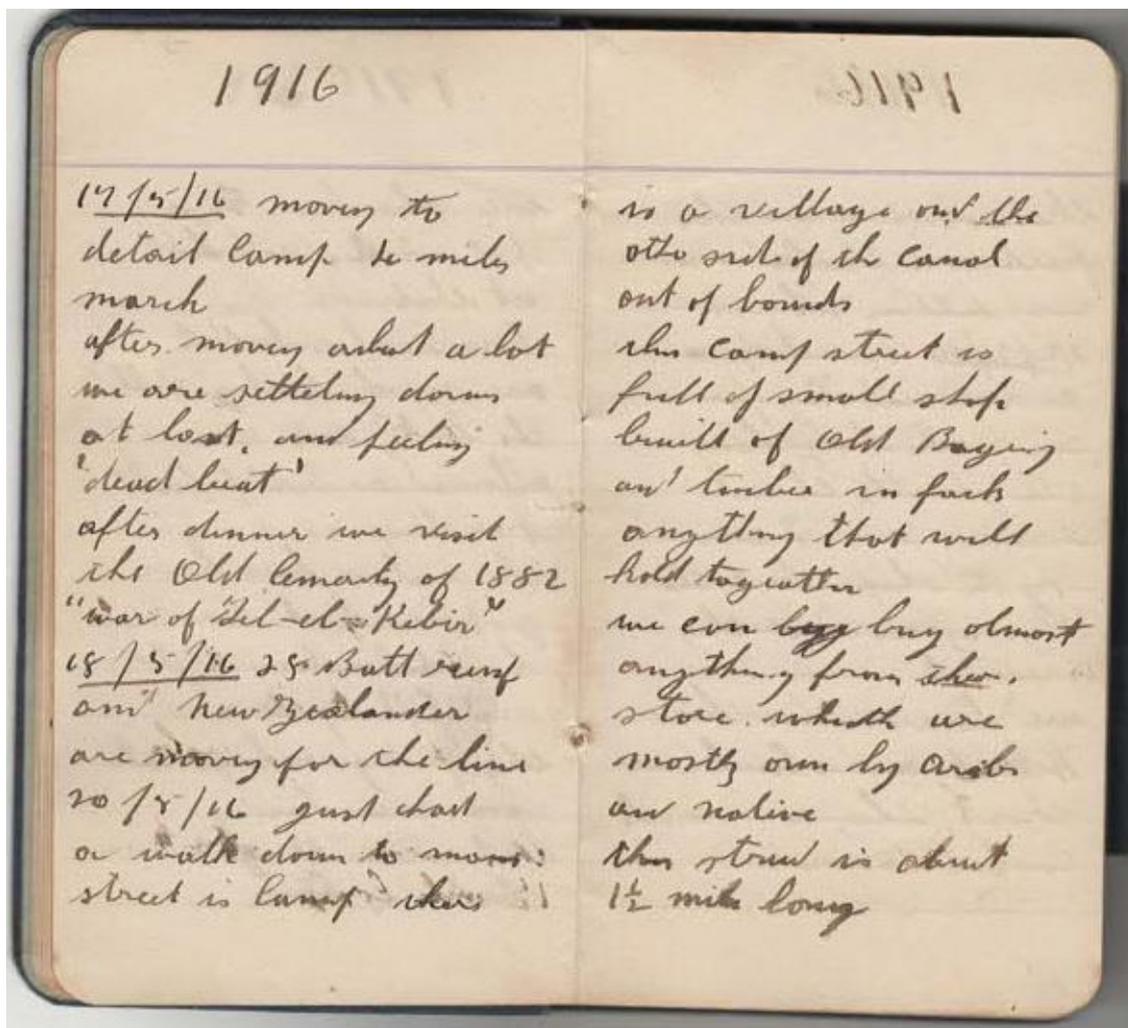
We also have Flys [sic] hot wind, red hot at that.

Our water bottles are nearly boiling with the heat. We are allowed a bottle full per day. The natives here have got me beat. Have been taken down right and left by them. The money exchange takes some understanding but we will get over that in time.

¹ Joseph is referring to the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir where the British defeated an Egyptian force on 13 September 1882 which led to the occupation of Egypt by the British until the Suez Crisis of 1956.



"After dinner we visit the old cemetery of 1882" - Tel-el-Kebir 1882 (UNK)



17/5/16 Moving to detail camp 4 miles march. After moving about a lot we are settling down at last and feeling "dead beat". After dinner we visit the old cemetery¹ of 1882 "War of Tel-el-Kebir".

18/5/16 2nd Battalion reinforcement and New Zealander are moving for the line.

20/5/16 Just had a walk down to main street in camp. There

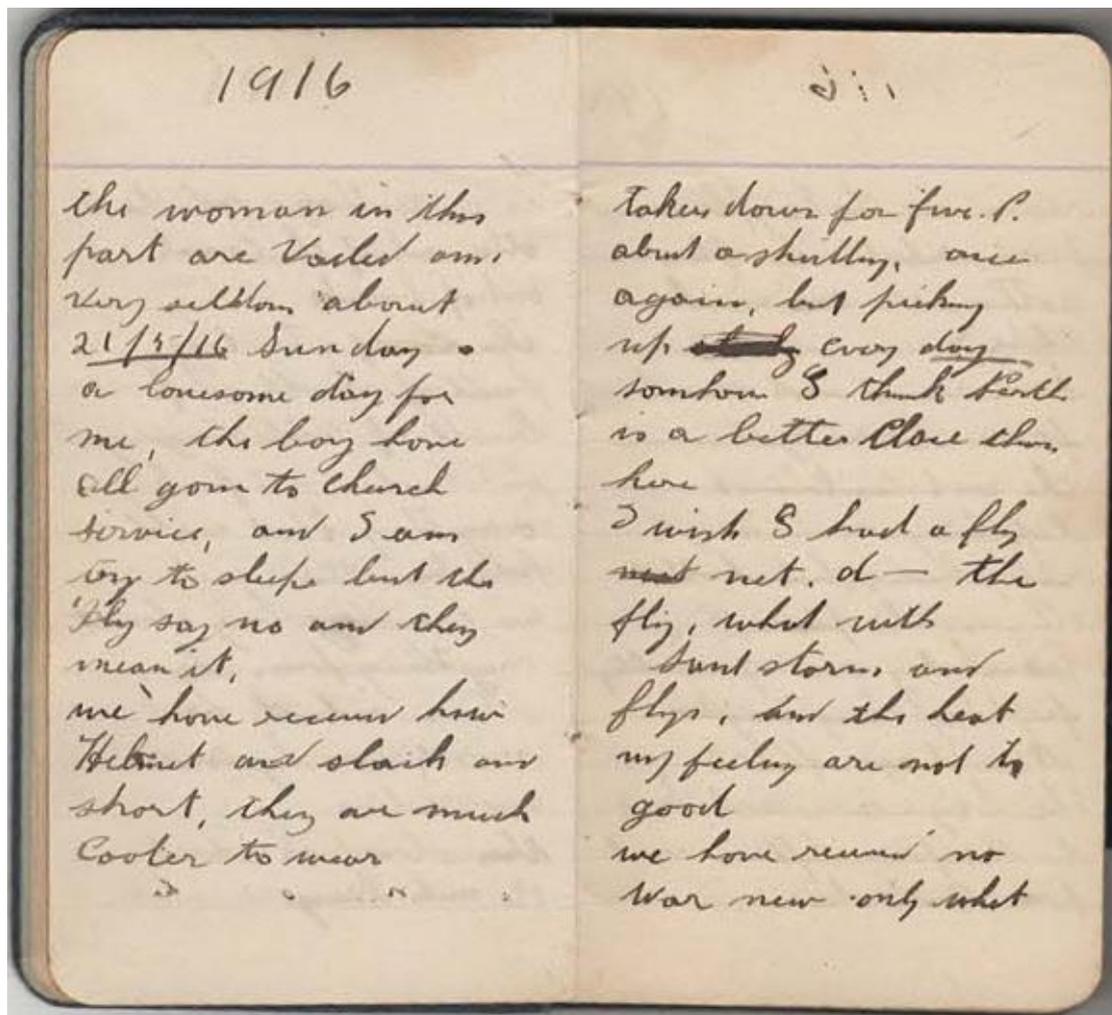
is a village out the other side of the canal out of bounds.

This camp street is full of small shops built of old bagging and timber in fact anything that will hold together. We can buy almost anything from this store which are mostly owned by Arabs and natives. This street is about 1 1/2 miles long.

¹ Where 9 officers and 48 men from the battle are buried.



Australian troops wearing shorts in Egypt. (FLR)

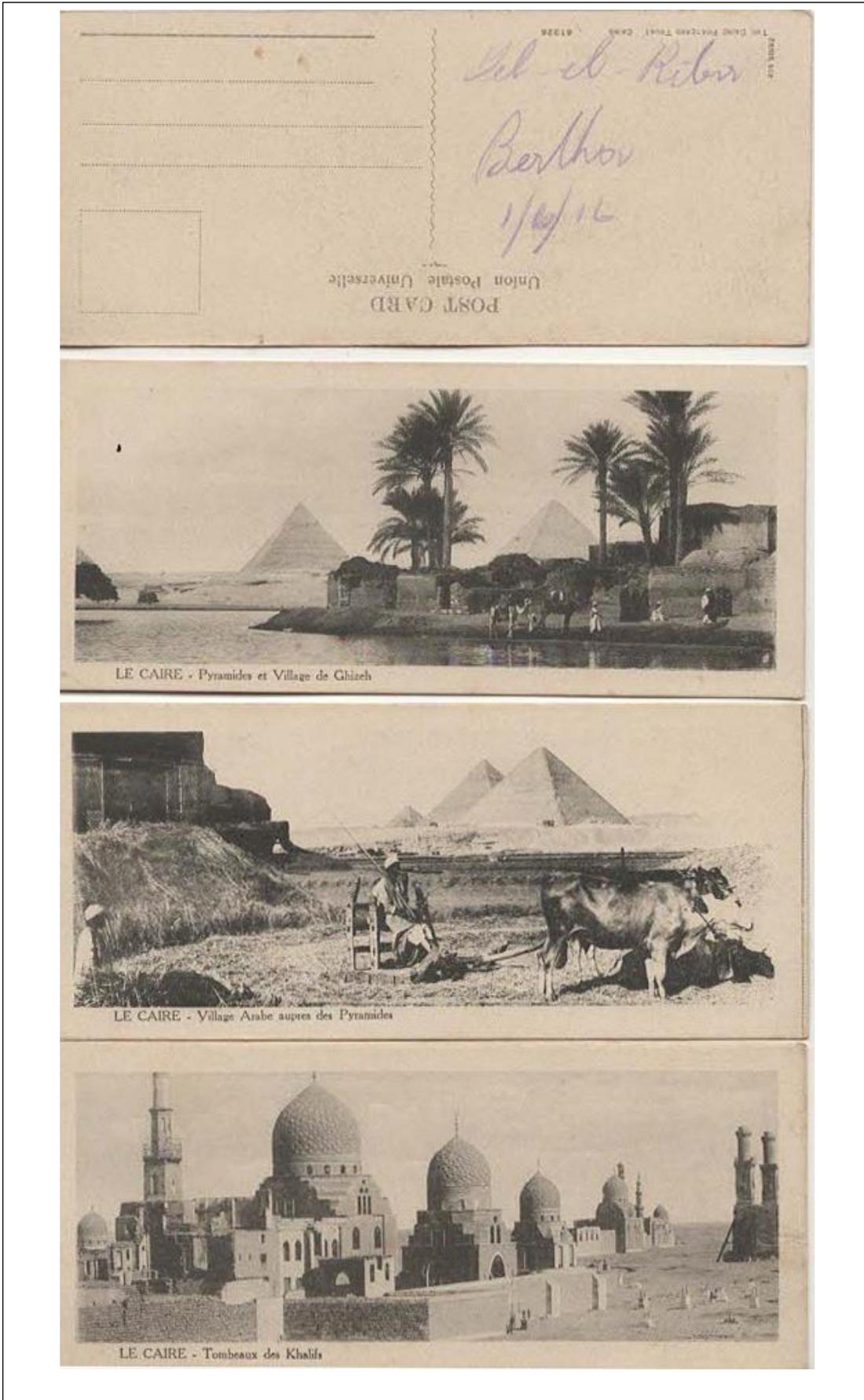


The women in this part are veiled and very seldom about.
21/5/16 Sunday. A lonesome day for me. The boys have all gone to church service and I am trying to sleep but the flies say “no” and they mean it.
 We have received our helmets and slack our short, they are much cooler to wear.

Taken down for five P about a shilling, once again but picking up every day.
 Somehow I think Perth is a better place than here. I wish I had a fly net. D---¹ the fly.
 What with sand storms and flies (sic) and the heat my feelings are not too good. We have received no war news only what

¹ Probably “damn” but a word that Joseph does not use!

Found in Joseph's writing box was a group of small postcards (eight in all) showing scenes from Egypt. On one he wrote, "Tel-el-Ribir [Tel-el-Kebir?], Bertha, 1/6/16". Herewith a sample of those photos.



19\16

received in the Egyptians
Time. That very often
nothing or six weeks
old.
Have received not much
from home yet
the wet canteen is
kept busy every night
pulling beer have bottles
all over the place.
Gambling and quarrelling
fighting every night
it is disgraceful
The boys are sent here
to reinforce different units
for Australia

but when we arrived
here we are sent into
detail camp and
sent to any unit after-
wards
There is about 600 AMC
details here
and they are sent away
daily to different units
25/5/16 9. A.M.
going on a march
to old trenches in the
desert. we have arrived
at the old trenches after
a 4 mile march
the trenches are nearly

received in the Egyptians time. That is very often nothing or six weeks old. Have received not much from home yet. The wet canteen is kept busy every night pulling beer have bottles all over the place. Gambling and quarrelling, fighting every night. It is disgraceful. The boys are sent here to reinforce different units for Australia

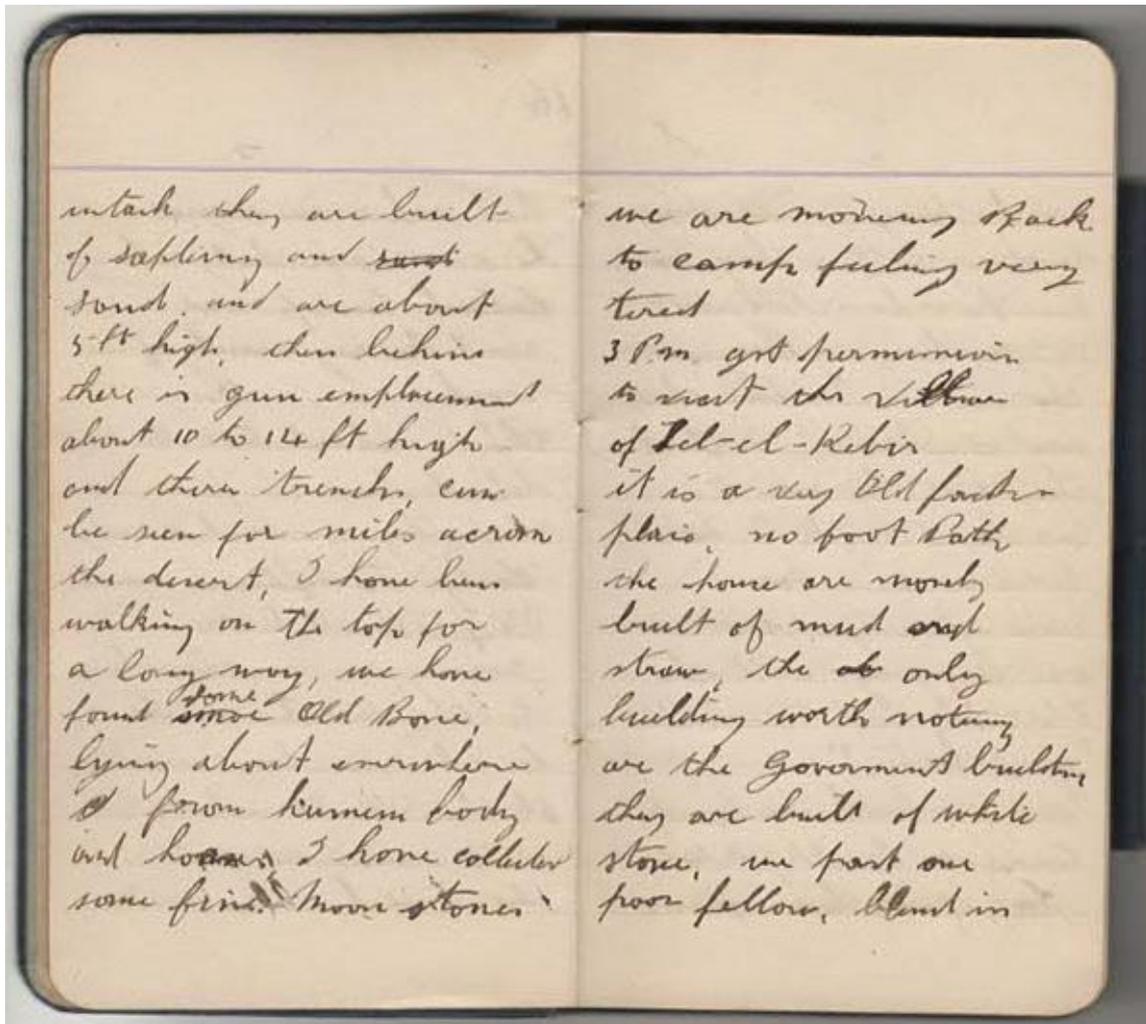
but when we arrived here we are sent into detail camp and sent to any unit afterwards. There are about 600 AMC details here and they are sent away daily to different units. 25/5/16 9am. Going on a march to old trenches in the desert. We have arrived at the old trenches after a 4 mile march. The trenches are nearly

Postcard: 'Tel-El-Kebir' Page 2 of three page letter, Tom Cross, 1916



TEL-EL-KEBIR

"Got permission to visit the village" - Sketch of Tel-el-Kebir village (II)



intact. They are built of sapling and sand and are about 5ft high. Then behind there is gun emplacement about 10 to 14ft high and these trenches can be seen for miles across the desert. I have been walking on the top for a long way. We have found some ~~some~~ Old Bone, lying about ~~everywhere~~ from human body and horses. I have collected some fine moon stones.

We are moving back to camp feeling very tired. 3pm. Got permission to visit the village of Tel-el-Kebir. It is a very old French place. No foot path. The houses are mostly built of mud and straw. The only building worth noting are the government buildings. They are built of white stone. We past one poor fellow, blind in

Embarkation Roll

Précised from AWM:

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL RCDIG1067626

The series comprises printed nominal rolls of individual Australian Imperial Force units and reinforcements as they embarked from Australia during the First World War. The rolls are usually referred to as embarkation rolls, or nominal rolls as at embarkation and were printed by the Government Printer, Albert J. Mullett in Melbourne.

During the war the original embarkation rolls seem to have been used primarily by the branch pay offices, and post war were possibly used by Base Records as the basis for medal rolls and honours lists.

Unfortunately this copy from AWM is not very clear so elements of the relevant line (arrowed) is reproduced hereunder.

(EMBARKED AT FREMANTLE, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, PER H.M.A.T. A60 "ANEAS," 17th APRIL, 1916)

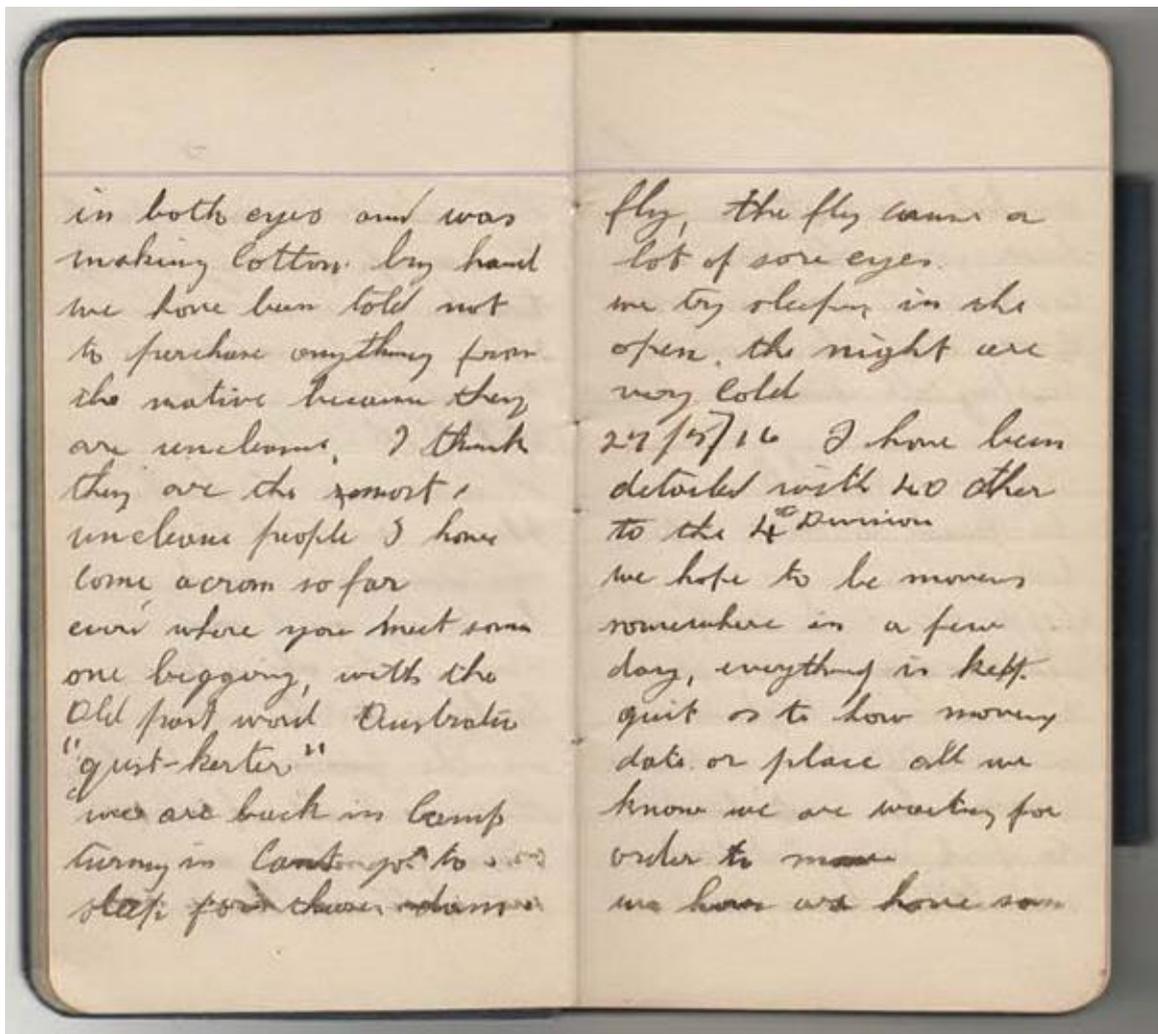
Regit. No.: 10385. Name (in full): Joseph Rosenthal. Rank: Private. Age: 23.
 Trade or Calling: Picture Framer. Married or Single: S.
 Address at Date of Enrolment: Perth, Western Australia. Next of Kin and Address: Mother Mrs B Rumpf 272 William Street Perth, Western Australia. Religion: Jewish

Nominal Roll

From AWM

2705	Cpl.	ROSENKJAR	George William	27th A.S.C.	22.4.16.	R.T.A.	23.6.19.
558	Pte.	ROSENTHAL	Albert	43rd Battalion	22.1.16.	R.T.A.	8.1.19.
641	Pte.	ROSENTHAL	Alfred Charles	5th M.G.Bn.	1.10.14.	R.T.A.	24.8.18.
50	Pte.	ROSENTHAL	Arthur Kingston	L.H.Fld.Amb.	15.9.14.	D.O.D.	20.9.15.
171	Dvr.	ROSENTHAL	Arthur Robert	5th Pioneers	20.7.15.	R.T.A.	12.12.18.
	Major.Gen.	ROSENTHAL	Charles	1st Div.Arty.			
			("KOB")-("CMG")-("DSO")-("DCL")-("OB")-("LH")				
	Capt.	ROSENTHAL	Cecil Phillip	A.M.C.		R.T.A.	1.7.19.
3618	Pte.	ROSENTHAL	Cyril Henry	22nd Battalion	6.5.16.	D.O.D.	4.9.18.
10385	Pte.	ROSENTHAL	Joseph	2nd Fld.Amb.	25.1.16.	R.T.A.	1.3.19.
7780	Pte.	ROSENTHAL	Morris	A.Vet.Hos.	23.3.17.	R.T.A.	19.10.18.
12056	Pte.	ROSENTHAL	Norman	9th Fld.Amb.	31.1.16.	R.T.A.	10.4.19.
	Lieut.	ROSENTHAL	Samuel	53th Battalion		K.I.A.	28.9.17.
116	Sgt.	ROSENTHAL	Samuel	11th Battalion	12.1.15.		
2047	Pte.	ROSENTHALL	Jack Lewis	12th L.H.	21.11.16.	R.T.A.	20.7.19.
3434	Pte.	ROSENTHALTER	Emil Robert	4th M.G.Bn.	24.10.16.	R.T.A.	2.1.19.
2236	Pte.	ROSENWAY	Charles Henry	19th Battalion	7.1.16.	R.T.A.	3.5.17.

The nominal roll was compiled in October 1919, probably at Australian Imperial Force (AIF) Administrative Headquarters, London as a record of members of the AIF who served overseas during the 1914-18 War. Note Joseph's brother Morris.



in both eyes and was making cotton by hand. We have been told not to purchase anything from the natives because they are unclean. I think they are the most unclean people I have come across so far. Even where you meet someone begging, with the old port word Australia "quest - karter". We are back in camp turning in. Can't get to sleep for the dam

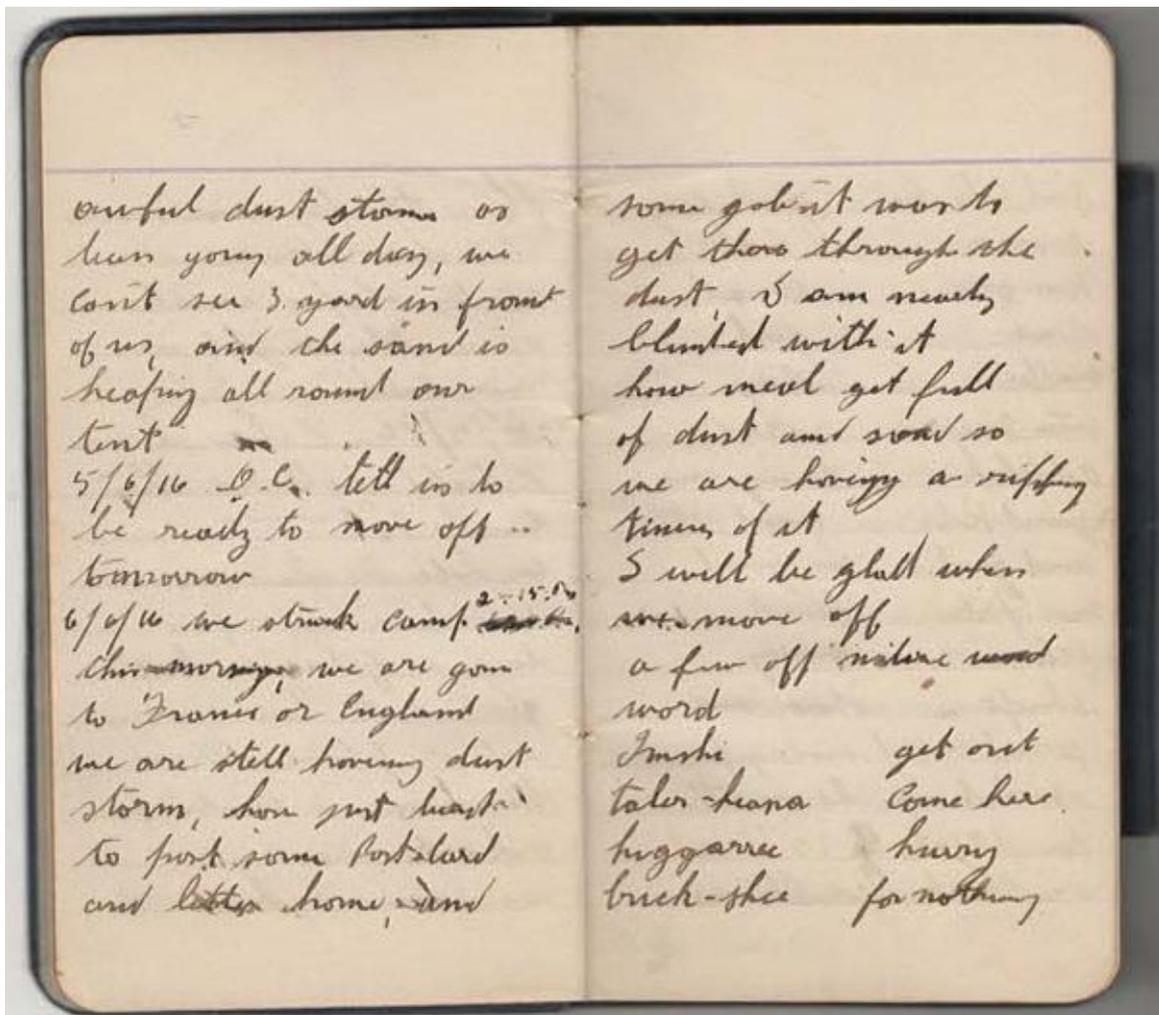
fly. The fly causes a lot of sore eyes. We try sleeping in the open. The nights are very cold. 27/5/16 I have been detailed with 40 others to the 4th Division. We hope to be moving somewhere in a few days. Everything is kept quiet as to our moving date or place. All we know we are waiting for orders to move. We have a home soon.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P00702.011

Australian soldiers in dust storm in Egypt in 1915. (AWM)



Awful dust storm has been going all day. Can't see 3 yards in front of us and the sand is heaping all round our tent.
5/6/16 OC tells us to be ready to move off tomorrow.
6/6/16 We struck camp 2-15am this morning. We are going to France or England. We are still having dust storms. Have just about to post some postcard and letter home and

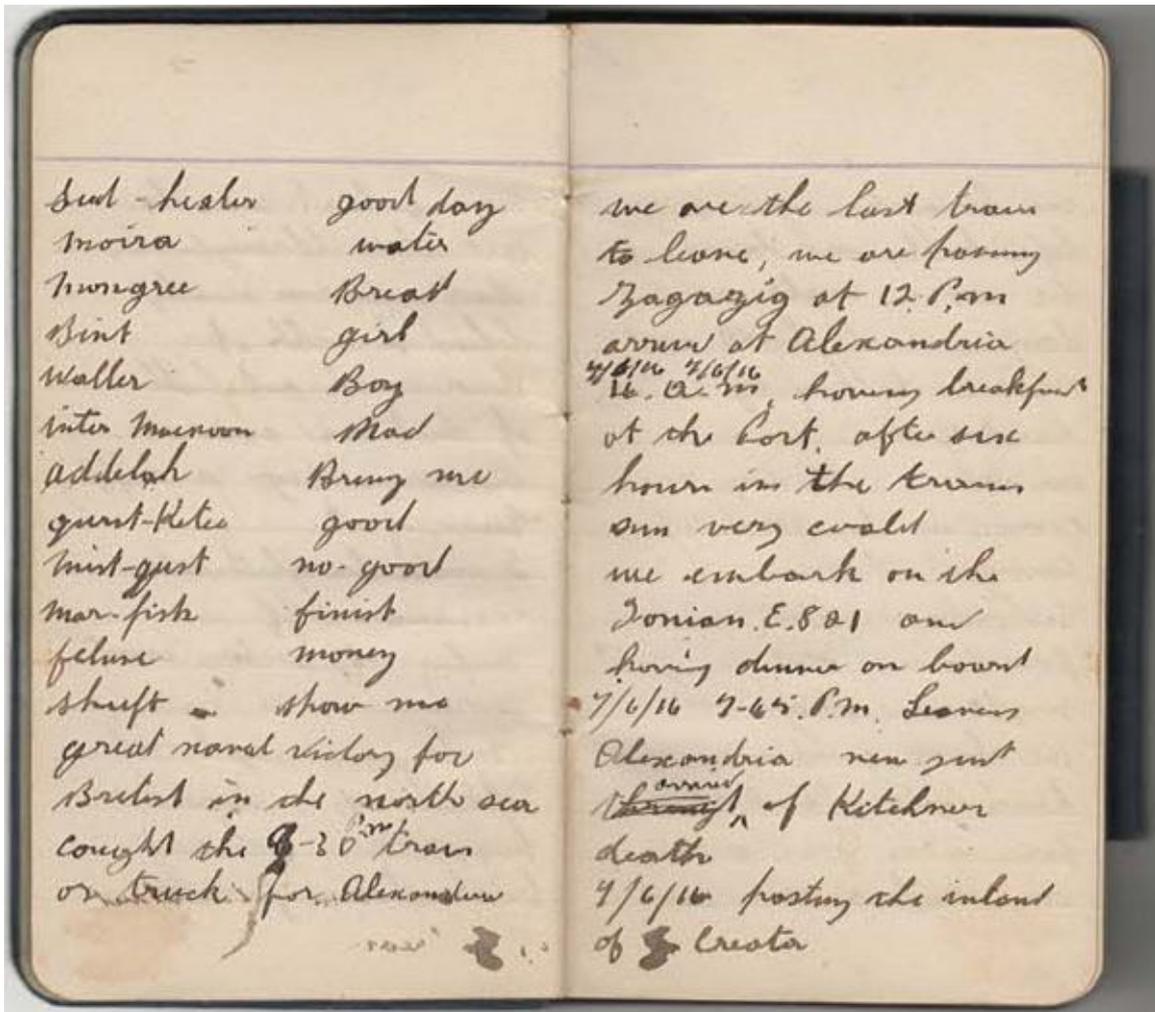
some job it was to get though through the dust. I am nearly blinded with it. How much get full of dust and some we are happy a ripping time of it. I will be glad when we move off. A few off native words¹

Imshi	Get out
Takir heena	Come here
Higgarie	Hairy
Buck shee	For nothing

¹ The words in this table (and over the page) are best interpretations from Joseph's writing.



HMT Ionian E821 owned by Allen Line 8,265 tons. (BWW)



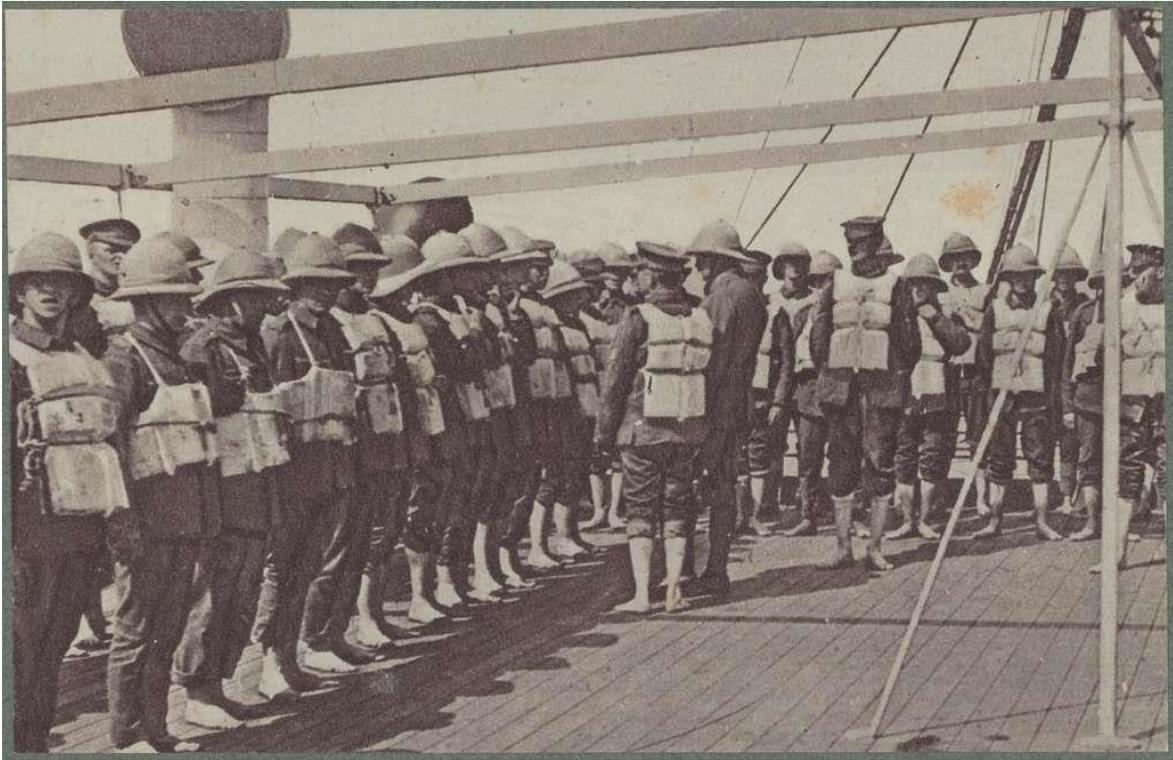
Seed healer	Good day
Moira	Water
Morgre	Bread
Bint	Girl
Waller	Boy
inter macnoon	Mad
Addelah	Bring me
Quest katee	Good
Mist quest	No good
Mar fish	Finish
Feline	Money
Shift	Show me

Great naval victory for the British in the North Sea¹. Caught the 9-30pm train or truck to Alexandria.

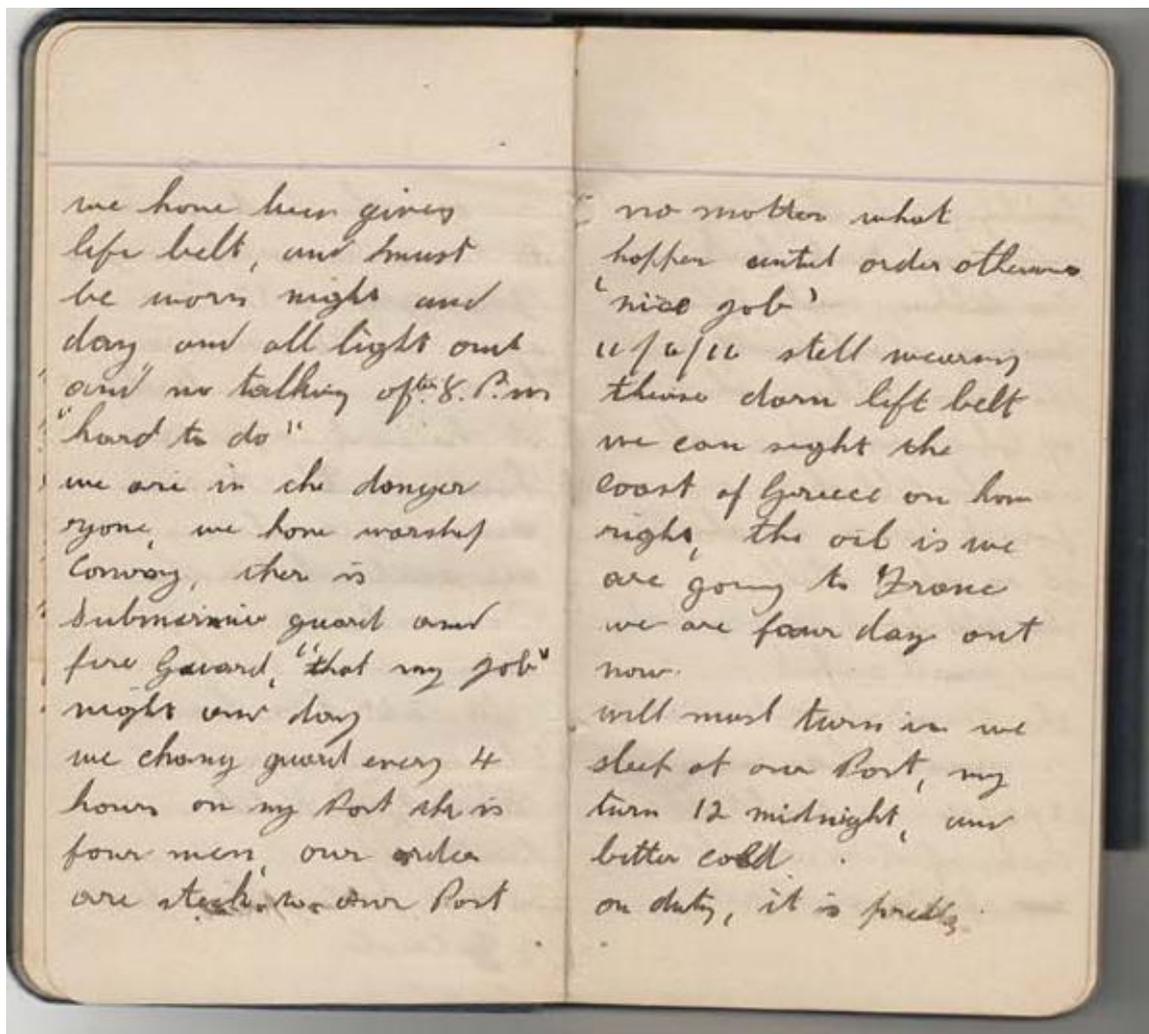
We are the last train to leave. We are passing Zagazig at 12pm. Arrive at Alexandria. 7/6/16 4am. Having breakfast at the port. After six hours in the train am very cold. We embark on the *Ionian*² E821. Am having dinner on board. 7-45pm Leaving Alexandria now. Just heard of Kitchener's death. 9/6/16 Passing the island of Crete.

¹ He is referring to the Battle of Jutland fought between 31 May and 1 June 1916 off the North Sea coast of the Jutland peninsula, Denmark, between the two great navies of Britain and Germany.

² Built 1901, owned by the Allen Line and used on UK - Canada routes until requisitioned as a troop ship in August 1914. Initially used on the UK - Bombay route but in 1915, also used to transport wounded from Gallipoli to Alexandria. She carried defensive armament.



Typical lifeboat drill on a WW1 troopship (UNK)



We have been given life belts and must be worn night and day and all lights out and no talking after 8pm. "Hard to do". We are in the danger zone. We have warship convoy. There is submarine guard and fire guard "that my job" night and day. We change guard every 4 hours on my post there are four men. Our orders are stick to own post

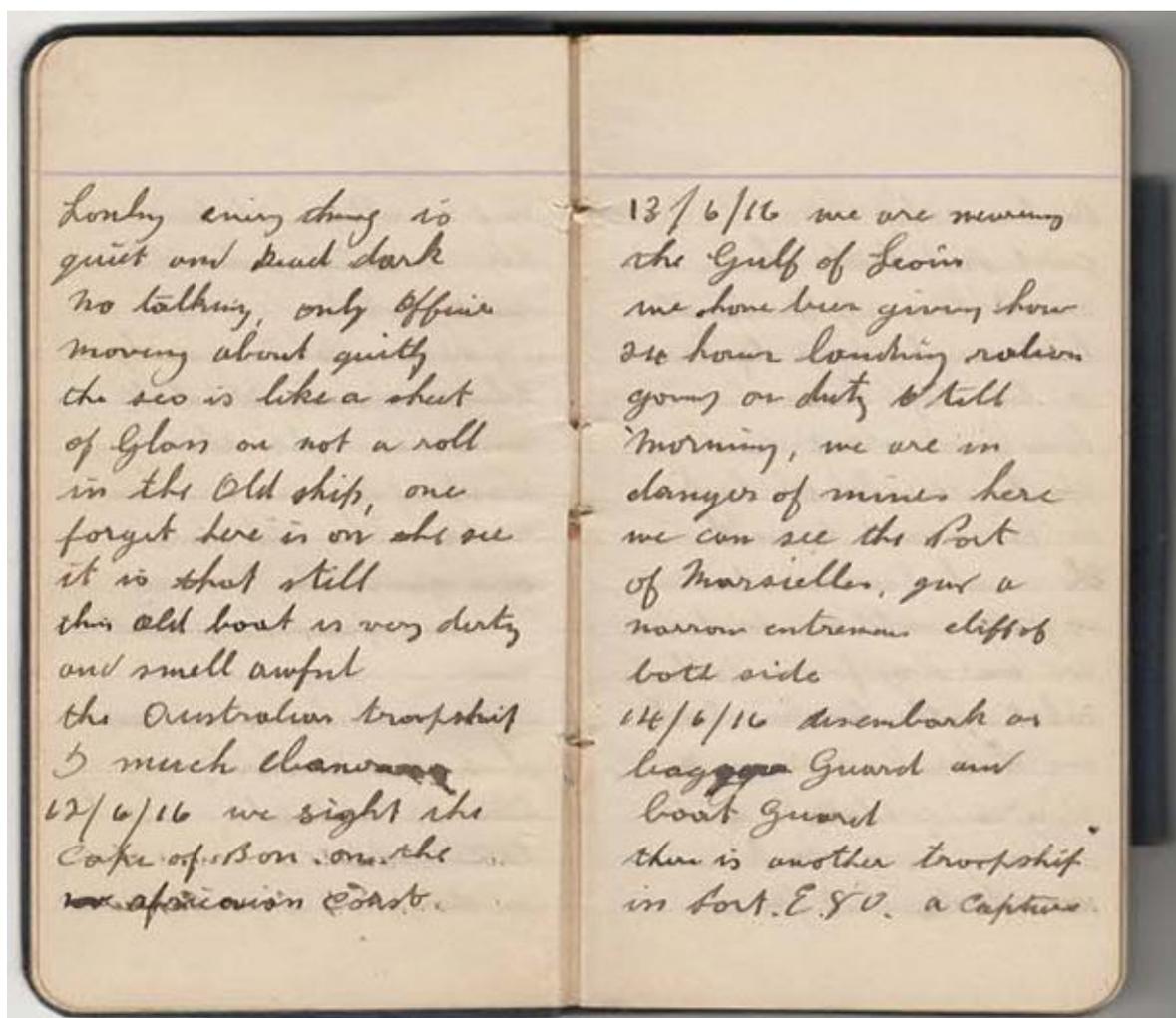
no matter what happens until ordered otherwise. "nice job". 11/6/16 Still wearing those darn life belt. We can sight the coast of Greece on our right. The oil is we are going to France. We are four days out now. Well must turn in. We sleep at our post. My turn 12 midnight and bitter cold. On duty. It is pretty



Edit & Rive

DÉFILÉ DES TROUPES BRITANNIQUES A MARSEILLE
Les Australiens

Australians marching through Marseille (UNK)



lonely. Everything is quiet and dead dark. No talking, only officers moving about quietly. The sea is like a sheet of glass and not a roll in the old ship. One forgets we're on the sea it is that still. The old boat is very dirty and smells awful. The Australians troopship is much cleaner.

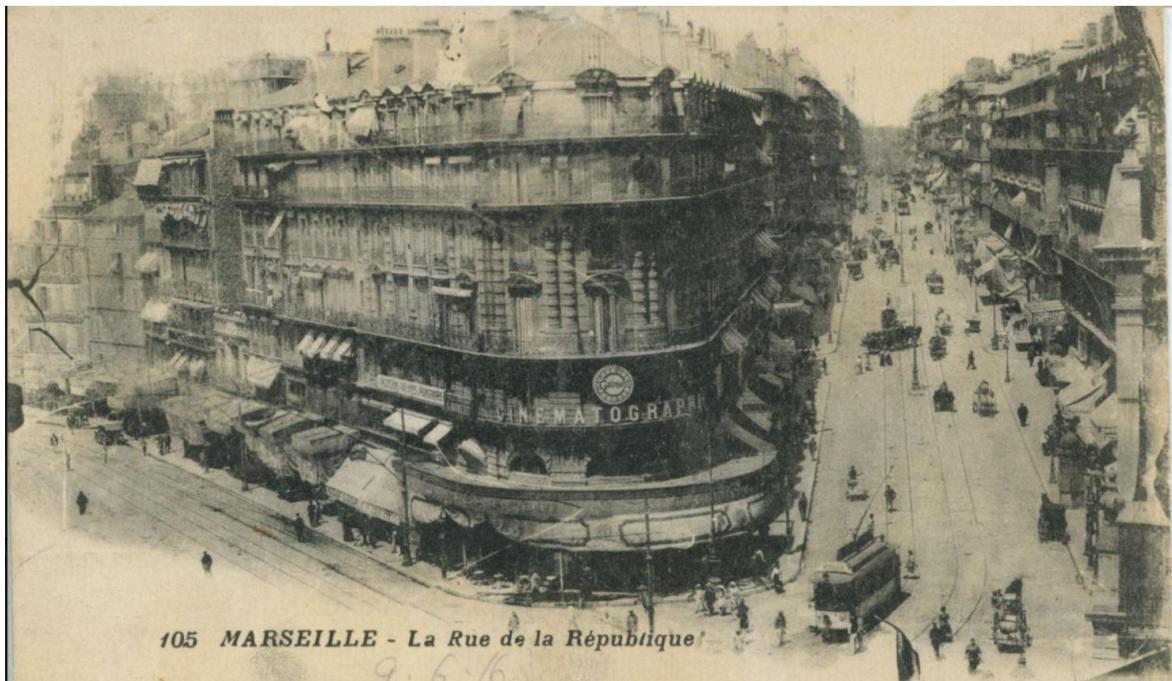
12/6/16 We sight the Cape of Bon on the African coast.

13/6/16 we are nearing the Gulf of Lions we have been given 24 hour landing rations going on duty till morning, we are in danger of mines here we can see the Port of Marseilles, got a narrow entrance cliffs both side

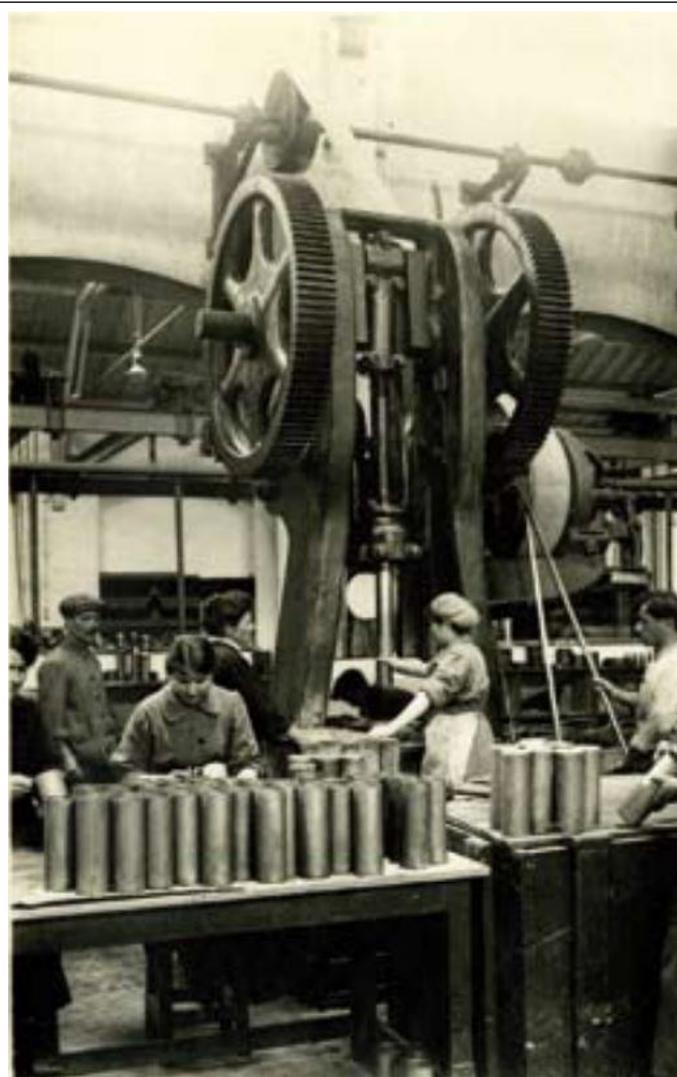
14/6/16 disembark on baggage Guard and boat Guard there is another troopship in port. E. 80. a capture.

13/6/16 We are nearing the Gulf of Lions. We have been given our 24 hour landing rations. Going on duty till morning. We are in danger of mines here. We can see the Port of Marseilles. Got a narrow entrance with cliffs on both sides.

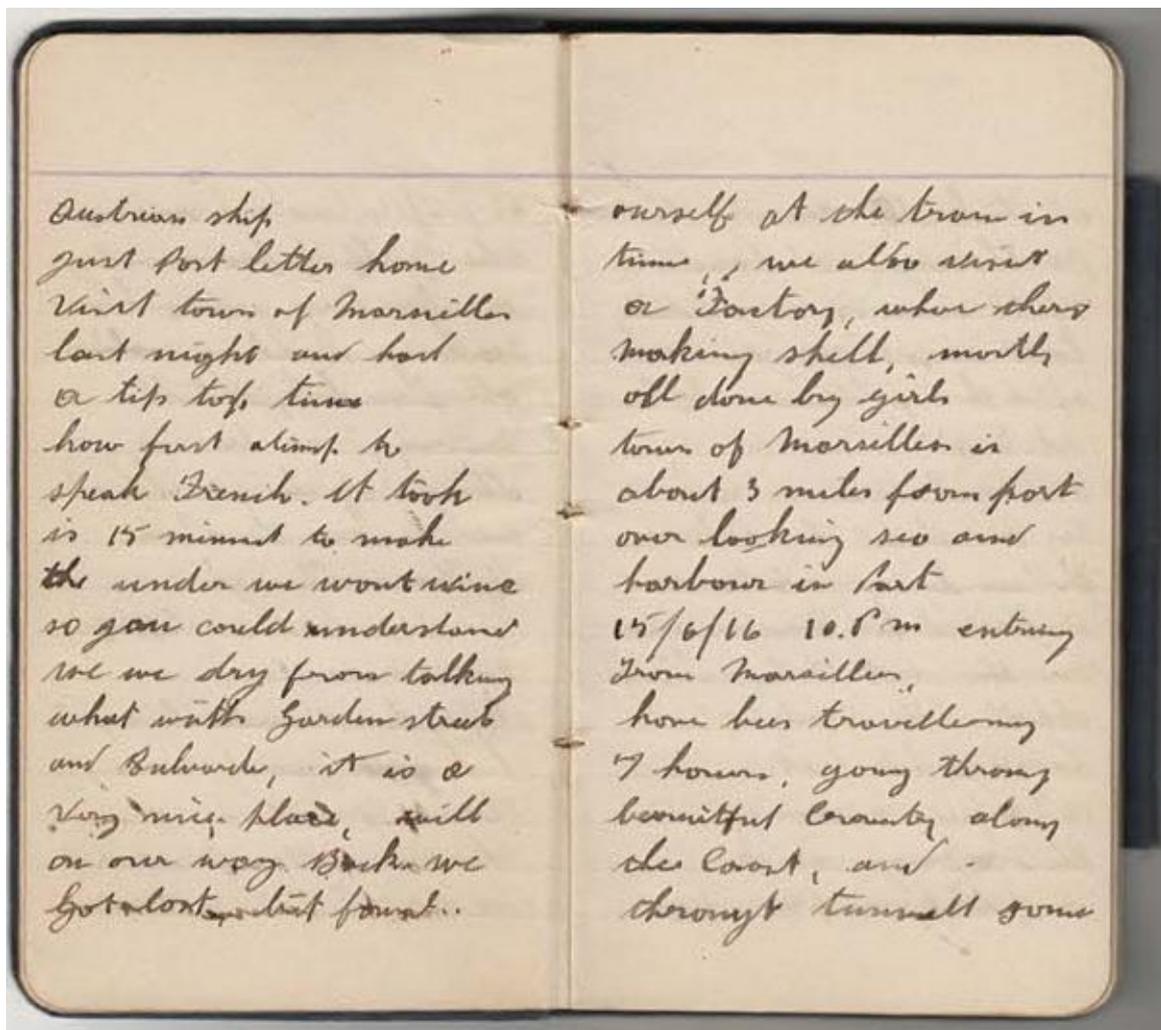
14/6/16 Disembarked. On baggage guard and boat guard. There is another troopship in port E80, a captive



Picture postcard of Marseille with date 9.6.16 (**UNK**)



"We also visited a factory where they were making shells, mostly all done by girls" (**UNK**)



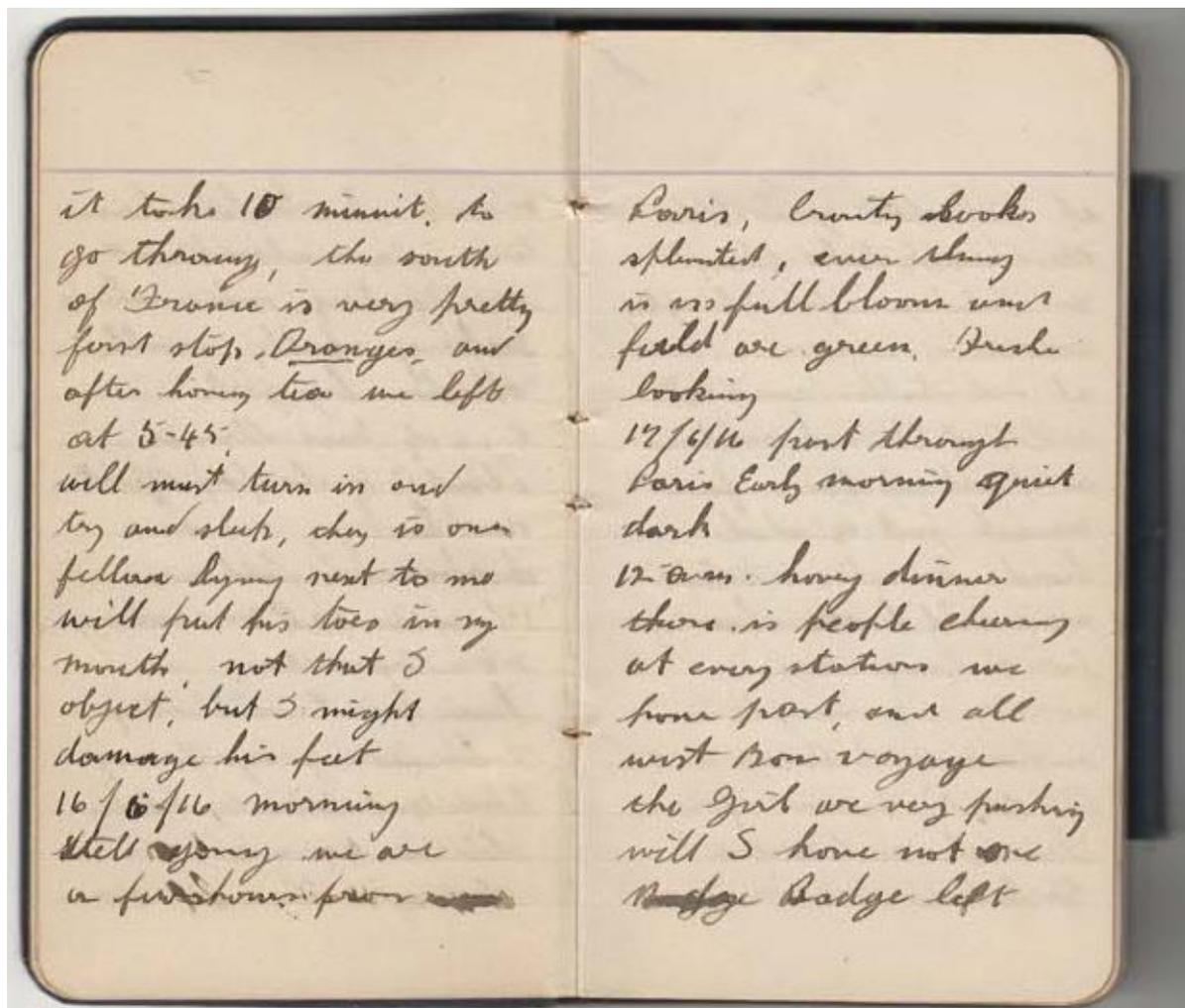
Austrian ship. Just posted letters home. Visit town of Marseilles last night and had a tip top time. Our first attempt to speak French. It took us 15 minutes to make them understand we want wine so you could understand we are dry from talking what with Garden streets and Boulevard, it is a very nice place. Well, on our way back we got lost but found

ourselves at the train in time. We also visited a factory where they were making shells, mostly all done by girls. Town of Marseilles is about 3 miles from port overlooking sea and harbour in port.

15/6/16 10pm. Entraining from Marseilles. Have been travelling for 7 hours. Going through beautiful country along the coast, and through tunnels some



Badge of the Australian Army Medical Corps with motto Paulatim – Little by Little.



it took 10 minutes to go through. The south of France is very pretty. First stop Oranges¹ and after having tea we left at 5-45.

Well must turn in and try and sleep. There is one fella lying next to me will put his toes in my mouth. Not that I object but I might damage his feet.

16/6/16 Morning still young. We are five hours from

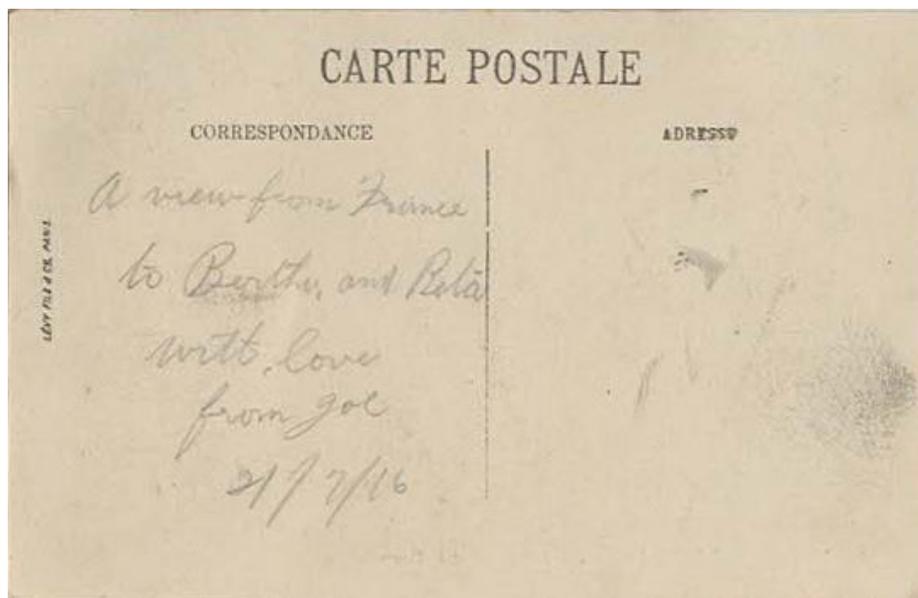
Paris. Country looks splendid. Everything is in full bloom and fields are green, fresh looking.

17/6/16 Past through Paris. Early morning, quite dark.

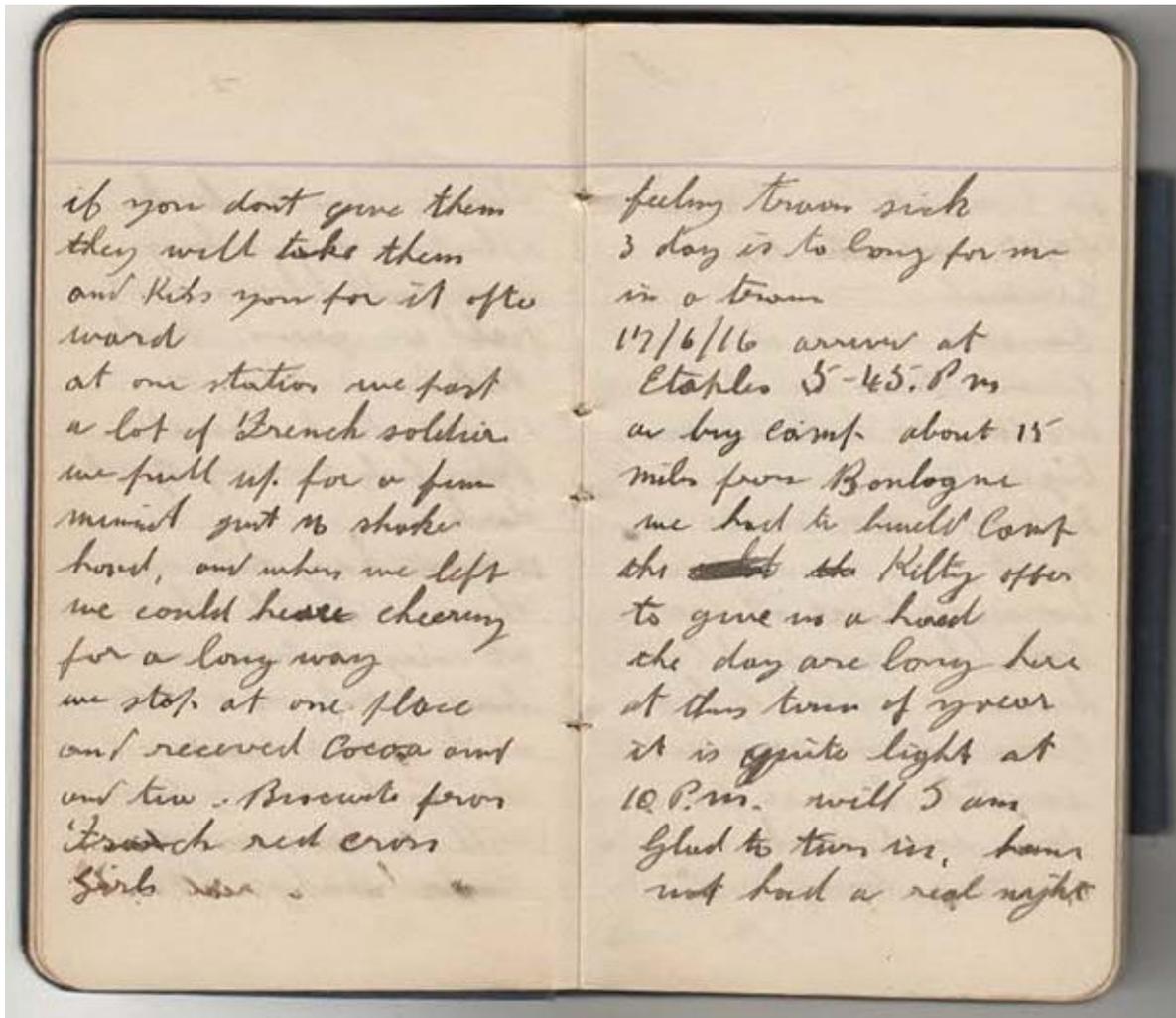
12am. Having dinner. There are people cheering at every station we come past and all wish bon voyage. The girls are very pushing well I have not one badge left.

¹ About 20 kms north of Avignon.

Post card sent to his sisters Bertha and Rita 21/7/16.



A view from France To Bertha and Rita With love From Joe 21/7/16	
--	--



If you don't give them they will take them and kiss you for it afterwards.

At one station we past a lot of French soldiers. We pulled up for a few minutes just to shake hands, and when we left we could hear cheering for a long way.

We stop at one place and received cocoa and tea. Biscuits from French Red Cross girls.

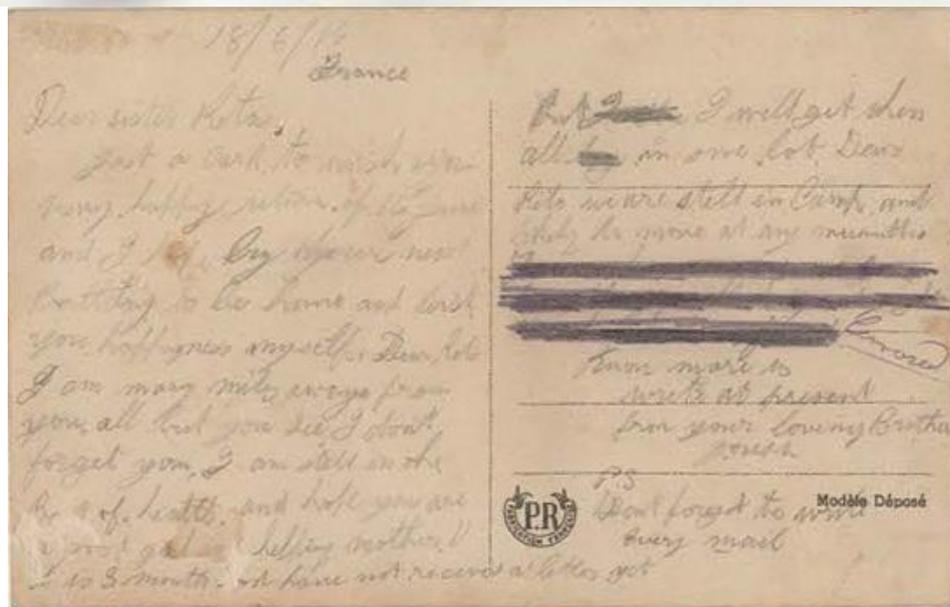
Feeling train sick. 3 days is too long for me in a train.

17/6/16 arrive at Etaples¹ 5-45pm. A big camp about 15 miles from Boulogne. We had to build camp though Kilty offered to give us a hand. The days are long here at this time of year. It is quite light at 10pm. Well I am glad to turn in.

Have not had a real night

¹ During the First World War, Etaples was a coastal fishing port situated on the North-East French coast, 15 miles south of Boulogne and was the main base camp for the British Army, as well as a major medical facility for wounded and sick troops. It had as many as 20 hospitals.

Post card sent to his sister Rita 18/6/16.

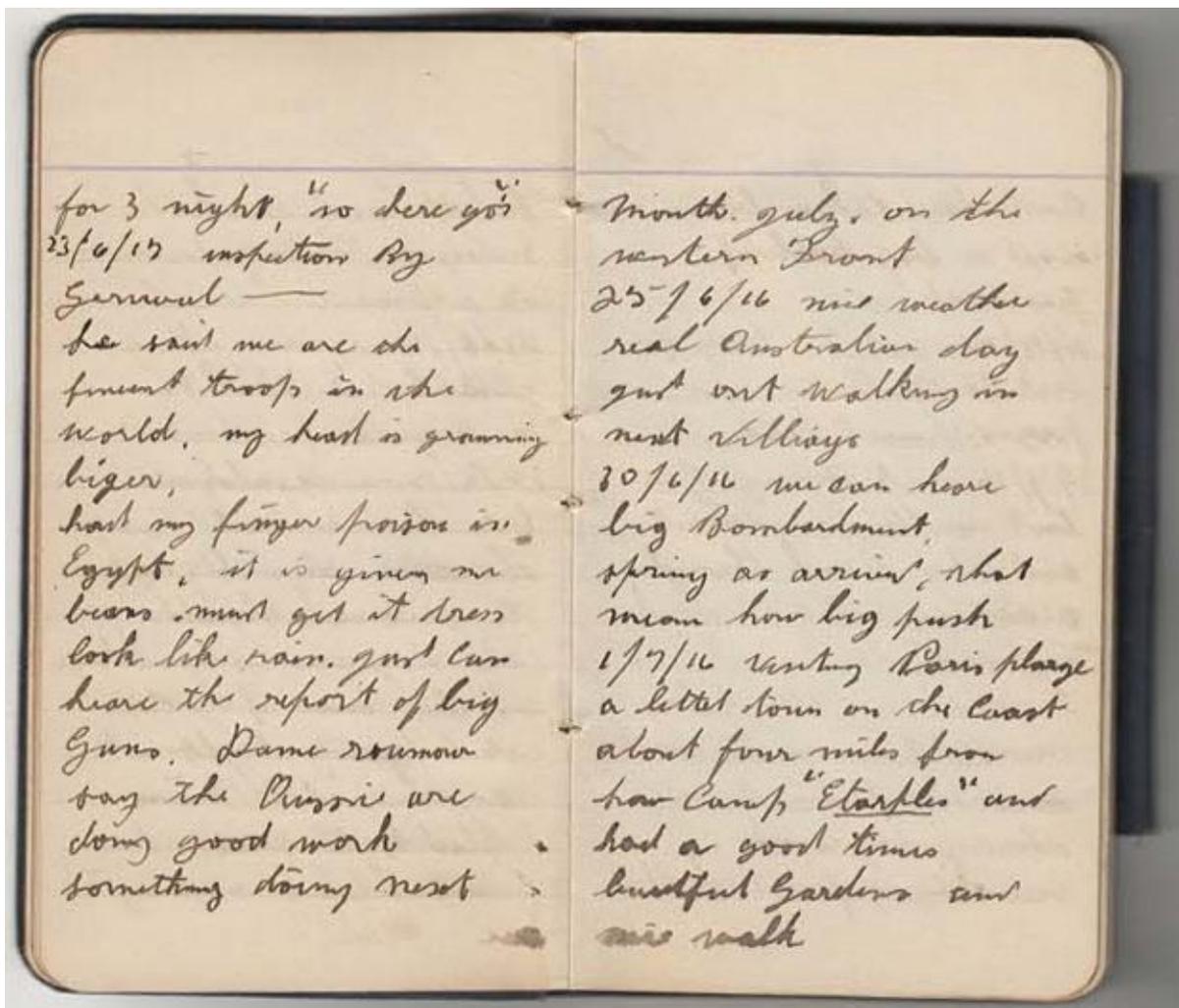


18/6/16 France
Dear sister Rita
Just a card to wish you happy returns of 16th June and I hope by your next birthday to be home and wish you happiness myself. Dear Rita I am many miles away from you, all but you see, I don't forget you. I am still in the best of health and hope your are a good girl and helping mother. It is 3 months and have not received a letter yet.

But I will get them all in one lot. Dear Rita we are still in camp and likely to move at any moment.

[The next 3 lines are censored]

No more to write at present
From your loving brother Joseph
PS Don't forget to write every mail.



for 3 nights "so here goes".

23/6/16 Inspection by General blank. He said we are the finest troops in the world. My head is growing bigger.

Had my finger poisoned in Egypt. It is giving me beans. Must get it dressed. Looks like rain. Just can hear the report of big guns.

Dame rumour say the Aussies are doing good work. Something doing next

month, July on the Western Front.

25/6/16 Nice weather. Real Australian day. Just out walking in next village.

30/6/16 We can hear big bombardment.

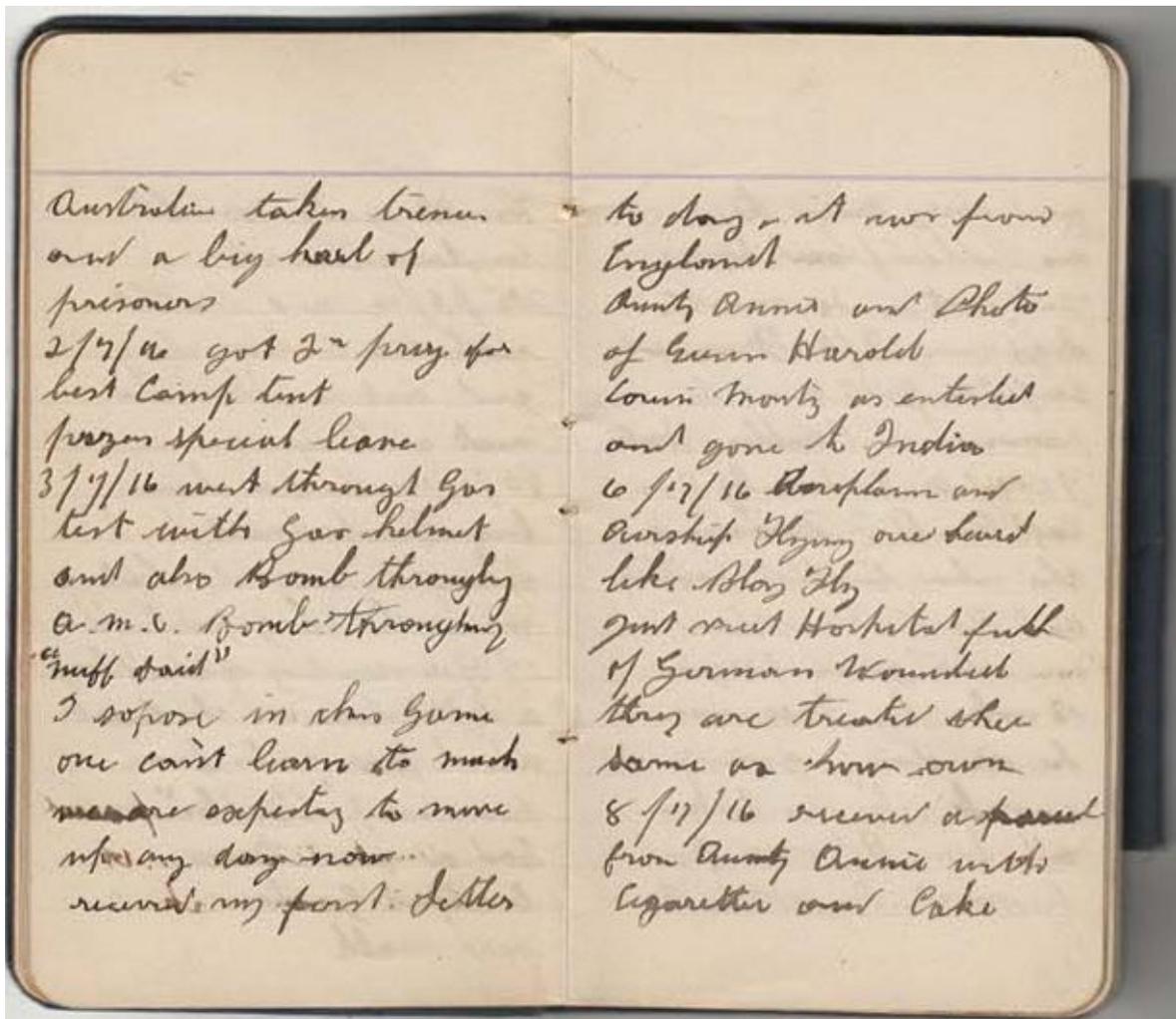
Spring has arrived. That means now big push.

1/7/16 Visiting, a little town on the coast about four miles from camp "Etaples" and had a good time; beautiful gardens and nice walk¹.

¹ Presumably this is Le Touquet-Paris-Plage a seaside resort nickname the "Garden of the English Channel" on the shoreline of the English Channel. It is on the opposite bank of the Canches river and was where the officers lived in style. It was the site of various military hospitals. See post card on page 46.



*"Just went to a service" - A Jewish service in the field (**JWIRE**)*



Australian taken trenches and a big haul of prisoners.
2/7/16 Got 2nd prize for best camp tent. Prizes special leave.
3/7/16 Went through gas test with gas helmet and also bomb throwing. AMC bomb throwing "nuff said".
 I suppose in this game one can't learn too much. We are expecting to move any day now.
 Received my first letter

today and it was from England. Aunty Annie and photo of cousin Harold and cousin Monty as intended and gone to India.
6/7/16 Aeroplane and airship flying overhead like blow fly. Just met hospital full of German wounded. They are treated the same as our own.
8/7/16 Received a parcel from Aunty Annie with cigarettes and cake

Post card sent to his Mother 23/7/16.



23/7/16 France
A.A.M.C

4.A.D.B.D.
Section 17
c/o A.P.O.
B.E.F France

Dear Mother

Just a card to let you know that I am do well. We are still in the same place and things are going well all round.

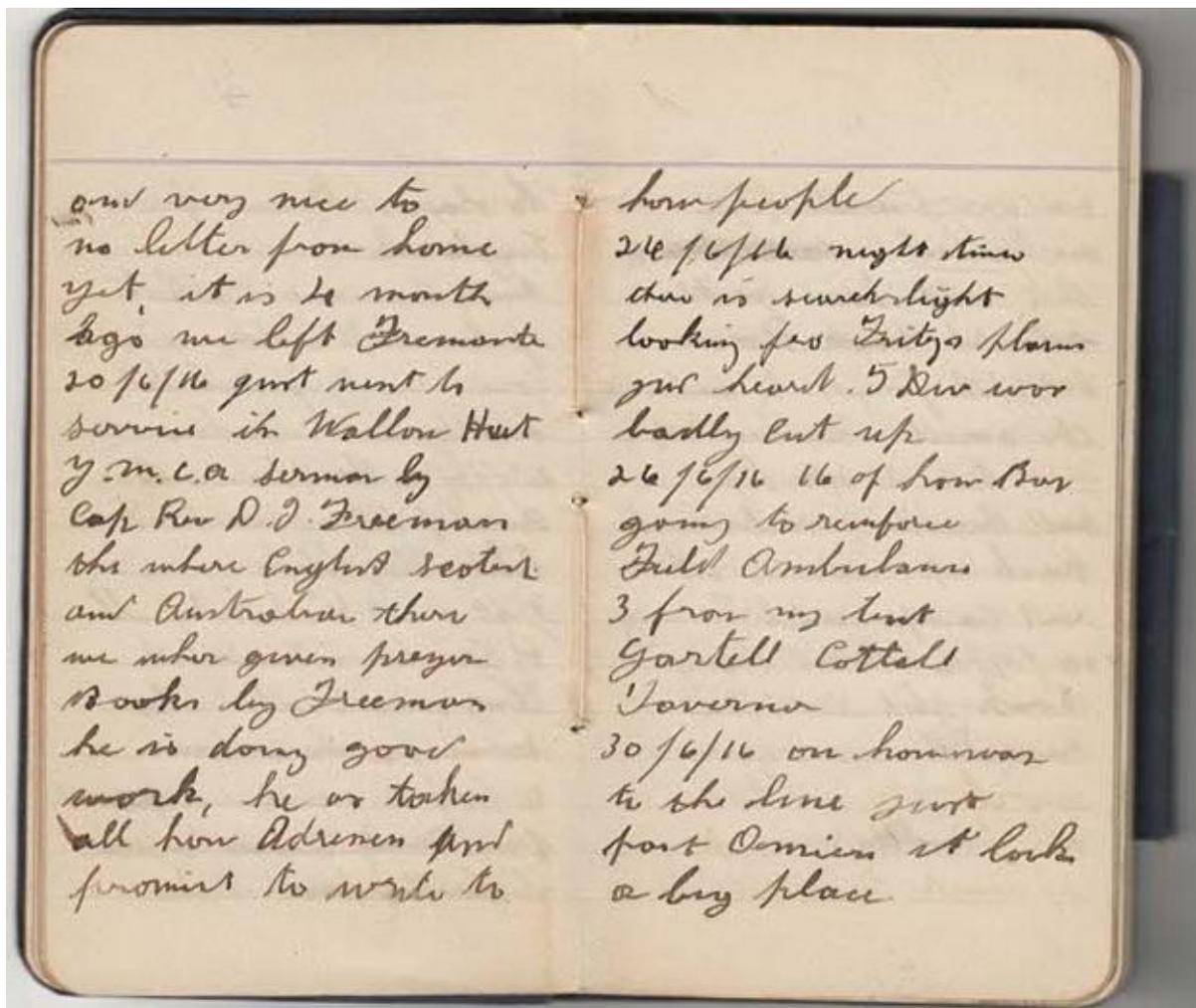
Dear mother I have received a letter from cousin Gertie from Manchester. They sent me the best of wishes and a safe return. I doing well in parcels. Aunty Nora is sending me another one. Dear mother I have not received any letters.

from you yet.

I'm the only one worrying about to no [sic] how you are all getting on. The Post Office for our mail is not up to much there is some fellows here who have not received letters for 4 and 5 months. I suppose we will get them some day when we are going home. And then we will be able to say what we like and no blue pencil.

Good night

From your love son Joseph



and very nice. No letter from home yet. It is 4 months ago we left Fremantle.

[20/7/16] 20/6/16 Just went to service in Wallon Hut YMCA. Sermon by Captain Rev. DI Freeman¹. There were English, Scottish and Australians there. We were given prayer books by Freeman. He is doing good work. He has taken all our addresses and promises to write to

our people.

[24/7/16] 24/6/16 Night time there is a search light looking for Fritz's planes. Over heard 5 Div. was badly cut up².

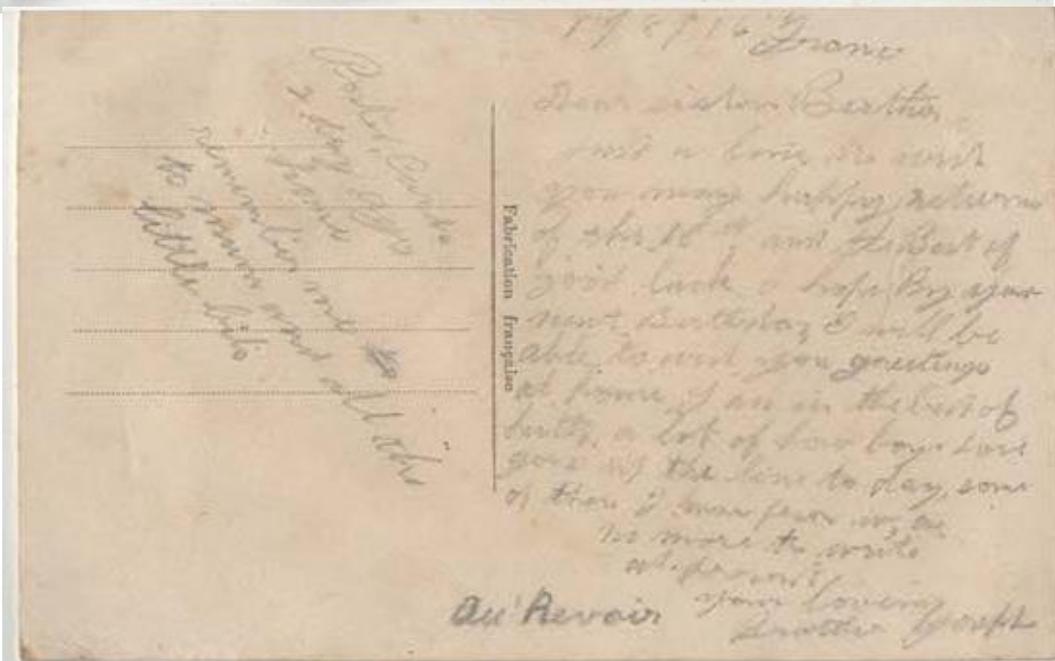
[26/7/16] 26/6/16 16 of our boys going to reinforce Field Ambulance 3 from my tent Gartell, Cottall, Taverner.

[30/7/16] 30/6/16 On our way to the line just past Amiens. It looks a big place.

¹ This presumably is Rabbi David Isaac Freedman OBE BA VD JP (1874-1939) who, between 1915 and 1918 served with the AIF as Chaplain-Major at Gallipoli, France, Belgium, Egypt and Palestine – aka “The Anzac Rabbi”. He was the Rabbi at the Brisbane Street synagogue. Freedman street in Menora is named after him. See portrait on page 62.

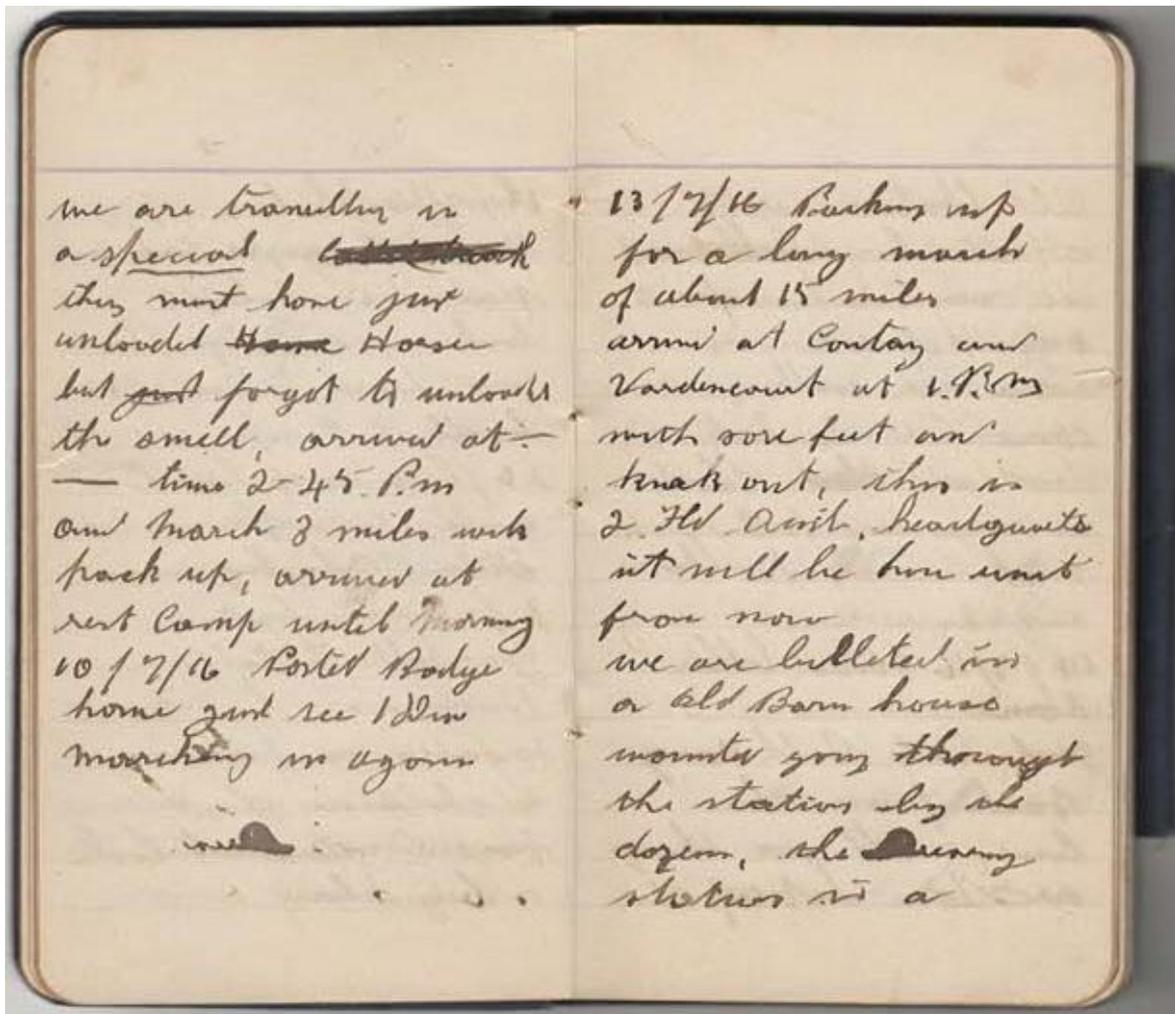
² Referring to the Battle of Fromelles which was a diversionary attack on German positions and was the first major battle fought by Australian troops on the Western Front. The attack was the worst 24 hours in Australian military history. Australia suffered over 5,500 casualties almost equivalent to the combined losses in the Boer, Korean and Vietnam wars.

Post card sent to his sister Bertha 1/8/16.



Posted cards
2 days ago home
Remember me
to Mum and all the
little bits

1/8/16 France
Dear Sister Bertha
Just a line to wish you many happy returns of
the 18th and the best of good luck. I hope by
your next birthday I will be able to wish you
greetings at home. I am in the best of health.
A lot of our boys have gone in the line today.
Some of them I know from W.A.
No more to write at present
Your loving
Brother Joseph
Au Revoir



We are travelling in a *special*. They must have just unloaded horses but forgot to unload the smell. Arrived at blank¹ time 2-45pm and march 3 miles with pack up. Arrived at rest camp until morning.

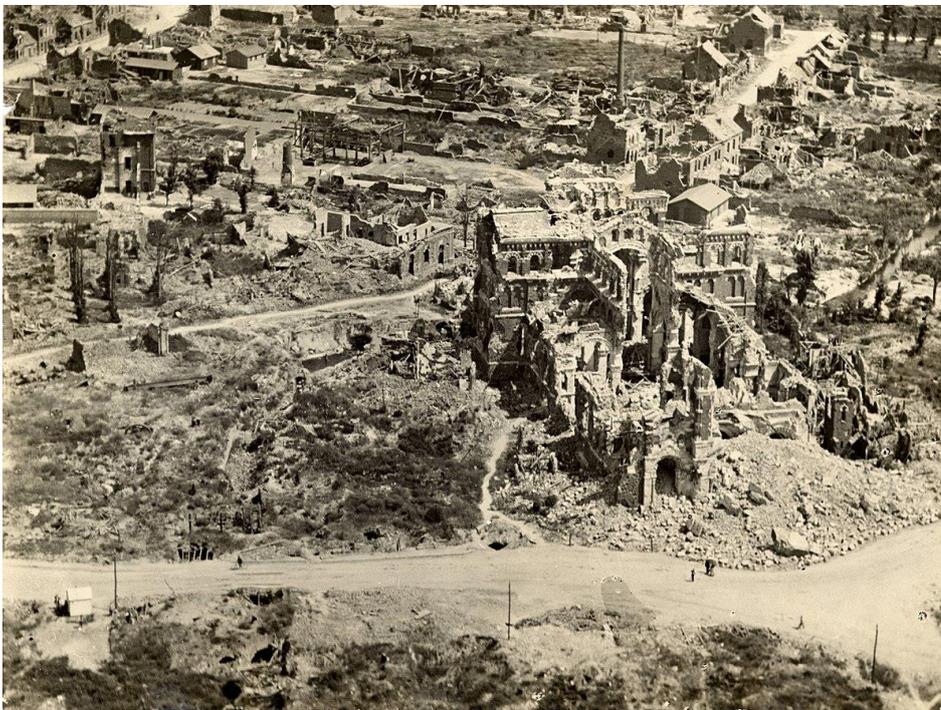
[10/8/16] 10/7/16 Posted badge home. Just see 1st Div marching in again.

[13/8/16] 13/7/16 Packing up for a long march of about 15 miles. Arrive at Contay and Vandencourt at 1pm with sore feet and knocked out. This is 2nd Field Ambulance headquarters. It will be our unit from now. We are billeted in an old barn house. Wounded going through the stations by the dozen. The dressing stations is a

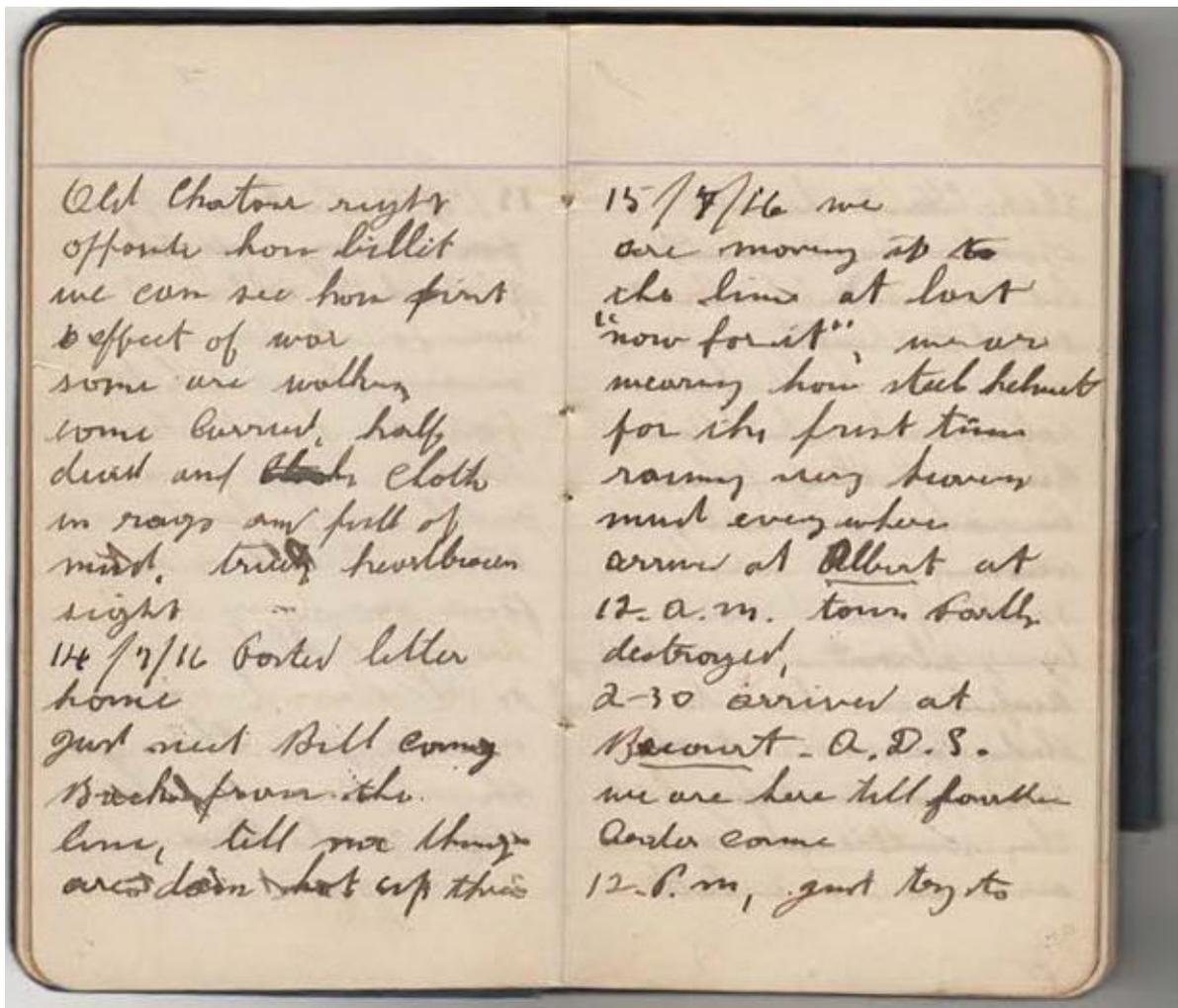
¹ Just a dash – ie doesn't know the name of the place (or doesn't want to state it for censor reasons).



*“Dressing station is old chateau right opposite our billet” - Chateau de Contay opposite billet (**CHA**)*



*“town partly destroyed” - Albert (**AWM**)*



old chateau right opposite our billet. We can see our first effect of war. Some are walking, some burned, half dead and cloth in rags and full of mud. Truly heartbroken sight.

[14/8/16] 14/7/16 Posted letter home. Just met Bill coming from back from the line, tells me things are darn hot up there.

[15/8/16] 15/7/16 We are moving up to the line at last "now for it". We are wearing our steel helmets for the first time. Raining very heavily mud everywhere. Arrive Albert at 12am. Town partly destroyed.

2-30am arrived at Bécourt¹ ADS. We are here till further orders come.

12pm Just try to

¹ About 2½ kms southeast of Albert.

It would appear that the next section of the diary describes the hell of the Battle of Pozieres that officially raged from 23 July to 3 September 1916 and was part of the Battle of the Somme. However, Joseph's diary indicates days earlier. From <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/wars-and-missions/ww1/where-australians-served/western-front/battle-of-pozieres>

Near the French village of Pozieres, the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) lost as many men over a few weeks as it did over 8 months on Gallipoli.

The first attack began at 12.30am on Sunday 23 July. The Australian 1st Division seized the German front and reached the main road through Pozieres an hour later. The Germans counter-attacked at dawn, but the Australians fought them off. The rest of Pozieres fell between 23 and 25 July.

In response, for three days the Germans concentrated their artillery fire on the Australians. They directed constant bombardments onto the village and the narrow approaches. The Australians suffered over 5,000 killed, wounded or taken prisoner.

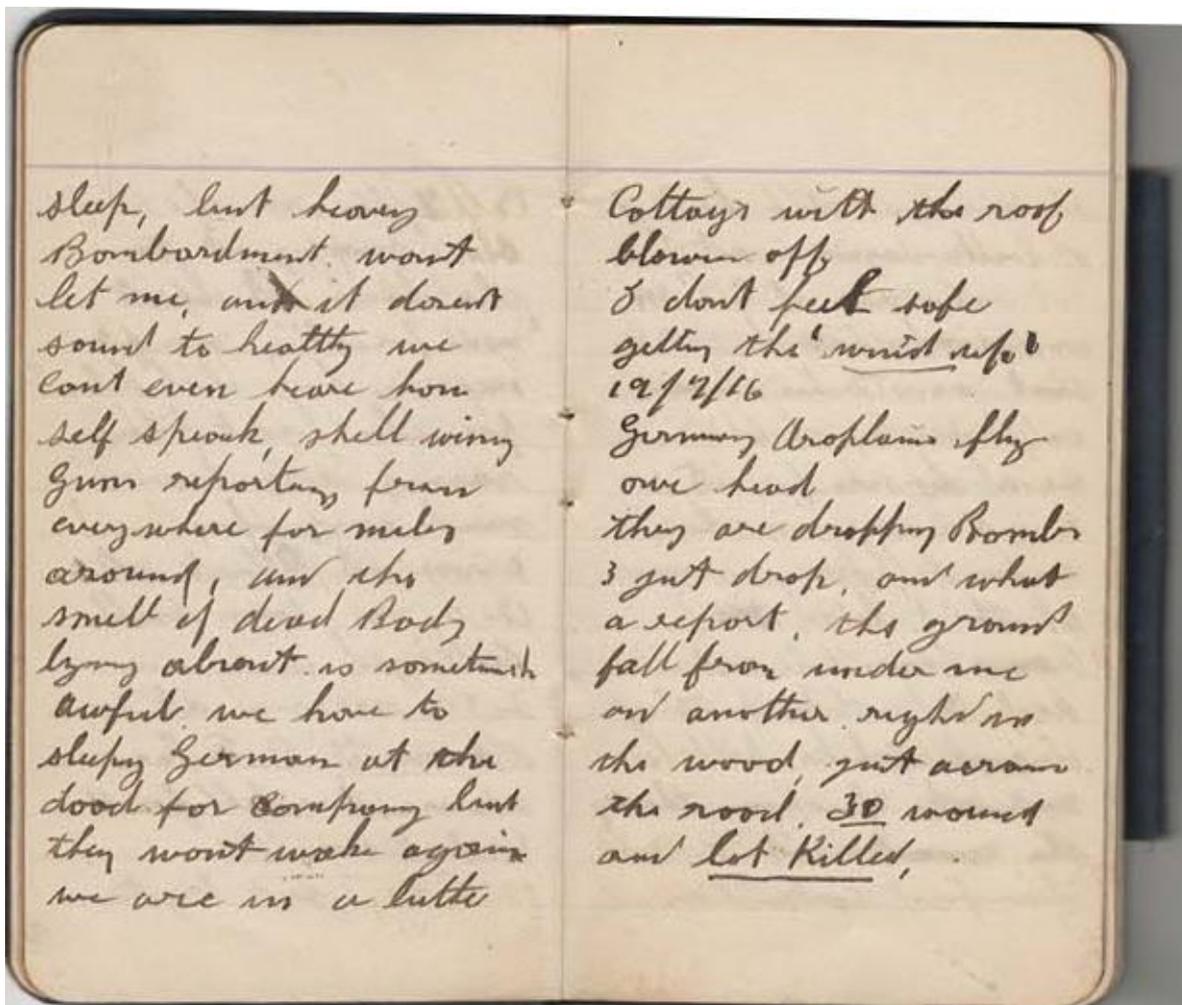
It is this intense counter bombardment that Joseph lived through and describes hereunder.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

EZ0066

July 1916: Unidentified members of the Australian Army Medical Corps dressing the wounds of Australian soldiers in Becourt Chateau during the battle of Pozieres. At the time the chateau was occupied by a field ambulance of the 2nd Australian Division and a British field ambulance.



sleep, but heavy bombardment won't let me, and it doesn't sound too healthy. We can't even hear ourselves speak. Shells whining, guns reporting from everywhere for miles around and the smell of dead bodies lying about is something awful. We have two sleeping Germans at the door for company but they won't wake again. We are in a little

cottage with the roof blown off. I don't feel safe. Getting the "wind up".
[19/8/16] 19/7/16 German aeroplanes fly overhead. They are dropping bombs. 3 just dropped and what a report. The ground falls from under me. On another night in the wood just across the road, 30 wounded and lot killed.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

EZ009

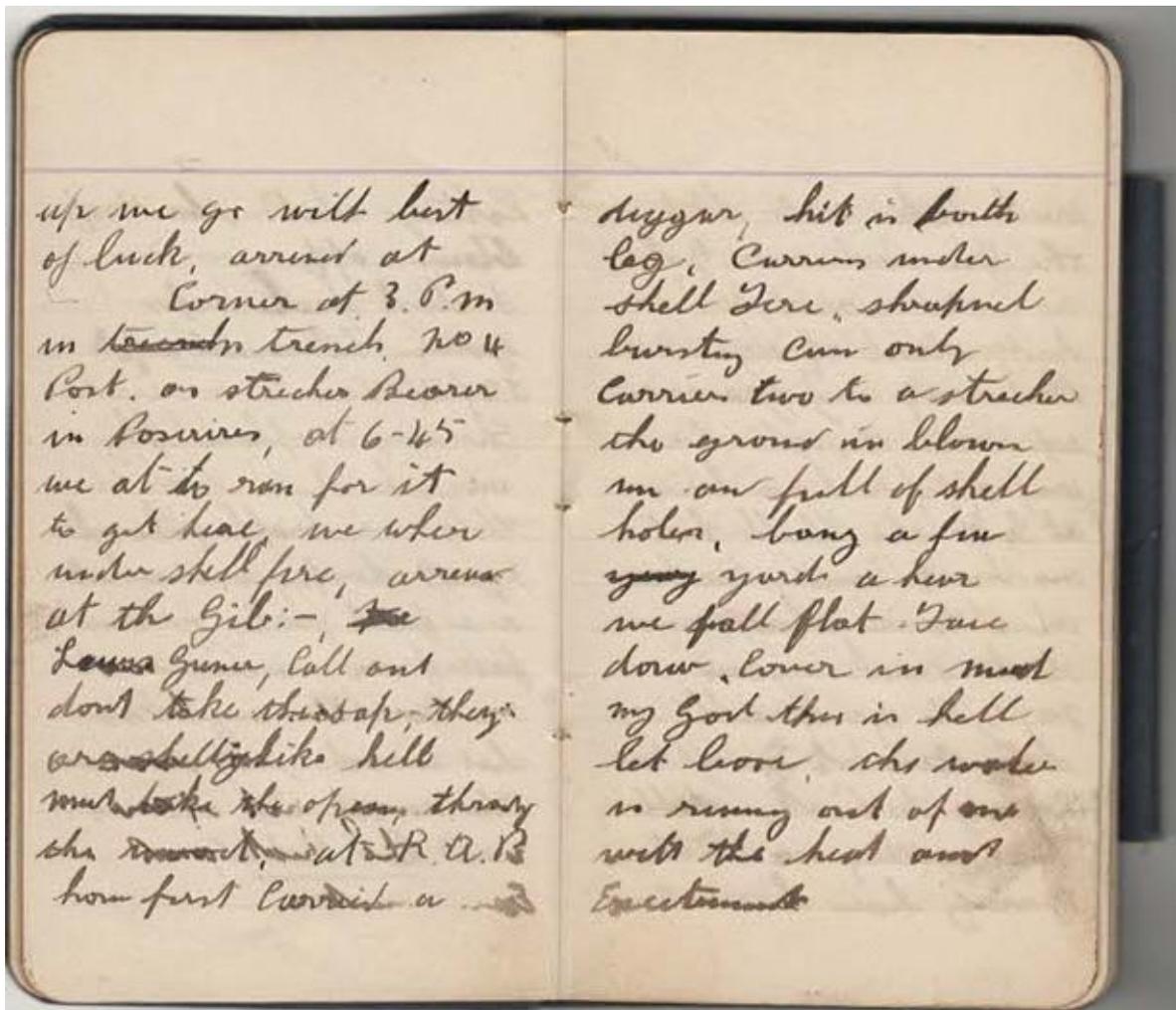
"Arrive at the Gib". Not much left except mass destruction at around Gibraltar German blockhouse (AWM)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P10330.006

"Our first carry, Digger hit in both legs". Typical stretcher bearer duties. (AWM)



Up we go with best of luck. Arrived at blank Corner at 3pm in trench no 4 post. On stretcher bearer in Pozières at 6-45pm. We had to run for it to get here. We were under shell fire. Arrive at the Gib¹:- Lewis gunner called out don't take the sap, they shelling like hell. Must take the opening through the ??? at RAP. Our first carry a

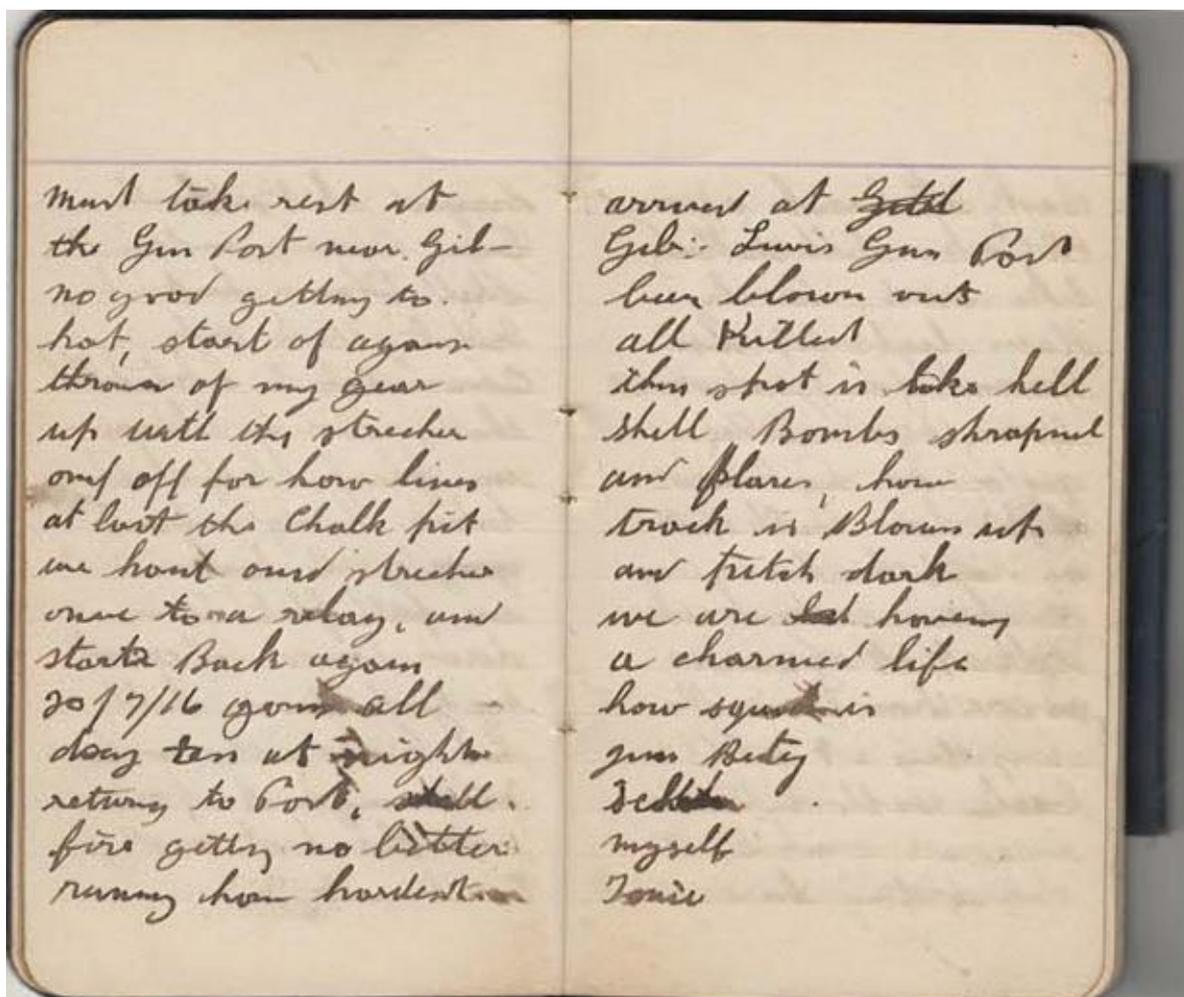
digger, hit in both legs. Carrying under shell fire, shrapnel bursting. Can only carry two to a stretcher. The ground is blown in and full of shell holes. BANG! a few yards and here we fall flat face down covered in mud. My God this is hell let loose. The water is running out of one with the heat and excitement.

¹ German blockhouse at Pozières named by troops as Gibraltar, like the Rock of Gibraltar.



Chaplain David Isaac Freedman , Rabbi of Perth. Photo probably 1915. (JHGS)

Freedman



Must take rest at the Gun Post near Gib. No good getting too hot. Start of again throwing off my gear up with the stretcher and off for our lives. At last the chalk pit. We hand our stretcher over to a relay and start back again. 20/7/16 gone all day till ten at night. Returning to Post. Shell fire getting no better. Running our hardest.

Arrived at Gib. Lewis gun post been blown out all killed. This spot is like hell. Shell, bombs, shrapnel and flares. Our track is blown up and pitch dark. We are having a charmed life. Our squad is Jim Bety, Ted, myself, Tonie.

¹ Joseph doesn't describe his duties in detail but to get some idea the following is from the Unit Diaries:

During the period 22/7/16 to 16/8/16, excluding 1112 cases of sickness, 7183 casualties passed through the Field Ambulance, Officers 79, Other Ranks 7104. Of the 79 Officer casualties 10 were "Shell Shocks", or about 12 per cent of the whole. Of the 7104 casualties among other ranks 1610 were "Shell Shocks" or about 22 per cent of the whole.

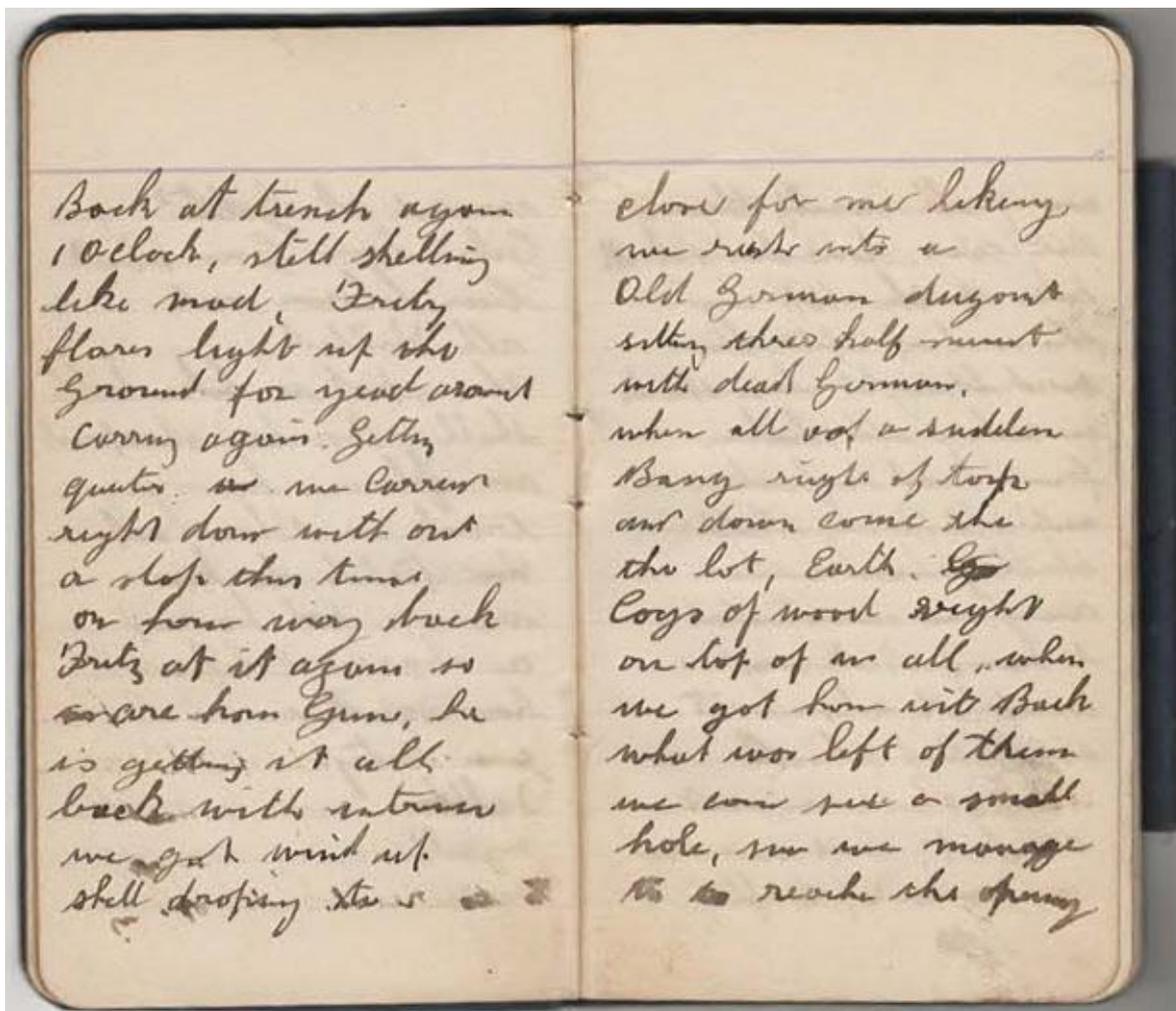


(RHPFH)

"Carrying in the wounded during the height of battle." (Multiple negative composite)



Stretcher bearers in mud. (IWM)



Back at trench again 1 o'clock. Still shelling like mad. Fritz flares light up the ground for yards around. Carrying again. Getting quieter. We carrying right down without a stop. This time on our way back Fritz at it again so are his guns. He is getting it all back with interest. We got wind up shell dropping too

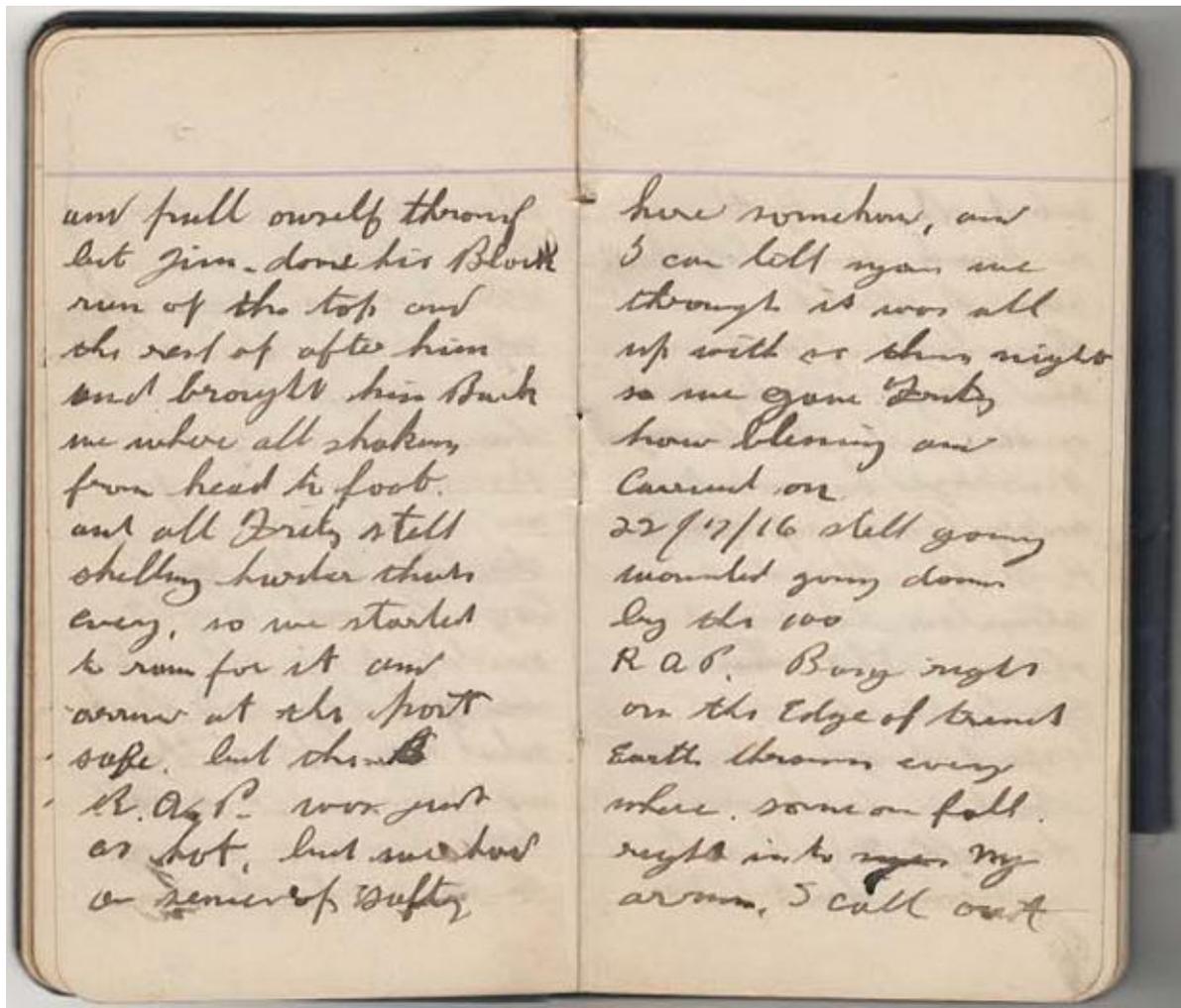
close for my liking. We rush into an old German dugout. Sitting there half present with dead German. When all of a sudden BANG! right of top and down come the lot, earth, logs of wood right on top of us all. When we got our wits back, what was left of them, we can see a small hole, so we manage to reach the opening



"Scene in an advanced dressing station during a battle."



Shell fire near a trench. (*RHPFH*)



and pull ourselves through. But Jim done his block run off the top and the rest of us after him and brought him back. We were all shaking from head to foot. And old Fritz still shelling harder than ever. So we started to run for it and arrive at the post safe but this RAP was just as hot but somehow a sense of safety

here somehow, and I can tell you we thought it was all up with us this night so we gave Fritz our blessing and carried on.
22/8/16 22/7/16 Still getting wounded going down by the 100. RAP busy. Right on the edge of trench earth thrown everywhere. Some fall right into my arms. I call out

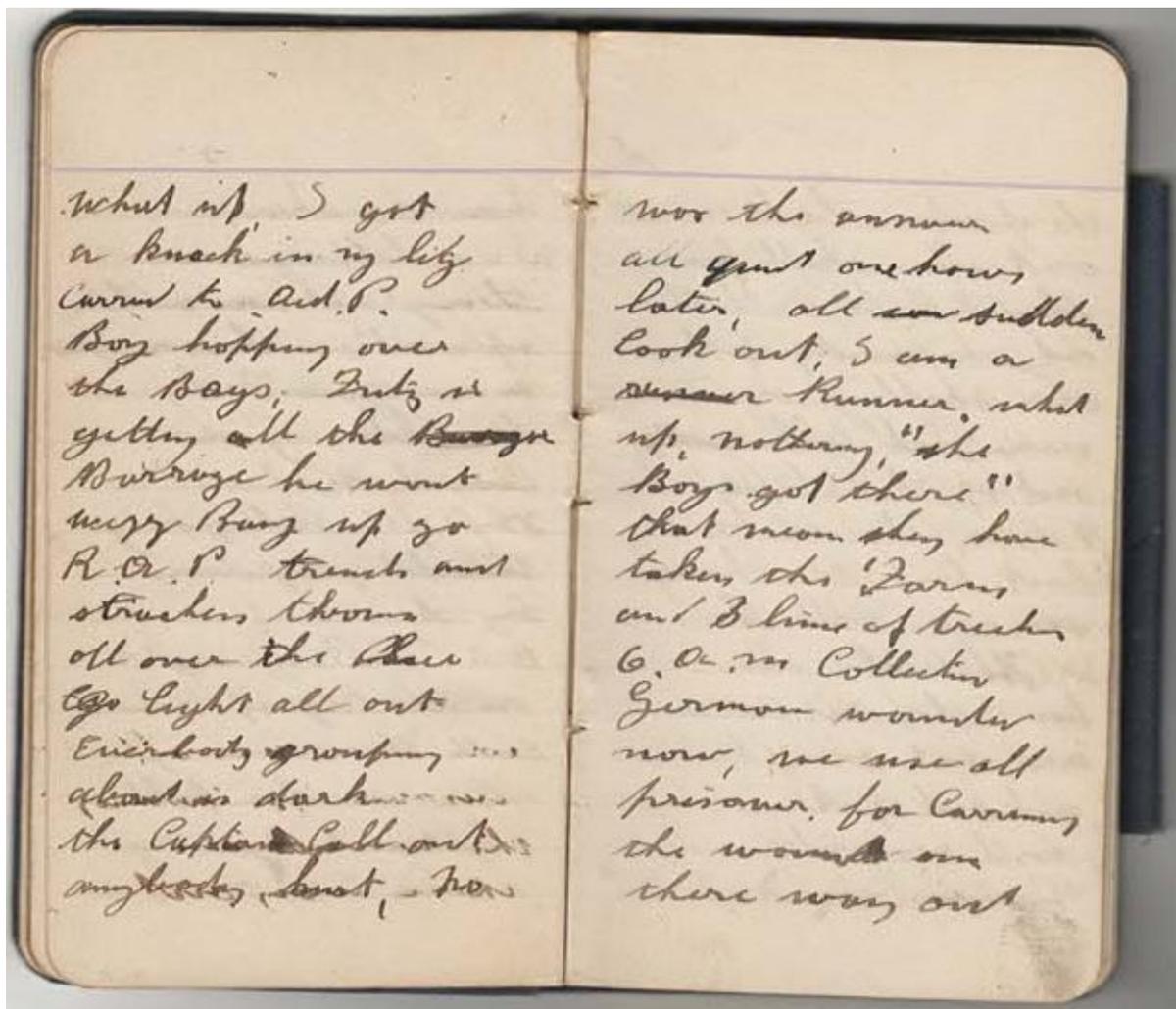


AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E00006

The landscape of Mouquet Farm, October 1916. AWM E00006

"That means the boys got the farm" (AWM)



what's up. I got a knock in my leg carried to Aid Post. Boy hopping over the bags. Fritz is getting all the barrage he want wizz bang. Up go RAP trench and stretchies thrown all over the place. Lights all out. Everybody groping about in the dark. The Captain calls out anybody hurt - no

was the answer. All quiet one hour later. All of a sudden Look out, I am a runner what up nothing "the boys got there". That means the boys got the Farm¹ and 3 lines of trenches. 6am Collecting German wounded now, we use all prisoners for carrying the wounded on their way out.

¹ Presumably Mouquet Farm. The farm was near the high ground of Pozieres ridge. Three Australian Divisions made nine attacks on the Germans here between 8 August and 3 September 1916. Most of the farm buildings were reduced to rubble. Stone cellars remained below ground, and the Germans made them into defences. The Battle of Mouquet Farm cost the 1st, 2nd and 4th Australian Divisions over 11,000 casualties. None of the Australian attacks succeeded in capturing and holding the farm. Maybe Joseph was a little premature.



Contalmaison Chateau Cemetery and ruins of the Chateau just after the war. Photo: Michelin Guide to the Somme

Contalmaison "a heap of brick and dust and stump trees" (**WWIB**)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

CO15341

Accession Number: CO15341

Before - Pozières village 1914 (**AWM**)

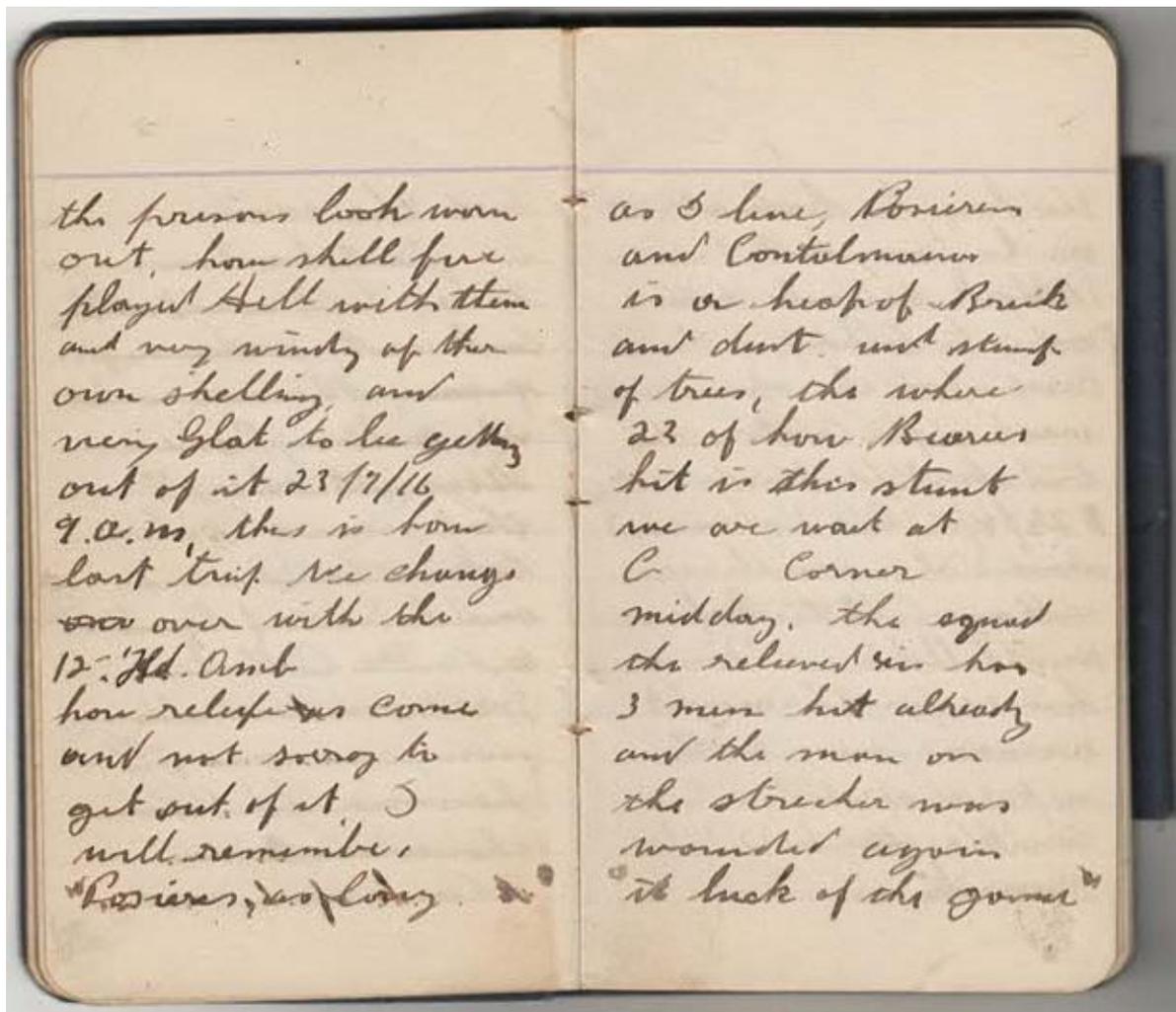


AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

A05776

Accession Number: A05776

After - Pozières village December 1916
"a heap of brick and dust and stump trees" (**AWM**)

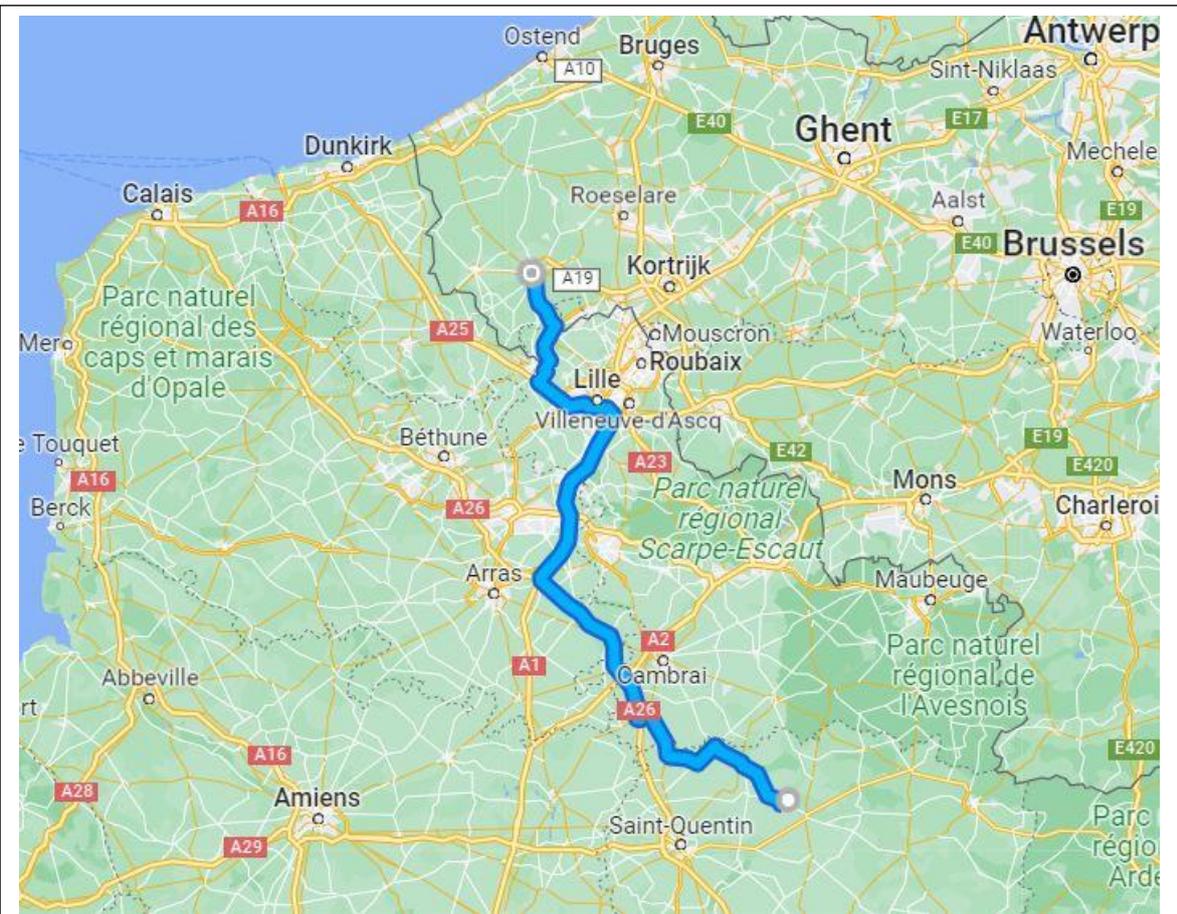


The prisoners look worn out. Our shell fire played Hell with them and very windy of their own shelling. Am very glad to be getting out of it.

[23/8/16] 23/7/16 9am. This is our last trip. We change over with the 12 Field Amb, Now relief has come and not sorry to get out of it. I will remember Pozières as long

as I live. Pozières and Contalmaison is a heap of brick and dust and stump of trees. This is where 23 of our bearers hit in this stunt. We are waiting at C Corner

Midday. The squad that relieves us has 3 men hit already and the man on the stretcher was wounded again, "it's the luck of the game".

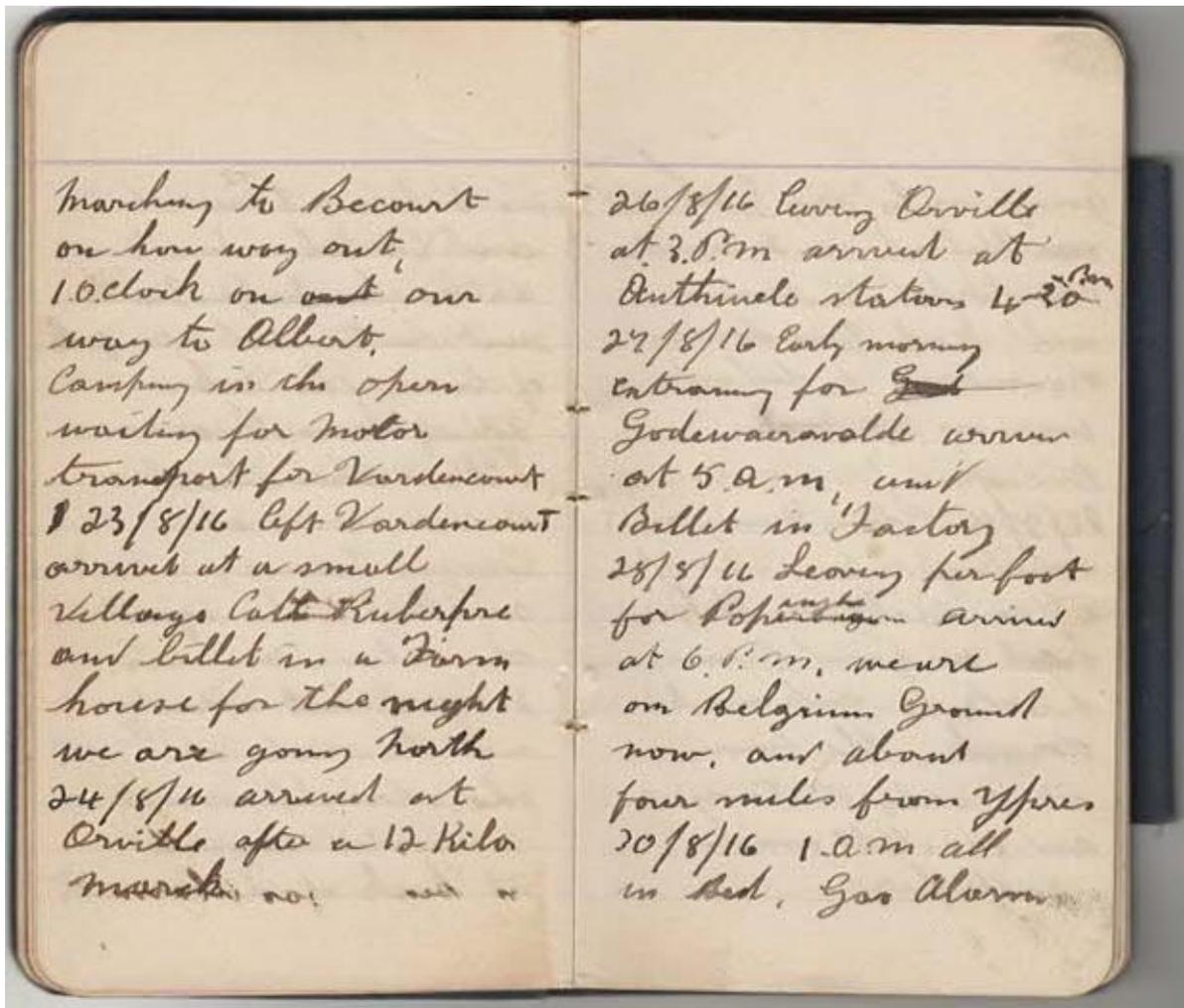


The route today from Vandencourt to Ypres (600)



2. London buses, shipped to France, being used to move up a division of Australian troops. Reninghelst. 2nd Division. #

National Media Museum



Marching to Bécourt on our way out.
1 o'clock on our way to Albert. Camping in the open waiting for motor transport for Vandencourt.

23/8/16¹ Left Vandencourt arrived at a small village call Rubempré and billet in a farm house for the night. We are going North.

24/8/16 Arrived at Orville after a 12 kms march.

26/8/16 Leaving Orville at 3pm arrived at Authieule station 4-20pm.

27/8/16 Early morning entraining for Godewaersvelde arrive at 5am and billet in factory.

28/8/16 Leaving per foot for Poperinge arrived at 6pm. We are on Belgium ground now and about four miles from Ypres.

30/8/16 1am all in bed. Gas alarm.

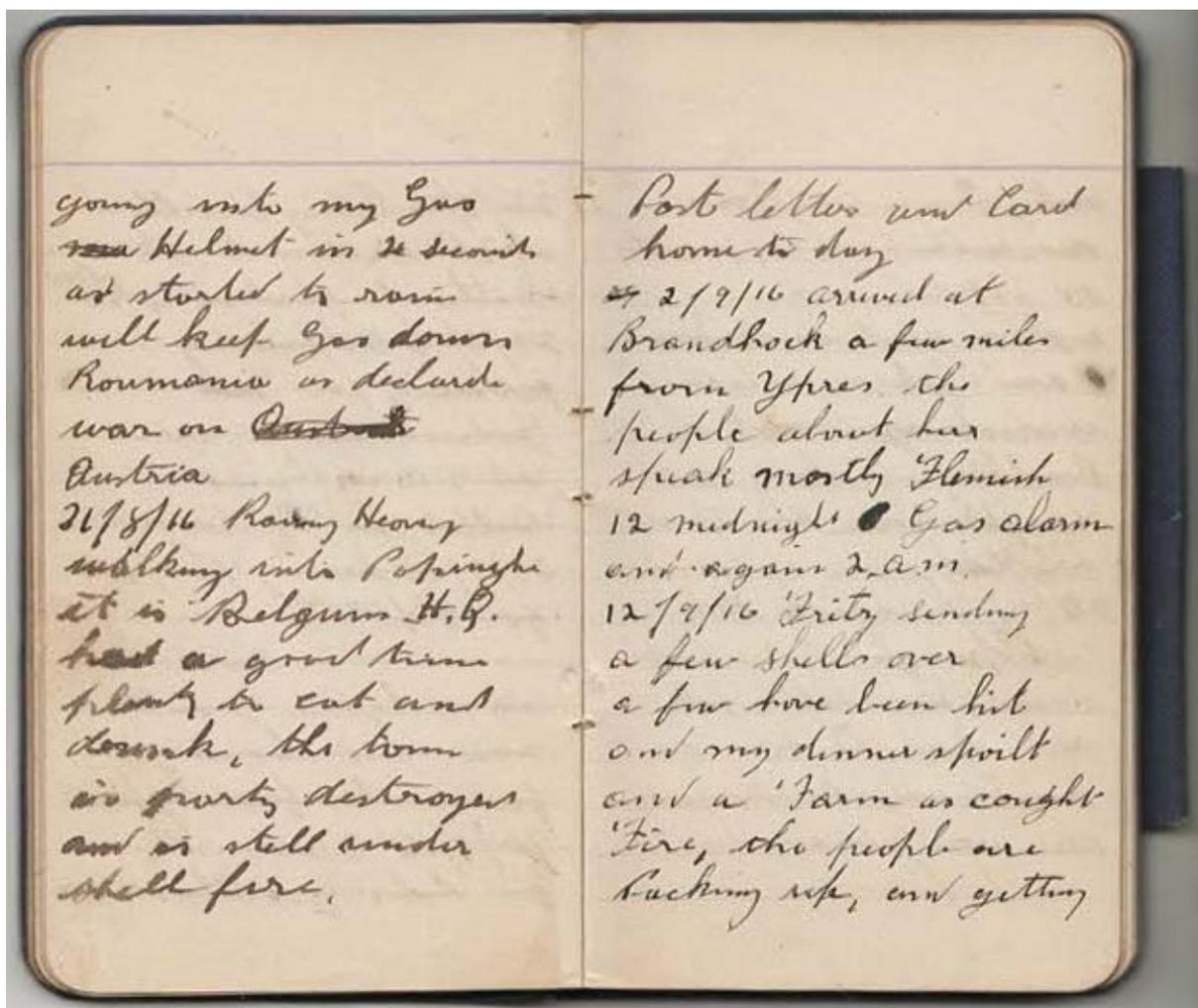
¹ Note there were two entries for 23/8/16. Joseph presumably realised that his months were correct.



"The people are packing up and getting out." (UNK)



"The people are packing up and getting out." (UNK)



Going into my gas helmet in 4 seconds and started to rain will keep gas down. Roumania¹ (sic) has declared war on Austria.

31/8/16 Raining heavy. Walking into Poperinge. It is Belgium HQ. Had a grand time – plenty to eat and drink. The town is partly destroyed and is still under shell fire.

Posted letters and card home today.

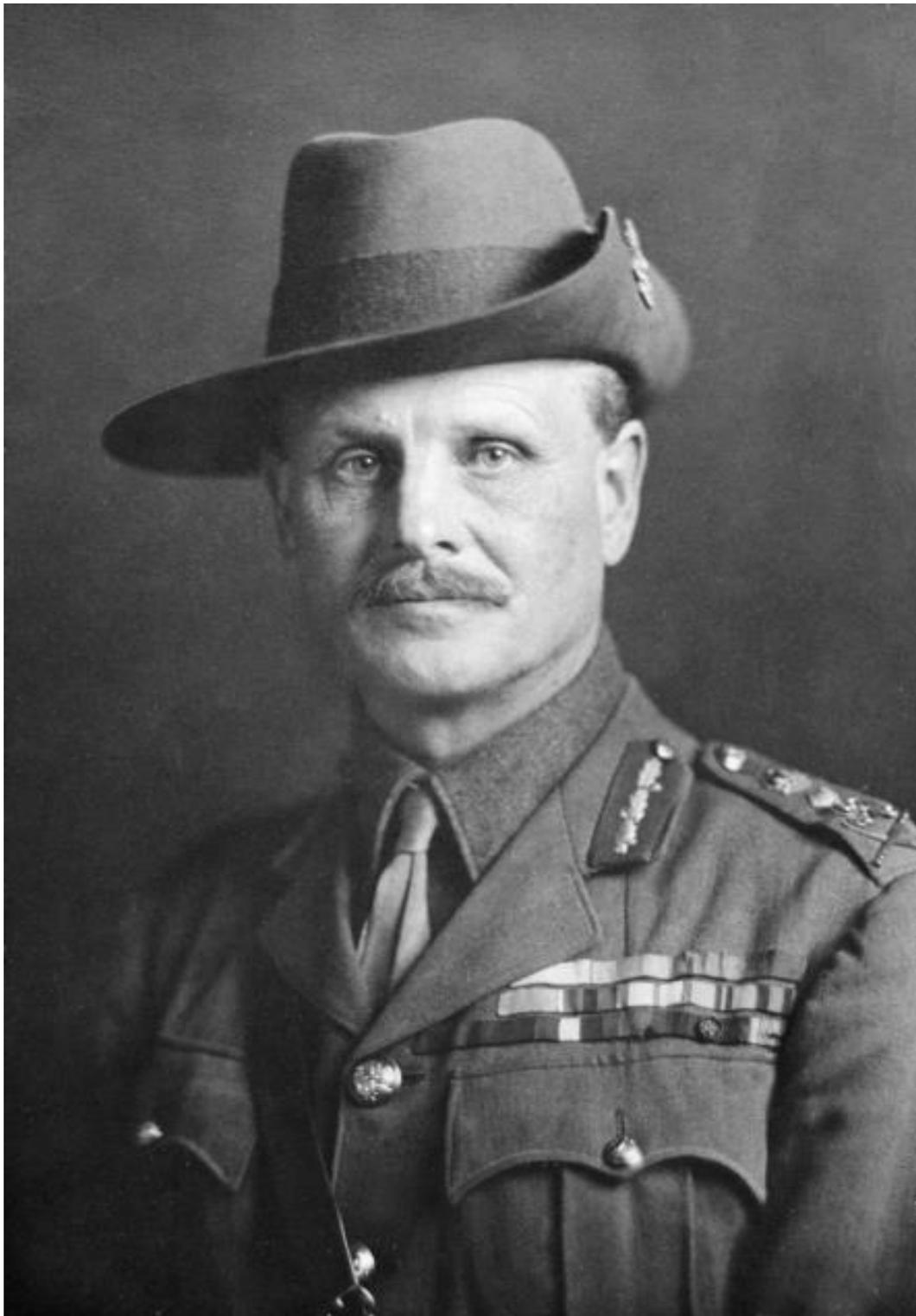
2/9/16 Arrived at Brandhoek² a few miles from Ypres. The people about here speak mostly Flemish.

12 midnight. Gas alarm and again at 2am.

12/9/16 Fritz sending a few shells over. A few have been hit and my dinner spoilt and a farm has caught fire. The people are packing up and getting

¹ Having been neutral for the first two years of WW1, Romania entered on the side of the Allied powers on 27 August 1916.

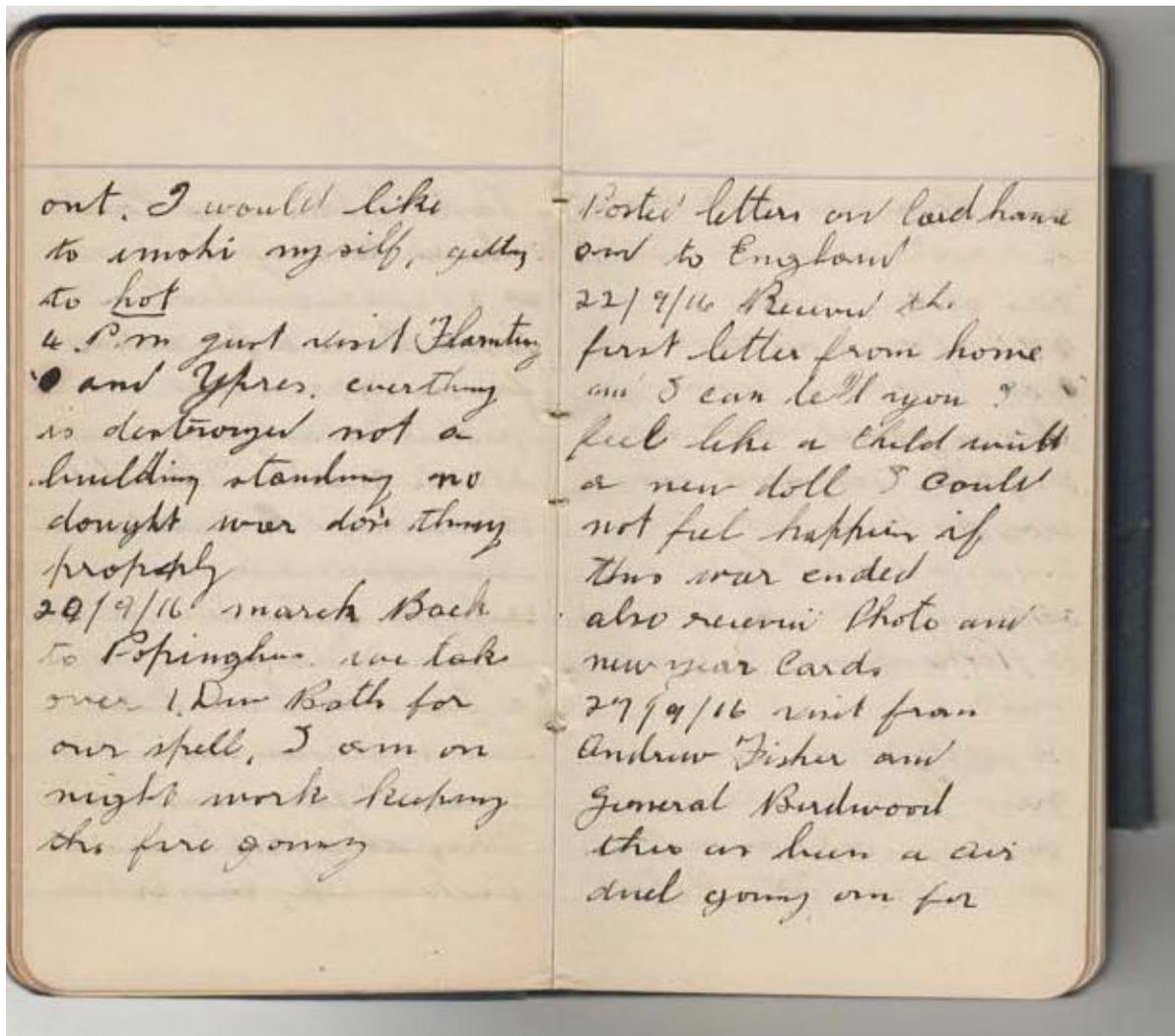
² Situated halfway between Poperinge and Ypres, Brandhoek is a small hamlet in Belgium and was used as a Field Ambulance and Casualty Clearing Station.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P03717.009

"Visit from General William Birdwood" (AWM)



out. I would like to imohi myself. Getting too hot.

4pm Just visited Flamtry and Ypres. Everything is destroyed, not a building standing. No doubt war does things properly.

20/9/16 March back to Poperinge. We take over 1 Div bath for our spell. I am on night work keeping the fire going.

Posted letters and card home and to England.

22/9/16 Received the first letter from home and I can tell you feel like a child with a new doll. I could not feel happier if this war ended. Also received photo and new year cards.

27/9/16 Visit from Andrew Fisher and General Birdwood¹. There has been an air dual going on for

¹ Lieutenant-General William Riddell Birdwood was the British commander of the Australian Imperial Force for most of WW1. On 25 April 1915 he was in command of the ANZACs and in September he took command of the entire British Dardanelles army. On Gallipoli, Birdwood was generally regarded with affection by his troops, but disastrous actions on the Western Front led to a notable loss in popularity. (from AWM website).

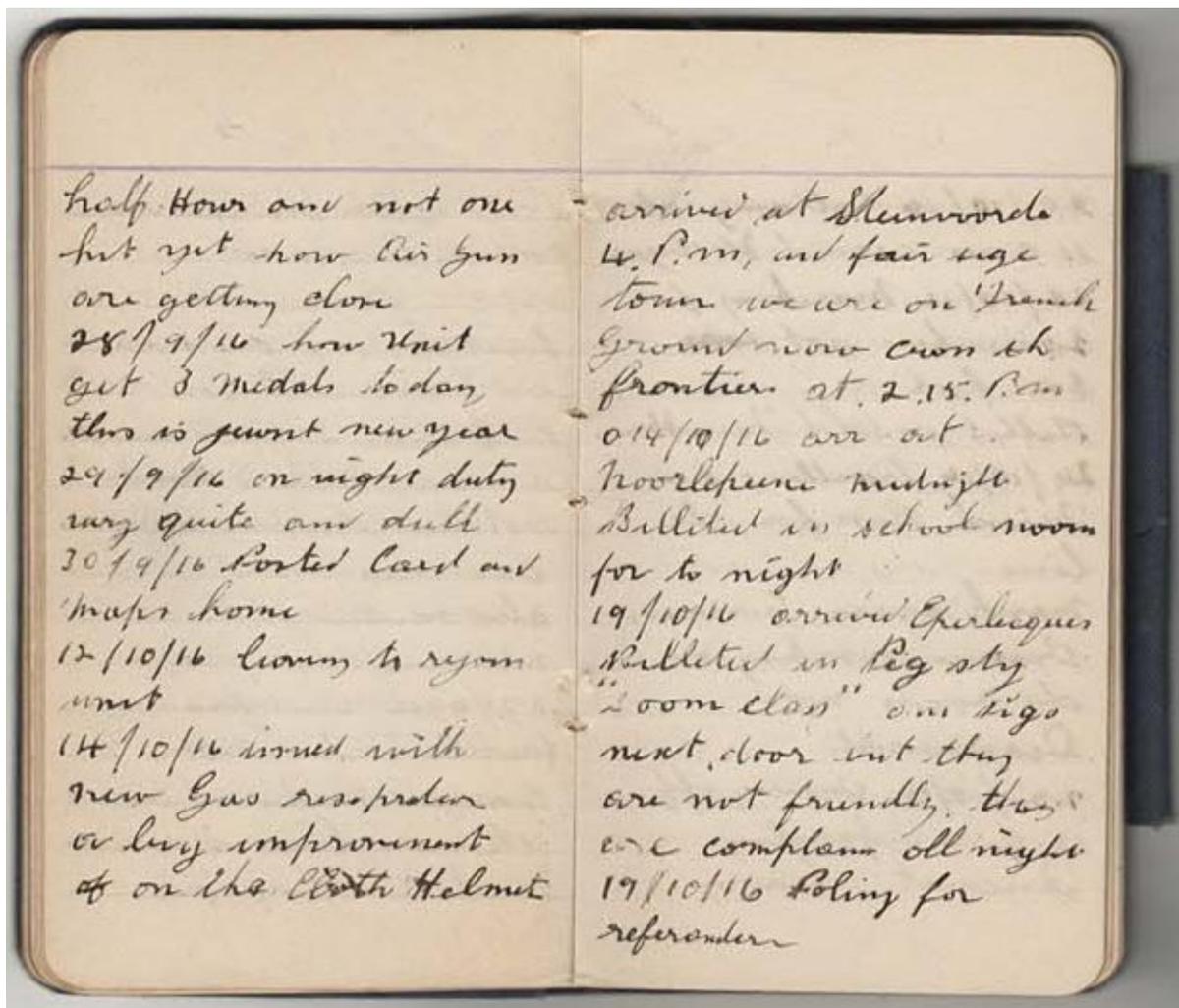


The ruins of Fricourt Chateau Photo: Vise Paris

Fricourt - "everything destroyed for miles around" (**WW1B**)



"Polling for Referendum" (**AWM**)



half an hour and not one hit yet. Our air guns are getting close.

28/9/16 Our unit got 3 medals today. This is Jewish new year¹.

29/9/16 On night duty. Very quiet and dull.

30/9/16 Posted card and maps home.

12/10/16 Leaving to rejoin unit.

14/10/16 Issued with new gas respirator a big improvement on the cloth helmet.

Arrived at Steenvoorde 4pm and fair sized town. We are on French ground now near the frontier at 2-15pm.

14/10/16 Arrive at Noordpeene midnight billeted in school room for tonight.

19/10/16 Arrive Éperlecques. Billeted in pig sty "zoom class" and pigs next door but are not friendly. They are complaining all night.

19/10/16 Polling for Referendum².

¹ Tu BiShvat or Tu B'Shevat or Tu B'Shvat (Hebrew: טו בשבט) is a minor Jewish holiday, occurring on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat. In the year 1916 it was celebrated between 27 and 29 September.

² The Military Service Referendum Act 1916 held on 28 October 1916.

Question: Are you in favour of the Government having, in this grave emergency, the same compulsory powers over citizens in regard to requiring their military service, for the term of this war, outside the Commonwealth, as it now has in regard to military service within the Commonwealth?

133,813 votes by members of the Australian Imperial Force, of which 72,399 were for, 58,894 against, and 2,520 informal.

Obtained majority in three States and an overall minority of 72 476 votes. **Not carried**



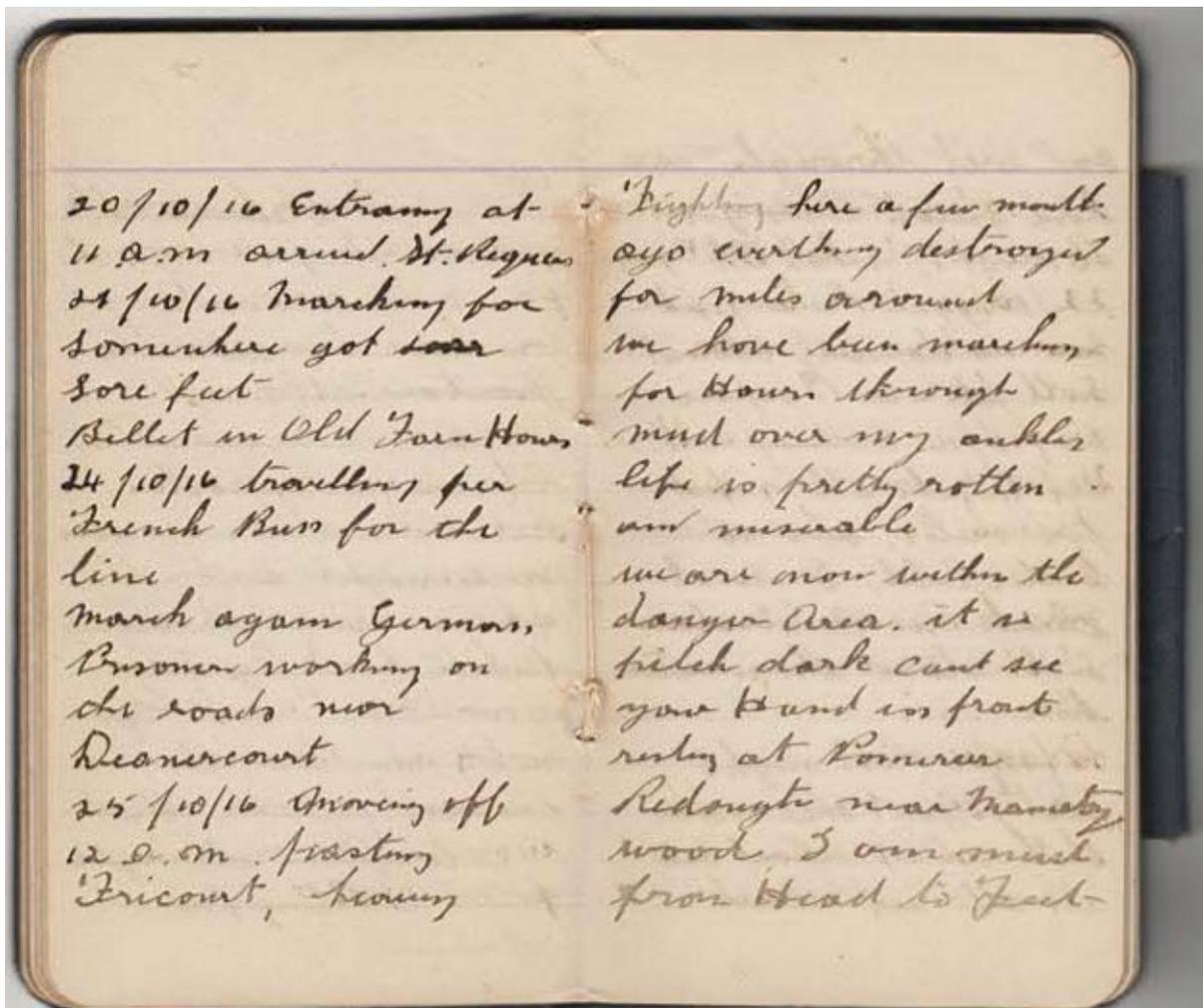
AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E01829

"Travelling per French bus for the line". Buses through ruined village – Oct 1917



"We have been marching for hours through mud over my ankles" (NSWSL)



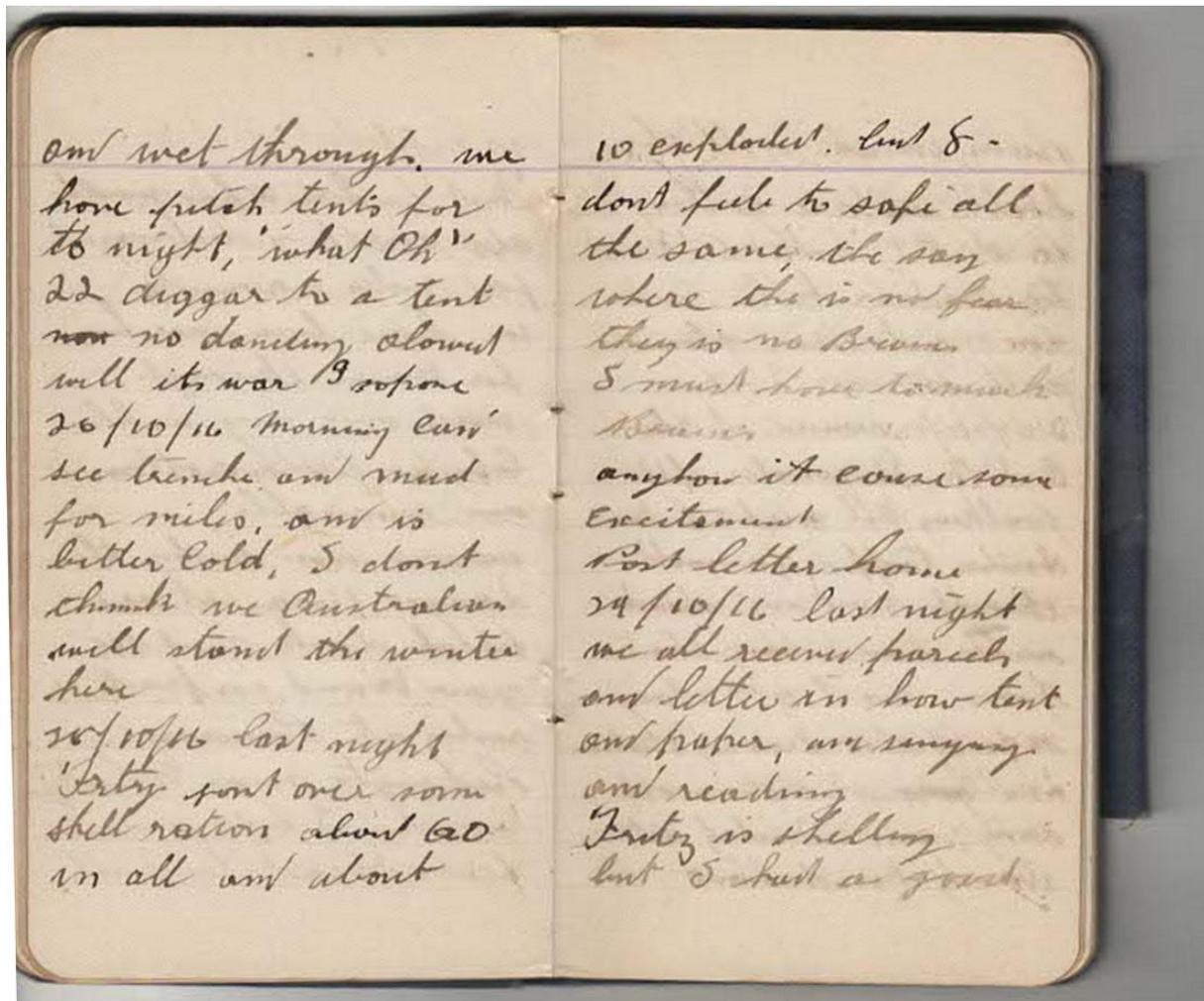
<p>20/10/16 Entraining at 11am. Arrived St. Ricquier.</p>	<p>fighting here a few months ago. Everything destroyed for miles around. We have been marching for hours through mud over my ankles. Life is pretty rotten and miserable.</p>
<p>21/10/16 Marching for somewhere got sore feet. Billet in old farm house.</p>	<p>We are now within the danger area. It is pitch dark, can't see your hand in front. Resting at Pommiers Redoubt near Mametz Wood. I am mud from head to feet</p>
<p>24/10/16 Travelling per French bus for the line. March again. German prisoners working on the road near Dernancourt.</p>	
<p>25/10/16 Moving off 12am. Passing Fricourt. Heavy</p>	

Post card sent to his sister Bertha 23/10/16.



<p>23/10/16 Somewhere in France</p> <p>To Bertha With Best wishes and love to all from your love Brother Joe</p>	<p>Naomi Saffer¹</p> <p><i>[Naomi, born 1937, obviously wrote her name, in the space provided some 20+ years later. Naomi was Joseph's niece – his sister Bertha's daughter.]</i></p>
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¹ It is from Naomi Gates (nee Saffer) (Joseph's niece – sister Bertha's daughter – the late Mrs Gates of Roleystone) that this diary and postcards have survived having been given to the Jewish Historical and Genealogical Society of Western Australia for safe keeping.



and wet through. We have pitch tents for tonight, "what oh". 22 diggers to a tent. No dancing allowed. Well it's war, I suppose.
26/10/16 ¹Morning can see trenches and mud for miles and is bitter cold. I don't think we Australians will stand the winter here.
28/10/16 Last night Fritz sent over some shell rations about 60 in all and about

10 exploded. but I -
 don't feel too safe all the same. They say where there is no fear there is no brains. I must have too much brains. Anyhow it causes some excitement.
 Posted letter home.
29/10/16 Last night we all received parcels and letters in our tent and paper, am singing and reading.
 Fritz is shelling but I had a good

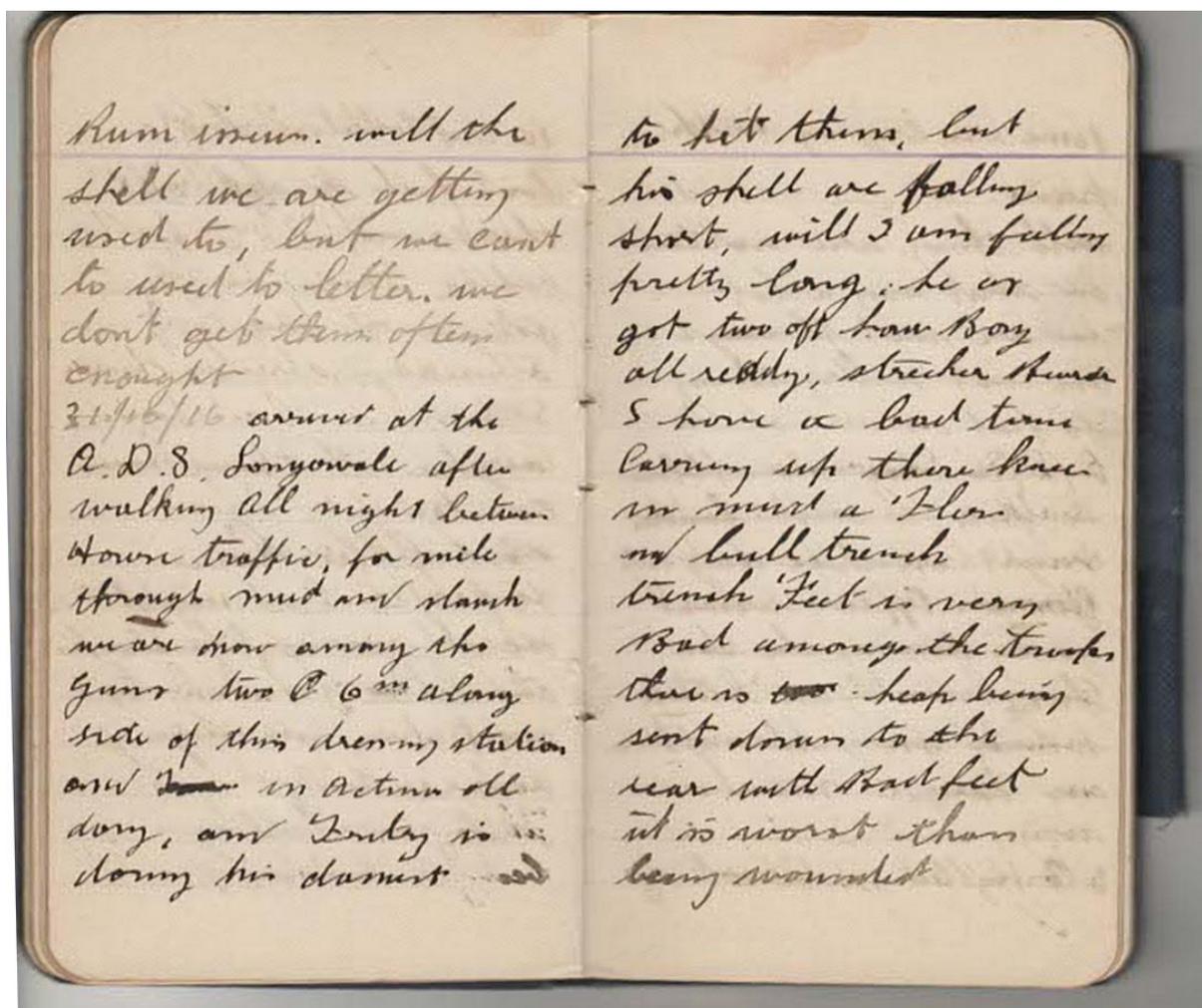
¹ Joseph says that he is at Mametz Wood. This was attacked as part of the Battle of the Somme and taken eventually by 12 July 1916. The Welsh Division lost about 4,000 men killed or wounded in the engagement.



"Trench feet is very bad among the troops" Evacuating trench foot cases (AWM)



"Trench feet is very bad among the troops" – pictured an extreme case (UNK)



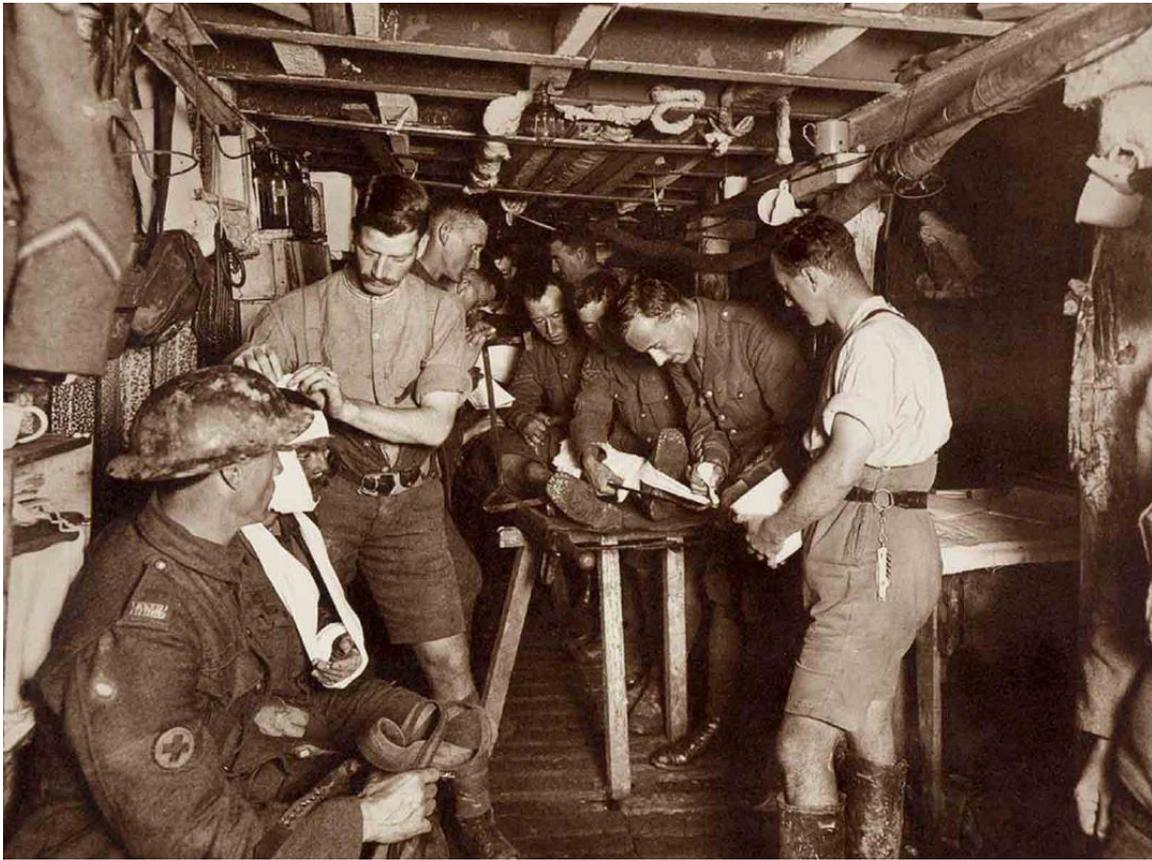
rum issue. Well the shell we are getting used to, but we can't use to letters. We don't get them often enough.

31/10/16 Arrived at the ADS Longueval after walking all night between horse traffic, for miles through mud and stench. We are now among the guns two 6" along side of this dressing station and in action all day and Fritz is doing his darrest

to hit them, but his shells are falling short, well I am feeling pretty long. He has got two of our boys already, stretcher bearers.

I have a bad time carrying up these knees in mud at Flers and Bull trench. Trench feet¹ is very bad among the troops. There is heaps being sent down to the rear with bad feet it is worse than being wounded.

¹ Feet suffered in the waterlogged trenches, as tight boots, wet conditions and cold caused swelling and pain. Prolonged exposure to damp and cold could lead to gangrene and even amputation of the feet in severe cases. Only by regularly changing into dry socks (up to 3 times a day) and rubbing the feet with whale oil could the worst effects of the painful affliction be reduced.



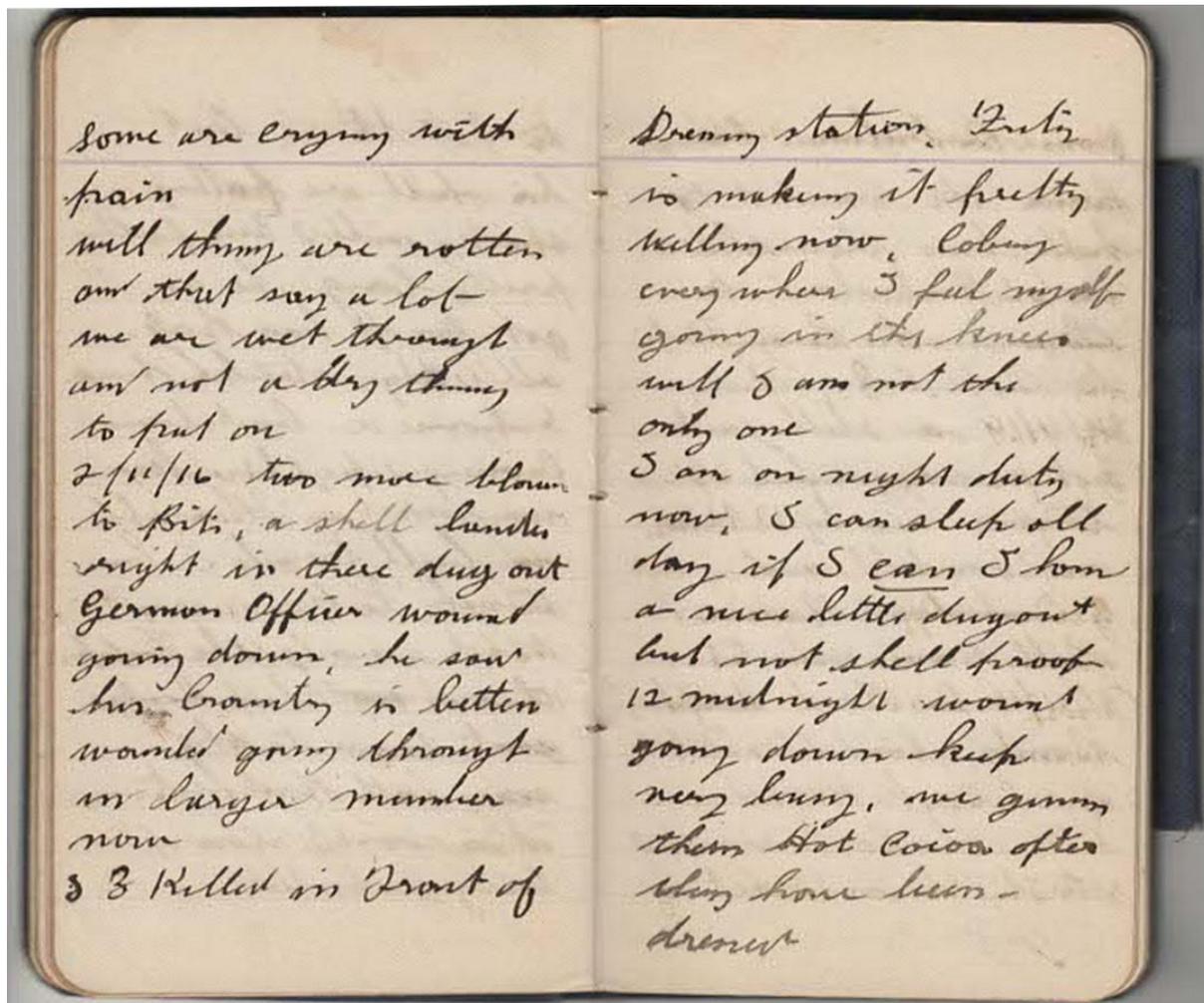
"Attending to wounded in the advanced dressing station on Hill 60."

(RHPFH)



Photograph taken by Lieutenant John Brooke, an official photographer for the British army on the Western Front. Taken at the third battle of Ypres in August 1917.

"I have a bad time carrying up these knees in mud". (UNK)



Some are crying with pain.
 Well things are rotten and that says a lot. We are wet through and not a dry thing to put on.
2/11/16 Two more blown to bits. A shell landed right in these dug out. German Officer wounded going down. He saw his country is beaten wounded going through in larger numbers now.
 3 killed in front of

dressing station. Fritz is making it pretty killing now. Bodies everywhere. I feel myself going in the knees, well I am not the only one. I am on night duty now. I can sleep all day if I can. I have a nice little dugout but not shell proof.
 12 midnight wounded going down keeping very busy. We give them hot cocoa after they have been dressed.



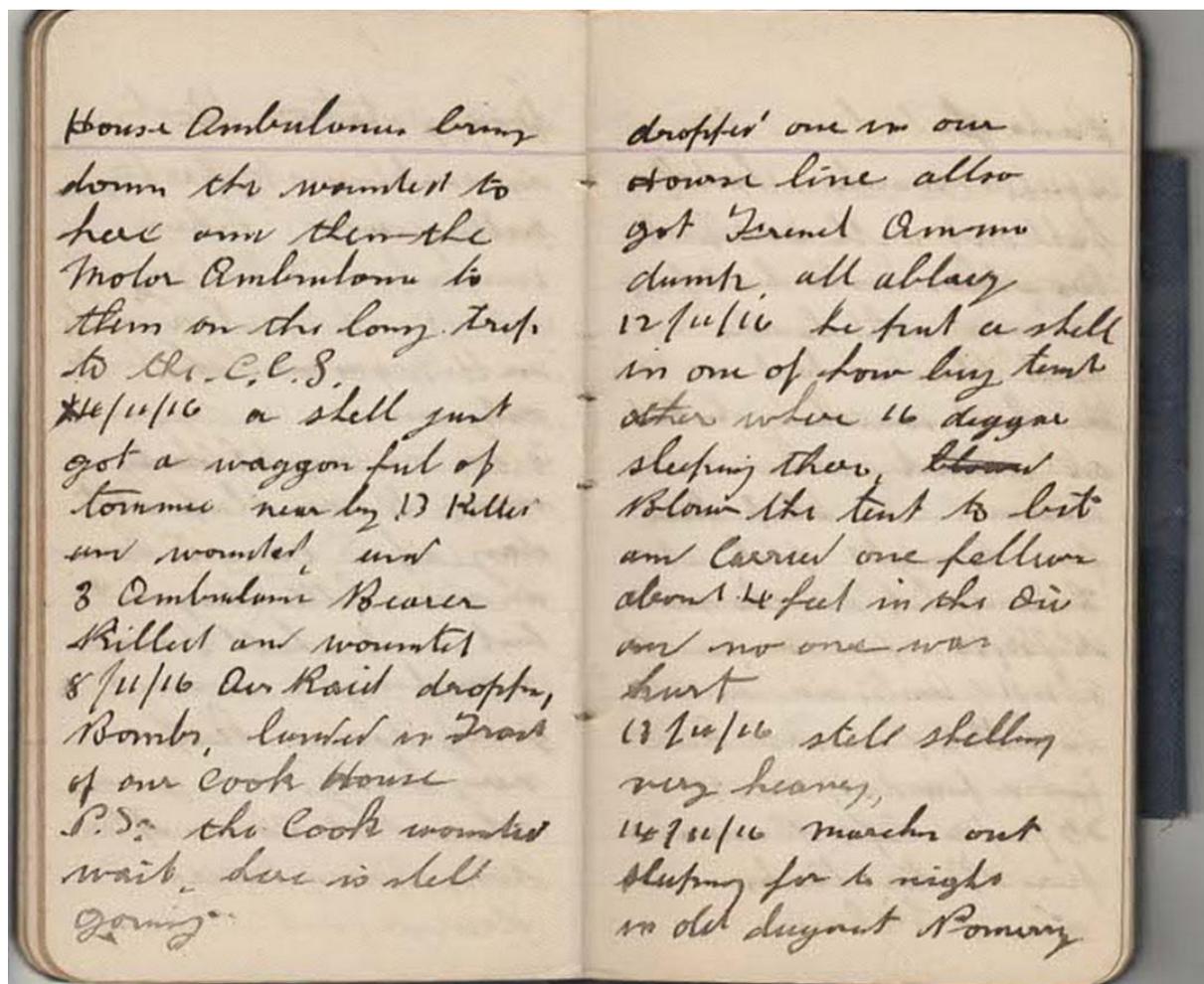
Precision bombing – WW1 style. (UNK)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E00455

"I have a nice little dugout" (AWM)



Horse ambulances bring down the wounded to here and then the motor ambulance to them on the long trip to the CCS.

4/11/16 A shell just got a wagon full of Tommies nearby. 13 killed and wounded and 3 ambulance bearers killed and wounded.

8/11/16 Air raid dropping bombs. Landed in front of our cook house.

PS the cook wounded. Wait here is still going

dropped one in our house line also got French Ammu dump all ablaze
12/11/16 He put a shell in one of our big tents other where 16 diggers sleeping there. ~~blown~~ Blown the tent to bits and carried one fellow about 4 feet in the air and no one was hurt

13/11/16 still shelling very heavy,

14/11/16 march out sleeping for 6 nights in old dugout Pommiers

dropped one in our house line. Also got French ammo dump all ablaze.

12/11/16 He put a shell in one of our big tents. There were 16 Diggers sleeping there. Blown the tent to bits and carried one fellow about 4 feet in the air and no one was hurt.

13/11/16 Still shelling very heavy.

14/11/16 March out. Sleeping for tonight in old dugout Pommiers



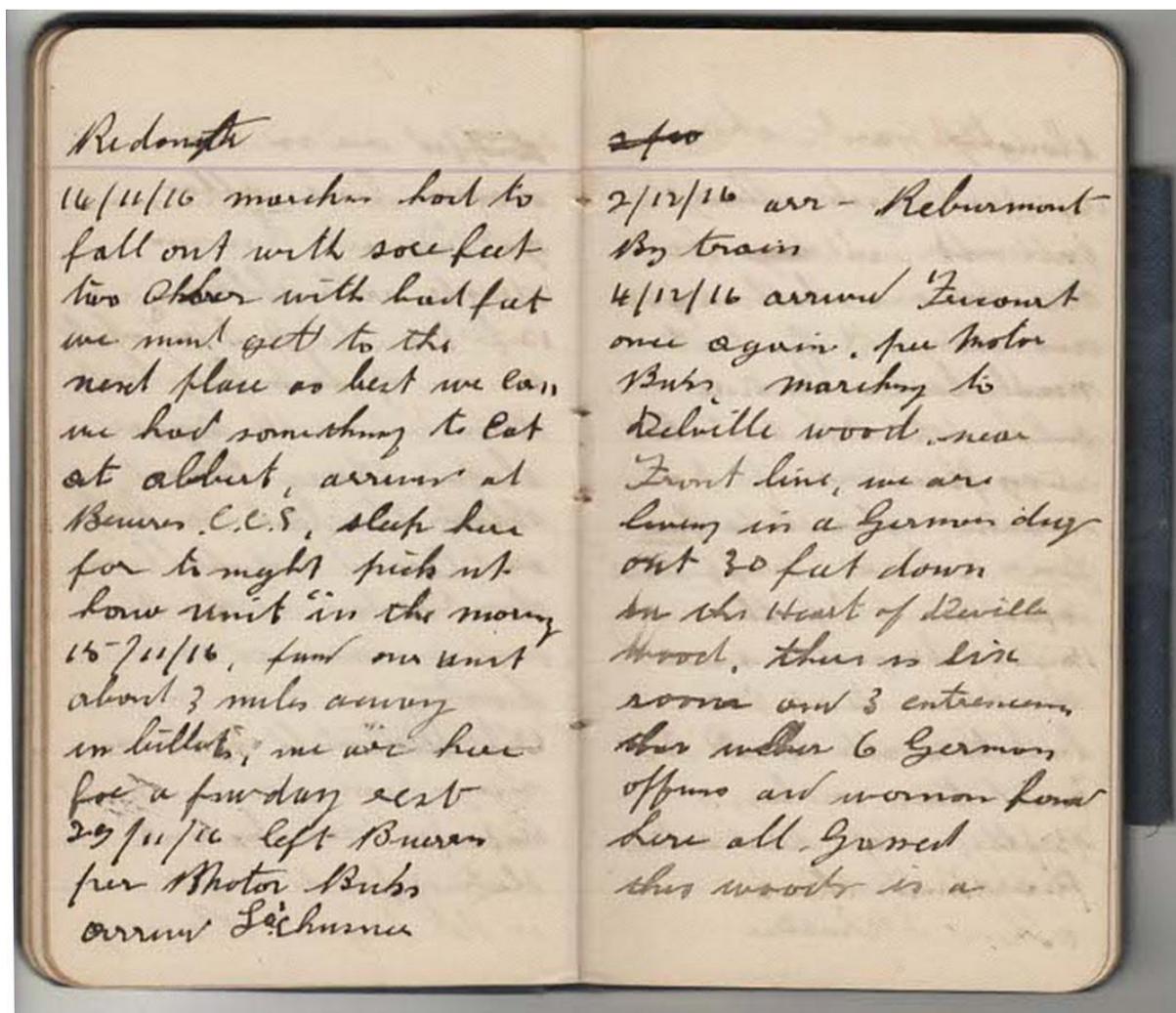
Typical field ambulance and dressing station. (UNK)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E031 37

Stretcher bearers transferring to an ambulance. (AWM)



Redoubt.

14/11/16 Marchers had to fall out with sore feet. Two others with bad feet. We must get to the next place as best we can. We had something to eat at Albert, arrive at Buire CCS. Sleep here for tonight pick up our unit in the morning.

15/11/16 Found our unit about 3 miles away in billet. We are here for a few days rest.

29/11/16 Left Buire per motor bus arrive La Chaussée.

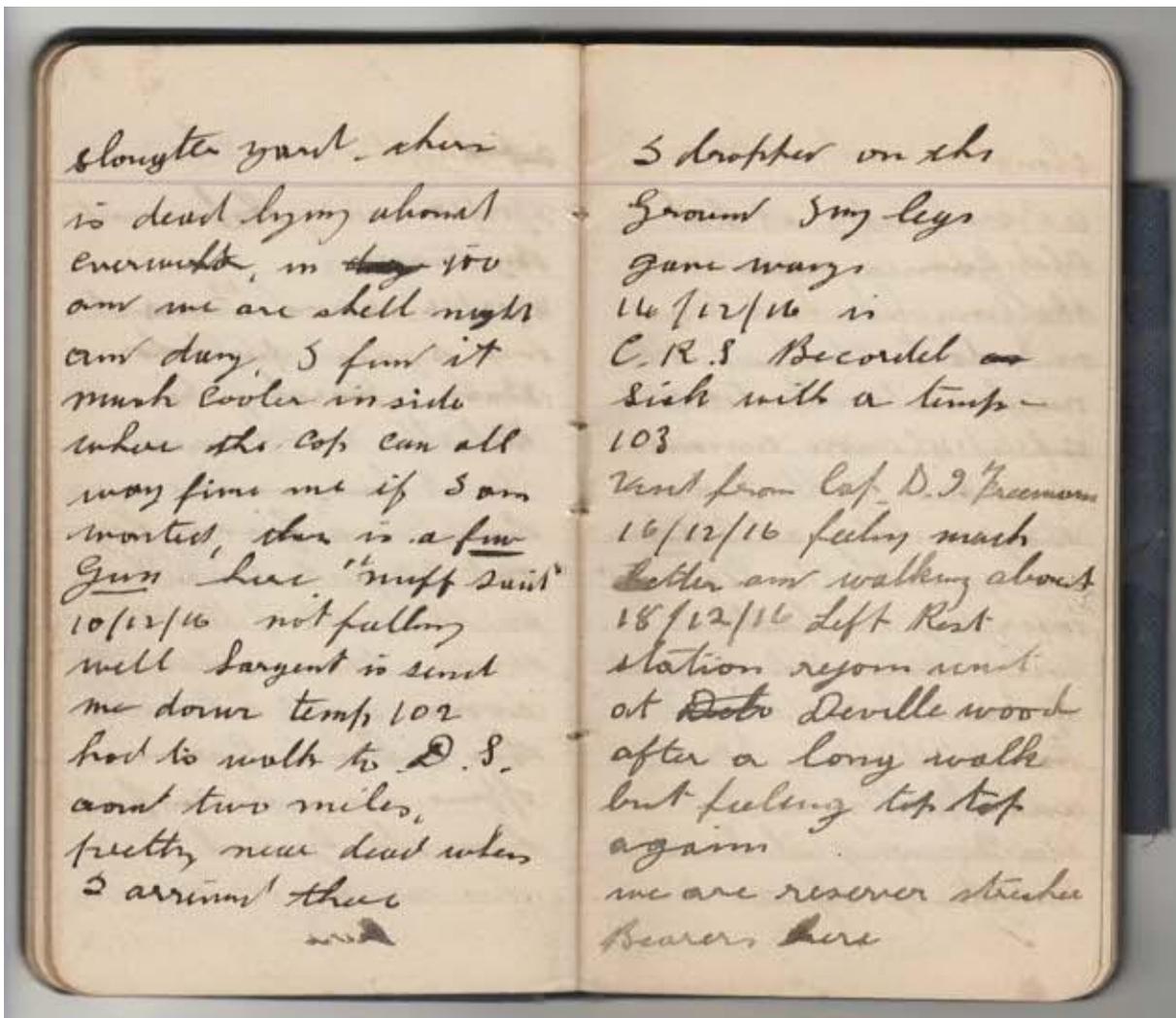
2/12/16 Arrived Ribmont by train.

4/12/16 Arrived Fricourt once again per motor buses. Marching to Delville Wood near front line. We are living in a German dugout 30 feet down in the heart of Delville Wood. This is six rooms and 3 entrances where 6 German officers and woman found here all gassed. This wood is a



"Registering up a battery of Australian 'Heavies.'"

*There are a few guns here "nuff said" (**RHPFH**)*



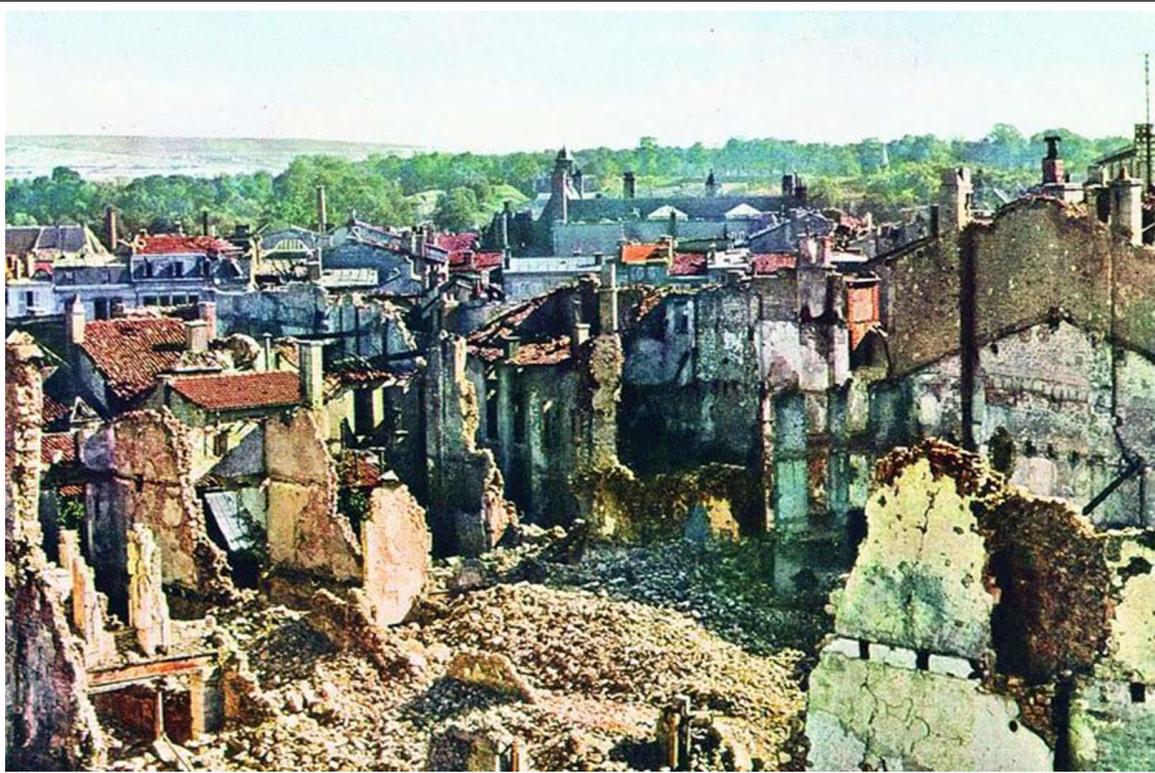
slaughter yard. There is dead lying about everywhere and we are shelled night and day. I find it much cooler inside where the Capt can always find me if I am wanted. There are a few guns here "nuff said".

10/12/16 Not feeling well. Sargent is send me down temp 102 had to walk to DS about two miles. Pretty near dead when I arrived there.

I dropped on the ground, my legs gave way. **14/12/16** In CRS Bécordel sick with a temp 103. Visit from Captain DI Freedman.

16/12/16 Feeling much better and walking about.

18/12/16 Left rest station rejoin unit at Delville Wood after a long walk but feeling tip top again. We are reserve stretcher bearers here.



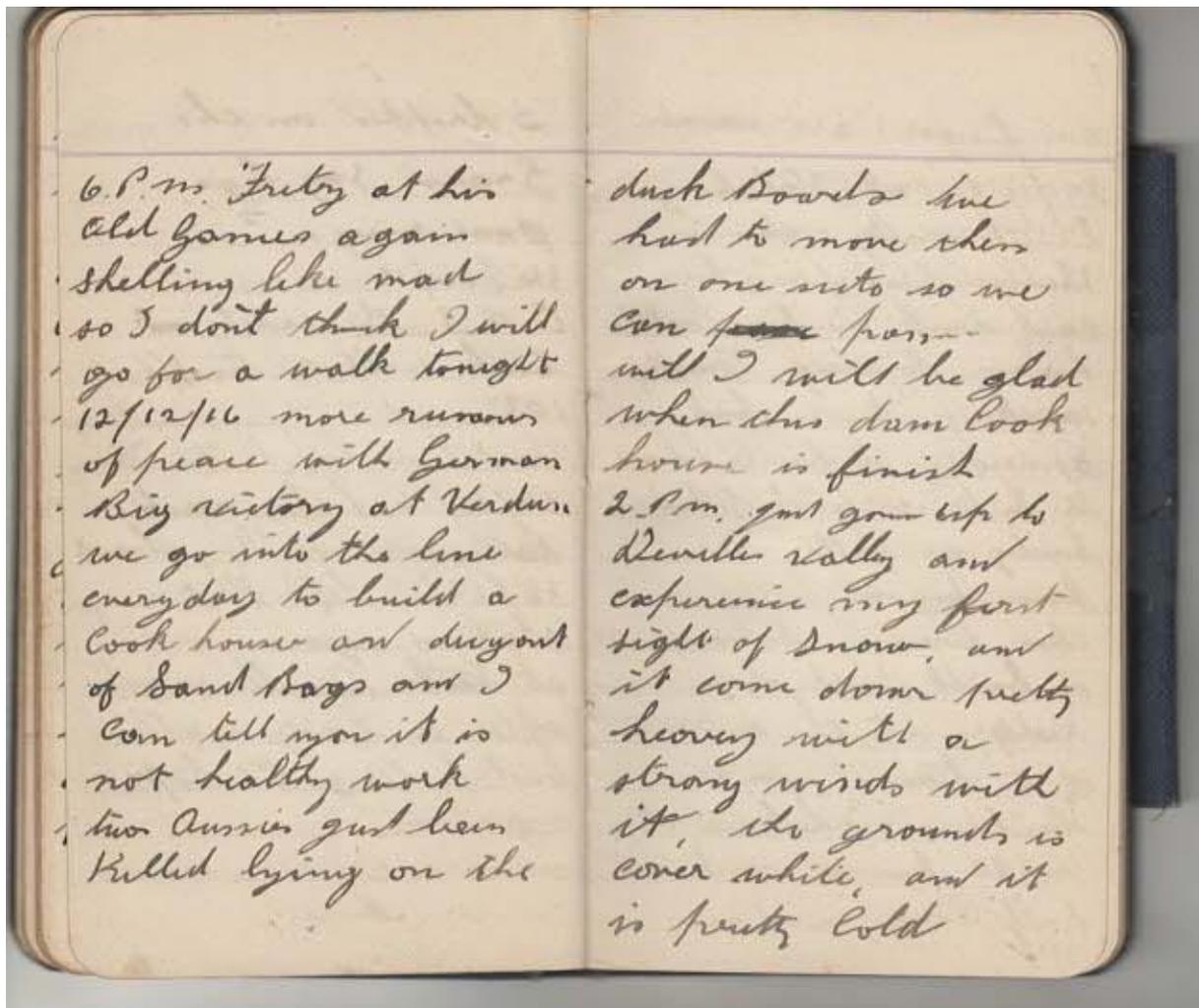
"Big victory Verdun" – Verdun in ruins 1916 (RHPH)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E00193

Snow on the battlefield (AWM)



6pm. Fritz at his old games again, shelling like mad so I don't think I will go for a walk tonight.

12/12/16¹ More rumours of peace with Germany. Big victory at Verdun². We go into the line everyday to build a cook house and dugout of sand bags and I can tell you it is not healthy work. Two Aussies just been killed lying on the

duck boards. We had to move them on one side so we can pass. Well I will be glad when this darn Cook house is finished.

2pm Just gone up to Delville Valley and experience my first sight of snow, and it come down pretty heavy with a strong winds with it, the grounds is cover white, and it is pretty cold

¹ This is clearly the date that Joseph has in his diary but not chronological.

² The Battle of Verdun (the longest battle of WW1) was fought for 302 days between February and December 1916 in the hills north of Verdun. It resulted in approximately 143,000 German dead and 163,000 French dead, all up about 750,000 casualties. (The world population in 1916 was approximately 1.9 billion).

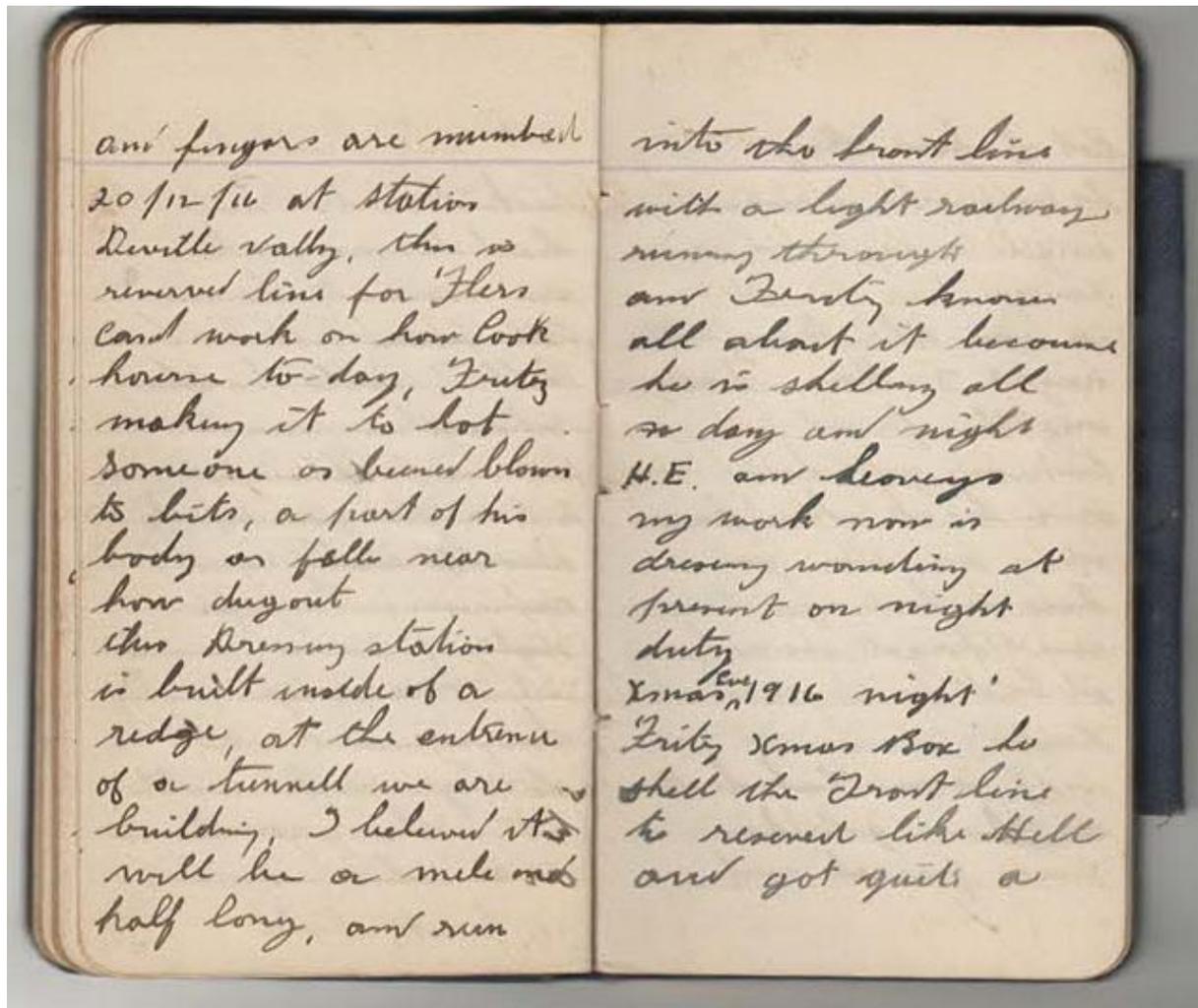


April 1917: Use of a tramway to evacuate the wounded at Vimy Ridge.

Canadians and Germans evacuating the wounded using tramway.



— Stretcher bearers at Passchendaele (Imperial War Museums)



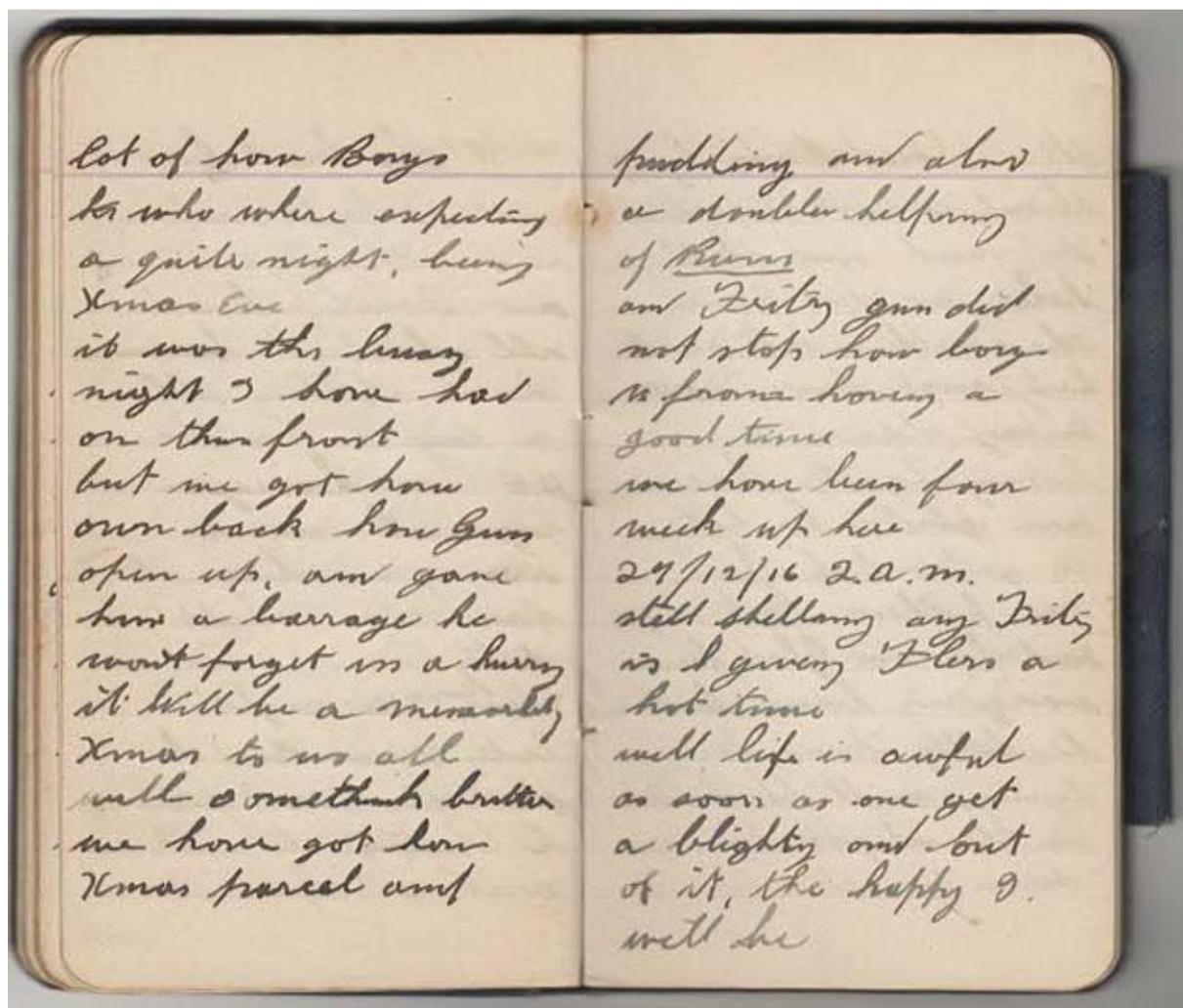
<p>and fingers are numbed.</p> <p>20/12/16 At station Delville Valley. This is reserved line for Flers can't work on our Cook house today. Fritz making it too hot. Someone has been blown to bits. A part of his body has fallen near our dugout. This dressing station is built inside of a ridge. At the entrance of a tunnel we are building. I believe it will be a mile and half long and run</p>	<p>into the front lines with a light railway running through and Fritz knows all about it because he is shelling all day and night. HE and heavys. My work now is dressing wounded at present on night duty.</p> <p>Xmas Eve 1916. Night. Fritz Xmas Box he shell the front line to reserved like Hell and got quite a</p>
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49



Flers : Held by the Australians all the Winter.

(TAF)



lot of our boys who were expecting a quiet night, being Xmas Eve. It was the busiest night I have had on the front but we got our own back our guns open up and gave him a barrage he won't forget in a hurry. It will be a memorable Xmas to us all with something better. We have got our Xmas parcel and

pudding and also a double helping of Rum and Fritz gun did not stop our boys from having a good time. We have been four weeks up here. 27/12/16 2am Still shelling and Fritz is giving Flers a hot time. Well life is awful as soon as one get a blighty¹ and out of it the happier I will be.

¹ A slang term for a wound severe enough to send one home - in the ANZAC sense means back to Australia.

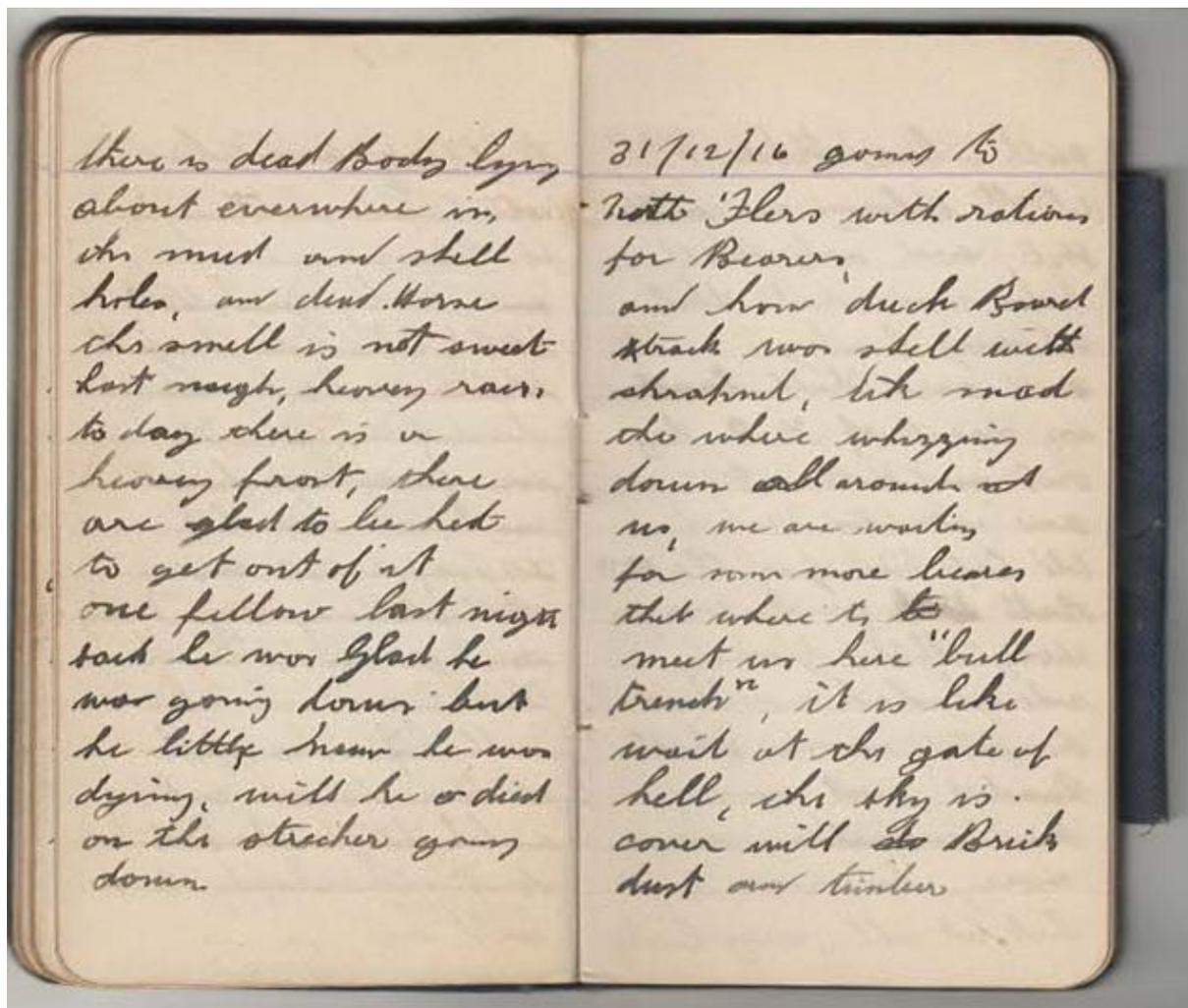


The infamous duckboards. (AWM)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

Soldiers on duckboards during winter (AWM)



There are dead bodies lying about everywhere in the mud and shell holes and dead horses. The smell is not sweet. Last night heavy rain. Today there is a heavy frost. There are glad to be hat to get out of it. One fellow last night said he was glad he was going down but he little knew he was dying. Well he died on the stretcher going down.

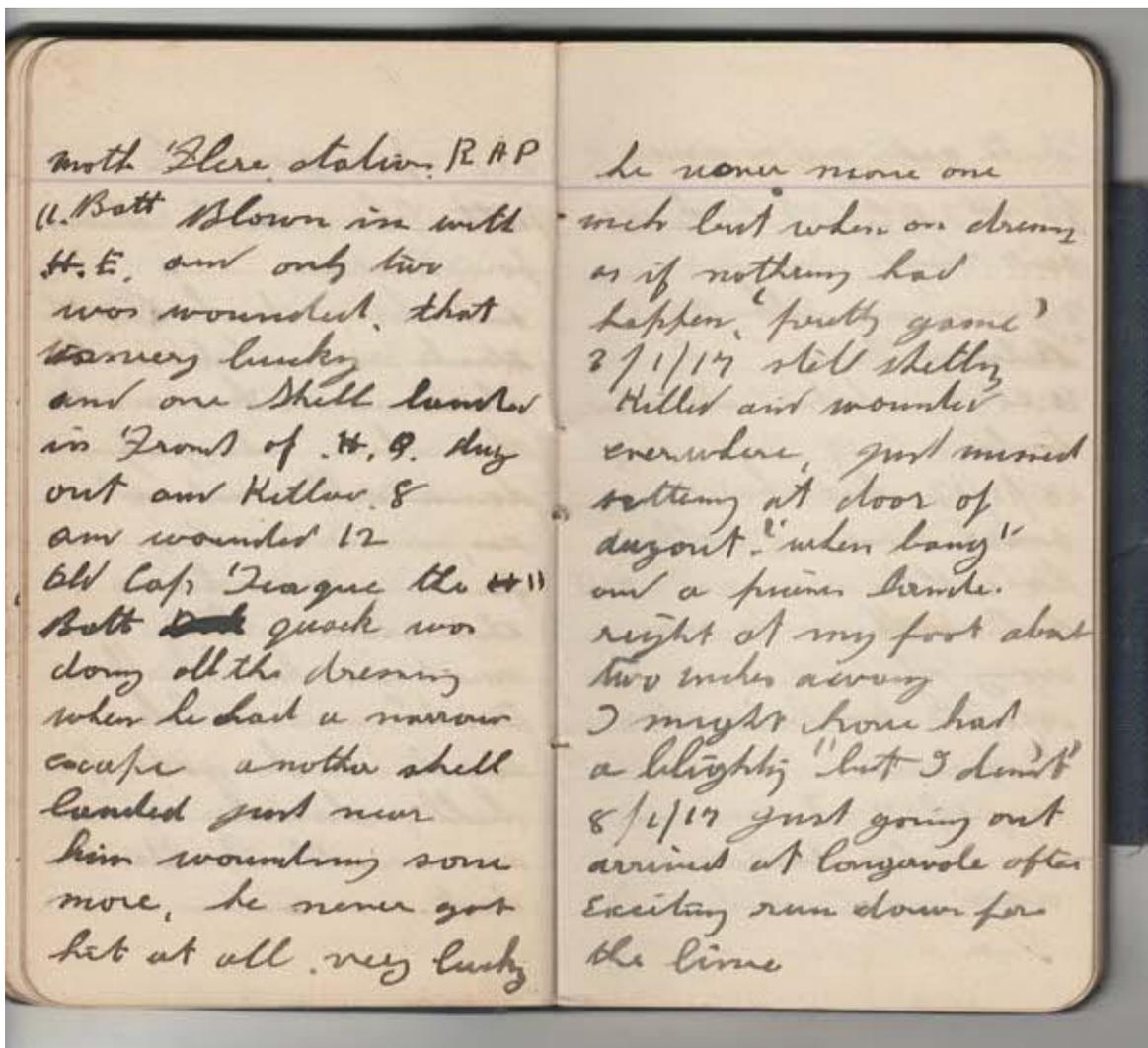
31/12/16 Going to North Flers with rations for bearers and our duck board track was shelled with shrapnel like mad they were whizzing down all around us. We are waiting for some more bearers that were to meet us here "Bull trench". It is like wait at the gate of hell, the sky is covered with brick dust and timber.



Mountains of shell cases on the roadside near the front lines, the contents of which had been fired into the German lines.



"Looking out from the entrance of a captured Pill-Box on to the shell ravaged battlefield." (Multiple negative composite)



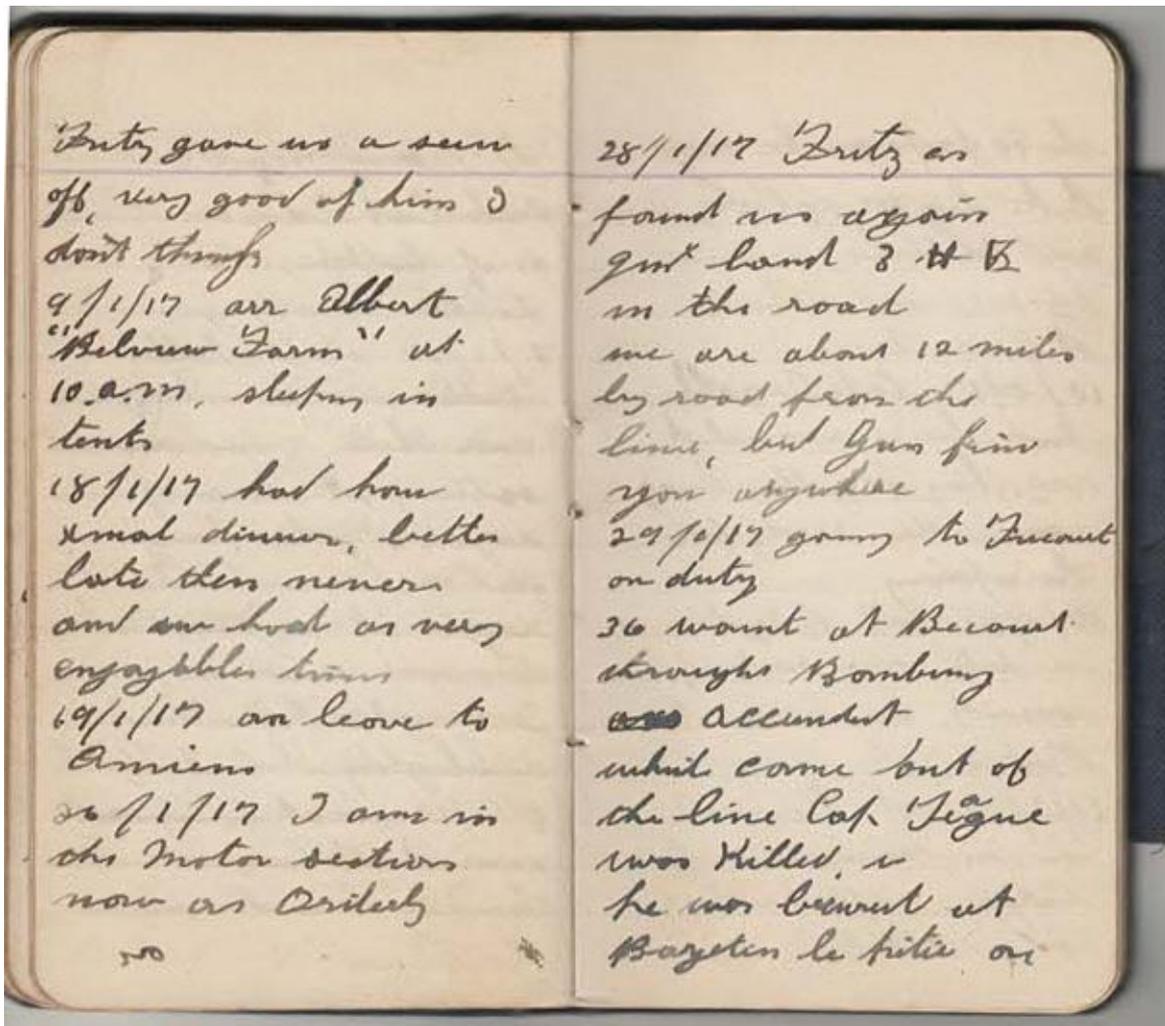
North Flers station R.A.P. 11 Batt blown in with H.E. and only two was wounded that was very lucky and one shell landed in front of HQ dug out and killed 8 and wounded 12. Old cap Teague [see page 105] the 11 Batt quack was doing all the dressing when he had a narrow escape. Another shell landed just near him wounding some more, he never got hit at all. Very lucky.

He never moved one inch but went on dressing as if nothing had happened "pretty game". 3/1/17 Still shelling. Killed and wounded everywhere. Just missed sitting at door of dugout "when BANG!" and a piece landed right at my foot about two inches away. I might have had a blighty "but I didn't". 8/1/17 Just going out. Arrived at Longueval after exciting run down for the line.



(RHPFH)

“The World’s most infamous highway, the Menin road on a winter’s sunset.”



Fritz gave us a send off, very good of him , I don't think.

9/1/17 Arrived Albert "Belview Farm" at 10am. Sleeping in tents.

18/1/17 Had our Xmas dinner. Better late than never and we had a very enjoyable time.

19/1/17 On leave to Amiens.

26/1/17 I am in the motor sections now as orderly.

28/1/17 Fritz as found us again just land 3 HE in the road we are about 12 miles by road from the line, but guns find you everywhere
29/1/17 going to Fricourt on duty

36 wound at Bécourt through bombing ~~accident~~ accident which come out of the line. Cap. Teague was killed. He was buried at Bazentin le Petit on

28/1/17 Fritz has found us again. Just land 3 HE in the road and are about 12 miles by road from the line but guns find you everywhere.

29/1/17 Going to Fricourt on duty. 36 wounded at Bécourt through bombing accident which came out of the line. Captain Teague¹ was killed. He was buried at Bazentin le Petit on

¹ This is an interesting entry.

Captain Harold Oscar Teague, Medical Practitioner, age 30, was with the 11th Battalion when killed in action on 14/2/17 (about a fortnight after Joseph's entry!). He originally joined up 1/5/15 and taken on strength with the 2nd Field Ambulance on 12/1/16 but was transferred to the 11th Battalion on 28/11/16 as Medical Officer. He was mentioned in despatches relating to conspicuous service London Gazette date 1 June 1917. His father lived in Albany Highway, Victoria Park, WA.

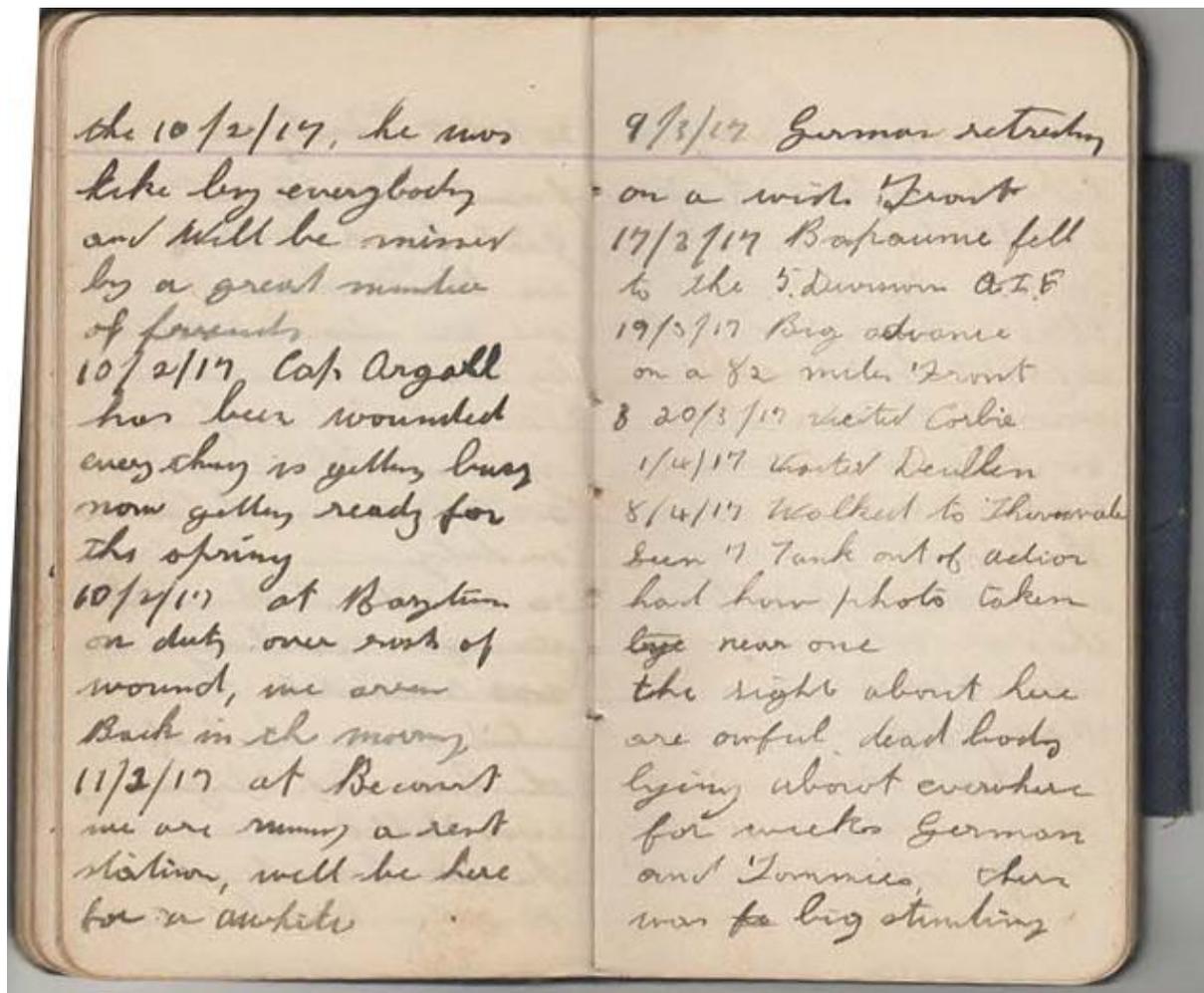
Was he known to Joseph before the war as his mother is listed as living in Victoria Park in the early 1900s? Joseph presumably also knew him from when he was with the 2nd Field Ambulance. We will never know.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E01420

"Seen 7 tank out of action". Disabled Mark IV tank in mud (AWM) E4766



the 10/2/17. He was liked by everybody and will be missed by a great number of friends.

10/2/17 Capt Argall [Carlile? – from Unit Diary] has been wounded. Everything is getting busy now getting ready for the spring.

10/2/17 At Bazentin on duty over rush of wound. We are back in the morning.

11/2/17 At Bécourt. We are running a rest station. Will be here for a while.

9/3/17 German retreating

on a wide front

17/3/17 Bapaume fell to the 5. Division A.I.F.

19/3/17 Big advance on a 82 mile front

20/3/17 Visited Corbie.

1/4/17 Visited Deullen

8/4/17 Walked to *Thiepal* [Thiepval?]. Seen 7 tank out of action had our photo taken near one

The sights about here are awful. dead bodies lying about everywhere for weeks German and Tommies. There was big stunting.

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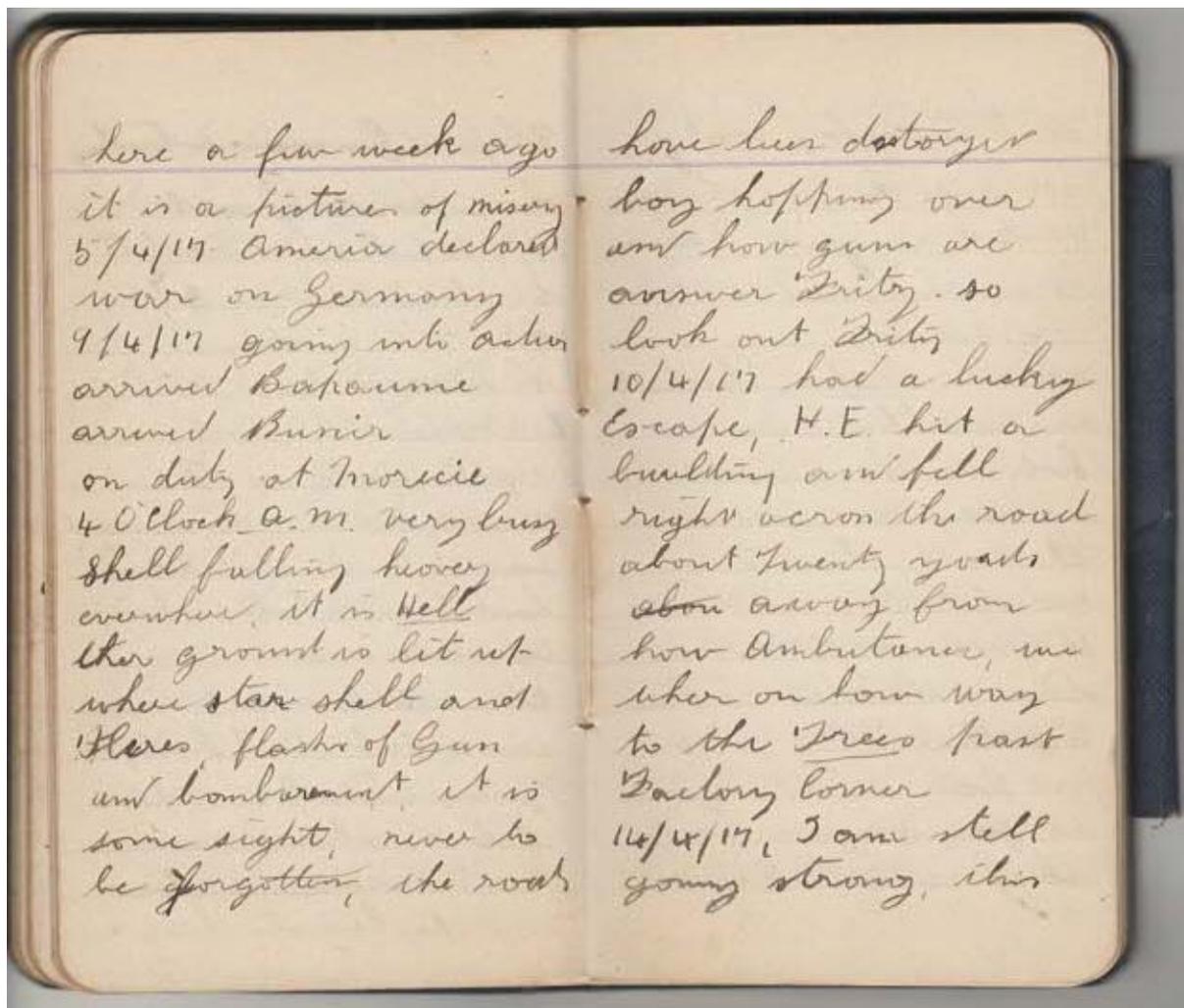
¹ Bapaume was a large German-held town almost within sight of the Australians' trench lines throughout the winter months on the Somme. Suddenly, from 24 February 1917 it became evident that the enemy was retiring. The British advanced after them, and by the morning of 17 March Australian troops reached the outskirts of Bapaume. The soldiers' heightened spirits were exemplified by the band of the 5th Australian Brigade playing amid the burning ruins as they marched into the old town square on the 19th. However booby traps and time bombs had been left behind; one exploded in the town hall a week later burying men and killing twenty-five. (AWM)



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E003

Cambrai Road, Bapaume after capture. (AWM)



here a few weeks ago. It is a picture of misery.
5/4/17 America declared war on Germany.¹
9/4/17 Going into action. Arrived Bapaume.
 Arrived Burie. On duty at Moricie
 4 o'clock a.m. very busy shell falling heavy
 everywhere. It is Hell. The ground is lit up
 where star shell and flares, flashes of guns and
 bombardment. It is some sight. Never to be
 forgotten. The roads

have been destroyed. Boys hopping over and
 our guns are answering Fritz. So look out
 Fritz.
10/4/17 Had a lucky escape. HE hit our
 building and fell right across the road about
 twenty yards away from our ambulance. We
 were on our way to Flers past Factory Corner².
14/4/17 I am still going strong. This

¹ On April 2, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson went before a joint session of Congress to request a declaration of war against Germany. Wilson cited Germany's violation of its pledge to suspend unrestricted submarine warfare in the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean, as well as its attempts to entice Mexico into an alliance against the United States, as his reasons for declaring war. On April 4, 1917, the U.S. Senate voted in support of the measure to declare war on Germany. **(OTH)**

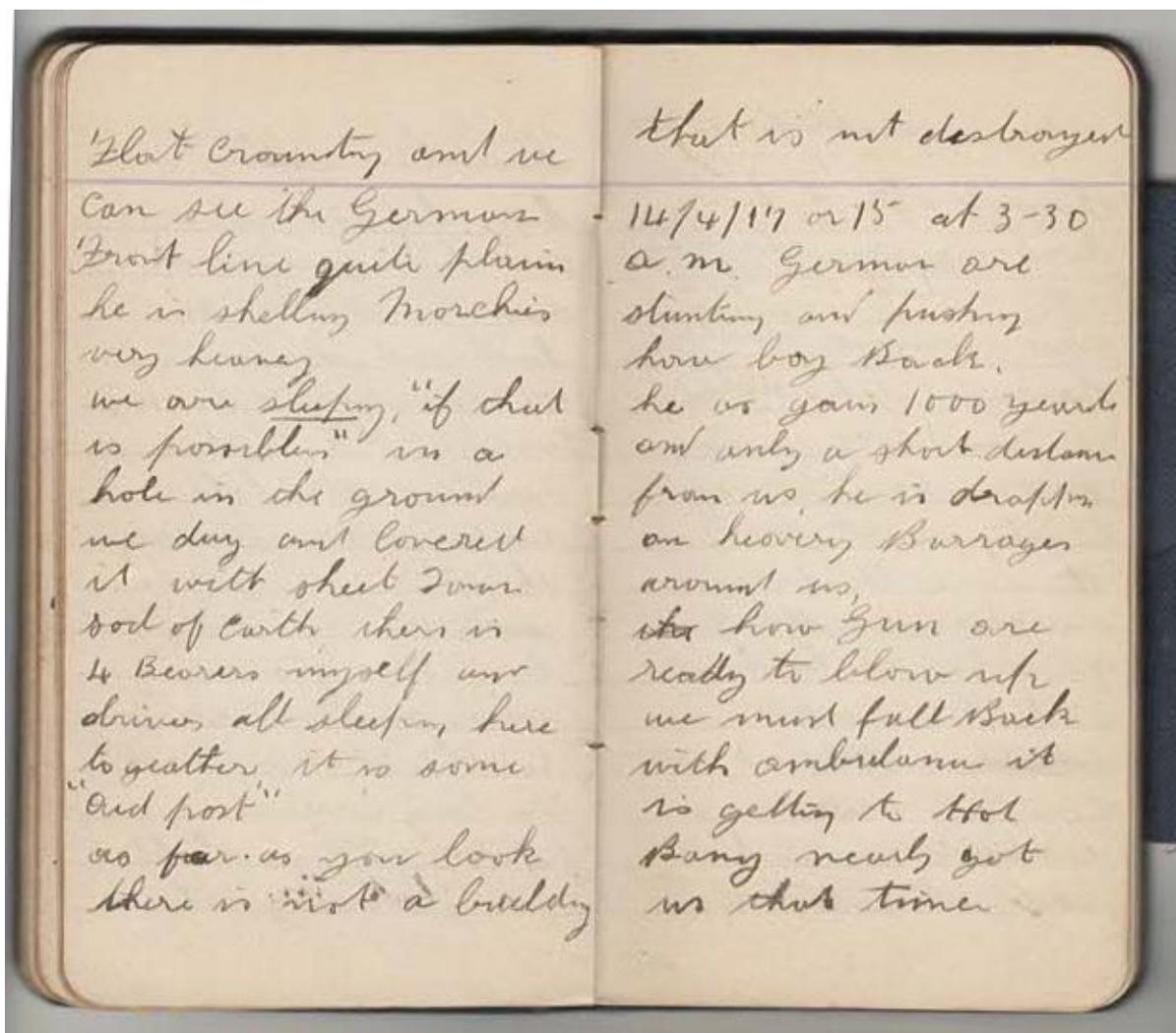
² 'Factory Corner' near Flers. It was here the 22nd Battalion had their Headquarters. The country around was devoid of landmarks, and the mud truly appalling. Rations were, with great difficulty, brought up each night and dumped at this spot, to be carried forward by ration parties. Casualties from enemy shelling were frequent, and not a few wounded men died exhausted in the engulfing mud. -
AWM



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E00572

Knee deep in mud in a trench. (AWM)

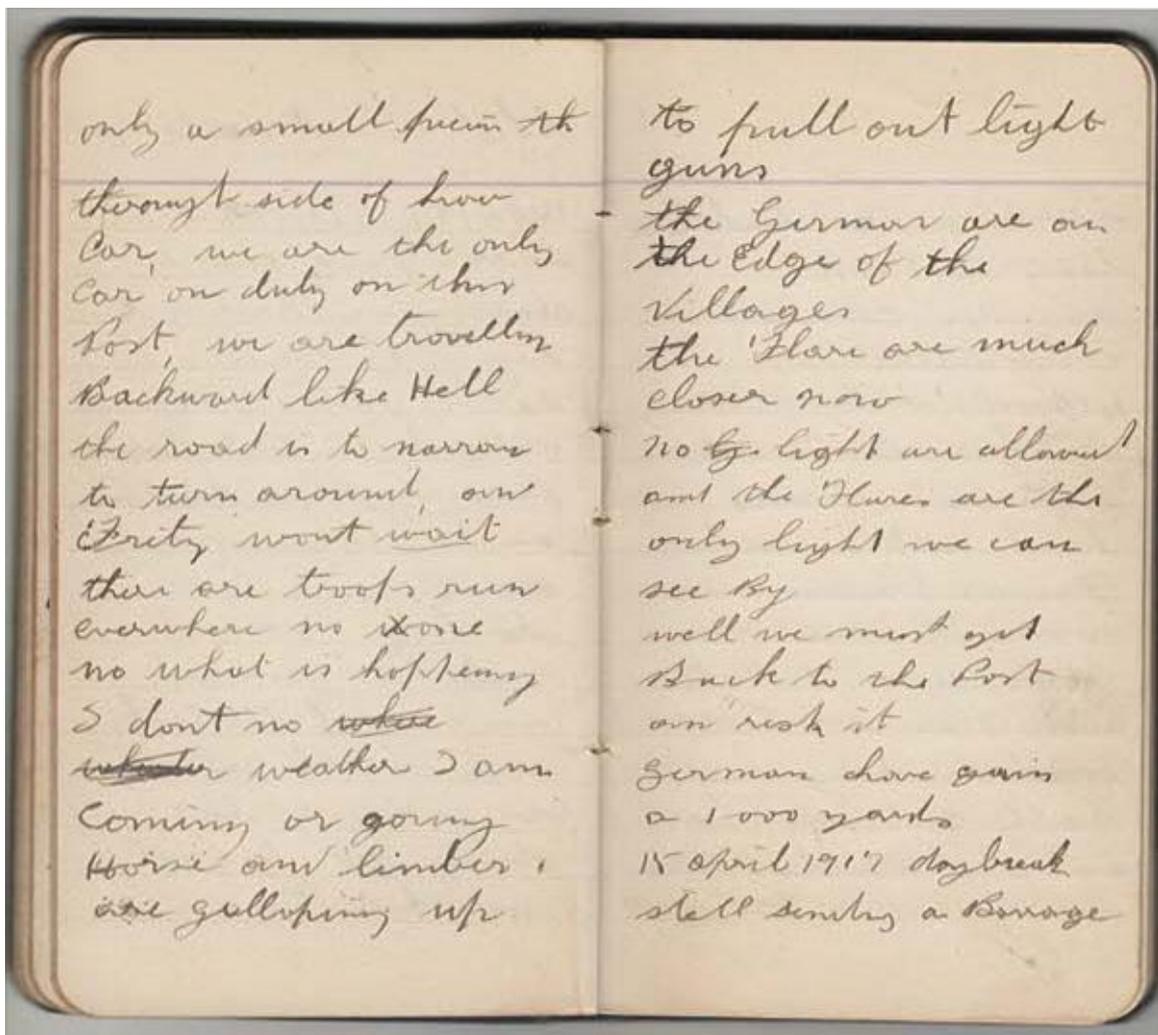


flat country and we can see the German front line quite plainly. He is shelling Morchies very heavy. We are sleeping "if that is possible" in a hole in the ground we dug and covered it with sheet ??? sod of earth. There are 4 bearers myself and drivers all sleeping here together. It is some "aid post". As far as you look there is not a building

that is not destroyed.
14/4/17 or 15 At 3-30am German are starting and pushing our boys back. He has gained 1000 yards and only a short distance from us. He is dropping a heavy barrage around us. Our guns are ready to blow up. We must fall back with ambulance it is getting too hot. BANG! nearly got us that time.



Captain Archie Cockburn viewing a dead German soldier, 17 April 1917. (AWM P02321.061).



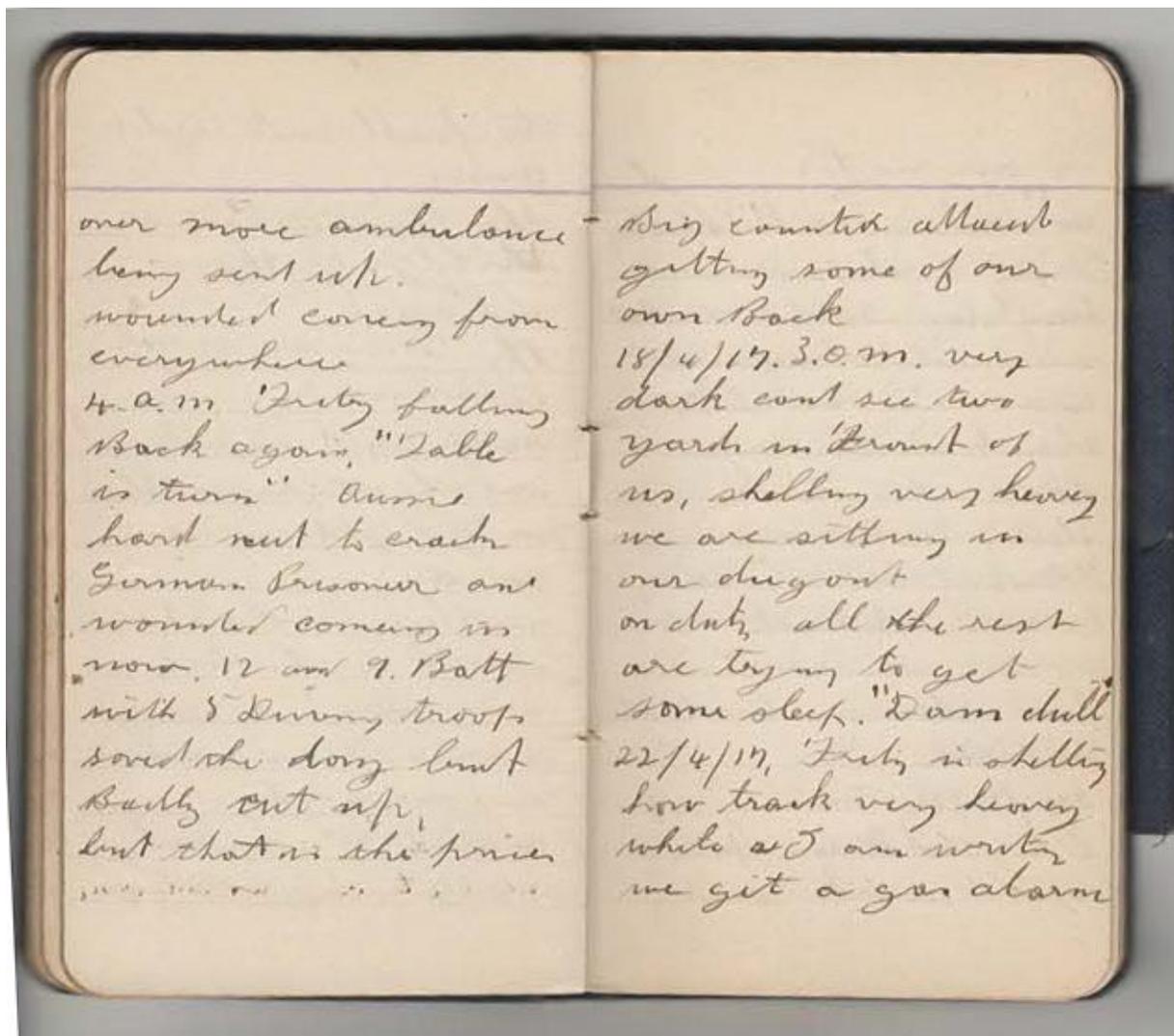
Only a small piece through side of our car. We are the only car on duty on this Post. We are travelling backward like hell. The road is too narrow to turn around and Fritz won't wait. There are troops running everywhere. No one knows what is happening. I don't know whether I am coming or going. Horse and limbers are galloping up

to pull out light guns. The Germans are on the edge of the villages. They are much closer now. No lights are allowed and the flares are the only light we can see by. Well we must get back to the post and risk it. German have gained 1,000 yards.
15/4/17 Day break still sending a barrage



The 2nd Field Ambulance camp at Bazentin le Petit. (AWM P02321.063).

(AWM)



over. More ambulances being sent up.
Wounded coming from everywhere.
4am Fritz falling back again "Table is turned".
Aussies hard nut to crack. German prisoners
and wounded coming in now.
12am. 9th Battalion with 5 Division troops
saved the day but badly cut up, but that is the
price.

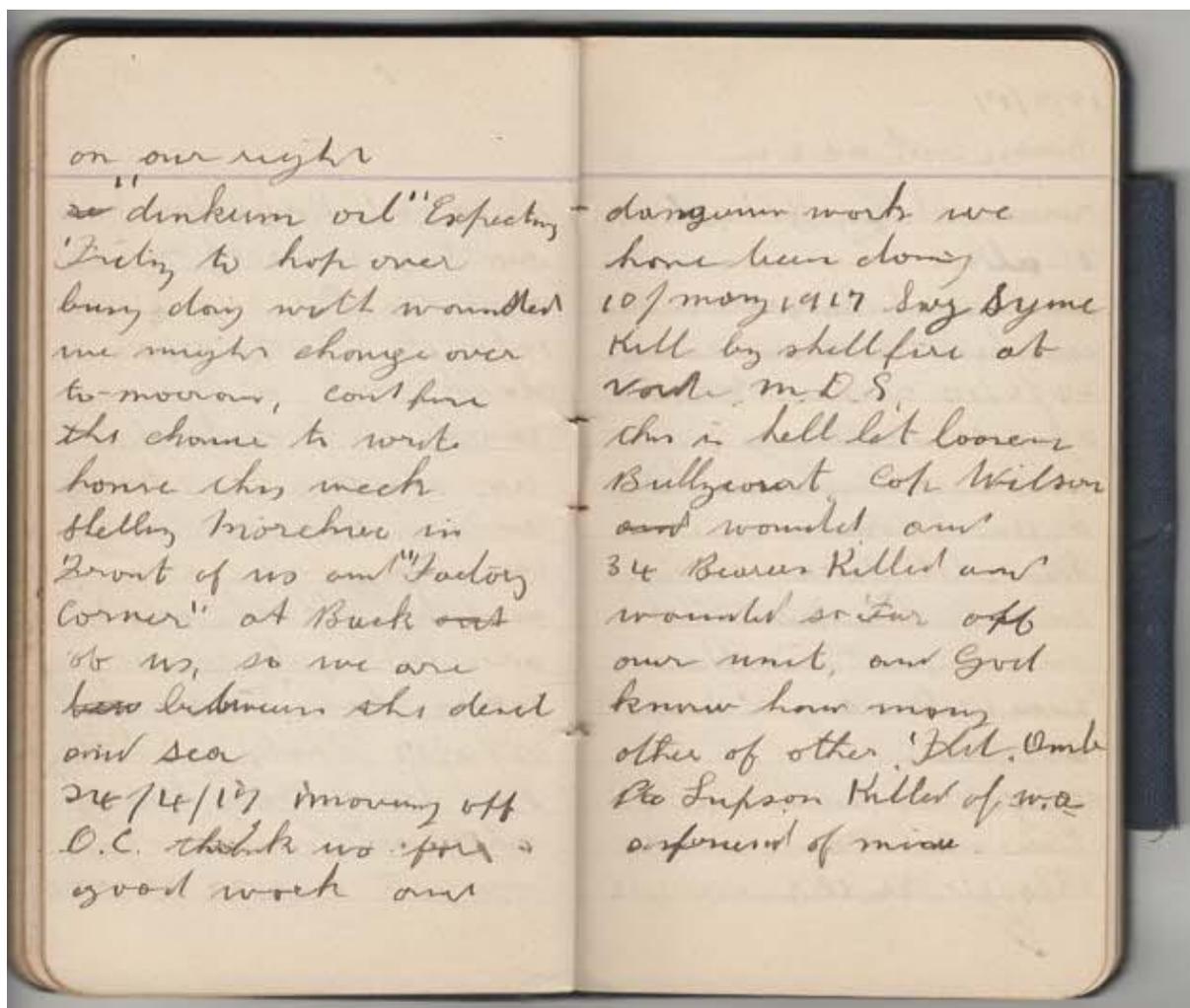
Big counter attack getting some of our own
back.
18/4/17 3.00am Very dark and can't see two
yards in front of us. Shelling very heavy. We
are sitting in our dugout on duty. All the rest
are trying to get some sleep. "Damn dull".
22/4/17 Fritz is shelling our track very
heavily. While I am writing we get a gas
alarm



Stretch bearers at work (AWM)



Wearing gas masks – 45th Battalion. (AWM) E00825



on our right "dinkum oil". Expecting Fritz to hop over. Busy day with wounded. We might change over tomorrow. Can't find the chance to write home this week. Shelling Morchies in front of us and "Factory Corner" at back of us, so we are between the dead and sea.
24/4/17 Moving off. OC thanks us for good work and

dangerous work we have been doing.
10/05/17 Sgt Syme² killed by shell fire at Vaux³ MDS. This is hell let loose.
 Beaulancourt Capt Wilson wounded and 34 bearers killed and wounded so far of our unit and God knows how many other of other Field Ambulance. Pte Lupson⁴ killed of WA a friend of mine.

¹ Joseph has a gap in the dates of his diary here. From an extract from the 2nd Australian Field Ambulance War Diary one can understand why:

The bearer sub-divisions are attached to the Main Dressing Station at Vaux and are evacuating the wounded from the struggle for Bullecourt. Casualties amongst the stretcher bearers are heavy, being nearly 30%.

² Sergeant Noel Herbert Syme no.1501 died of gunshot wound to head 10/5/17. A farmer from Victoria.

³ Presumably Vaux-sur-Somme.

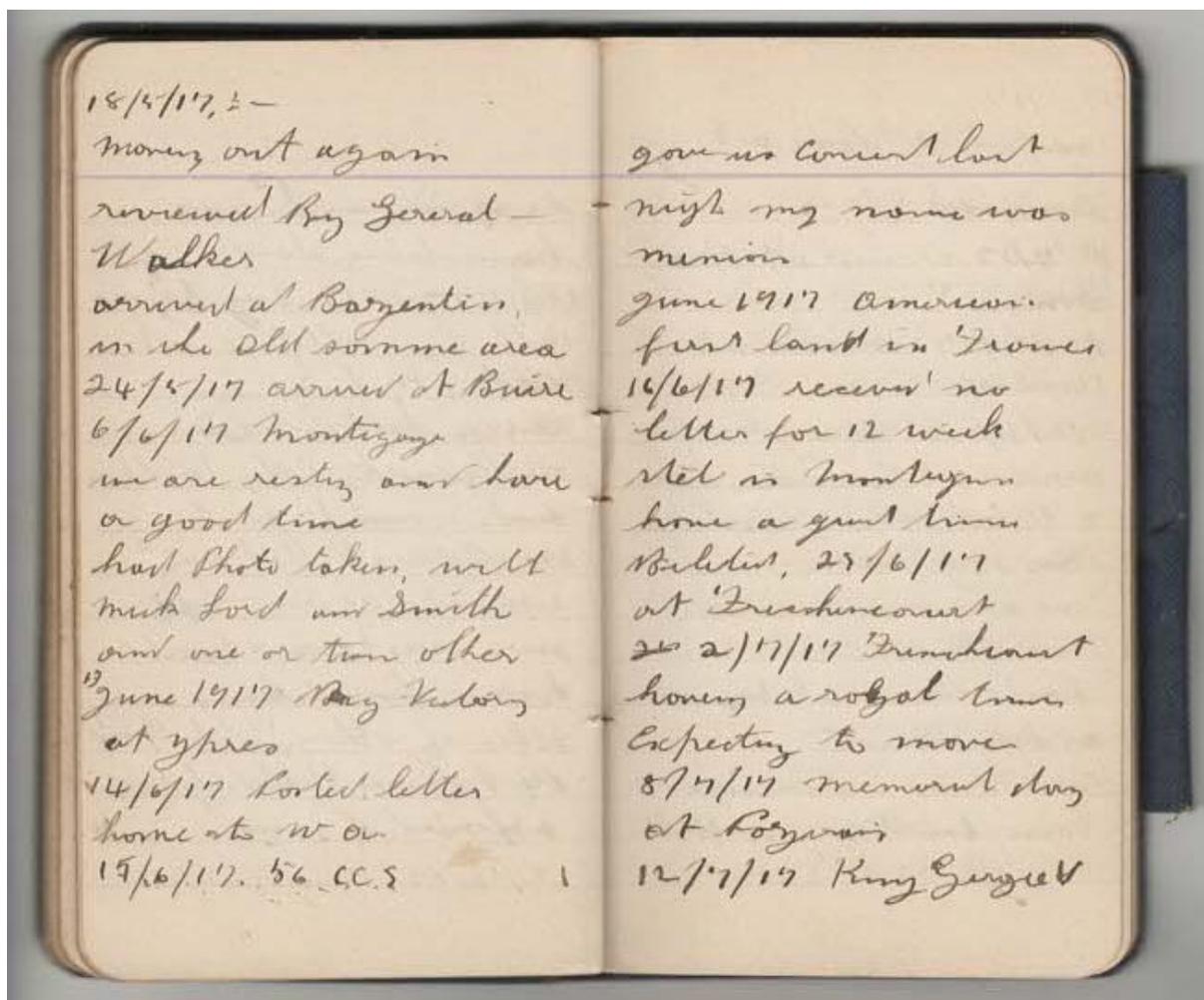
⁴ Pte George Laban Lupson no. 4856 KIA 5 May 1917 age 24. Buried at Villiers-Bretonneux.



(RHPFH)

The bombed barracks at Ypres, viewed from 500 ft.

"Big victory at Ypres"



18/5/17 Moving out again. Reviewed by General Walker¹. Arrived at Bazentin le Petit in the old Somme area.
24/5/17 Arrive at Buire.
6/6/17 Montigny. We are resting and have a good time. Had photo taken with Mick Lord and Smith and one or two others.
13/6/17 Big victory at Ypres.²
14/6/17 Posted letter home to WA.
15/6/17 56 CCS.

Gave us concert last night my name was *minion*.
 June 1917 Americans first landed in France.
16/6/17 Received no letters for 12 weeks. Still in Montigny. Have a great time billeted.
23/6/17 at Frenchencourt.
2/7/17 Frenchencourt. Having a royal time. Expecting to move.
8/7/17 Memorial day at Pozieres.
12/7/17 King George V

¹ Brigadier General Harold Walker British commander of 1st Division.

² Presumably this was the Battle of Messines which was the first major battle for the 3rd Australian Division under Major General John Monash. Two of his men, Private John Carroll and Captain Robert Grieve, won the Victoria Cross during the fighting which cost 6,000 Australian casualties.

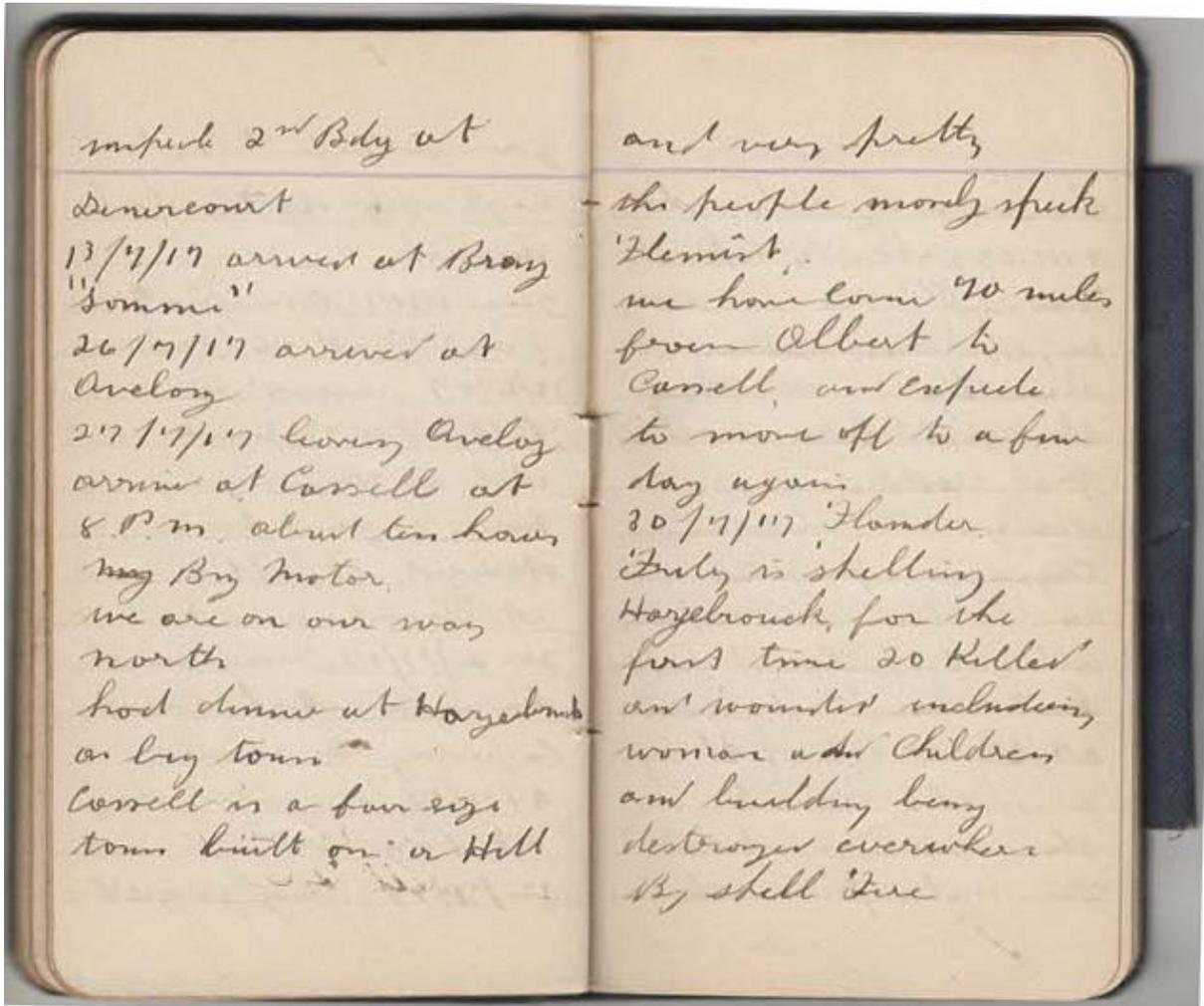


AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P03631.182

Soldiers, mules and carts stopped on a street in the ruined village of Voormezele. August 1917.

Voormezele ruins August 1917 (AWM)



inspects 2nd Bdy at Dienercourt[Dernancourt?].

13/7/17 Arrive at Bray-sur-Somme¹.

26/7/17 Arrived at Aveluy.

27/7/17 Leaving Aveluy. Arrive at Cassell at 8pm about ten hours by motor. We are on our way north. Had dinner at Hazebrouck a big town. Cassell is a fair size town built on a hill

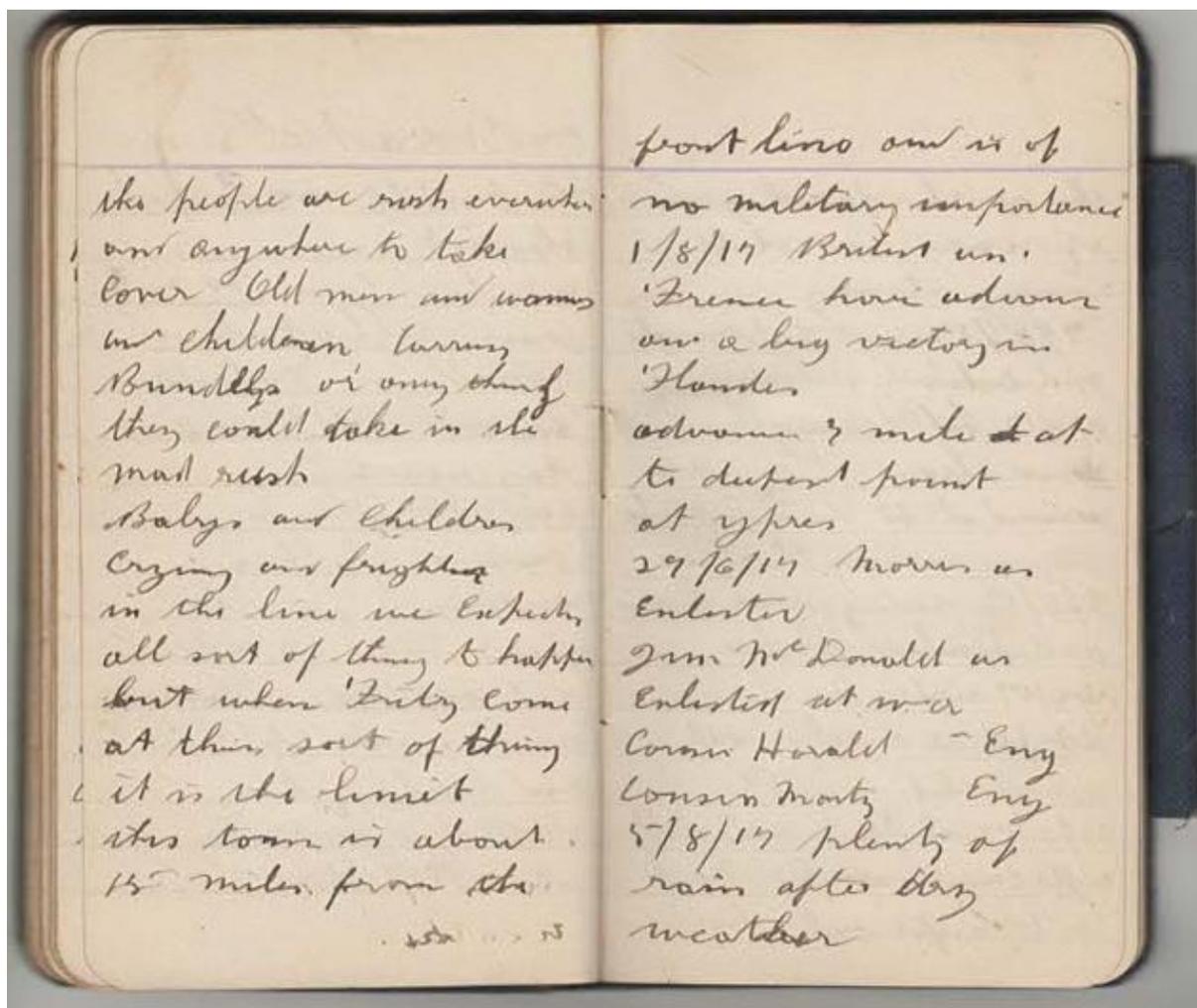
and very pretty. The people mainly speak Flemish. We have come 70 miles from Albert to Cassell and expect to move off in a few days again.

30/7/17 Flanders. Fritz is shelling Hazebrouck for the first time. 20 killed and wounded including woman and children and buildings being destroyed everywhere by shell fire.

¹ After marching 15 miles (from 2nd Australian Field Ambulance Unit War Diary).



The Menin Road. (RHPFH)



The people are rushing everywhere and anywhere to take cover. Old men and woman and children carrying bundles or anything they could take in the mad rush. Babies and children crying and frightened in the line. We are expecting all sorts of things to happen but when Fritz comes at this sort of thing it is the limit. This town is about 15 miles

from the front lines and is of no military importance.
1/8/17 British and French have advanced and a big victory in Flanders. Advanced 3 miles at the deepest point at Ypres.
29/7/17 Morris¹ is enlisted. Jim McDonald² has enlisted at WA. Cousin Harold and Cousin Moritz – enlisted in England.
5/8/17 Plenty of rain after dry weather.

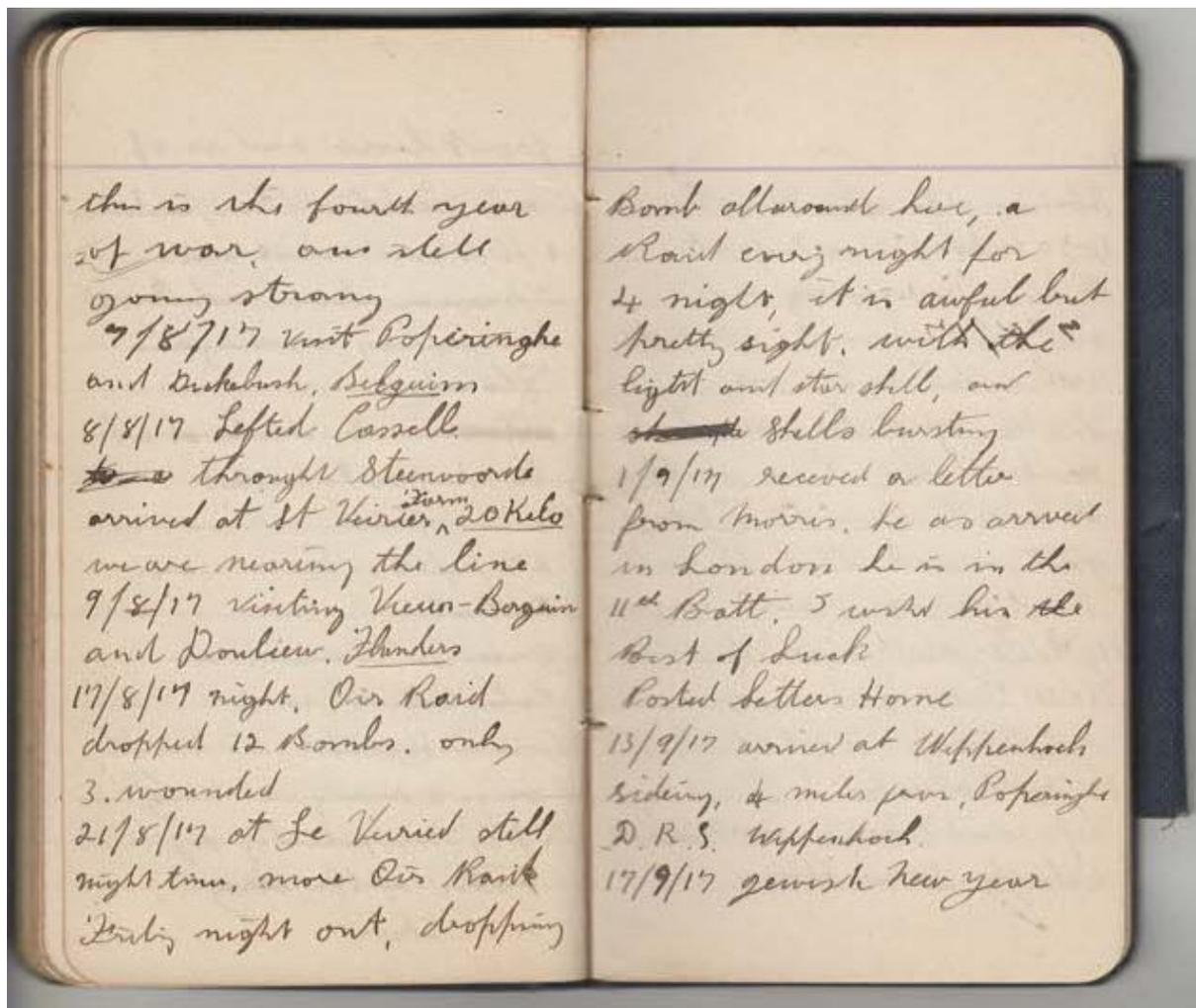
¹ This is Joseph's brother Morris Rosenthal who enlisted 23 March 1917. Occupation Horse Driver and NOK mother Bertha Rumpf of 28 Brookman Street Perth. He was 37. Embarked Fremantle June 1917 per A30 HMAT *Borda* and arrived Plymouth August 1917. Returned to Australia and discharged medically unfit April 1919.

² Presumably this is James Hogg McDonald born 1885, trade wood carver, no. 7122? Joined 27 Feb 1917 in Perth and attached to 1st Tunnelling Company. Address given as 224 William Street, Perth. His father had died but his mother lived in Edinburgh, Scotland. Amongst the artifacts of Joseph Rosenthal was an undated card from Edinburgh, Scotland, which leads one to assume that it is this McDonald. He was obviously a good friend of Joseph's as he is mentioned a few times in this diary. Was he a beau for one of his sisters? It would appear that he never married; his last address was the Salvation Army Workman's Home, 34 Queens Street, Perth. Died in Perth 1935 and buried at Karrakatta.



"Shrapnel bursting amongst reconnoitering planes."

(RHPFH)



This is the fourth year of war and still going strong.

7/8/17 Visit Poperinge and Drokebush, Belgium.

8/8/17 Left Cassell through Steenvoorde arrived at St Vierier Farm¹ 20 kilo. We are nearing the line.

9/8/17 Visiting Vieux-Berquin and [Le] Doulieu, Flanders.

17/8/17 Night. Air raid dropped 12 bombs. Only 3 wounded.

21/8/17 At Le Verier still night time. More air raids. Fritz night out, dropping

bombs all around here, a raid every night for 4 nights. It is awful but pretty sight with light and star shells and shells bursting.

1/9/17 Received a letter from Morris. He has arrived in London. He is in the 11th Batt. I wish him the best of luck. Posted letters home.

13/9/17 Arrived at Wippenhoek siding 4 miles from Poperinge. DRS Wippenhoek.

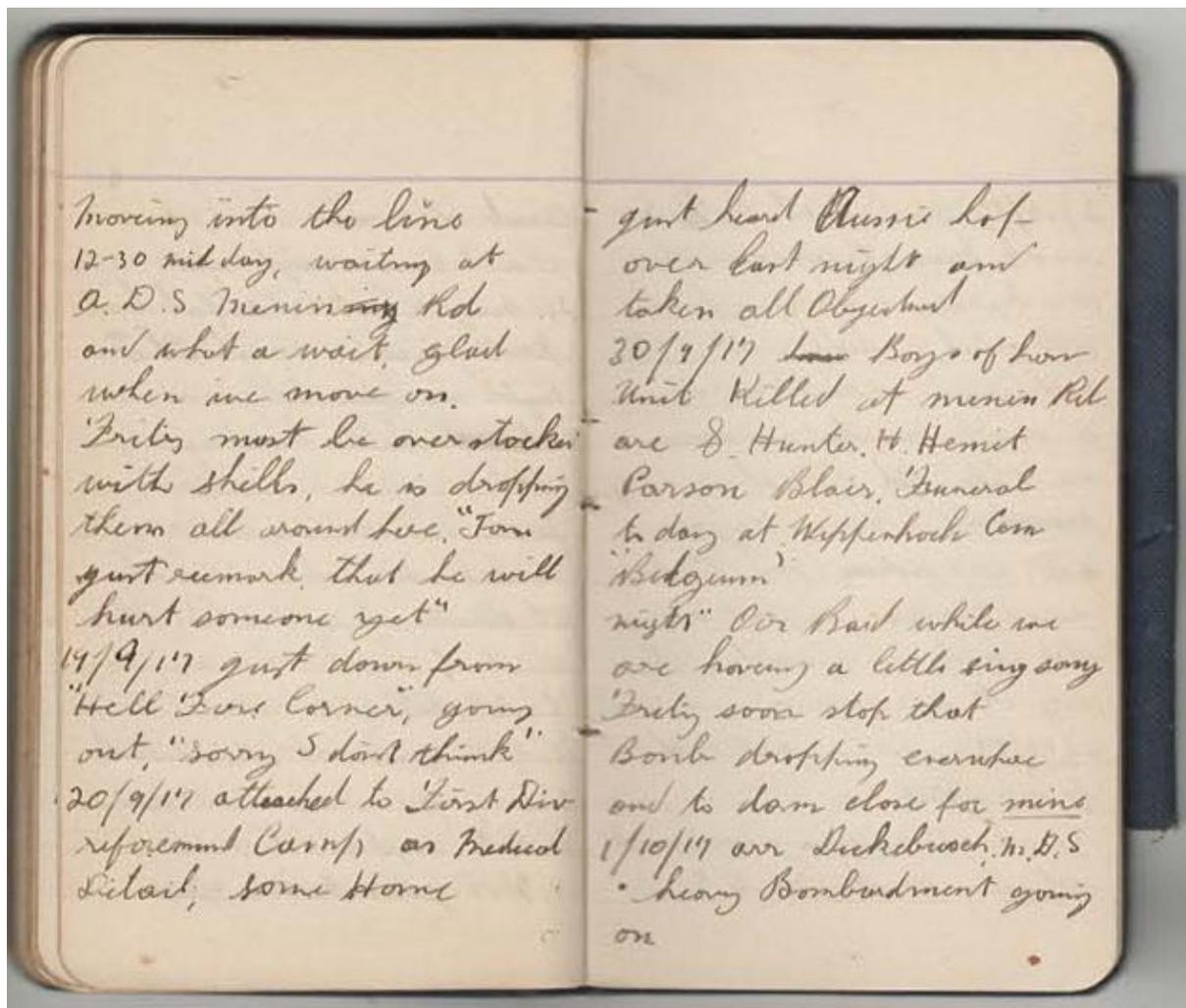
17/9/17 Jewish New Year.

¹ The 2nd Australian Field Ambulance War Diary states, "The unit then billeted in Farm du Bois".



"Hell-Fire Corner. Showing the difficulty of transport along an exposed highway."

(RHPFH)



Moving into the line 12-30 midday. Waiting at ADS Menin Road and what a wait. Glad when we move on. Fritz must be over stocked with shells. He is dropping them all round here. "Tom just remarked, that he will hurt someone yet".

19/9/17 Just down from "Hell Fire Corner". Going out. "Sorry, I don't think".

20/9/17 Attached to First Division reinforcement camp as Medical Detail. Some home.

Just heard Aussie hop over last night and taken all objectives.

30/9/17 Boys of our unit killed at Menin Road are F Hunter¹, H Hemit², Parson³, Blair⁴. Funeral today at Wippenhoek corner, Belgium. Night air raid while we are having a little sing song. Fritz should stop that bomb dropping everywhere and to darn close for mine.

1/10/17 Arrive Dickebusch MDS. Heavy bombardment going on.

¹ Foster Hunter 5423 who died of wounds 27/9/17 (GSW shoulder and compound fracture of tibia and fibia).

² Ernest Emmett 3332 who died of wounds 28/9/17 (GSW to head).

³ Pte Sydney F Parsons 5343 KIA 21/9/17 (Menin Road South Military Cemetery, Belgium).

⁴ Pte Reginald C Blair 10297 who died of wounds 31/8/17 (Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium).

132 Watson Avenue
Rose Park,
South Australia.
June 10th 1918.

The C.C.

Base Records Office, Melbourne

Dear Sir

Would you kindly send me the parents' address of Parsons, 2nd Field Ambulance who was killed at Ypres September 22nd last year, as I was wounded by the same shell and would like to write to them. I am sorry that I do not know his initials or number, but believe his parents live close to Perth in Western Australia.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours faithfully
G.S. Bennett.

W. Morgan
1/76

National Archives of Australia

NAA: B2455, PARSONS SYDNEY FREDERICK

"Boys of our unit killed at Menin Road..." Sydney Parsons (NAA)

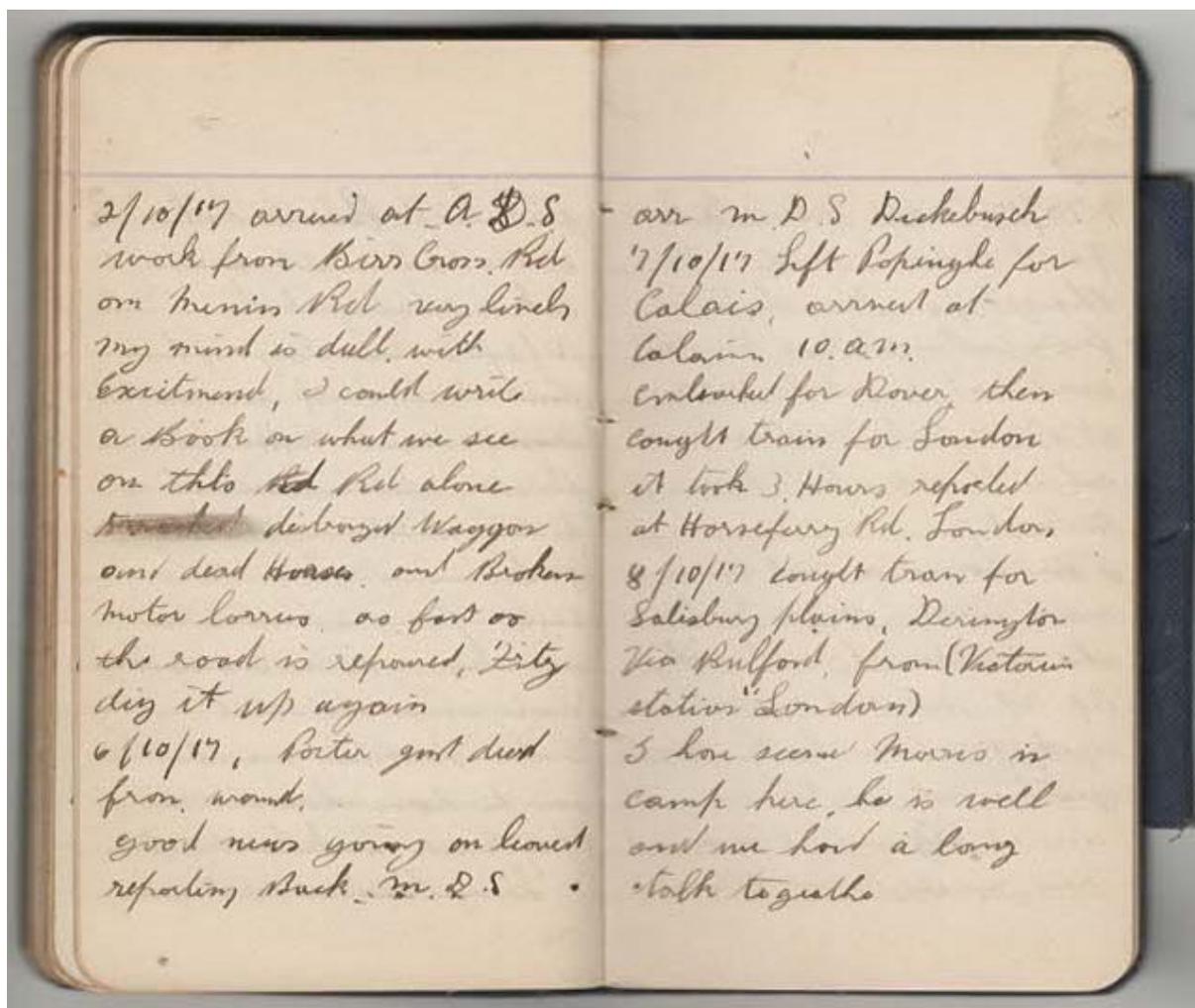
19th June 1918.
Havre
2nd Aust. Field Amb. Parsons S.F. No. 5343.
D. 25th Sept 1917. Det D/B.

I knew him well, he came from Cottislow Beach, W. Australia in the 'Orseva' sailing from Melbourne in July 1915. On the 17th Sept we were at Glencorse Wood, attacking. Parsons was S/B, and had just come back from a carry and was going towards the A.P. when a shell burst badly wounding several and killing Parsons right out. I helped carry him down to the Menin Road, and he was buried in the Cemetery there, about a kilometre from the Menin Gate, at Ypres. There was a proper burial service.

Inf:- L/Cpl A.V. Morris No. 5281.
2nd Aust. Field. Amb.
Conv. Depot.
Rouelles.

CWSG. P. & B. 1/76

"Boys of our unit killed at Menin Road..." Sydney Parsons (NAA)



2/10/17 Arrived at ADS work from Birr Cross Road on Menin Road. Very lively. My mind is dull with excitement. I could write a book on what we see on this road alone, destroyed wagon and dead horses and broken motor lorries, As fast as the road is repaired Fritz digs it up again.

6/10/17 Porter¹ just died from wound. Good news, going on leave. Reporting back MDS.

Arrive MDS Dickebusch.

7/10/17 Left Poperinge for Calais. Arrived at Calais 10am. Embarked for Dover then caught train for London. It took 3 hours. Reported at Horseferry Road², London.

8/10/17 Caught train for Salisbury plains. Durrington via Bulford from (Victoria station London). I have seen Morris³ in camp here. He is well and we had a long talk together.

¹ Private (driver) George John Porter age 24 of Leederville, occupation motor driver. Joined 2nd Amb. Unit 15 August 1916. Wounded in Action (shrapnel wound to neck) 5 October 1917 and DOW next day at 17th Casualty Clearing Station, Belgium. His mother wrote on his headstone "We have lost, heaven has gained one of the best the world contained".

² Throughout the period from Spring 1916 when the AIF was active on the Western Front in France or Belgium, the Administrative HQ in Horseferry Road in London was responsible for the administration of the AIF while overseas, including medical services and liaison with the British War Office.

³ Morris is Joseph's brother who enlisted 23 March 1917 in Perth. He arrived at Bulford barracks (Sutton Veny?) prior to being posted to 51st Battalion on 2 March 1918.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E00711

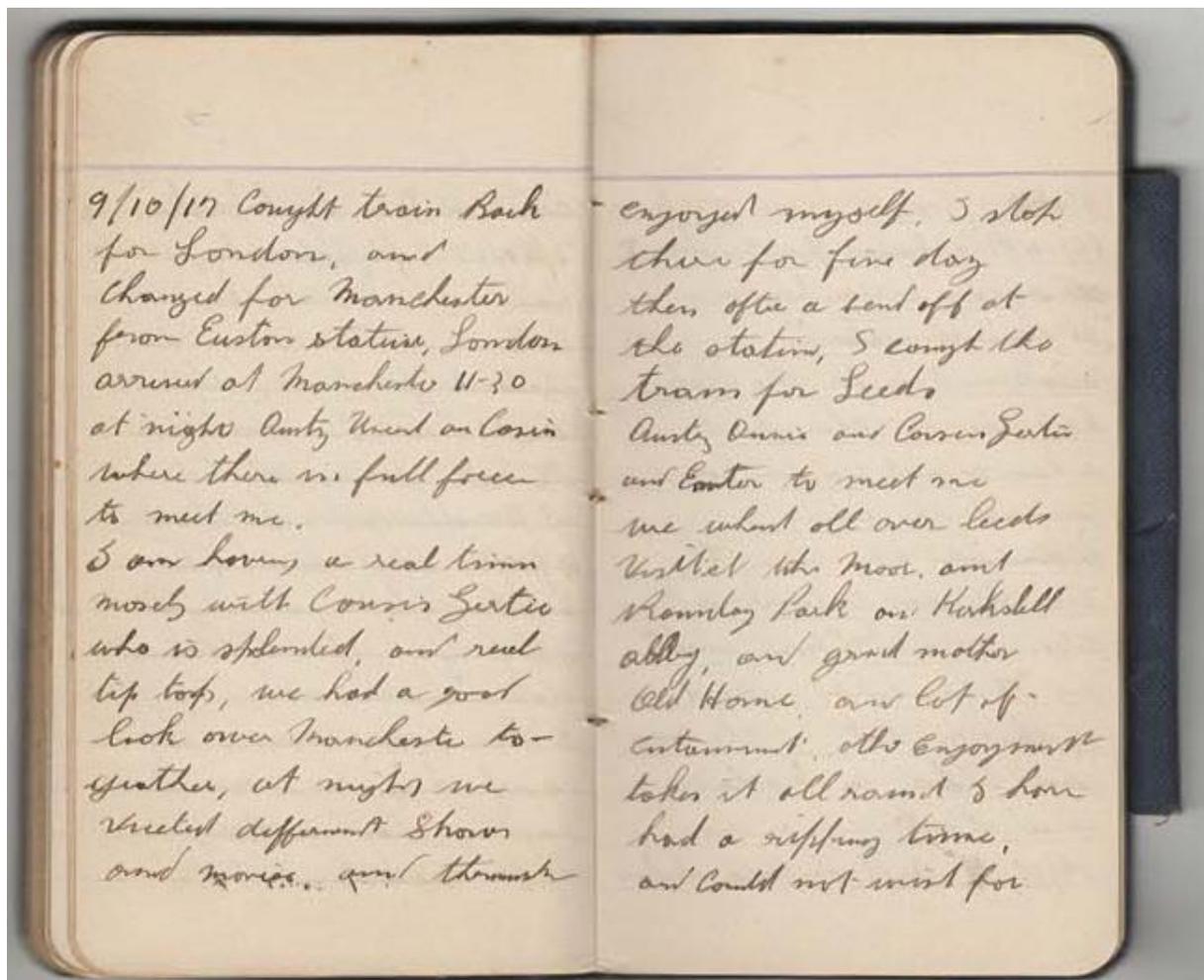
“Arrived at ADS work from Birr Cross Road on Menin Road. Very lively. My mind is dull with excitement. I could write a book on what we see on this road alone, destroyed wagon and dead horses and broken motor lorries.”

*A scene on the Menin Road near Hooge, looking towards Birr Cross Roads, during the battle on 20 September 1917. The wounded on the stretchers are waiting to be taken to the clearing stations; others able to walk are making their way along the road as far as possible. (**AWM**)*



“The Battle of the Menin Road in which the Australians took a prominent part.”

*“Menin Road very lively...” (**RHPFH**)*



9/10/17 Caught train back for London and changed for Manchester from Euston station, London. Arrived at Manchester 1130 at night. Aunty ??? and cousin were there in full force to meet me.
 I am having a real time mostly with Cousin Gertie who is splendid and really tip top. We had a good look over Manchester together. At nights we visited different shows and movies and thoroughly

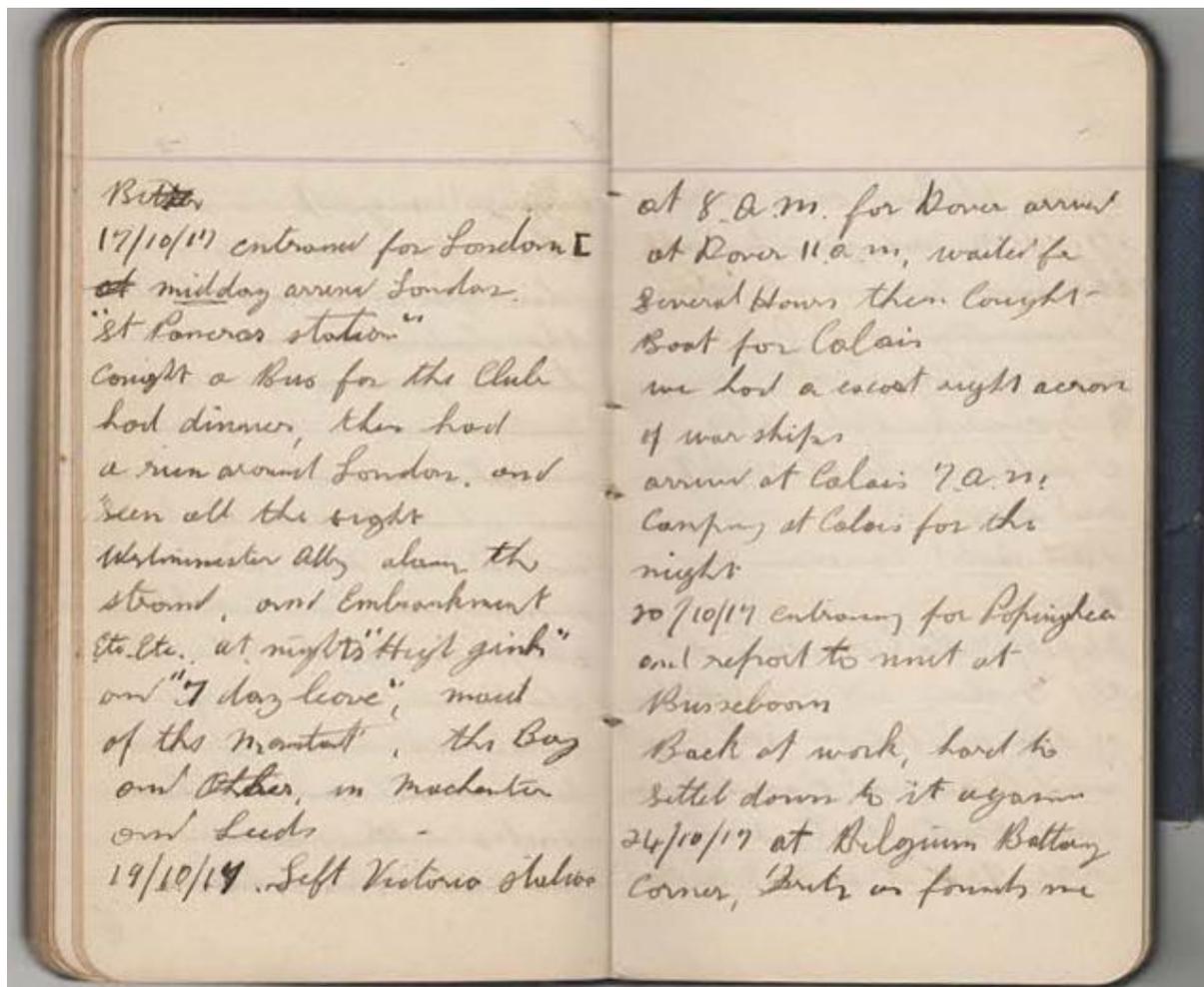
enjoyed myself. I stopped there for five days then after a send off at the station, I caught the train for Leeds.
 Aunty Doris and cousins Gertie and Emto to meet me. We went all over Leeds visited the moor and Romby Park and Hailshall abbey, and grandmother's old home and lot of entertainment other enjoyment takes it all round I have had a ripping time and could not wish for



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00796

"Caught a bus for the Club, had dinner..." Horseferry Road (AWM)



Better

17/10/17 Entrained for London at midday. Arrived London St Pancras Station. Caught a bus for the Club¹, had dinner, then had a run around London and seen all the sights. Westminster Abbey, along the Strand and embankment etc. etc. at night : "High jinks" on "7 day leave" made of the moment the boy and others in Manchester and Leeds.

19/10/17 Left Victoria station

at 8am for Dover. Arrived at Dover 11am. Waited for several hours then caught boat for Calais. We had an escort right across of warships. Arrived at Calais 7am. Camping at Calais for the night.

20/10/17 Entraining for Poperinge and report to unit at Busseboom².

Back at work. Hard to settle down to it again.

24/10/17 At Belgium Battery Corner. Fritz has found me

¹ Presumably this is the War Chest Club in Horseferry Road, Westminster (opposite the Australian Military Headquarters, London). Every day about 2,000 members of the AIF have either lunch or dinner there and there was sleeping accommodation for about 850 men.

² About 1½ kms southeast of Poperinge.

Post card sent to his Mother 22/10/16.



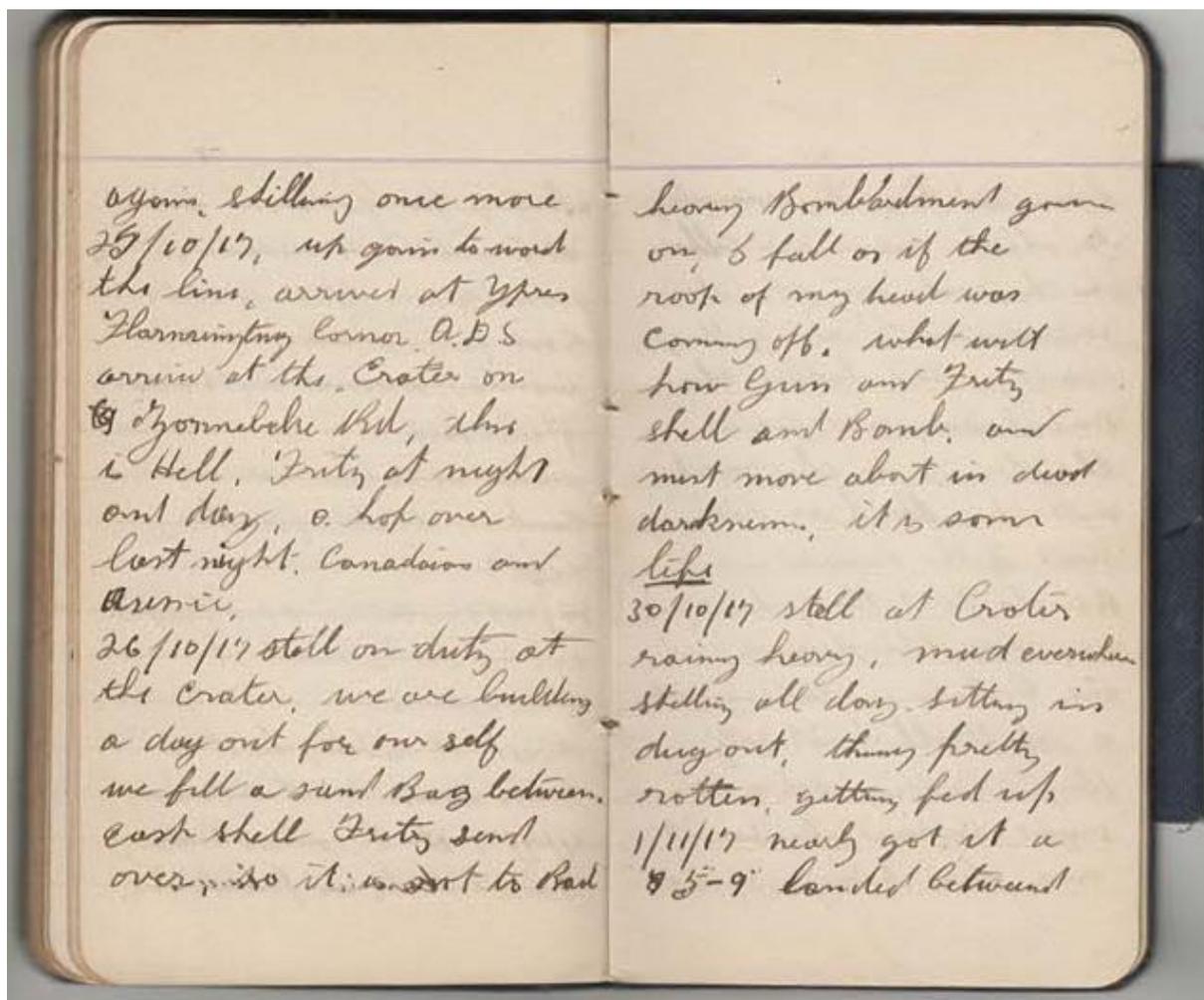
22/10/16 Somewhere in France

Dear Mother,

Just a card to let you know that I am well and hope you are the same. We are on the march to somewhere. It is getting very cool now but I am standing it well. We have been on the march for a few days. Dear Mother don't worry we are getting on fine.

(Faint handwritten text continues across the bottom of the card, including phrases like 'I have not received a letter for some time now', 'Its same address', '2 Field Ambulance in Division AIF abroad', 'Enclose find card for all', 'Tell Morris I received a letter from Harry Heales', 'I have answered his letter', 'No more from your', 'Loving son Joe'.)

<p style="text-align: right;">22/10/16 Somewhere in France</p> <p>To Mother</p> <p>Just a card to let you know that I am well and hope you are the same. We are on the march to somewhere. It is getting very cool now but I am standing it well. We have been on the march for a few days. Dear Mother don't worry we are getting on fine.</p>	<p>I have not received a letter for some time now. Its same address 2 Field Ambulance in Division AIF abroad. Enclose find card for all. Tell Morris I received a letter from Harry Heales. I have answered his letter. No more from your Loving son Joe.</p>
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again shelling once more.

25/10/17 Up again towards the line. Arrived at Ypres *Flarnrintug* [Vlamertinge] Corner ADS. Arrived at the Crater¹ on Zonnebecke Road. This is Hell. Fritz at night and day and hop over last night, Canadians and Aussies.

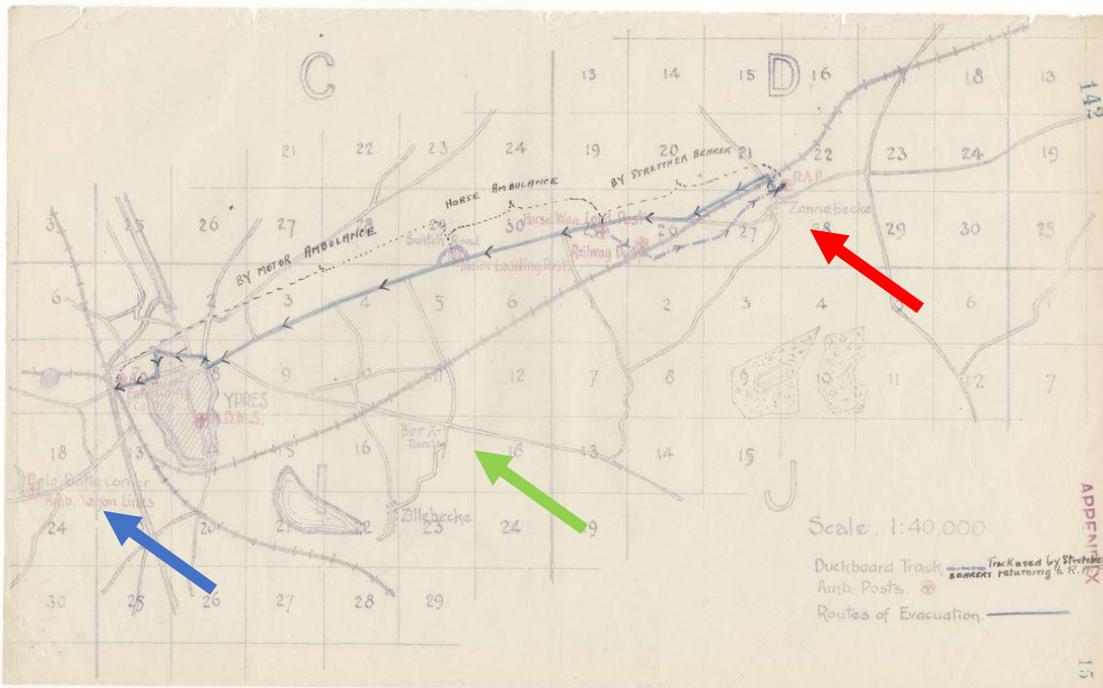
26/10/17 Still on duty at the Crater. We are building a dug out for ourselves. We fill a sand bag between each shell Fritz sends over so it not to bad.

Heavy bombardment going on. I felt as if the roof of my head was coming off. What with our guns and Fritz shells and bombs and must move about in dead darkness. It is some life.

30/10/17 Still at Crater. Raining heavy. Mud everywhere. Shelling all day. Sitting in dug out. Things pretty rotten. Getting fed up.

1/11/17 Nearly got it. A 5"-9" landed between

¹ A crater formed by the Germans blowing up the road to prevent it being usable by tanks.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

RCDIG1013320

"On Zonnebeke Road..." – Josephs movements during Oct/Nov 1917. Blue arrow Belgium Battery Corner, Green arrow Birr Cross Road, Red arrow Zonnebeke. Map from 2nd Australian Field Ambulance War Diary October 1917.

AWM E00941

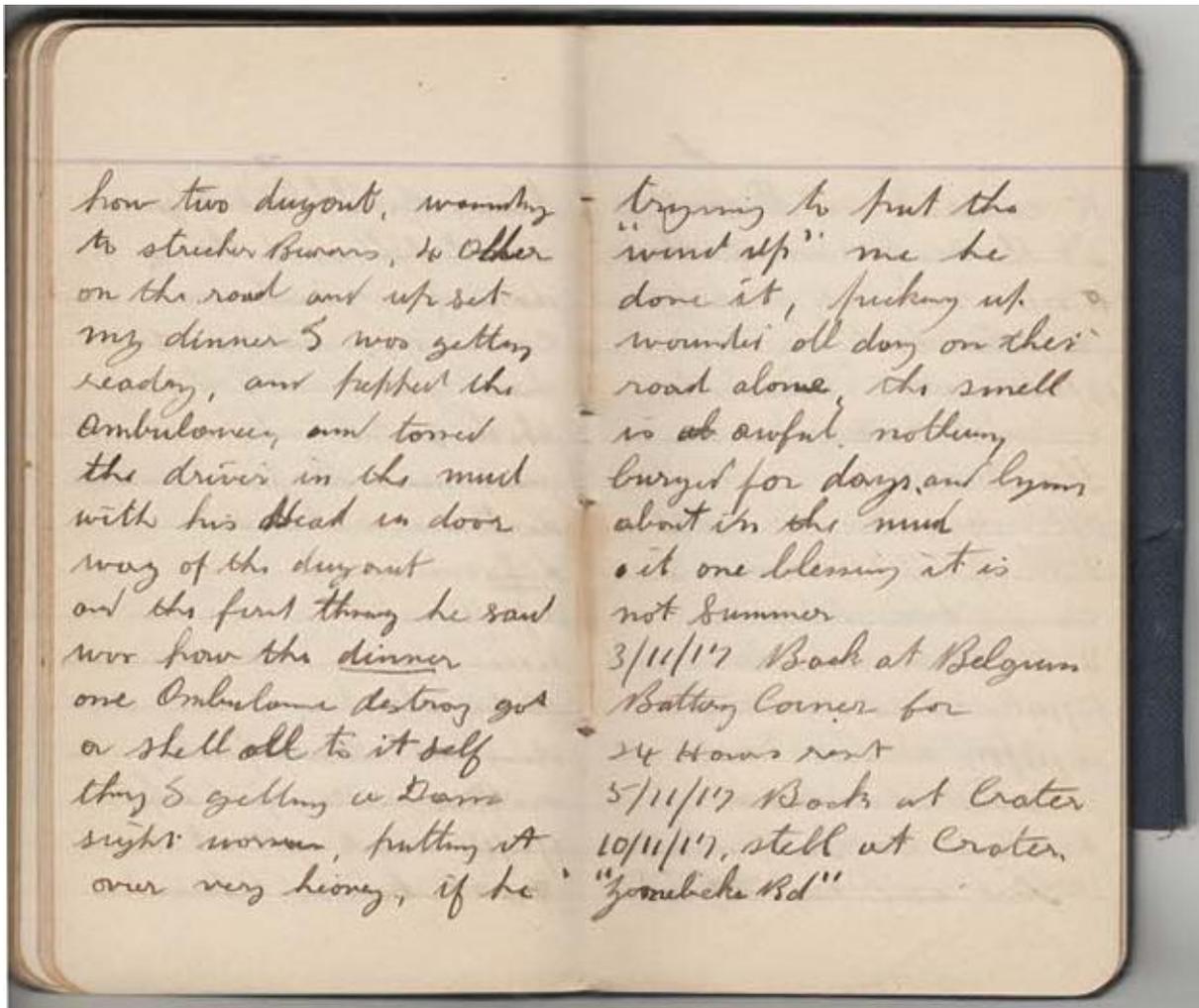


AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E00941

Stretcher bearers of the 9th Field Ambulance AIF sleep on a railway embankment, 10 October 1917. These men had been carrying for over 60 hours in conditions of rain, mud, cold and shellfire. Major Eric Hutchinson, AAMC, wrote: ... the work was so heavy that for a large part of the time 6 men had to carry one stretcher—8 and even 12 men were used in parts. Under these conditions the stretcher bearers become exhausted and rapidly so after 24 hours ... some 36 and even 48 hour shifts were done. (Major Eric Hutchinson, quoted in Colonel AG Butler, *The Western Front, The Official History of the Australian Army Medical Services*, Vol II, Canberra, 1940, p. 234. Image: AWM E00941)

Example of exhausted stretcher bearers. (AWM)



our two dugouts. Wounding the stretcher bearers. 4 others on the road and up set my dinner. I was getting ready and peppered the ambulance and tossed the driver in the mud with his head in door way of the dugout and the first thing he said was how's the dinner. One ambulance destroyed. Got a shell all to itself. Think I getting a darn sight worse. Putting it over very heavy. If he

is trying to put the "wind up" me he's done it. Picking up wounded all day on this road alone. The smell is awful. Nothing buried for days and lying about in the mud. It one blessing it is not summer.
3/11/17 Back at Belgium Battery Corner for 24 hours rest
5/11/17 Back at Crater
10/11/17 Still at Crater "Zonnebecke Road".



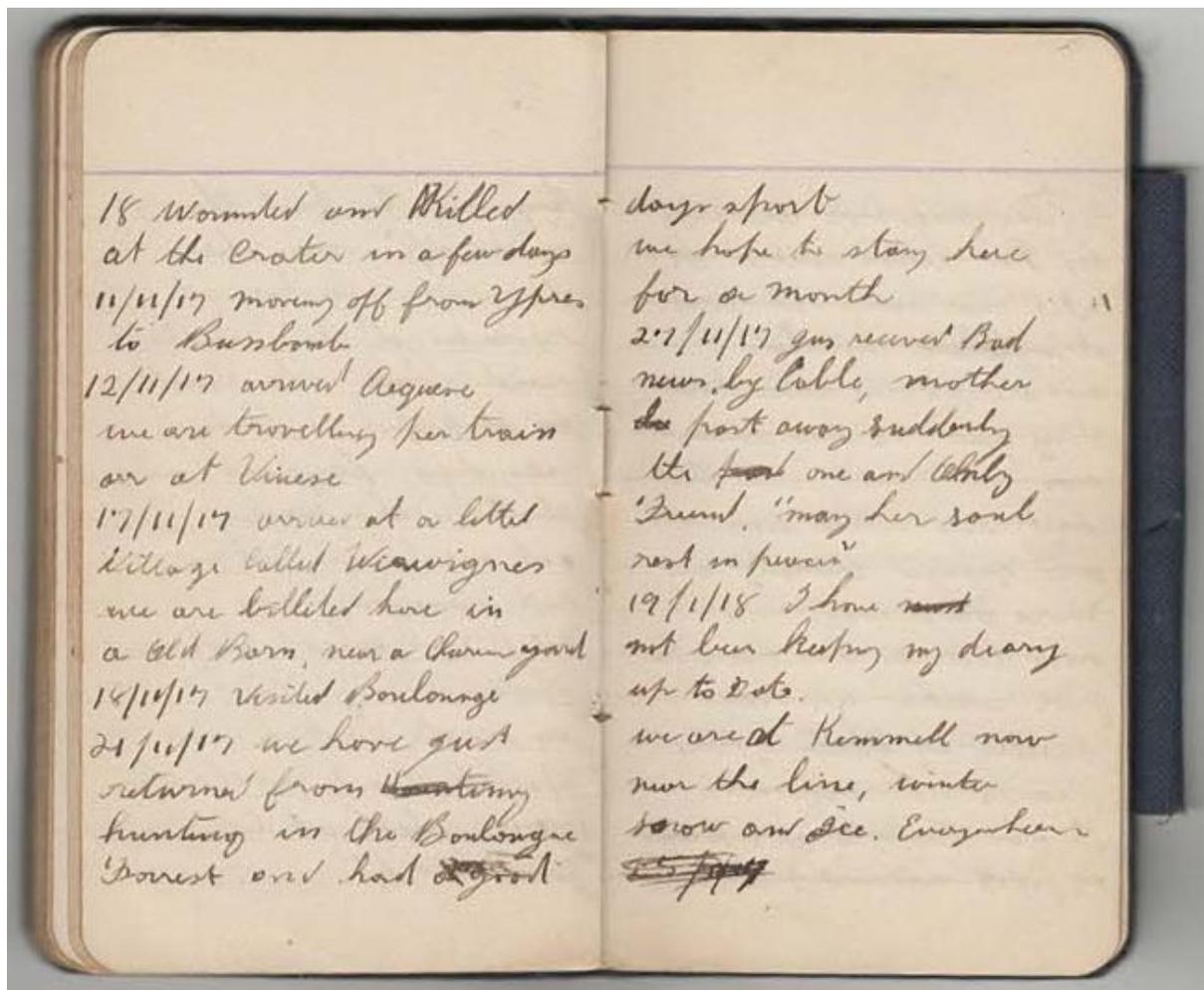
A gigantic shell crater, 75 yards in circumference, Ypres, Belgium, October 1917



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E04489

"Winter snow and ice everywhere".



18 wounded and killed at the Crater in a few days.

11/11/17 Moving off from Ypres to Bunbroek.

12/11/17 Arrived Arques. We are travelling per train arrive at Vinese.

17/11/17 Arrived at a little village called Wirwignes. We are billeted here in the old barn near a farm yard.

18/11/17 Visited Boulogne.

21/11/17 We have just returned from hunting in the Boulogne Forrest and had a good

days sport

we hope to stay here for a month

27/11/17 just received bad news by cable, mother

has past away suddenly

the first one and only

Friend. "May her soul rest in peace"

19/1/18 I have ~~not~~

not been keeping my diary up to date.

we are at Kimmell now

near the line, winter

snow and ice. Everywhere

~~is frozen~~

days sport. We hope to stay here for a month.

27/11/17 Just received bad news by cable.

Mother past away suddenly the one and only Friend. "May her soul rest in peace".

19/1/18 I have not been keeping my diary up to date.

We are at Kimmell [Kemmel] now near the line. Winter snow and ice everywhere.

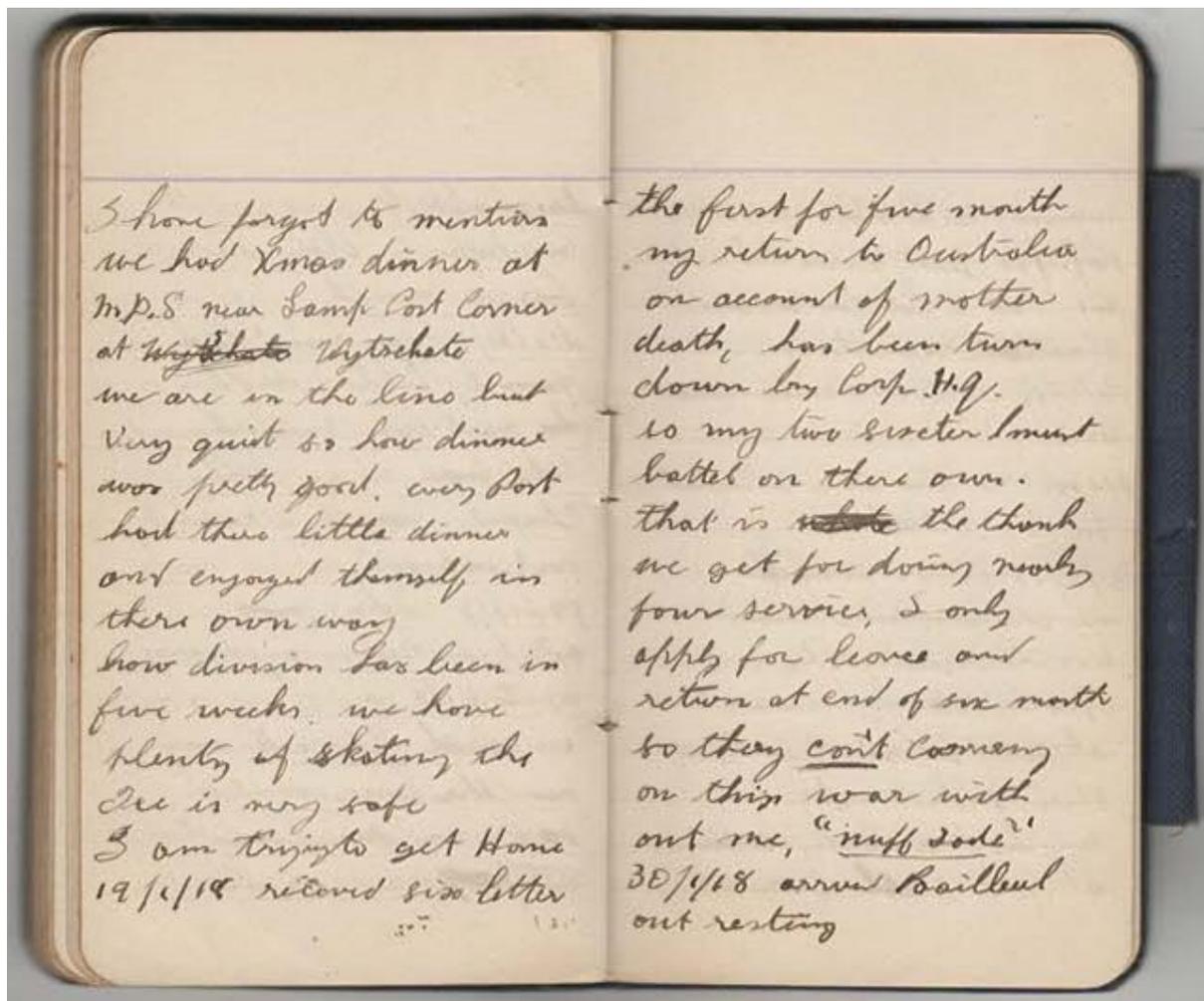


The 2nd Field Ambulance at Bailleul, February 1918 (AWM E01637).

Joseph is in there somewhere!



Officers and NCOs of the 2nd Field Ambulance at Bailleul. L-R, back row: Cpl RH Bartlett [43]; S/Sgt NF Coote [38A]; S/Sgt HB Wilkinson [235]; Sgt M Booth [53]; Sgt Tornarich; Cpl Payne MM; Sgt RE Goode [106]; Sgt JMcD Stewart DCM [131A] (KIA 23 April 1918); Sgt ET Roper [280]; Cpl PO Blackman MM [49]. Middle row: Sgt RA Boardman [1163]; S/Sgt EJ Pride [1163]; S/Sgt HA Streeon [15564]; S/Sgt ELS Danker [16826] (KIA 17 April 1918); WO1 W Mills MM [6]; WO1 G Mansell [17]; S/Sgt EH Prove [1670]; Sgt FF Eddie [110]; Sgt J Lightbody MM [18]. Front row: Capt Ponsford, 3rd Dental Unit; Maj TRE Davis; Maj HC Nott; Lt-Col WE Kay DSO, (CO); Maj EW Gutteridge; Capt RC Rutter (Capt RAR Green; Capt AJ Bothamley. (AWM E01638).



I have forgot to mention we had Xmas dinner at MDS near Lamp Post Corner at Vytschate [Wijtschate]. We are in the line but very quiet so our dinner was pretty good. Every post had their little dinner and enjoyed themselves in their own way.

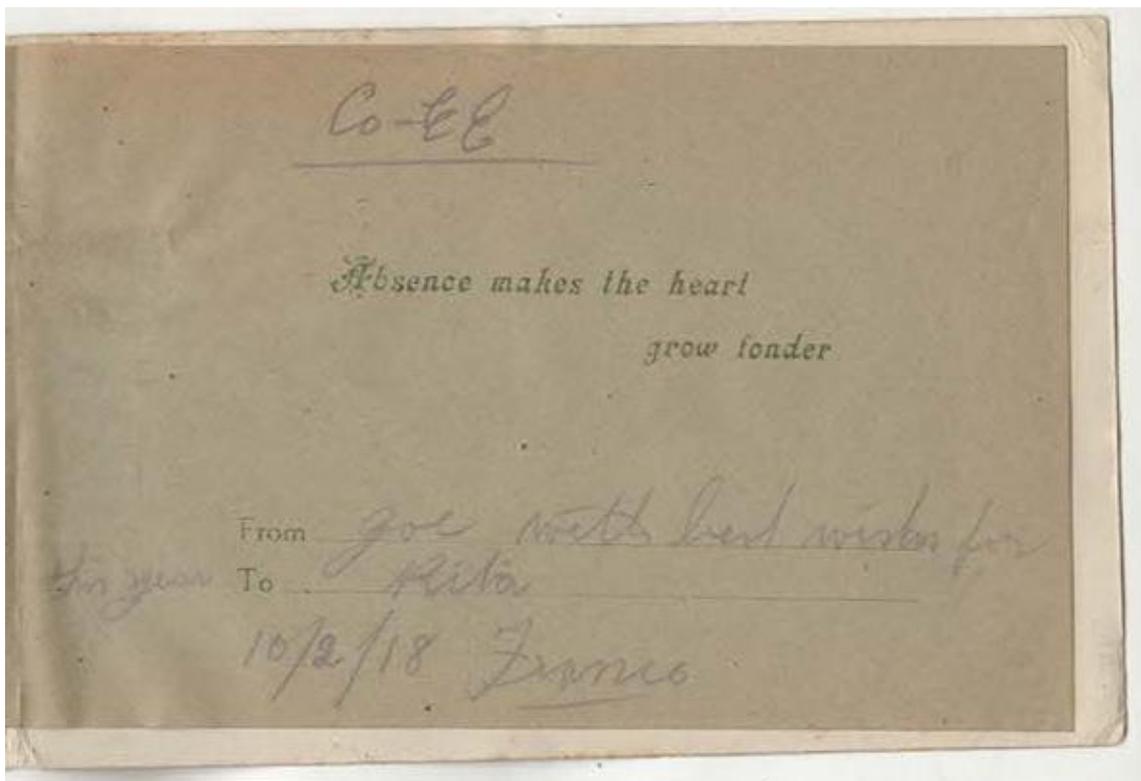
Our division has been in five weeks. We have plenty of skating, the ice is very safe. I am trying to get home.

19/1/18 Received six letters,

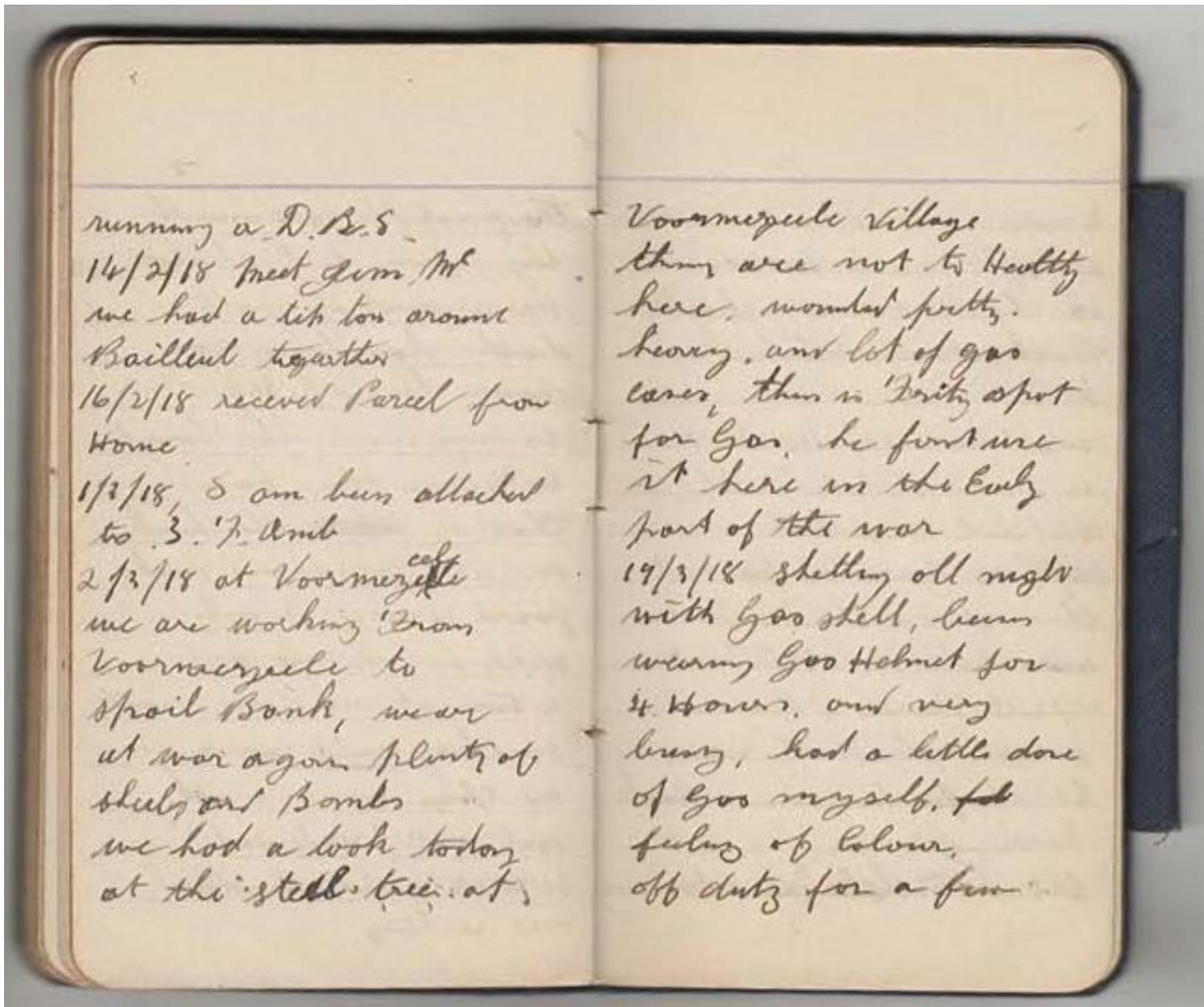
the first for five months. My return to Australia on account of mother death, has been turned down by Corp HQ so my two sisters must battle on their own. That is the thanks we get for doing nearly four services. I only apply for leave and return at end of six month so they can't continue on this war without me. "Nuff said".

30/1/18 Arrive Bailleul and resting.

Post card sent to his sister Rita 10/2/18.



Co-EE
Absence makes the heart grow fonder
From Joe with best wishes for
this year To..... Rita
10/2/18 France



Running a DRS.

14/2/18 Meet Jim Mc¹. We had a tip toe around Bailleul together.

16/2/18 Received parcel from home.

1/3/18 I am being attached to 3 Field Ambulance.

2/3/18 At Voormezele². We are working from Voormezele to spoil bank³. We are at war again. Plenty of shells and bombs. We had a look today at the stell tree at

Voormezele village. Things are not too healthy here. Wounded pretty heavy and lot of gas cases. This is Fritz spot for gas. He first used it here in the early part of the war.⁴

19/3/18 Shelling all night with gas shells. Been wearing gas helmet for 4 hours and very busy. Had a little dose of gas myself. Feeling off colour. Off duty for a few

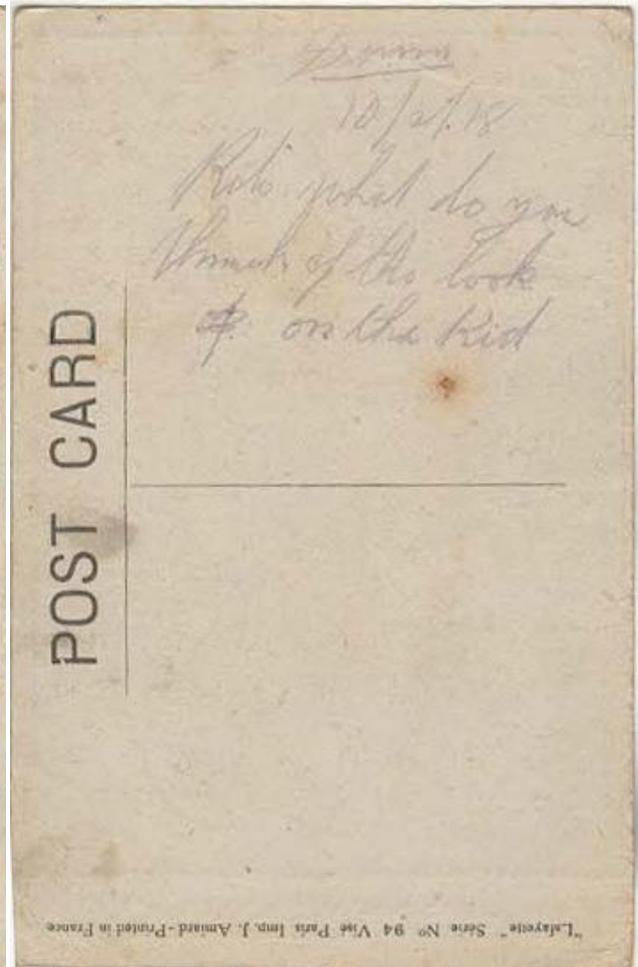
¹ Cannot confirm who this Jim is. Presumably it is Jim McDonald who is referenced on 16/4/16 and 29/7/17 (on news of his enlistment).

² A village about 3 kms south of Ypres.

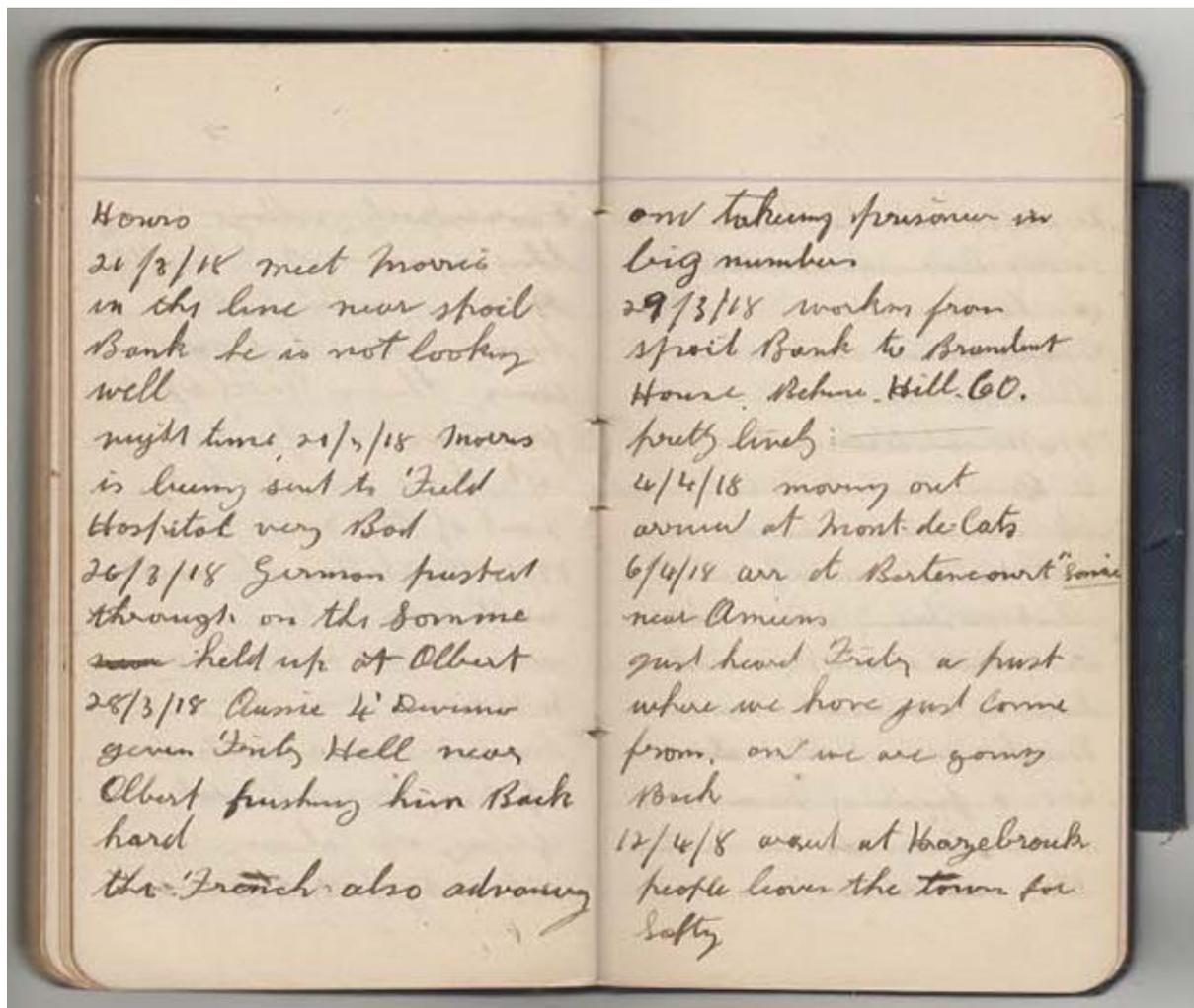
³ This is presumably the spoil heap made during the digging of the Ypres-Comines canal before the war.

⁴ The Germans used chlorine gas for the first time at the second battle of Ypres 22nd April 1915. On the 22nd April at 17:00 the Germans opened the valves of 5.7350 cylinders of gas using the light North East wind to carry more than 160 tons of chlorine gas across the Allied lines. Those least affected, experienced intense irritation of the eyes and difficulty breathing, causing damage to the tissue of the lungs. Those greater exposed, experienced their lungs flooding with fluid, drowning their victims slowly and painfully.

Post card sent to his sister Rita 10/2/18.



	France 10/2/18 Rita what do you think of the look on the Kid
--	---



hours.

21/3/18 Meet Morris in the line near spoil Bank. He is not looking well.

Night time - Morris is being sent to Field Hospital, very bad.

26/3/18 Germans pushed through on the Somme. Held up at Albert.

28/3/18 Aussie 4th Division given Fritz Hell near Albert pushing him back hard. The French also advancing

and taking prisoners in big numbers.

29/3/18 Working from spoil Bank to Brambut House. Behind Hill 60.

pretty lively.

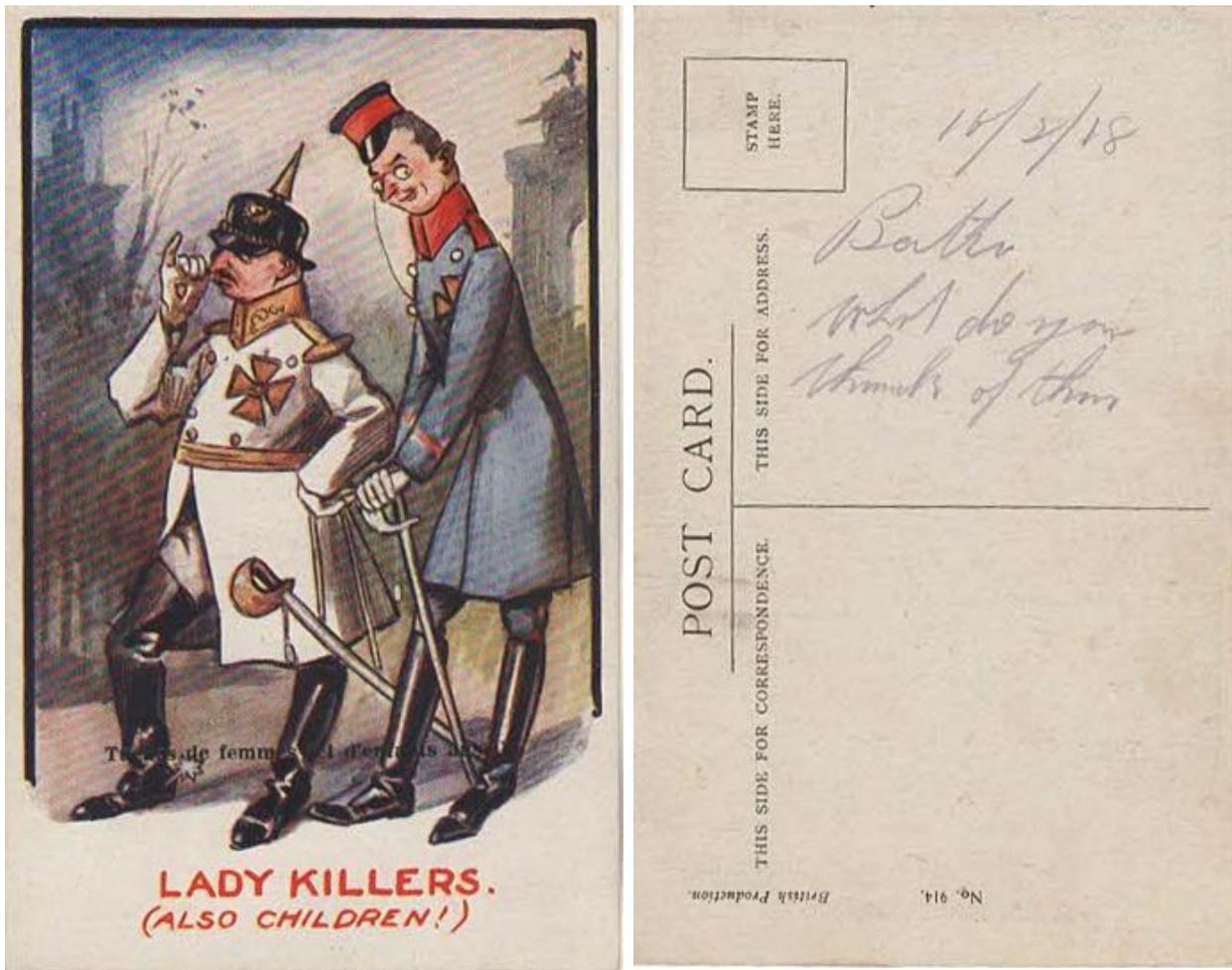
4/4/18 Moving out. Arrived at Mont-des-Cats.

6/4/18 Arrive at Bastencourt [Béthencourt?] near Amiens.

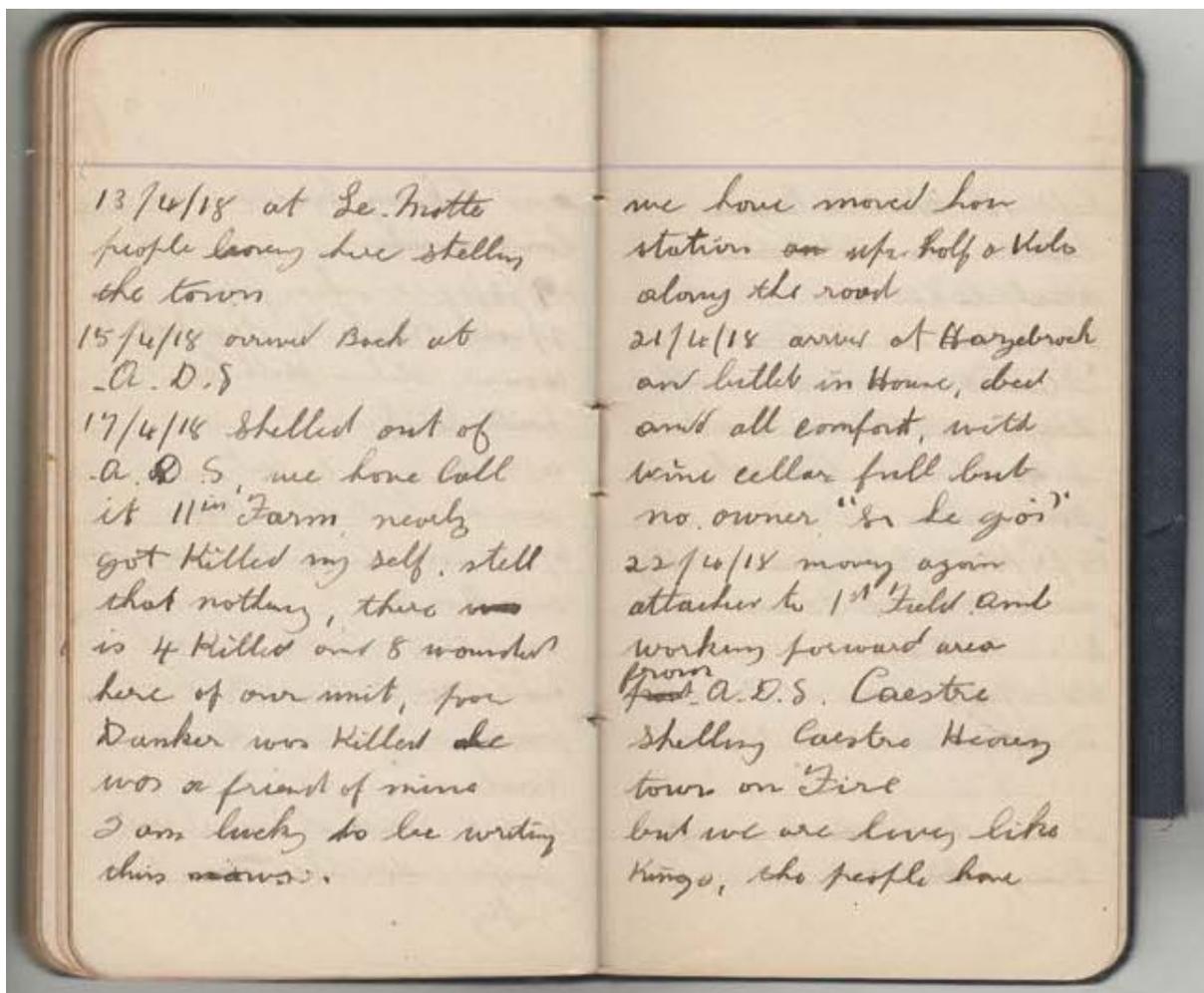
Just heard Fritz is past where we have just come from and we are going back.

12/4/18 Arrived at Hazebrouck. People leaving the town for safety.

Post card sent to his sister Rita 10/2/18.



	<p>18/2/18 Bertha What do you think of them</p>
--	---



13/4/18 At Le Motte. People leaving here shelling the town.

15/4/18 Arrived back at ADS.

17/4/18 Shelled out of ADS. We have call it 11th farm. Nearly got killed myself. Still that nothing. There are 4 killed and 8 wounded here of our unit¹. Poor Danker² was killed. He was a friend of mine. I am lucky to be writing this news.

We have moved our station up half a kilometre along the road.

21/4/18 Arrived at Hazebrouck and billeted in house. Bed and all comfort with wine cellar full but no owner "se la joi". [C'est la joie]

22/4/18 Moving again attached to 1st Field Ambulance working forward area from ADS. Caestre [Caëstre]. Shelling Caestre heavy. Town on fire but we are living like kings. The people have

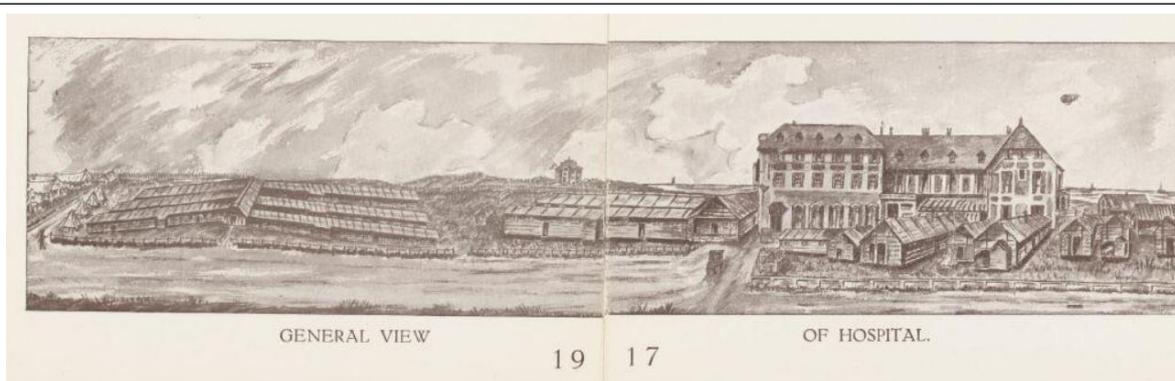
¹ From the War Diary of 2nd Australian Field Ambulance for April 1918 we see the following entry...

With regard to casualties, we have so far this month had more than our fair share, our total being:-

Killed = 5, Died of wounds = 1, Wounded = 7, Wounded and remaining on duty = 4.

² Eric Leslie Salisbury Danker, Service Number 16826 was a 25 year old Staff Sergeant of B section 2nd Field Ambulance, AAMC. He was the only son of a well-known chemist, Mr and Mrs FW Danker of 138 Walcott Street, Mt Lawley. He is buried at Hazebrouck Communal Cemetery 111.E.19. France.

Danker Lane between Chelmsford and Grosvenor streets is named after him.



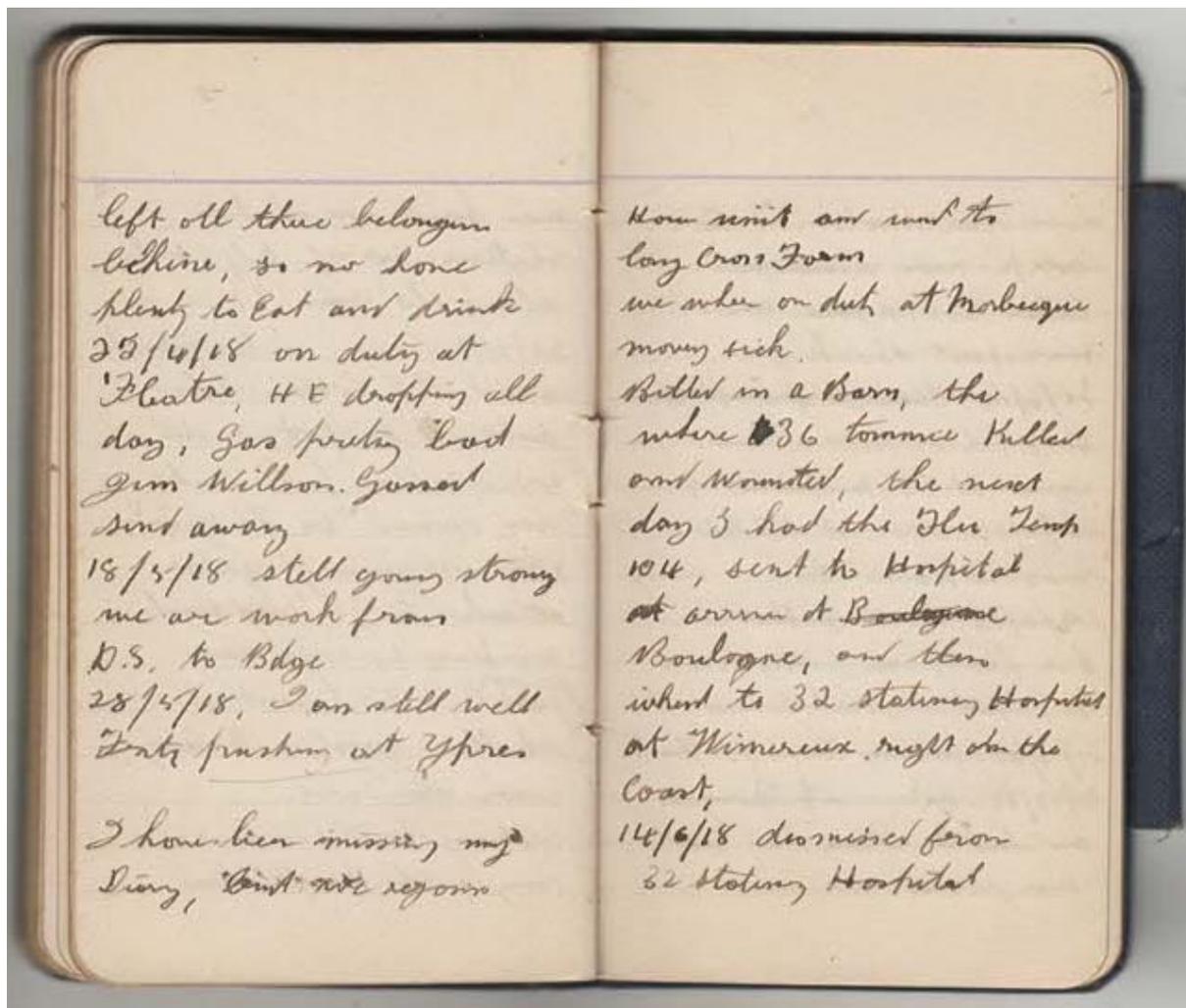
"then went to 32 stationary hospital at Wimereux, right on the coast".

The Australian Voluntary Hospital was a 200 bed military hospital established in Wimereux [about 5 kms north of Boulogne] in October 1914.. It was staffed by Australian expatriates in England that served on the Western Front between 1914 and 1916. For most of the first year of the war, although not an Australian Army unit, it was an Australian presence on the Western Front.

In June 1916. The Australian Voluntary Hospital was then absorbed into the British Army as No. 32 Stationary Hospital. By 1 May 1919, the hospital had treated 73,868 patients. Description paraphrased from Wikipedia. (UNK)



Ambulances outside the Australian Voluntary Hospital at the Hôtel du Golf et Cosmopolite in Wimereux. The ambulances carry signs indicating their donors, such as the "Red Cross Society, Queensland". (AWM)



left all their belongings behind so now have plenty to eat and drink.

22/4/18 On duty at Castro. HE dropping all day. Gas pretty bad. Jim Wilson gassed and sent away.

18/5/18 Still going strong we are working from DS to Bdge.

28/5/18 I am still well. Fritz pushing at Ypres.

I have been missing my diary, but we rejoin

Home unit and went to Long Cross Farm. We were on duty at Morbeque moving sick.

Billeted in a barn, the where 36 Tommies killed and wounded, the next day I had the Flu. Temp 104, sent to hospital at ~~arrive at Boulogne~~ Boulogne, and then went to 32 stationary hospital at Wimereux, right on the coast.

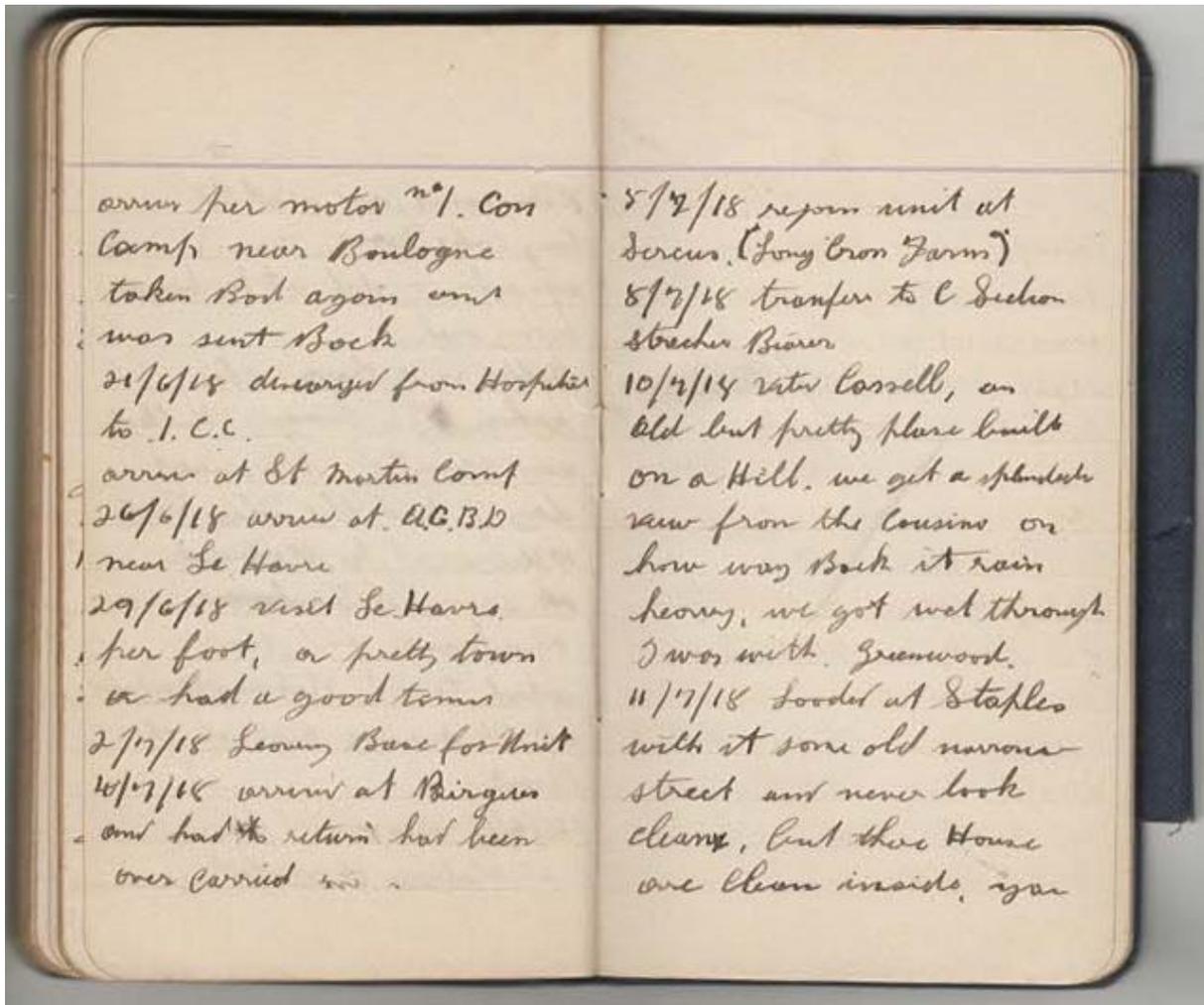
14/6/18 Dismissed from 32 Stationary Hospital.



"Arrive at A.G.B.D. near Le Havre."

This lantern slide, "Australian General Base Depot in Havre, France (c. 1918)," shows the rear of the Australian General Base Depot in Havre, France during World War I. (SP)

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Arrive per motor N° 1 con camp near Boulogne taken bad again and was sent back.

21/6/18 Discharged from hospital to ICC arrive at St Martin Camp.

26/6/18 Arrive at A.G.B.D.¹ near Le Havre.

29/6/18 Visit Le Havre per foot. A pretty town and had a good time.

2/7/18 Leaving base for unit.

4/7/18 Arrive at Birgue and had to return had been over carried.

5/7/18 Rejoin unit at Sercus² (Long Cross Farm).

8/7/18 Transfer to C Section stretcher bearers.

10/7/18 Visit Cassell³[Cassel] an old but pretty place built on a hill. We get a splendid view from the Cousino on our way back it rained heavy. We got wet through. I was with Greenwood.

11/7/18 Loded at Staples with it some old narrow streets and never look clean but the houses are clean inside you

¹ Australian General Base Depot. Originally built in Etaples, France, the Australian Base Depots moved to Harfleur, near Le Havre, in June 1917, in order to save shipping time. Base Depots were built for each Division, and the General Base Depot was used for those not assigned to divisions.

² About 5kms west of Hazebrouck.

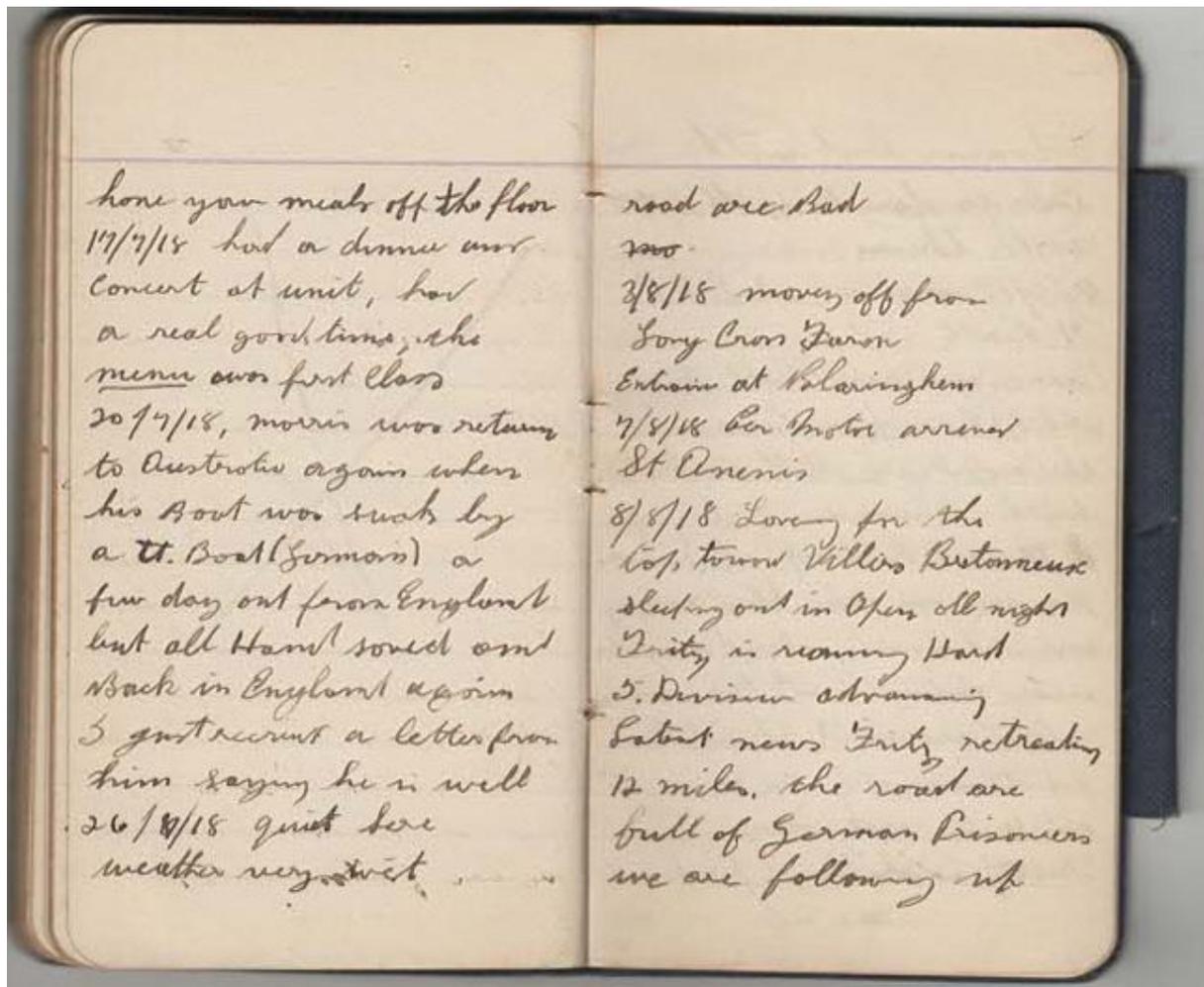
³ Cassel served as the headquarters of Marshal Foch in 1915 and the British Second Army under Sir Herbert Plumer from 1916 to 1918.



Wounded Australians being brought from the Lihons battlefield to the ADS of the 2nd Field Ambulance at Vauvillers on 14 August 1918. Left to right: Pte A Whyte [8619], Pte L. Bryant [8614], patient on stretcher; unidentified stretcher bearer; Pte F. Breakspear [8620] (left, front); Cpl JF McKellar [6141], unidentified soldiers in doorway and also on the far right. (AWM E03042).



"Per motor.." (VWNA) E03130_1



can have your meals off the floor.

17/7/18 Had a dinner and concert at unit. Had a real good time, the menu was first class.

20/7/18 Morris was returning to Australia again when his boat was sunk by a U Boat (German) a few days out from England but all hands saved and back in England again. I just received a letter from him saying he is well.

26/7/18 Quiet here. Weather very wet.

Road was bad.

3/8/18 Moving off from Long Cross Farm. Entrained at Blaringham.

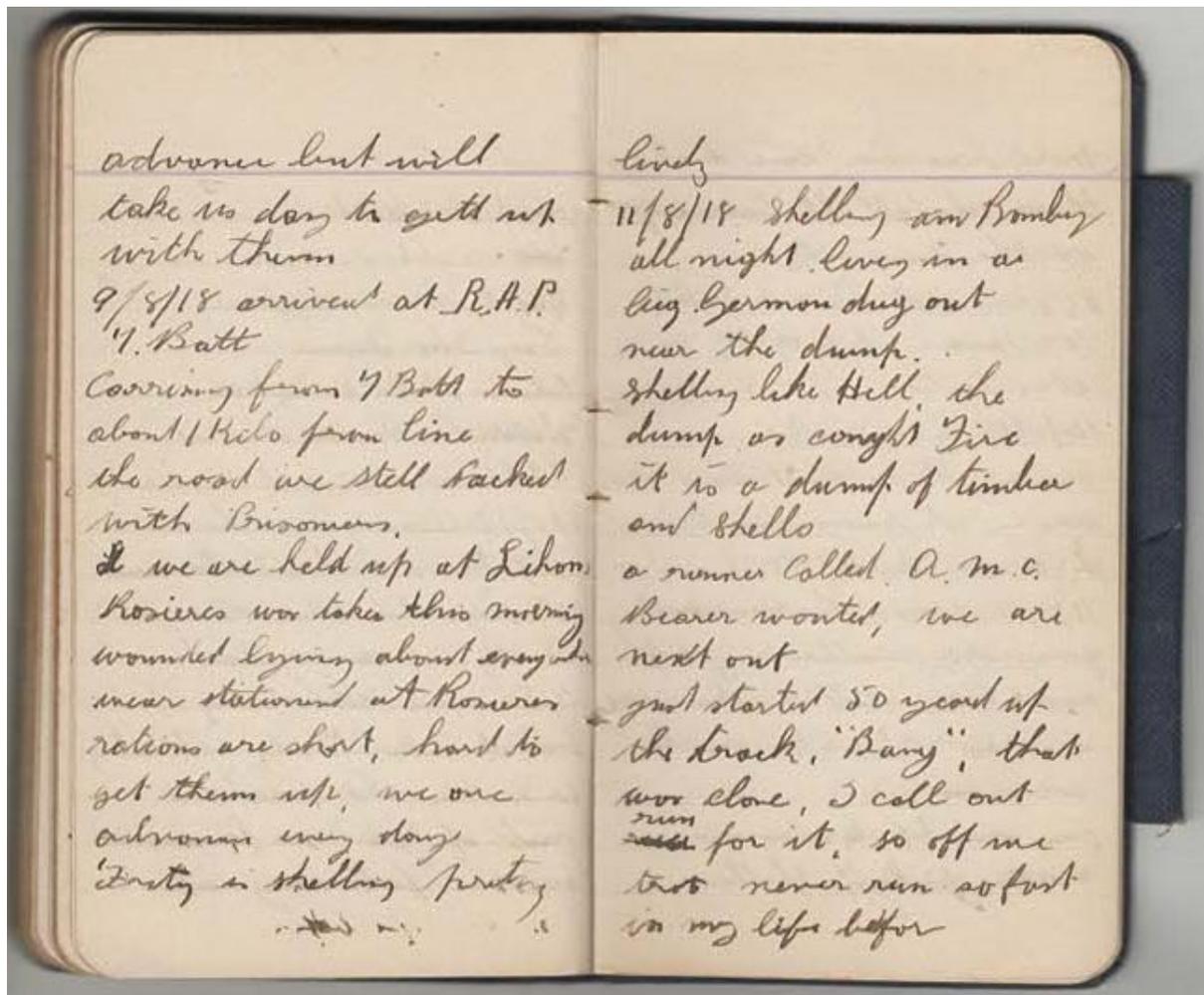
7/8/18 Per motor arrived St Amiens.

8/8/18 Leaving for the top town Villiers Bretonneux. Sleeping out in open all night. Fritz is running hard. 5 Division advancing. Latest news Fritz retreating 12 miles. The roads are full of German prisoners. We are following up



"The dawn of Passchendaele. The Relay Station near Zonnebeke Station." (Multiple negative composite)

(RHPFH)



advance but will take us day to catch up with them.

9/8/18 Arrived at RAP 7 Battalion.

Carrying from 7 Battalion to about 1 kilo from line. The roads are still packed with prisoners. We are held up at Lihons. Rosieres [Rosières-en-Santerre] was taken this morning.

Wounded lying about everywhere. We are stationed at Rosier. Rations are short, hard to get them up. We are advancing every day.

Fritz is shelling. Pretty

lively.

11/8/18 Shelling and bombing all night.

Living in a big German dugout near the dump. Shelling like hell. The dump has caught fire. It is a dump of timber and shells.

A runner called. AMC bearers wanted. We are next out.

Just started 50 yards up the track, "BANG!" that was close. I call out, run for it, so off we trot never run so fast in my life before.

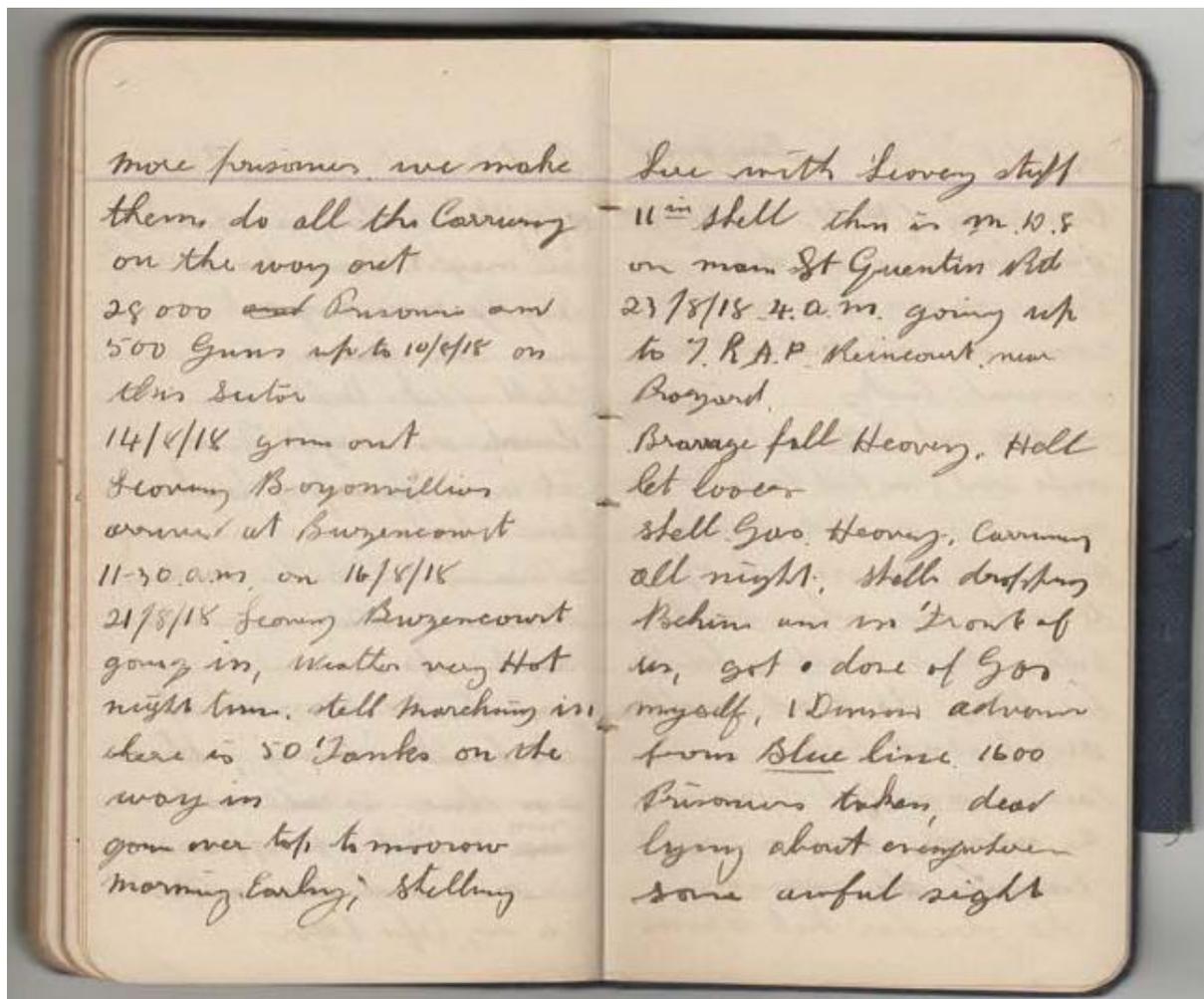


AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E04852

Following a gas shelling, Australians await attention at the dressing station established at the 'White Chateau', one of the few substantial buildings in Villers-Bretonneux to escape serious damage, 27 May 1918. AWM E04852

"Got a dose of gas myself".



More prisoners. We make them do all the carrying on the way out. 28,000 prisoners and 500 guns up to 10/8/18 on this sector.

14/8/18 Guns out. Leaving Boyonvilliers¹ arrive at Buzencourt² 11-30am on 16/8/18.

21/8/18 Leaving Buzencourt going in. Weather very hot night time. Still marching in. There are 50 tanks on the way in. Going over top tomorrow morning early. Shelling

here with heavy stuff 11" shell. This is MDS on main St Quentin Road.

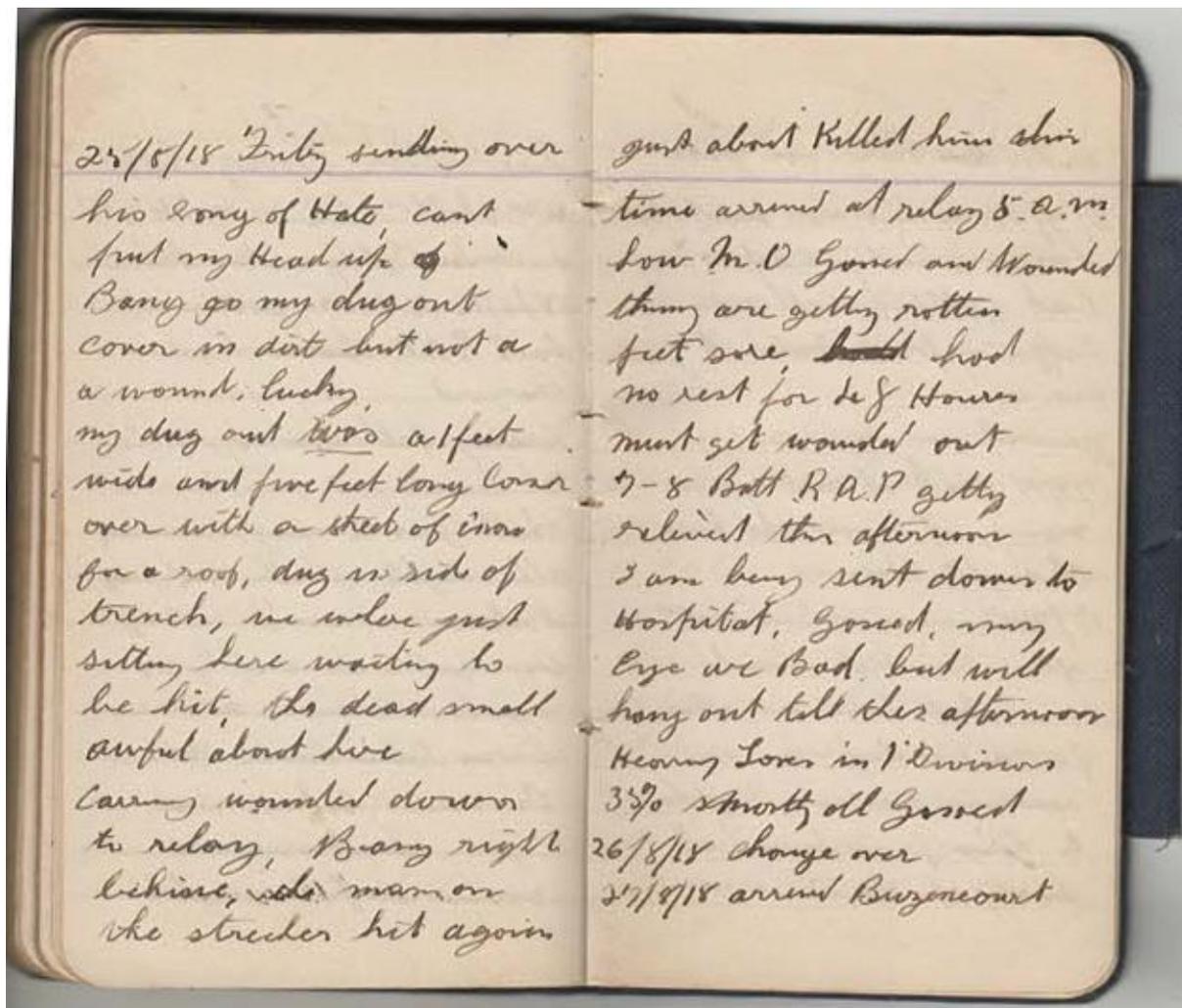
23/8/18 4am going up to 7 RAP Raincourt near Proyard. Barrage fall heavy. Hell let loose. Shell, gas, heavy, carrying all night. Shells dropping behind and in front of us. Got a dose of gas myself. 1 Division advances from Blue Line 1600 prisoners taken. Dead lying about everywhere. Some awful sights.

¹ From the 2nd Australian Field Ambulance War Diary it is Bayonvilliers 4 kms east of Villers-Bretonneux.

² From the 2nd Australian Field Ambulance War Diary it is Bouzencourt – “parades, fatigues and swimming.” 3 kms northeast of Villers-Bretonneux



Canadians loading stretchers into ambulance. (CMJ19-4 Canadian Military Journal)



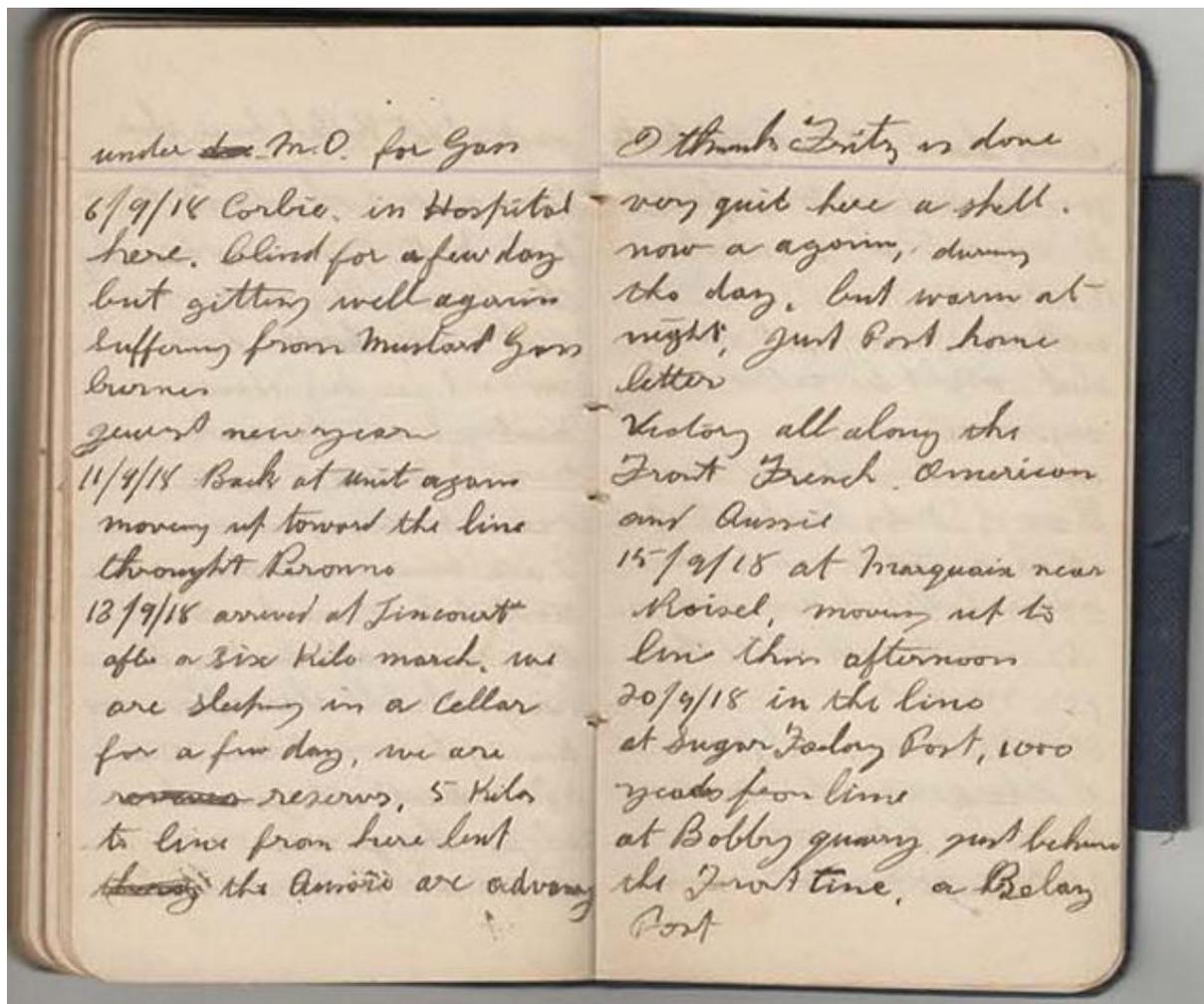
25/8/18 Fritz sending over his song of hate. Can't put my head up. Bang goes my dugout cover in dirt but not a wound. Lucky. My dugout was a 1 foot wide and five foot long covered over with a sheet of iron for a roof, dug inside of trench. We were just sitting here waiting to be hit. The dead smell awful about here. Carrying wounded down to relay. BANG! right behind. The man on the stretcher hit again,

just about killed him this time around. At relay 5am. Now MO gassed¹ and wounded. Things are getting rotten. Feet sore. Had no rest for 48 hours. Must get wounded out 7-8 Battalion RAP getting relieved this afternoon. I am being sent down to hospital. Gassed, my eye was bad but will hang out till this afternoon. Heavy losses in 1 Division 35% mostly all gassed.
26/8/18 Change over.
27/8/18 Arrived Buzencourt [Bouzencourt?].

¹ From 2nd Australian Field Ambulance War Diary for 25/8/18, "A great number of gassed cases are passing through. From 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. 340 cases passed through, mainly from 2nd Brigade."



Captured Germans bring wounded to an ADS in the Quarry, Bray Aug 1918 (AWM) E3063



Under MO for gas.

6/9/18 Corbie. In hospital here. Blind for a few days but getting well again. Suffering from mustard gas¹ burns.

Jewish new year.

11/9/18 Back at unit again. Moving up towards the line through Peronne.

13/9/18 Arrived at Tincourt after a six kilo march. We are sleeping in a cellar for a few days. We are reserves. 5 kilos to line from here but the Aussies are advancing.

I think Fritz is done

very quiet here a shell now and again, during the day. but warm at night, just post home letter

Victory all along the front French, American and Aussies

15/9/18 at Marquaix near Roisel, moving up to line this afternoon

20/9/18 in the line at Sugar Factory Post, 1000 yards from line at Bobby quarry just behind the front line, a Relay Post

I think Fritz is done. Very quiet here a shell now and again during the day but warm at night. Just posted home letter.

Victory all along the front, French, Americans and Aussies.

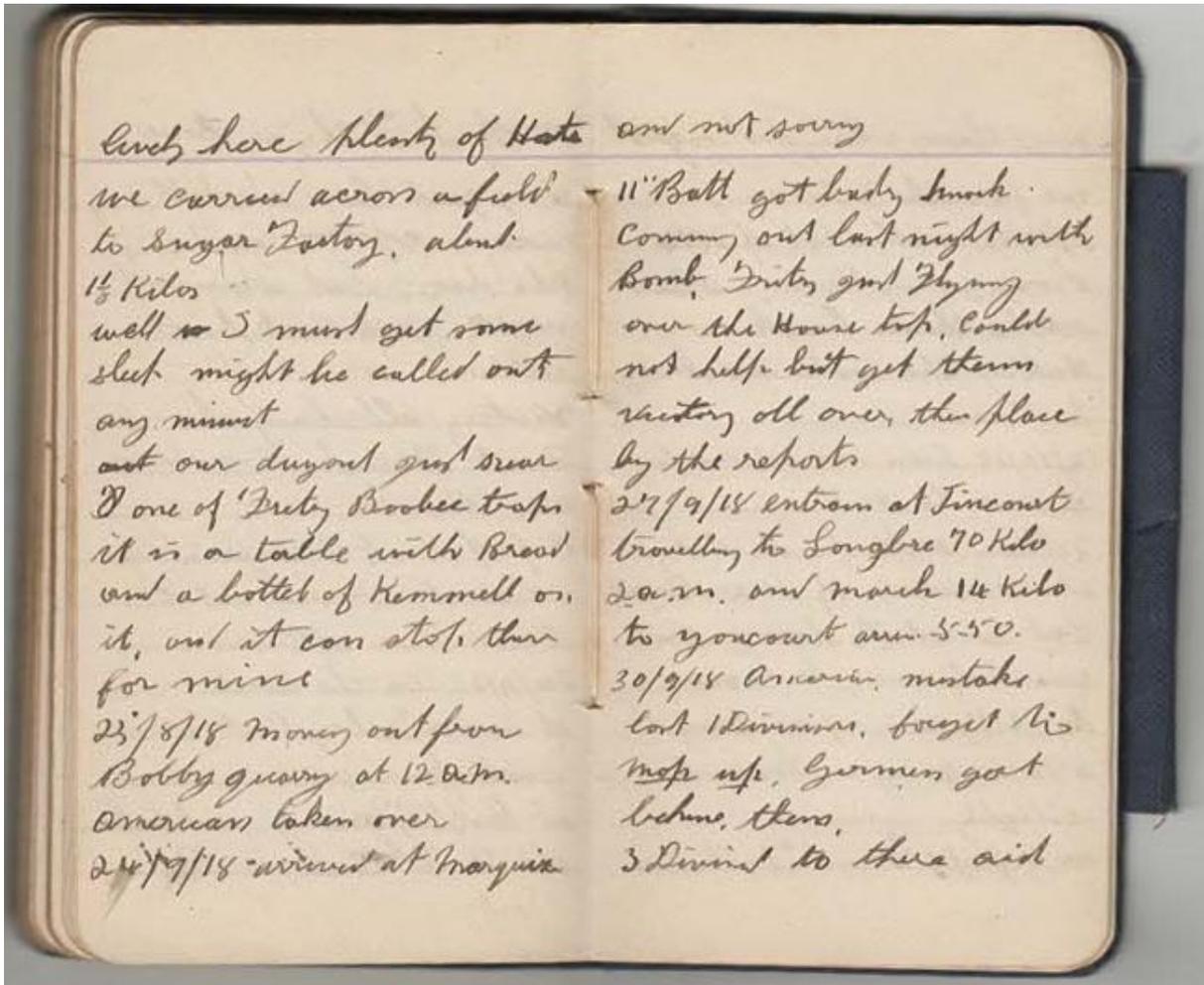
15/9/18 At Marquaix near Roisel. Moving up to line this afternoon.

20/9/18 In the line at Sugar Factory Post, 1000 yards from line at Bobby quarry just behind the Front line. A relay post.

¹ On the night of 12-13th July 1917, the Germans released an even more deadly gas, that of "Mustard Gas" (also known as H, yperite - probably from the place of first use, sulfur mustard, Kampfstoff Lost). In one of the supreme ironies of the history of chemical warfare, the British had tested mustard during the summer of 1916, but the developers had been unable to convince the military of its utility. Meanwhile, the Germans began developing mustard in September 1916, and first filled shells with mustard in the spring of 1917. The Germans waited to introduce mustard to the battlefield until they had accumulated a large supply, knowing that it would be difficult for the Allies to catch up; indeed it took the French 11 months and the British 14 months before they were able to use the agent on the battlefield. From website *Ypres and the Great War* by Simon Farr.



Planes and bombs and explosions. (AWM)

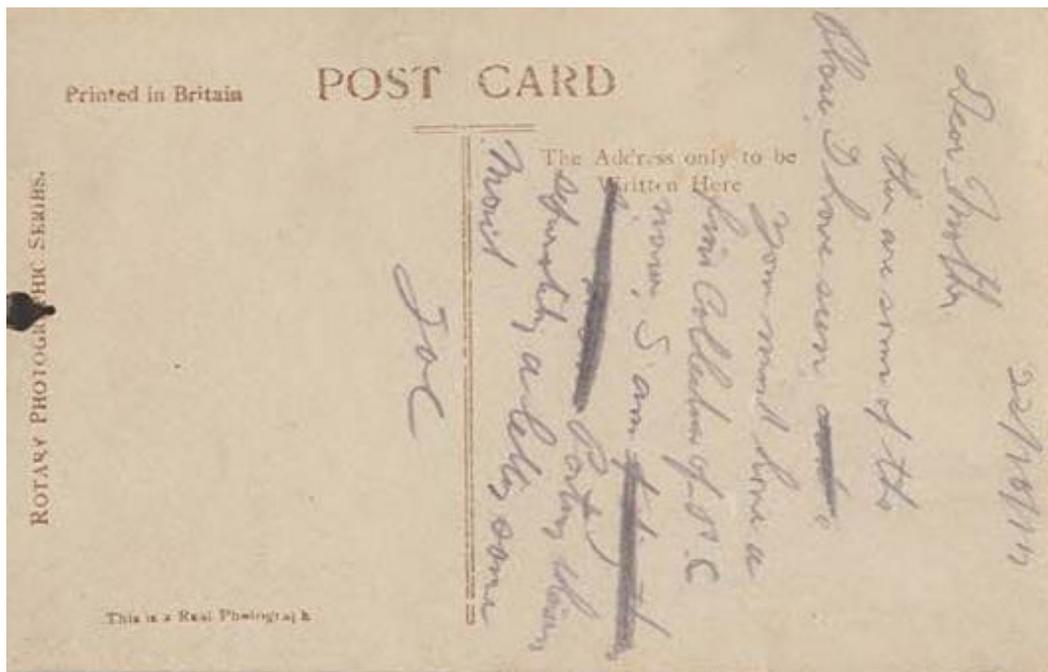


<p>Lively here. Plenty of Hate. We carried across a field to Sugar Factory, about 1½ kilos. Well I must get some sleep, might be called out any minute. Our dugout just near one of Fritz's booby traps. It is a table with bread and a bottle of Kimmell on it, and it can stop them for mine.</p> <p>23/9/18 Moving out from Bobby quarry at 12am. Americans taking over.</p> <p>24/9/18 Arrived at Marquieux.</p>	<p>Am not sorry. 11th Batt got badly knocked coming out last night with bomb. Fritz just flying over the house top. Could not help but get them victory all over the place by the reports.</p> <p>27/9/18 Entrain at Tincourt travelling to Longbre¹ 70 kilo. 2am and march 14 kilo to Youcourt² arrive 5.50.</p> <p>30/9/18 American mistake lost 1 Division. Forgot to mop up. Germans got behind them. 3 Division to their aid</p>
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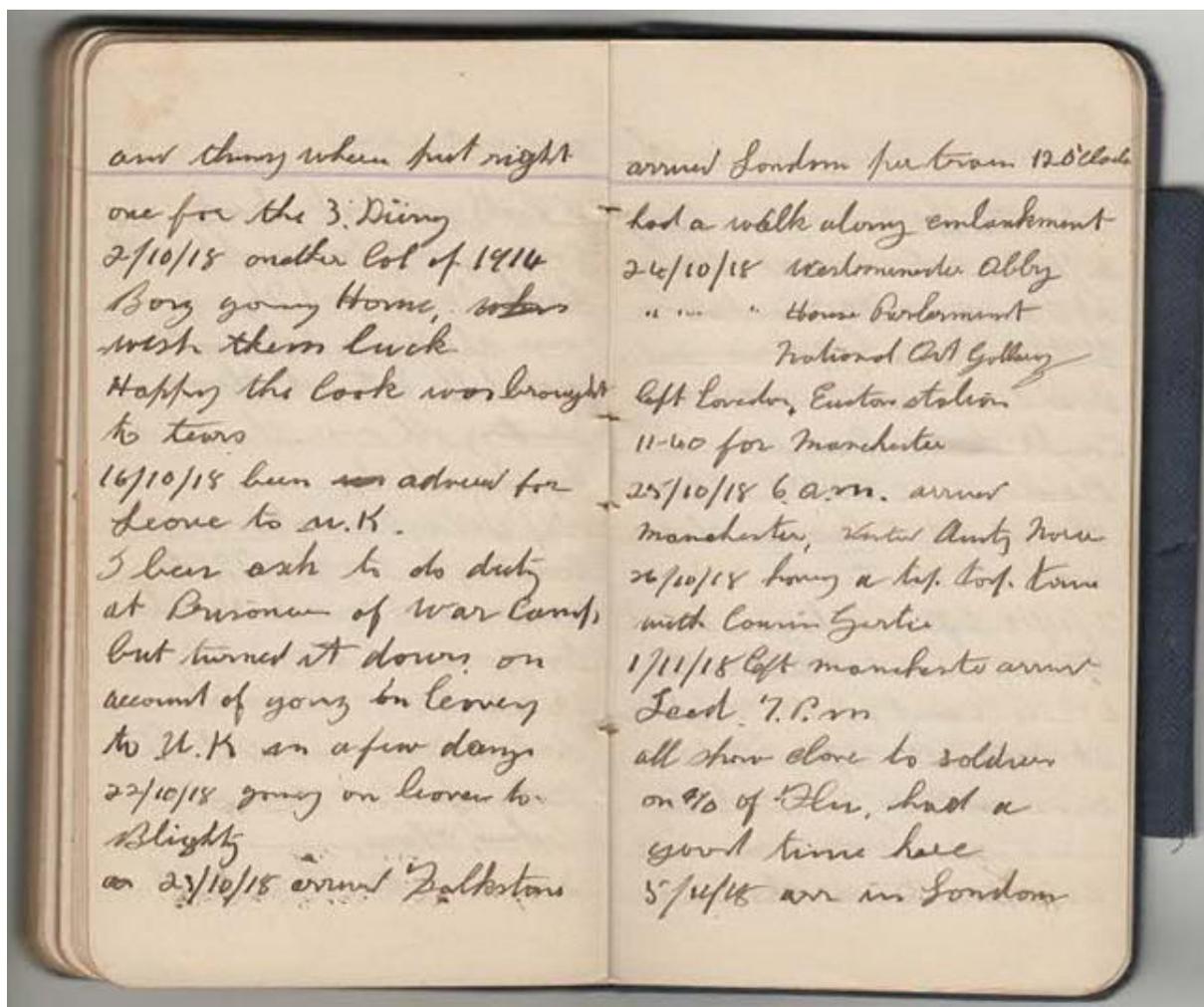
¹ From 2nd Australian Field Ambulance War Diary Longpre. "Train pulled up for about ½-hour on the journey on account of enemy aircraft dropping bombs very close. No damage to train."

² From 2nd Australian Field Ambulance War Diary Yaucourt-Bussus.

Post card sent to his Mother 22/10/17.



	<p>22/10/17 Dear Mother These are some of the places I have seen. You must have a fine collection of P.C.[Post Cards] now. I am xxxxx xxxxxx [censored?] posting this separately , a letter some mail. Joe</p>
--	--



and things were put right. One for the 3rd Division.

2/10/18 Another lot of 1914 boys going home. Wish them luck. Happy the cook was brought to tears.

16/10/18 Been advised for leave to UK. I been asked to do duty at prisoner of war camp but turned it down on account of going on leave to UK in a few days.

22/10/18 Going on leave to Blighty.

23/10/18 Arrived Folkstone.

Arrived London per train 12 o'clock. Had a walk along embankment.

24/10/18 Westminster Abbey. House Parliament. National Art Gallery. Left London, Euston station 11-40 for Manchester.

25/10/18 6am arrive Manchester. Visited Aunty Nora.

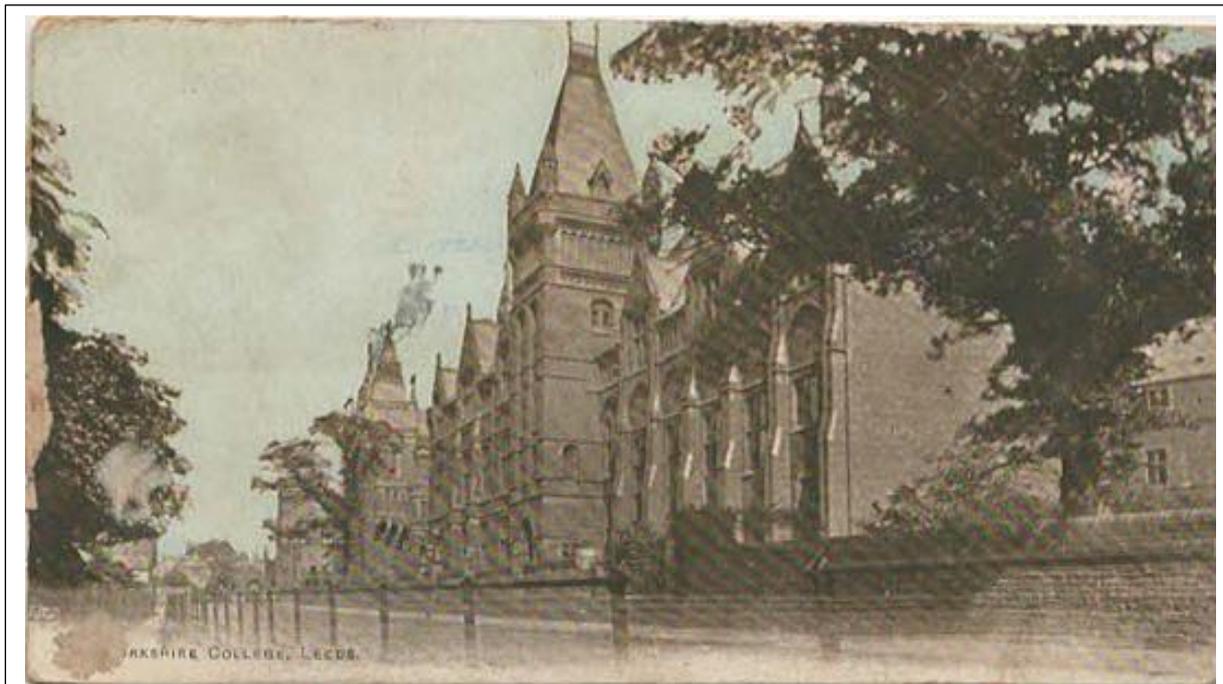
26/10/18 Having a tip top time with cousin Gertie.

1/11/18 Left Manchester arrive Leeds 7pm.

All show *done* to soldiers on [illegible - account??] of flu. Had a good time here.

5/11/18 Arrive in London.

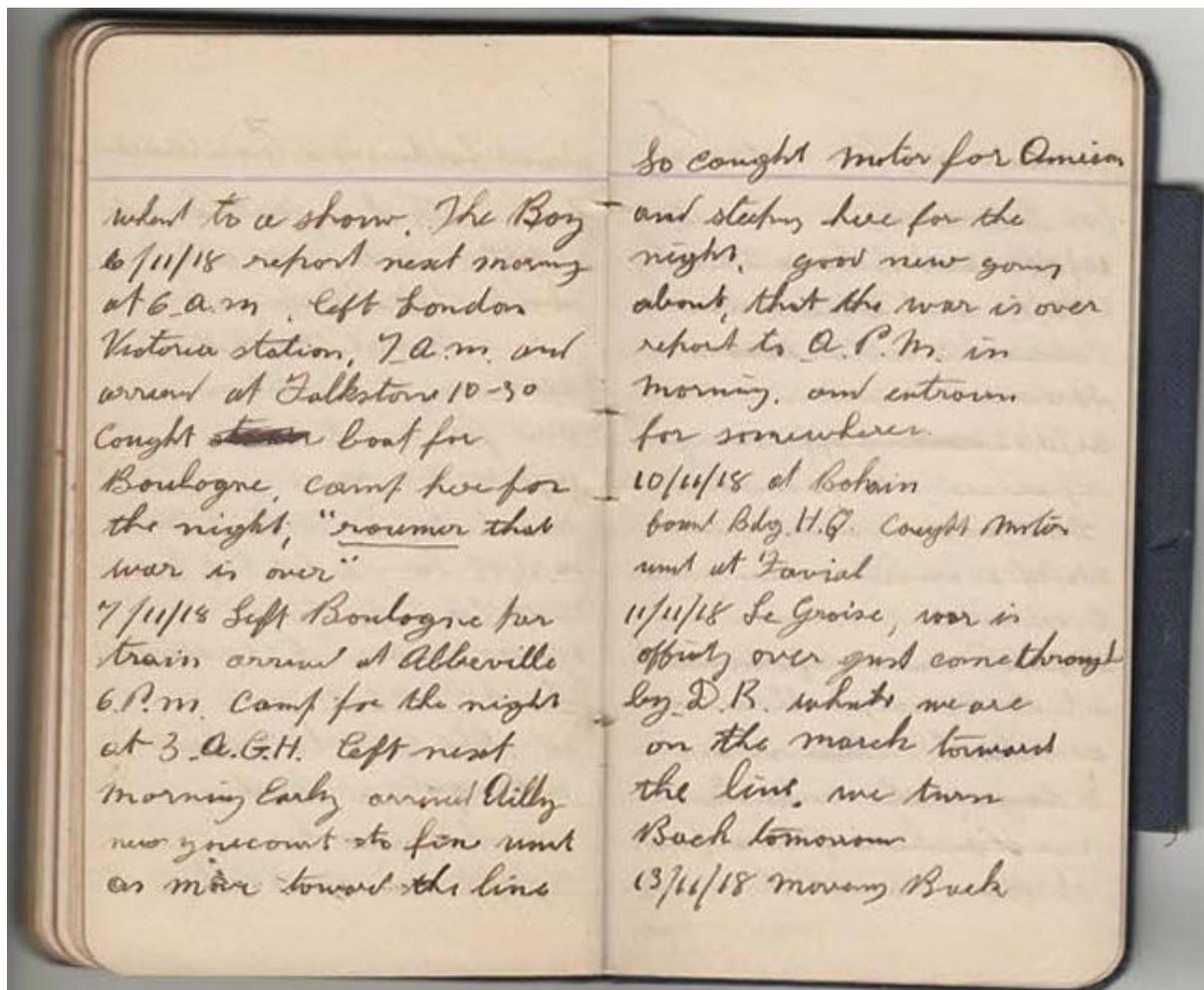
Photographs of Leeds found in Joseph's box. Some are dated 1908. Presumably he kept them as a reminder of the good times he had in Leeds.



Yorkshire College, Leeds.



The River Aire, Leeds



Went to a show – The Boy¹.

6/11/18 Report next morning at 6am. Left London Victoria station 7am and arrived at Folkstone 10-30. Caught boat for Boulogne. Camp here for the night, “rumour that war is over”.

7/11/18 Left Boulogne per train. Arrived at Abbeville 6pm. Camp for the night at 3AGH. Left next morning early and arrived Oilly near Zorecourt to find unit have move toward the line

so caught motor for Amiens and sleeping here for the night. good news going about that the war is over report to A.P.M. in morning. and entrain for somewhere.

10/11/18 at Bohain found Bdg H.Q. Caught motor unit at Favidal

11/11/18 Le Groise, war is officially over just come through by D.R. whilst we are on the march toward the line, we turn back tomorrow

13/11/18 moving back

so caught motor for Amiens and sleeping here for the night. Good news going about that the war is over. Report to APM in morning and entrain for somewhere.

10/11/18 At Bohain² found Bdg HQ. Caught motor unit at Favid [?].

11/11/18 Le Groise³. War is officially over just come through by DR. Whilst we are on the march toward the line. We turn back tomorrow.

13/11/18 Moving back.

¹ From Wikipedia - The Boy (a musical comedy) opened at the Adelphi Theatre in London on 14 September 1917. During the gloomy days of World War I, audiences, including servicemen on leave, wanted light and uplifting entertainment, and they flocked to theatres to see lighthearted musical comedies.

² Town about 15 kms northeast of Saint Quentin.

³ Commune about 40 kms northeast of Saint Quentin.

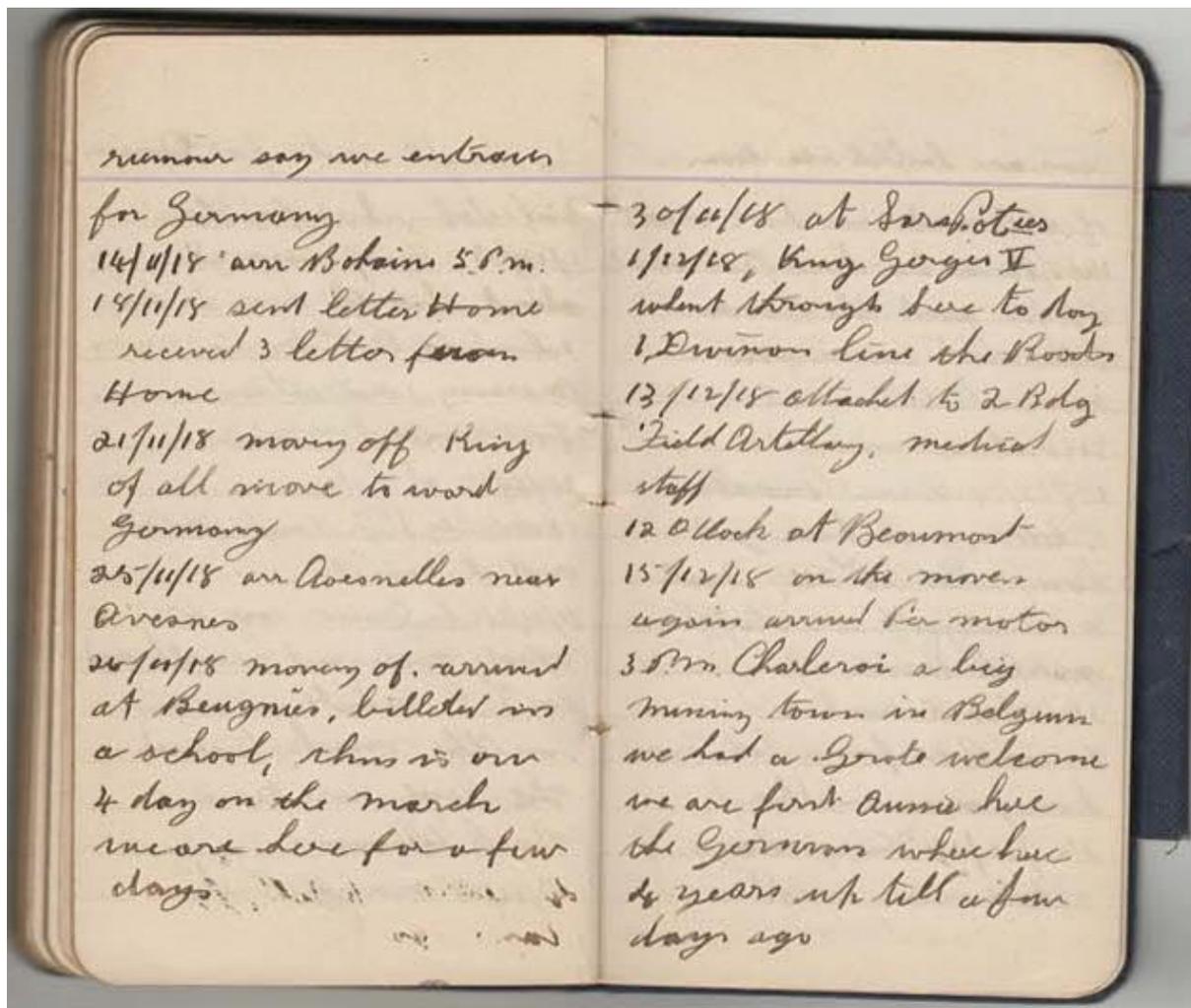
Photographs of Leeds found in Joseph's box. Some are dated 1908. Presumably he kept them as a reminder of the good times he had in Leeds.



Park Row, Leeds.



Boar Lan (West Bar), Leeds



Rumour say we entrain for Germany.

14/11/18 Arrive Bohain 5 pm.

18/11/18 Sent letter home. Received 3 letters from home.

21/11/18 Moving off *King of all move toward Germany.*

25/11/18 Arrive Asesnelles near Avesnes.

26/11/18 Moving off. Arrived at Bingingies. Billeted in a school. This is our fourth day on the march. We are here for a few days.

30/11/18 At Sars Poties [Sars Poteries].

1/12/18 King George V went through here today. 1 Division line the roads¹.

13/12/18 Attached to 2 Bdg Field Artillery medical staff.

12 o'clock at Beaumont.

15/12/18 On the move again. Arrived per motor 3pm Charleroi a big mining town in Belgium. We had a great welcome. We are first Aussies here. The Germans were here 4 years up till a few days ago.

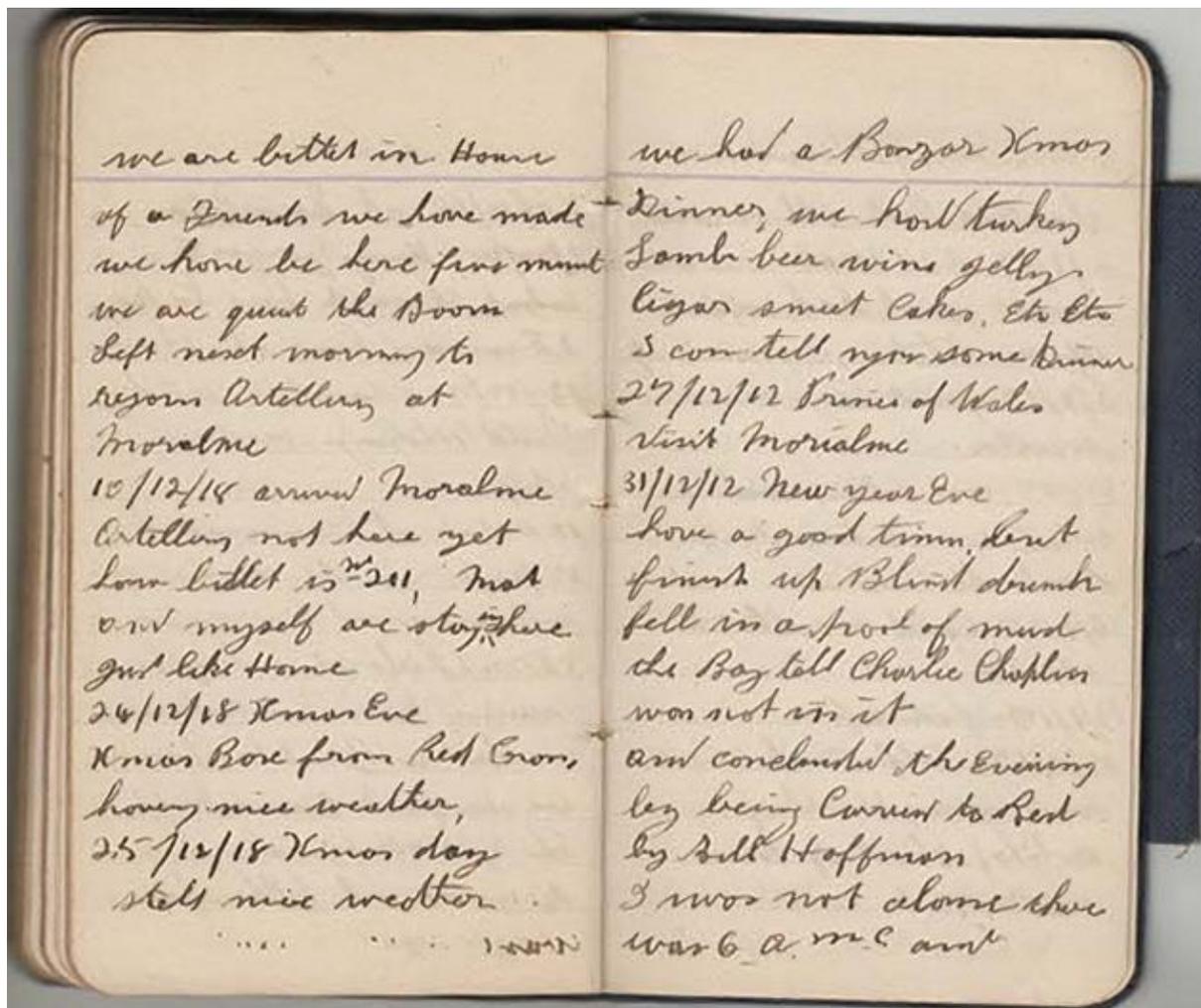
¹ From 2nd Australian Field Ambulance War Diary – “Cold, heavy frost. Unit marched eight kilometres to MAUBEUGE-AVESNES Road and lined a portion of the road, being in position at 11.00. At 12.30 King George V with Prince of Wales and Prince Albert passed along road in motor cars, after which Unit marched back to billets.”



Australian soldiers receiving comfort parcels. (AWM)



The badge of the Australian Comforts Fund. (MVI)



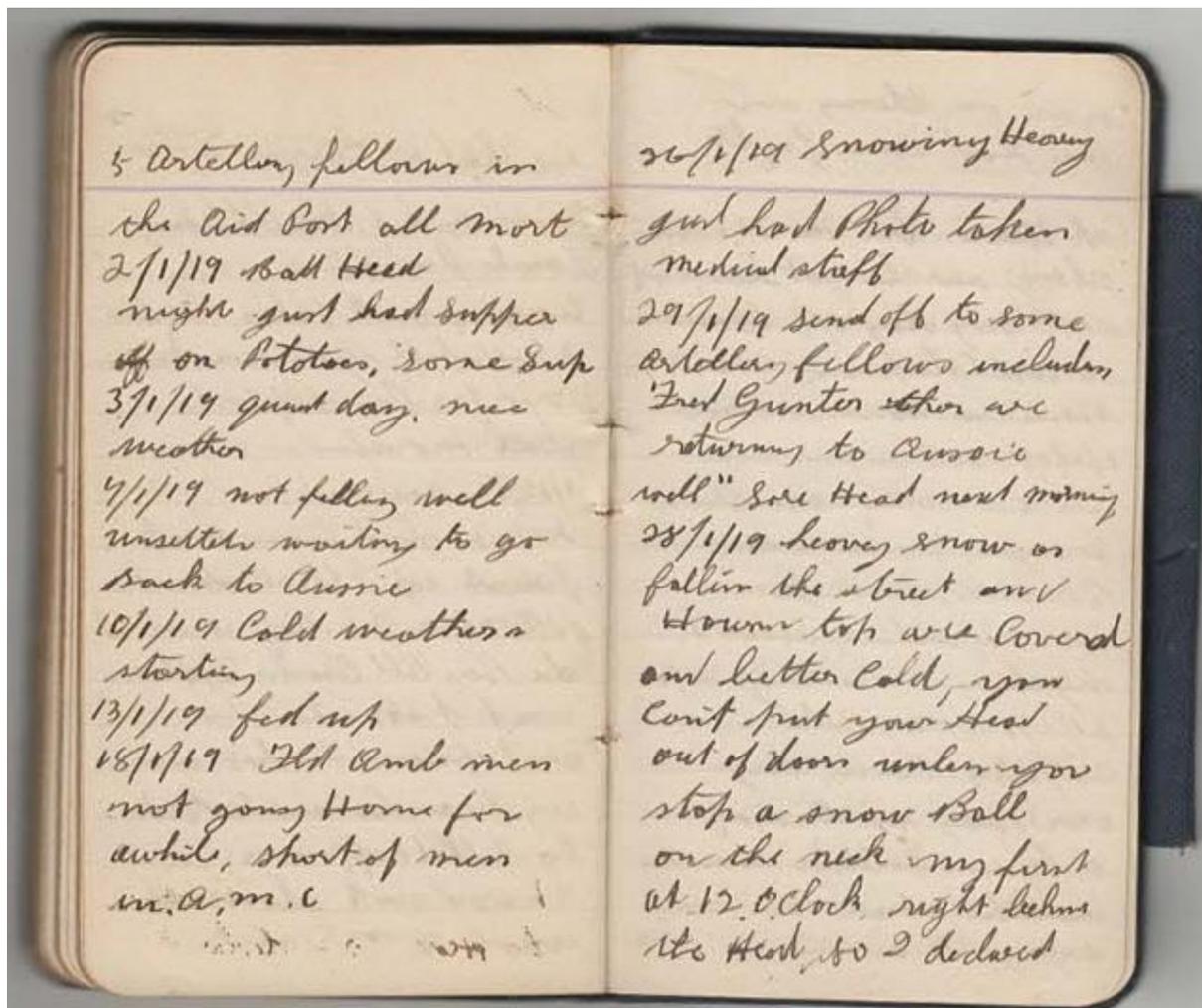
We are billeted in house of a friend we have made. We have be here five moment in are quiet the Boom. Left next morning to rejoin artillery at Morialmé.
15/12/18 Arrive Morialmé. Artillery not here yet. Have billeted is ?? 211. Mate and myself are staying here just like home.
24/12/18 Xmas Eve. Xmas box from Red Cross¹. Having nice weather.
25/12/18 Xmas day. Still nice weather.

We had a bonza Xmas dinner. We had turkey, lamb, beer, wine, jelly, cigars, sweet cakes etc. etc. I can tell you some dinner.
27/12/18 Prince of Wales visits Morialmé.
31/12/18 New Year Eve. Have a good time but finished up blind drunk fell in a pool of mud. The boys tell Charlie Chaplain was not in it.
 And concluded the evening by being carried to bed by Bill Hoffman. I was not alone there was 6 AMC also

¹ The Red Cross parcels were different from the Comfort Parcels sent from Australia. The Australian Comforts Fund (ACF) was set up in August 1916 and grew into an enormous fundraising, collecting, sorting and distribution organisation that rivalled the Red Cross. For example the ACF provided 80,000 hand knitted pairs of socks in the winter of 1916 alone. A Comfort Package would typically consist of tobacco, cakes, puddings, condensed milk, sugar, newspapers and other “luxury” items to supplement soldiers’ army rations. They also sent letters and extra clothing.



Barracks of the military police Charleroi, 1919. Since been demolished.



5 artillery fellows in the aid post all mort.
2/1/19 Bad Head. Night. Just had supper of potatoes, some sup.
3/1/19 Quiet day. Nice weather.
7/1/19 Not feeling well. Unsettled waiting to go back to Aussie.
10/1/19 Cold weather is starting.
13/1/19 Fed up.
18/1/19 Field Ambulance men not going home for a while. Short of men in AMC.

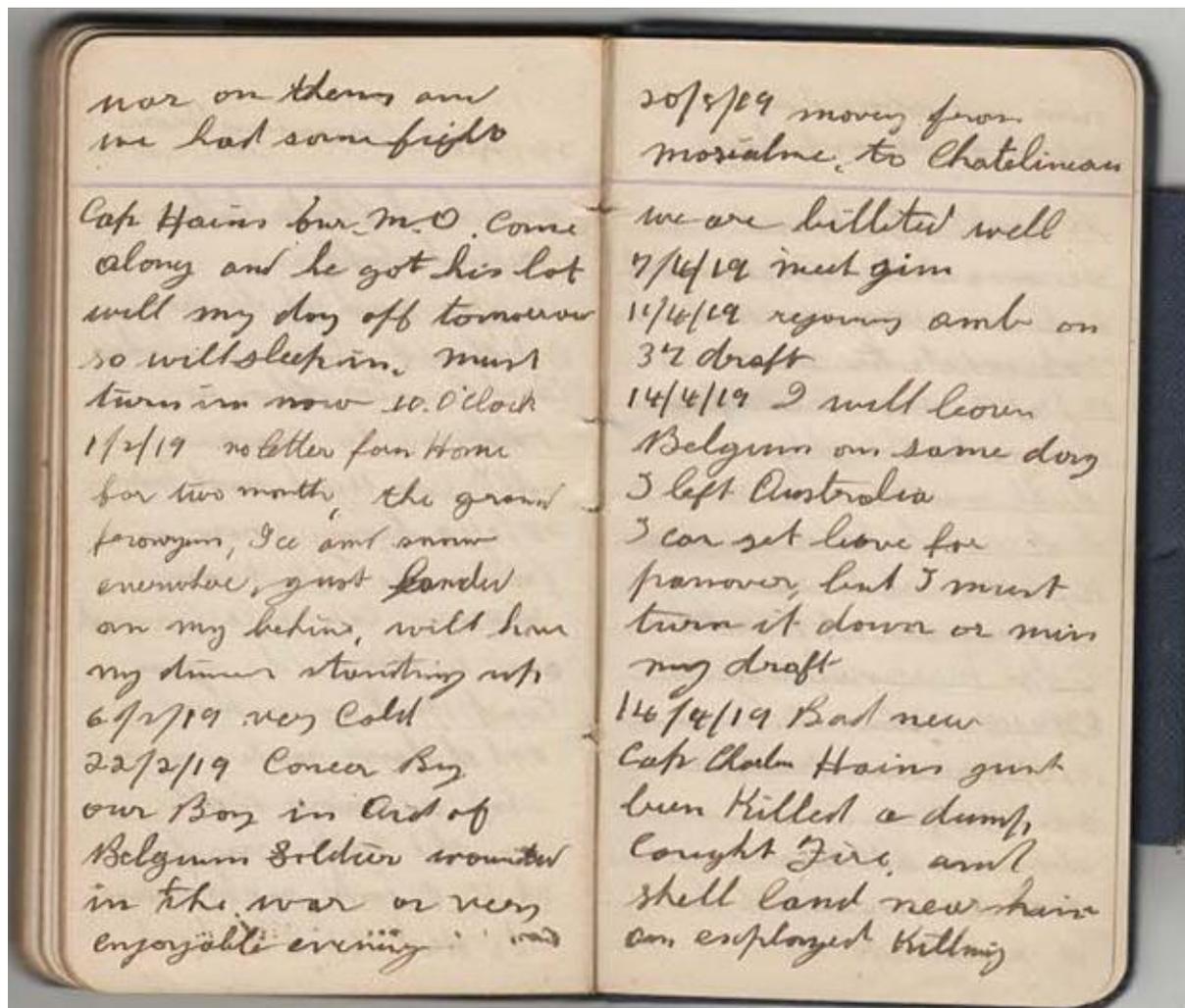
26/1/19 Snowing heavy. Just had photo taken medical staff.
27/1/19 Send off to some artillery fellow including Fred Gunter. They are returning to Aussie. Well "sore head next morning".
28/1/19 Heavy snow is falling. The street and house top were covered and bitter cold. You can't put your head out of doors unless you stop a snow ball on the neck. My first at 12 o'clock right behind the head so I declared



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E04298

Soldiers play leapfrog in the snow - Belgium-1919 (AWM) E04298



war on them and we had snow fights.
 Cap Hains our MO come along and he got his lot
 lot . Well my day off tomorrow so will sleep
 in. Must turn in now 10 o'clock.

1/2/19 No letter from home for two months.
 The ground frozen. Ice and snow everywhere.
 Just landed on my behind. Will have my
 dinner standing up.

6/2/19 Very cold.

22/2/19 Concert by our boys in aid of
 Belgium soldiers wounded in the war. A very
 enjoyable evening.

20/3/19 Moving from Morialmé to
 Chatelineau. We are billeted well.

7/4/19 Meet Jim [Presumably Jim McDonald].

11/4/19 Rejoining amb on 37 draft.

14/4/19 I will leave Belgium on same day I
 left Australia. I can get leave for Passover but
 I must turn it down or miss my draft.

14/4/19 Bad news. Cap Charles Hains¹ just
 been killed. A dump caught fire and shell
 landed near him and exploded killing

¹ Joseph refers to him as Charles. In fact his name was Clarence Cecil Hains, medical practitioner, a
 Captain in the AAMC from NSW. He died of "accidental injuries" at age 25. He is buried at
 Marcinelle New Communal cemetery in Belgium.



Codford Camp and Australian soldiers

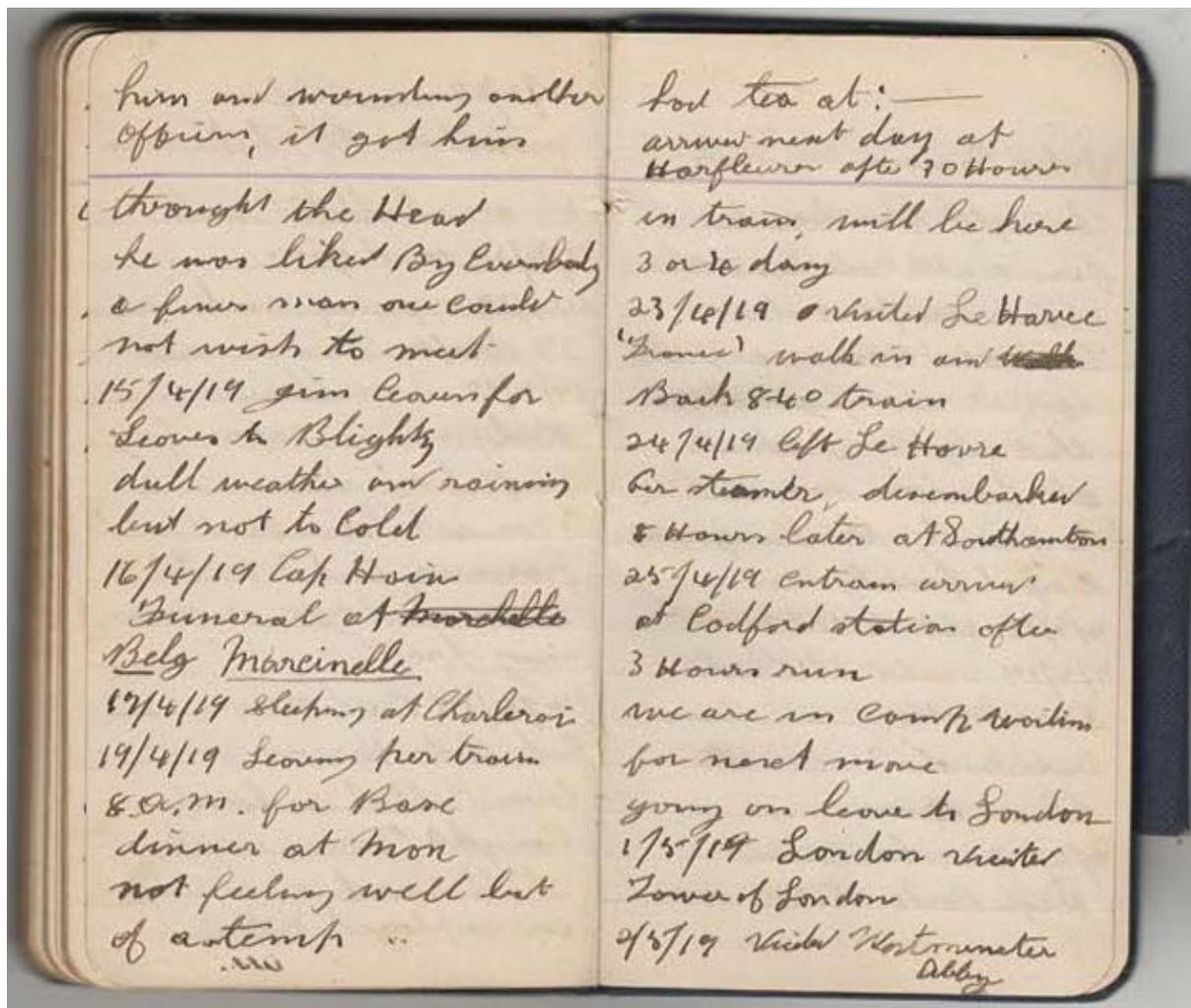
"We are in camp awaiting next move" (BWW)



The Lamb Down Chalk Badge dates back to approximately 1917. The Australian Brigade Commander of the nearby Codford garrison wanted to leave a visible Australian mark on the English countryside. Gazing out from the reading room of his headquarters at Stockton House, he came up with the idea of carving out a Rising Sun badge in the chalk hillside opposite, known as Lamb Down.

The initial work on the badge was started by the 13th Training Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces (AIF). The badge was then embedded with green, brown and clear beer bottles to make it shine bronze like the badge worn on the Australian uniform.. Maintaining the badge became the focus of punishment parades and as a result the spur on which it is carved became 'affectionately' known as Misery Hill by Australian troops.

The badge remained untouched until WW2 when it was covered over to prevent aircraft using it as a navigational aid. After the war it was uncovered. However, most of the glass had either washed away or sunk into the chalk below. The outline of the badge remains to this day. (BFW)



him and wounding another officer. It got him through the head. He was liked by everybody. A finer man one could not wish to meet.

15/4/19 Jim leaves for Blighty. Dull weather and raining but not too cold.

16/4/19 Cap Hains funeral at Marcinelle.

17/4/19 Sleeping at Charleroi.

19/4/19 Leaving per train 8am for base dinner at Mons. Not feeling well bit of a temp.

Had tea at: —
arrive next day at Harfleur after 30 hours

in train, will be here 3 or 4 days

23/4/19 visited Le Havre France 'France' walk in and back
Back 8-40 train

24/4/19 Left Le Havre per steamer, disembarked 5 hours later at Southampton

25/4/19 Entrain arrived at Codford station after 3 hours run

we are in camp waiting for next move

going on leave to London

1/5/19 London visited Tower of London

2/5/19 visited Westminster Abbey

Had tea at blank. Arrive next day at Harfleur after 30 hours in train. Will be here 3 or 4 days.

23/4/19 Visited Le Havre France. Walk in and back. 8-40 train.

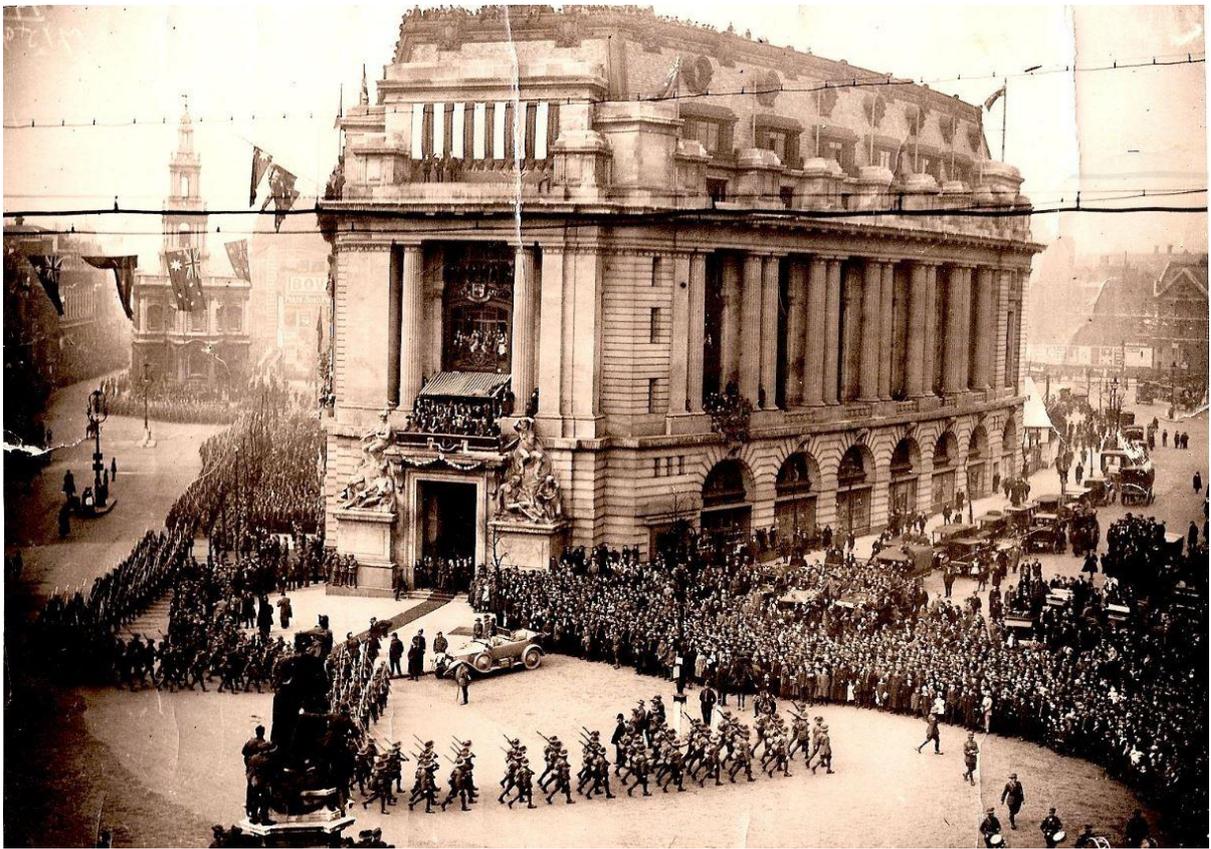
24/4/19 Left Le Havre per steamer. Disembarked 5 hours later at Southampton.

25/4/19 Entrain arrived at Codford¹ station after 3 hours run. We are in camp waiting for next move. Going on leave to London.

1/5/19 London. Visited Tower of London.

2/5/19 Visited Westminster Abbey.

¹ The Codford area has had a long history with Anzac soldiers and during WW1 large training and transfer camps were established for the tens of thousands of troops waiting to move to France. Codford also became a depot in 1916 for the men who had been evacuated from the front line and were not fit to return to the front. From <https://codfordvillage.org.uk/history>



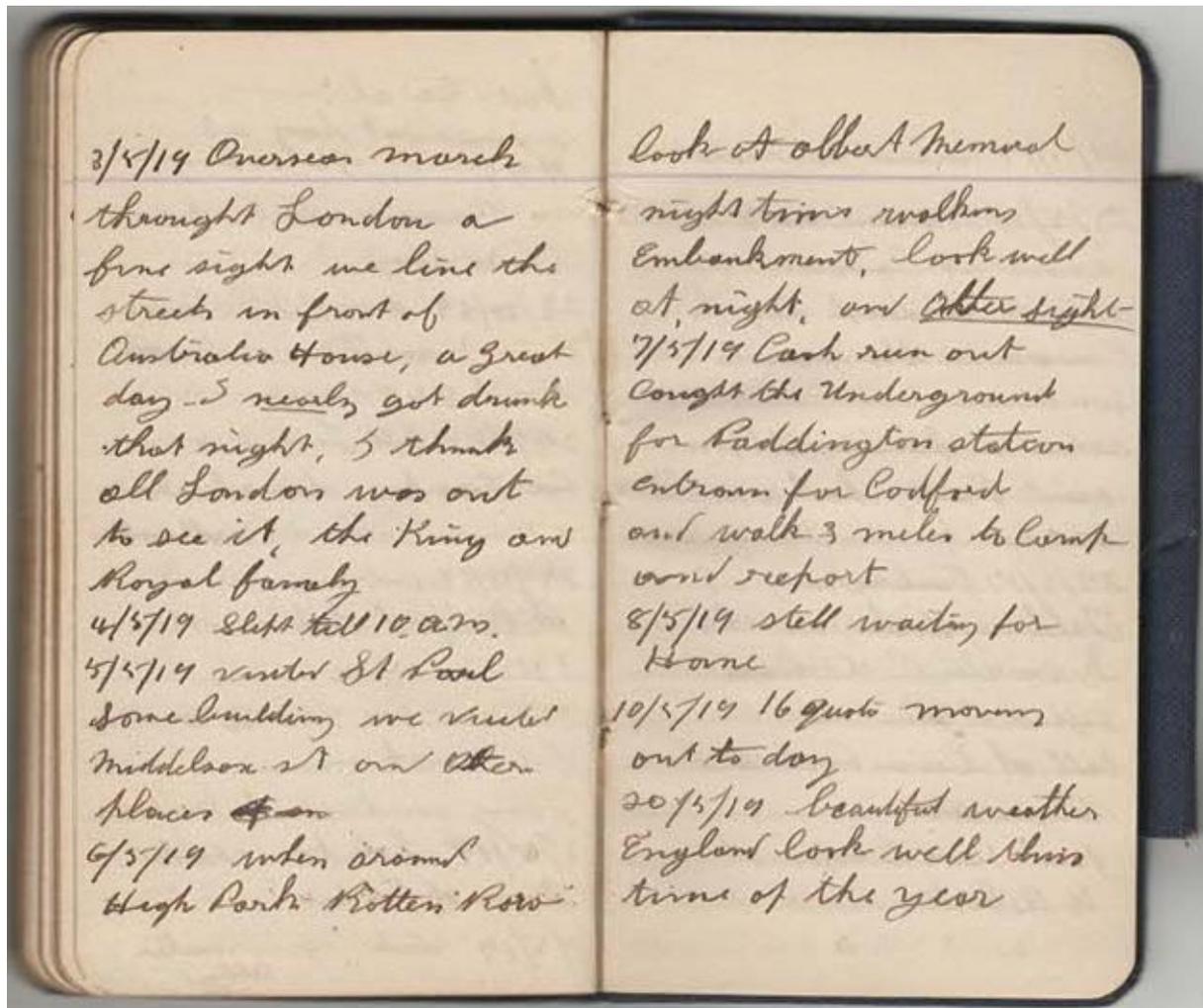
"We line the streets in front of Australia House." Australian troops marching past Australia House in Victory Parade. (CWA) cwa-org-32-P1982.27.1a



SPORT & GENERAL.

VICTORY MARCH THROUGH LONDON, 8th. MAY, 1919.
AUSTRALIAN TROOPS IN CONSTITUTION HILL.

165.H.
BEAGLES' POSTCARDS.



3/5/19 Overseas march through London. A fine sight. We line the streets in front of Australia House. A great day. I nearly got drunk that night. I think all London was out to see it. The King and royal family.

4/5/19 Slept till 10am.

5/5/19 Visited St Pauls. Some building. We visited Middlesex street and other places.

6/5/19 Went around Hyde Park, Rotten Row.

look at Albert Memorial
night time walking
Embankment, look well
at night, and other sights

7/5/19 Cash run out
Caught the Underground
for Paddington station
entrain for Codford
and walk 3 miles to camp
and report

8/5/19 still waiting for
Home

10/5/19 16 quota moving
out today

20/5/19 beautiful weather
England look well this
time of the year

Looked at Albert Memorial. Night time walking embankment, look well at night and other sights.

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SS Somali

1st August 1914 Hospital ship



SS Somali

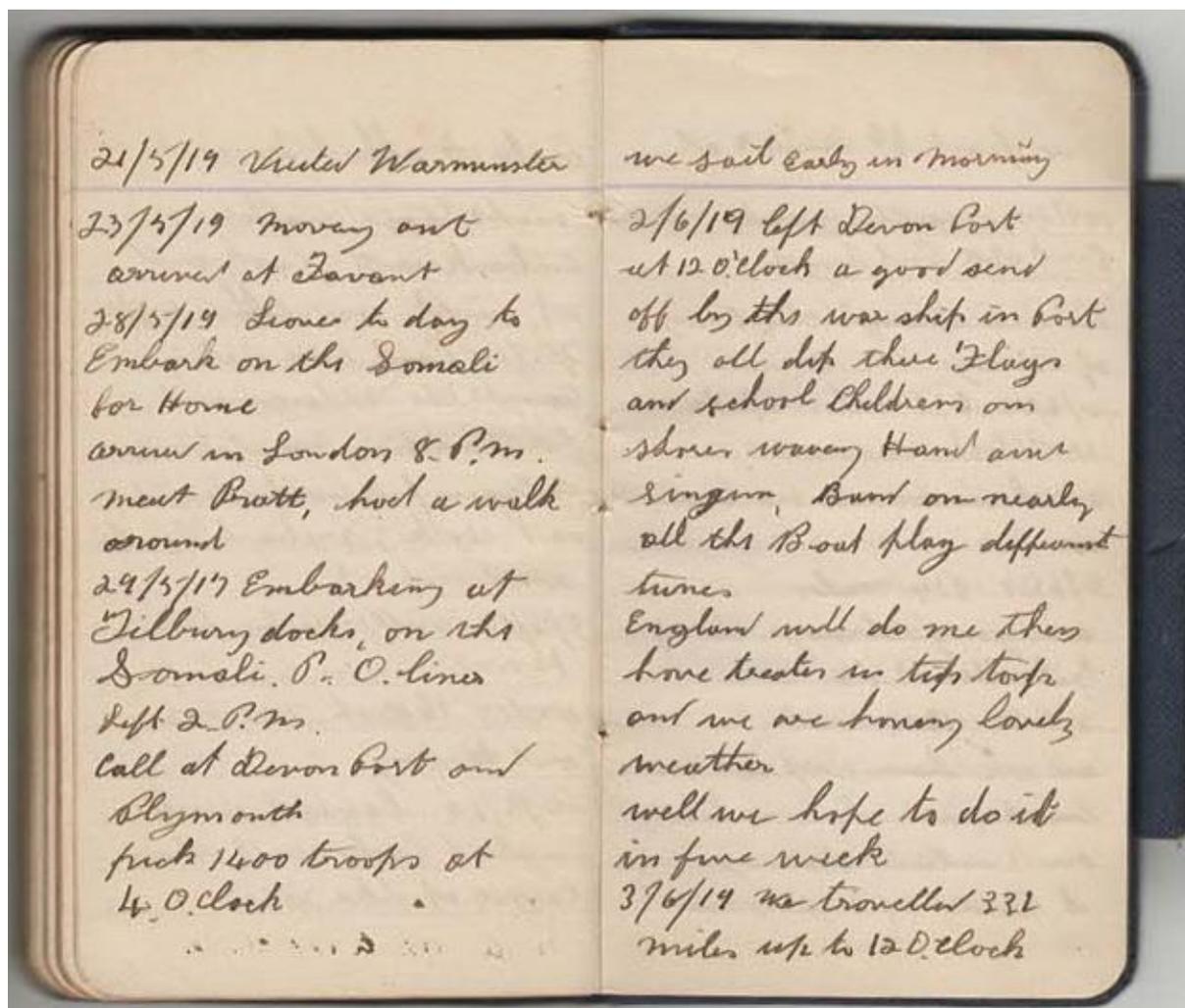
SS Somali was built in 1901 by Caird & Company Greenock, Yard No 298.

- Port of Registry: London
- Propulsion: Steam triple exp.
- Launched: Friday, 17/05/1901
- Ship Type: Passenger Cargo Vessel
- Tonnage: 6708 grt, Length: 450 feet, Breadth: 52 feet
- Owner History: Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company
- Status: Arrived for Scrapping - 10/12/1923

Served as troop carrier and hospital ship for Australians during WW1.

John Doran

If you can provide any additional information, please [add it here](#).



21/5/19 Visited Warminster.

23/5/19 Moving out. Arrived at *Favant*.

28/5/19 Leave today to embark on the *Somali* for home. Arrive in London 8pm. Meet Pratt. Had a walk around.

29/5/19 Embarking at Tilbury docks on the *Somali*, P & O lines. Left 2pm. Call at Devon Port and Plymouth. Pick 1400 troops at 4 o'clock.

we sail early in morning

2/6/19 Left Devon Port at 12 o'clock a good send off by the war ships in port they all dip their flags and school children on shore waving hand and singing. Band on nearly all the boat play different tunes.

England will do me they have treated us tip top and we are having lovely weather.

well we hope to do it in five weeks

3/6/19 we travelled 331 miles up to 12 o'clock

We sail early morning.

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England will do me. They have treated us tip top and we are having lovely weather. Well we hope to do it in five weeks.

3/6/19 We travelled 331 miles up to 12 o'clock.

Transferred to

D

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

No. 10385

Rank Pte Name ROSENTHAL J

Unit 2nd Field Amb

Casualty Relg. to Aust. per H. T. Somali embarked 14/19 } Nursing Staff
C.I.D. 3499/6207^P, dtd London 5/19 Rec. B.H. 14/19

Returned to Australia per Somali
Disembarked 5/8 M.D. 8/7/19 list 285 JJS

DATE. 19-6-19 Form B, 105, Received PURPORT.

M.O.K. Advised Returning to Australia, Form

Discharged 5/8 M.D. JJS

WAR HISTORY INDEX *SMA*



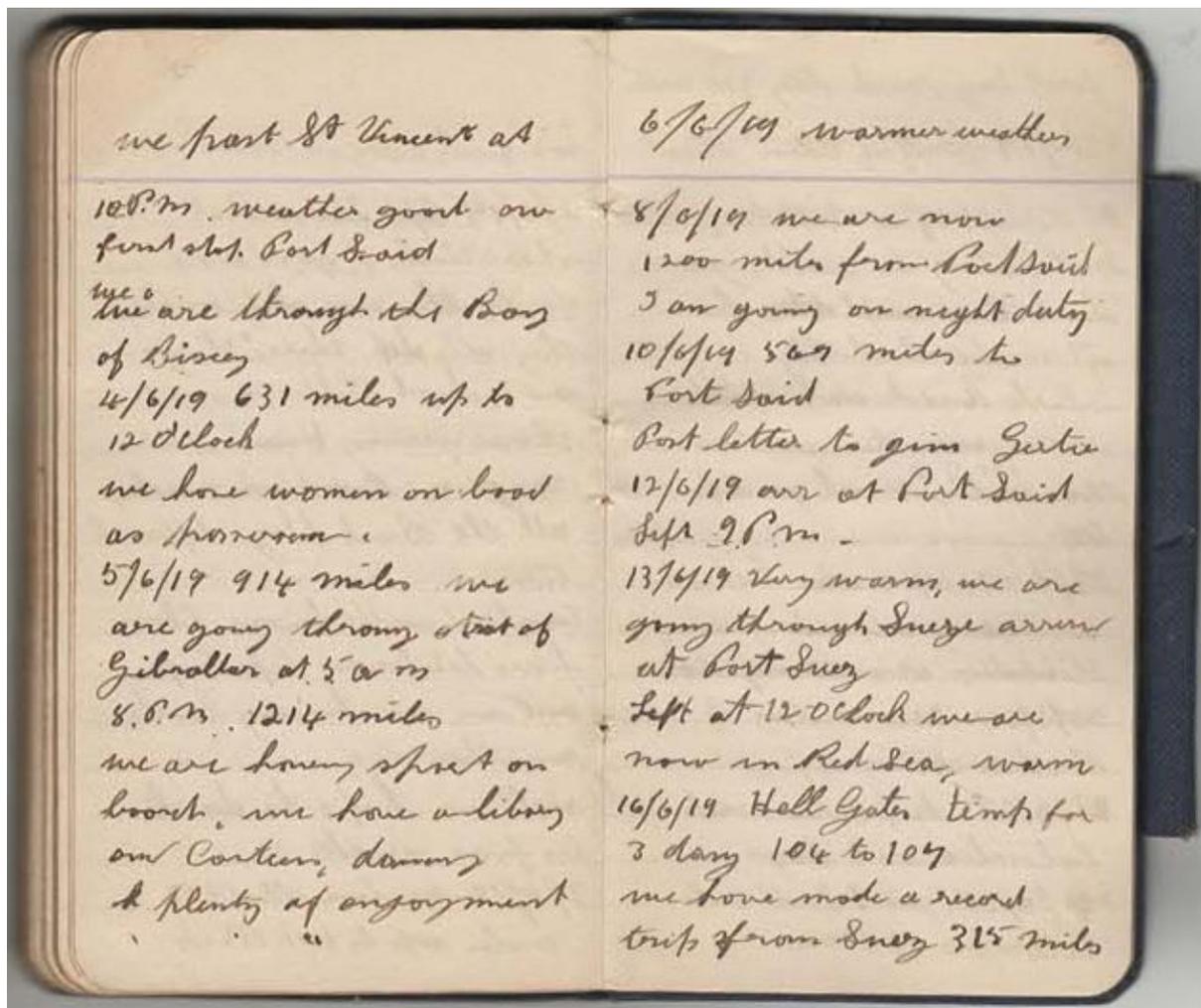
184/10.16.—C.12979.—80X.

National Archives of Australia

NAA: B2455. ROSENTHAL JOSEPH

Returned to Australia per Somali. Disembarked 8/7/19. Medals: 1914/15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.

Discharged 22/8/19

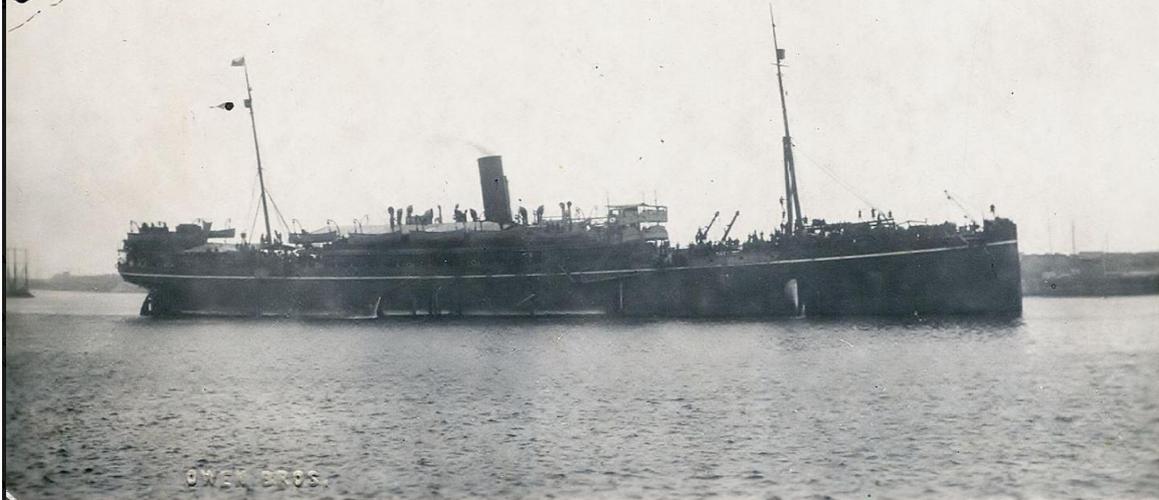


We past St Vincent at 10pm. Weather good and first stop Port Said. We are through the Bay of Biscay.
4/6/19 631 miles up to 12 o'clock. We have women on board as passengers[?]
5/6/19 914 miles. We are going through Strait of Gibraltar at 5am.
 8pm 1214 miles. We are having sport on board. We have a library, a canteen, dancing[?] plenty of enjoyment.

6/6/19 Warmer weather.
8/6/19 We are now 1200 miles from Port Said. I am going on night duty.
10/6/19 567 miles to Port Said. Post letter to Jim and Gertie[?].
12/6/19 Arrived at Port Said. Left 9pm.
13/6/19 Very warm. We are going through Suez. Arrive at Port Suez. Left at 12 o'clock. We are now in Red Sea, warm.
16/6/19 Hell Gates. Temp for 3 days 104 to 107. We have made a record trip from Suez 315 miles

H.M.A.T.
SOMALI

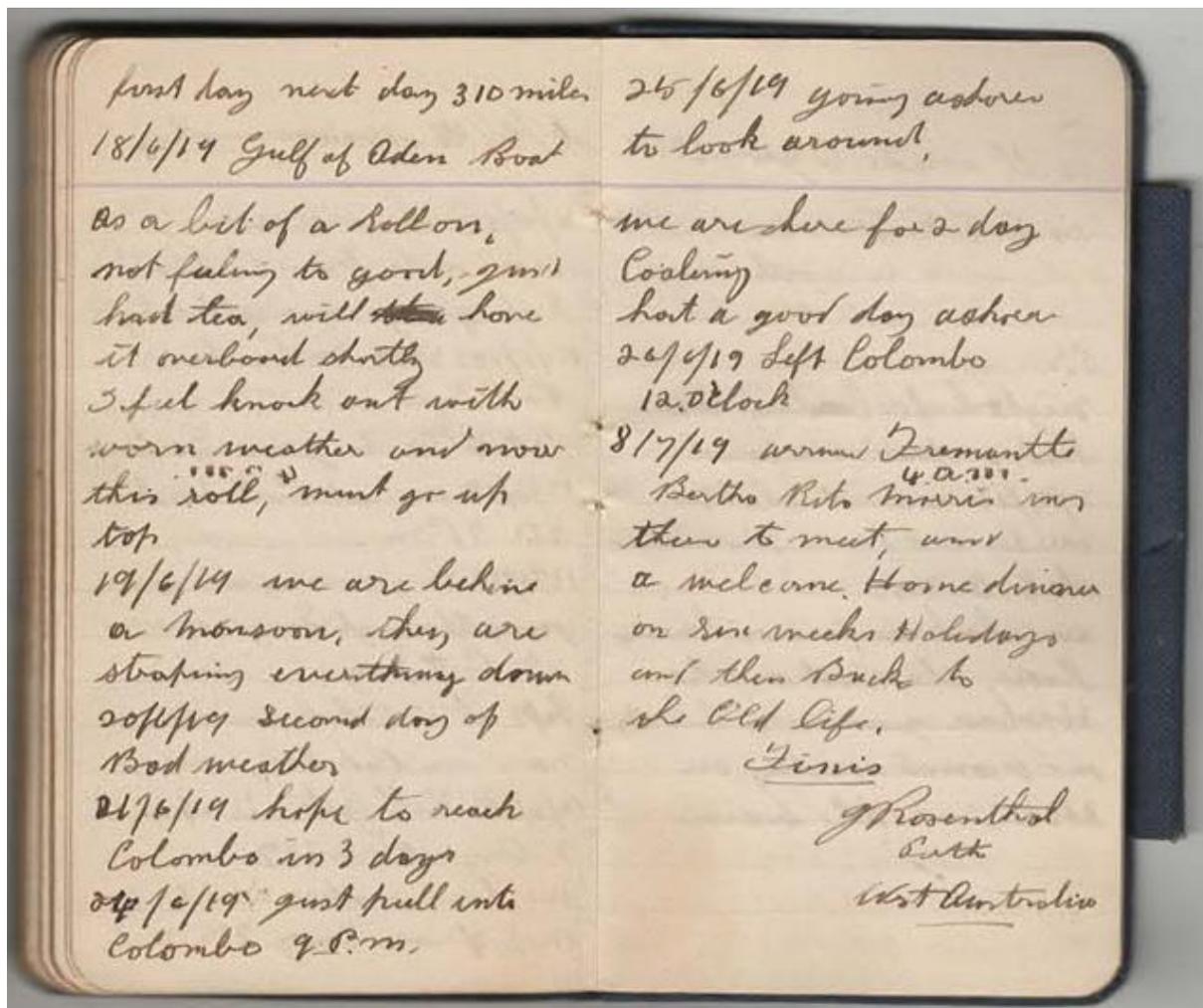
arrived Fremantle from Devonport
England on July 8th 1919, with a. 1,300 troops



HMAT arrived Fremantle from Devonport, England on July 8th 1919 with 1,300 AIF troops and Joseph aboard. (CWA)

Fifteen hundred Western Australian soldiers will be arriving on Monday by the Somali. The Mayor (Mr. Montgomery) has arranged for a parade of the local contingent through the main streets to the Oval, and shopkeepers are invited to add to the enthusiasm of the occasion by displaying bunting along the route of the march.

From The Fremantle Times Friday 4 July 1919 page 3.



first day, next day 310 miles.

18/6/19 Gulf of Aden. Boat has a bit of a roll on. Not feeling too good. Just had tea. Will have it overboard shortly. I feel knocked out with warm weather and now this roll, must go up top.

19/6/19 We are behind a monsoon. They are strapping everything down.

20/6/19 Second day of bad weather.

21/6/19 Hope to reach Colombo in 3 days.

24/6/19 Just pulled into Colombo 9pm.

25/6/19 Going ashore to look around. We are here for 2 days coaling. Had a good day ashore.

26/6/19 Left Colombo 12 o'clock.

8/7/19 Arrive Fremantle 4am. Bertha, Rita, Morris are there to meet. What a welcome. Home divisions on six weeks holidays and then back to the Old life.

Finis

J Rosenthal Perth West Australia.

So ends Joseph's diary from departure to safe return.

Over the next couple of pages he wrote various notes. These are reproduced here as written by him.

Obviously he wrote these after he got home. He was in reflective mood as he has quoted the casualty figures and memories of important people in his life. Also, very useful for us, a "Reference to Self" from which we can glean something of his background – where he came from and his family.

H.M.T. "SOMALI."

HOMEWARD BOUND FROM THE GREAT WAR.

DEC., 1918.

JAN., 1919.

Souvenir .
Programme



The Rising Sun Concert Party

Patrons—

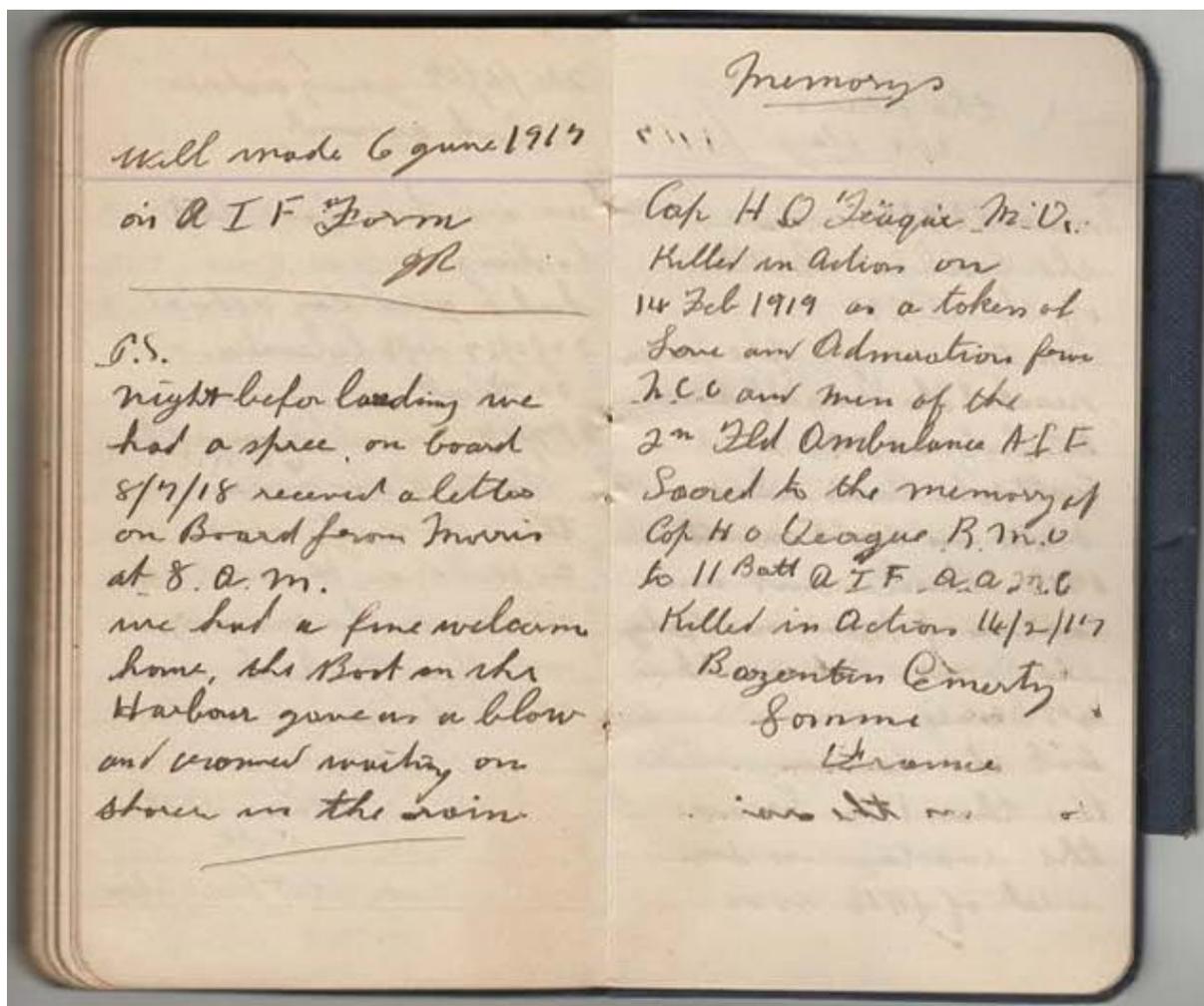
Major H. F. ARNALL.
Commdr. R. C. WARNER.

Concert Directors—

Lieut. A. A. OLLEY, M.C.,
D.C.M.
Mr. C. T. O. RICHARDSON

Staging and Lighting kindly provided by Ship.

"Night before landing we had a spree on board".



Will made 6 June 1917 on AIF form. JR
 PS Night before landing we had a spree on board.
8/7/19 Received a letter on board from Morris at 8am.
 We had a fine welcome home. The boats on the harbour gave us a blow and women[?] waiting on shore in the rain.

Memorys (sic)
 Capt HO Teague MO. Killed in action on 14 Feb 1917 as a token of love and admiration from NCO and men of the 2nd Field Ambulance AIF.
 Sacred to the memory of Cap HO Teague RMO to 11 Batt AIF AAMC.
 Killed in Action 14/2/17. Bazentin Cemetery, Somme, France.

It was always intriguing that Joseph catalogued the statistics from WW1. Where did he get his information from?

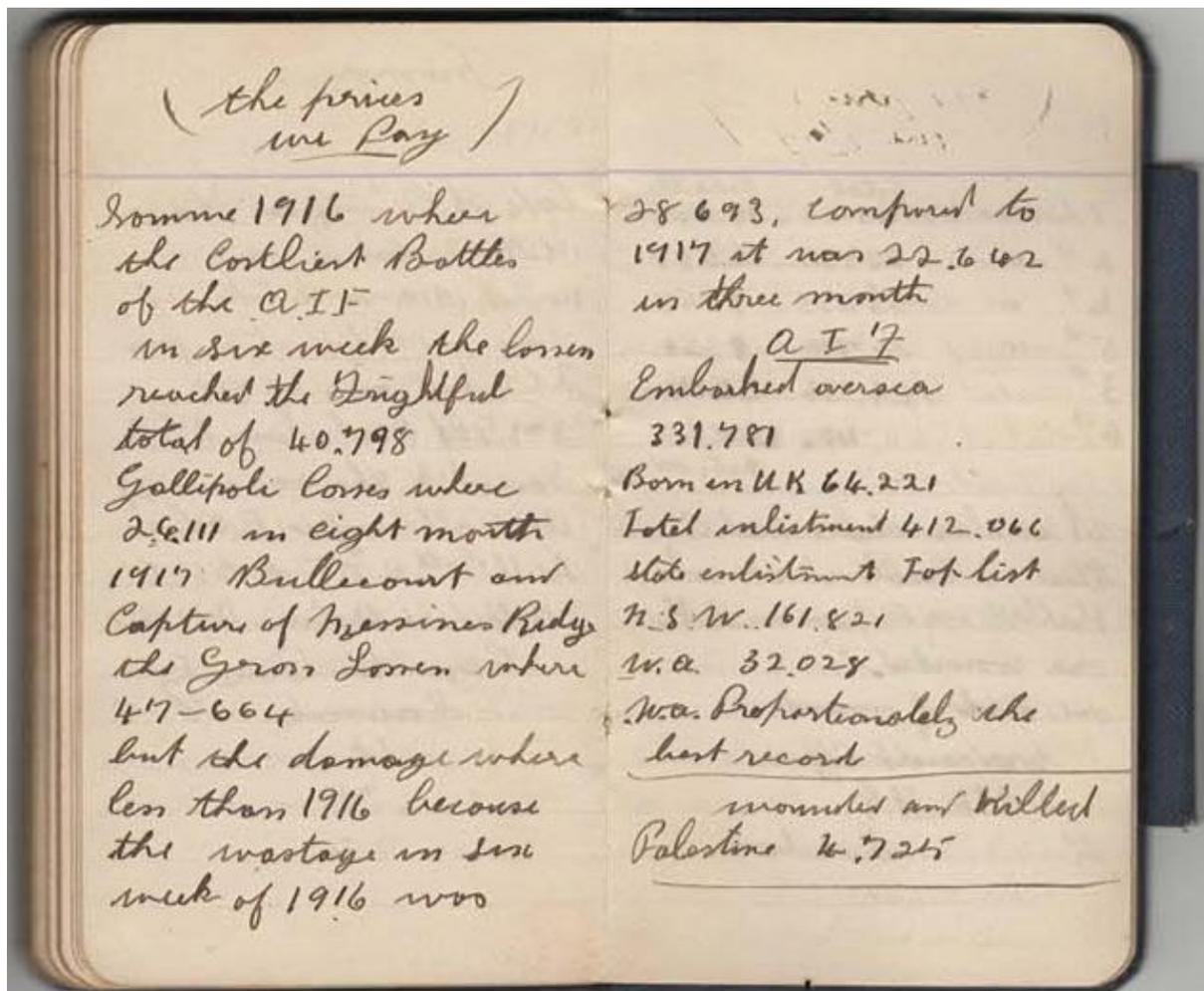
Here again we are lucky. Within the box of artifacts that were given to the Jewish Historical and Genealogical Society of Western Australia was a newspaper cutting (see page 190) which, after consulting Trove, was identified as being from The Sunday Times of 4 April 1920 page 4 entitled War Arguments Settled. It is thus reasonable to assume that Joseph extracted the statistics and documented them on the last couple of pages of his diary.

The first paragraph of the article reads:

Many war arguments have been settled once and for all by the publication of a budget of official statistics relative to the composition and casualties of the Australian Imperial Force. "The Sunday Times" has received a copy of this publication – it is issued from the Records Section A.I.F Headquarters London – and extracts some of the information embodied in its matter-of-fact tables, partly because it is of absorbing interest and partly because it will save remote correspondents the trouble of asking (and itself the labor [sic] of answering) familiar questions.

Why would he do this? Why add it to his diary some eight months after arriving safely back home? Why then follow it up with memorium of three soldiers who did not return. Was he tormented by memories of his experiences? Did he want to “round out” his diary? Was he thankful that he rather than the statistics, arrived home?

We will never know.



(the prices we pay)

Somme 1916 were the costliest battles of the A.I.F. In six weeks the losses reached the frightful total of 40,798. Gallipoli losses were 24,111 in eight months. 1917 Bullecourt and capture of Messines Ridge the gross losses were 47,664. But the damage were less than 1916 because the wastage in six weeks of 1916 was

28,693, compared to 1917 it was 22,642 in three months.

A.I.F.
Embarked overseas
331,781

Born in UK 64,221
Total enlistment 412,066
State enlistment, top list
N.S.W. 161,821
W.A. 32,028

W.A. Proportionally the best record

Wounded and killed
Palestine 4,725

The Prices we Pay

Somme 1916 were the costliest battles of the AIF. In six weeks the losses reached the frightful total of 40,798. Gallipoli losses were 24,111 in eight months. 1917 Bullecourt and capture of Messines Ridge the gross losses were 47,664.

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AIF

Embarked overseas 331,781
Born in UK 64,221
Total enlistment 412,066.
State enlistment, top list NSW 161,821 WA 32,028. WA Proportionally the best record.
Wounded and killed in Palestine 4,725.

WAR ARGUMENTS SETTLED

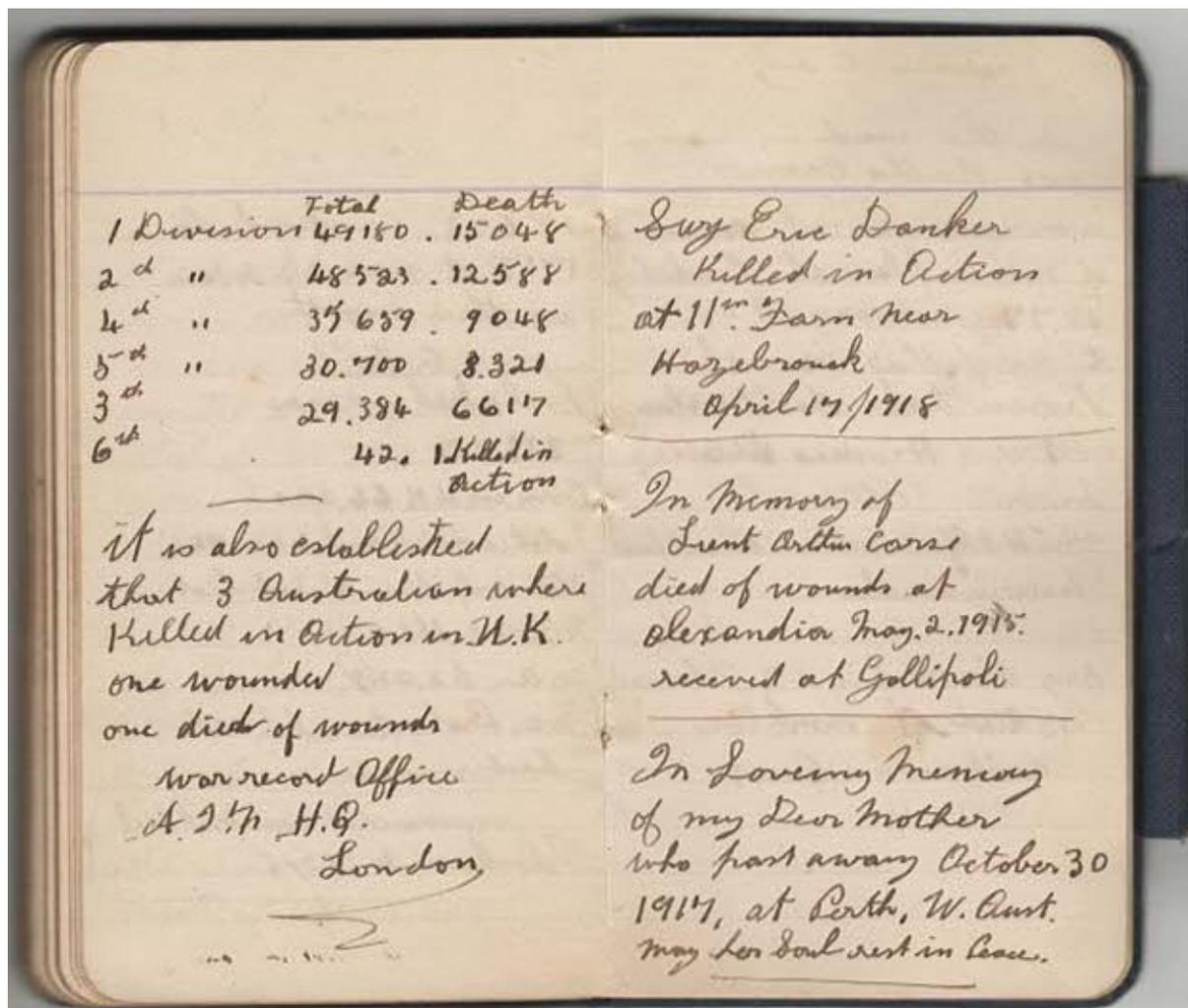
Many war arguments have been settled once and for all by the publication of a budget of official statistics relative to the composition and casualties of the Australian Imperial Force. "The Sunday Times" has received a copy of this publication—it is issued from the Records Section A.I.F. Headquarters, London—and extracts some of the information embodied in its matter-of-fact tables, partly because it is of absorbing interest and partly because it will save remote correspondents the trouble of asking (and itself the labor of answering) familiar questions. One of these questions, those of many a camp-fire controversy, is, "How many soldiers in the A.I.F. were British-born?" The answer is that 331,781 persons (including 386 chaplains and 2654 nurses) embarked in Australia for service abroad with the A.I.F., and that 44,221—a trifle under one-fifth—were born in the United Kingdom. There weren't as many British-Australians as there were natives of Victoria (52,553) or of New South Wales (58,258), but the number of Britishers exceeded that of the natives born in Queensland, South Australia and West Australia combined. Of actual enlistments there were 412,066, and New South Wales heads the list with 161,821. But West Australia, with 32,628 volunteers, has proportionately the best record, having sent one-tenth of its 1914 population, and more than a sixth of its males, old persons and infants included. This statement has been denied, specifically by the inaccurate Piglet of "Life," but it is a fact nevertheless. By way of illustration Knibba shows that between 1914 and 1918 W.A. sustained a serious loss of male population—in effect, 17,714, or

nearly one-tenth. No other State suffered to anything like this extent. In Tasmania, indeed, the male population increased. The A.I.F.'s costliest battles were those fought on the western front in the summer of 1916. In six weeks of furious fighting at Fleurbaix, Pozieres, Pozieres Ridge and Mouquet Farm, its losses reached the frightful total of 46,528, and only 12,365 rejoined the ranks. The Fleurbaix and Somme casualties exceeded those of Gallipoli, where 26,111 men were lost in battle in eight months. In the spring campaign of 1917, famous for the two fights at Bullecourt and the capture of Messines Ridge, the gross losses were 47,844, or 8466 greater than those of Fleurbaix-Pozieres-Mouquet, but owing to the greater proportion of slightly wounded men the net result was less damaging to the force; that is to say, the wastage in six weeks of 1916 was 23,493; in three months of 1917 it was 22,643. The muddy and muddled Flanders campaign (Messines excepted) cost us 53,127 men, of whom a large number became sick during the winter. Between July and September, when most of the fighting took place, the losses were 39,058 and the wastage 14,624. In view of the important results obtained, the 1918 casualties in France and Flanders were comparatively light. In the April-June quar-

ter, France and Flanders were comparatively light. In the April-June quarter, when the force stood on its defence against the onrush of Hunn, the losses were 46,279 and the wastage 15,954; in the July-September quarter, distinguished by the great days of Hamel, Mont St. Quentin and Le Verguier, the figures were respectively 48,197 and 19,163. The Egyptian and Palestine campaigns, so fruitful in consequence, were carried out at a loss of 4726 to the thirteen regiments of Light Horse—1374 killed and 3351 wounded. But the "Egyptians" suffered a great deal more from sickness than the men who served in France and Flanders, and the number of sick in the E.E.F.—particularly the number of malaria cases—is not given. This is one of the few instances in which the brochure under notice is defective. In the absence of exact information about the extent of malaria in the E.E.F., a comparison of the mounted divisions' losses with those of the infantry divisions is apt to be unjust. Unquestionably a trooper who got fever in the Jordan Valley was just as much a casualty as a rifleman who was slightly wounded at Passchendaele, but this publication records one casualty and ignores the other. Which is distinctly unfair to the Light Horse. The list of divisional casualties is headed by the First Division with a total of 49,130 (15,648 deaths), the Second Division coming next with 48,523 (12,578 deaths), and the Fourth Division next with 35,659 (9048 deaths). The Fifth Division, which was cut up in its first battle, that of Fleurbaix (why no enquiry into that tragic blunder?) lost 26,790 (8321 deaths), and the Third (Monash's) Division suffered least of all, losing 29,284 (6617 deaths). To the bitter dissatisfaction of the other divisions the Third was kept in England throughout the murderous fighting of 1916, but the men were not responsible for that. In view of solemn political disclaimers it is interesting to note that there WAS a Sixth Division, and that one of its strength was killed in action, and that 42 died from other causes. It is also established that three Australians were killed in action in the United Kingdom, that a fourth was wounded in action, and that another died of his wounds. One would very much like to know when and where.



Joseph's saved cutting.



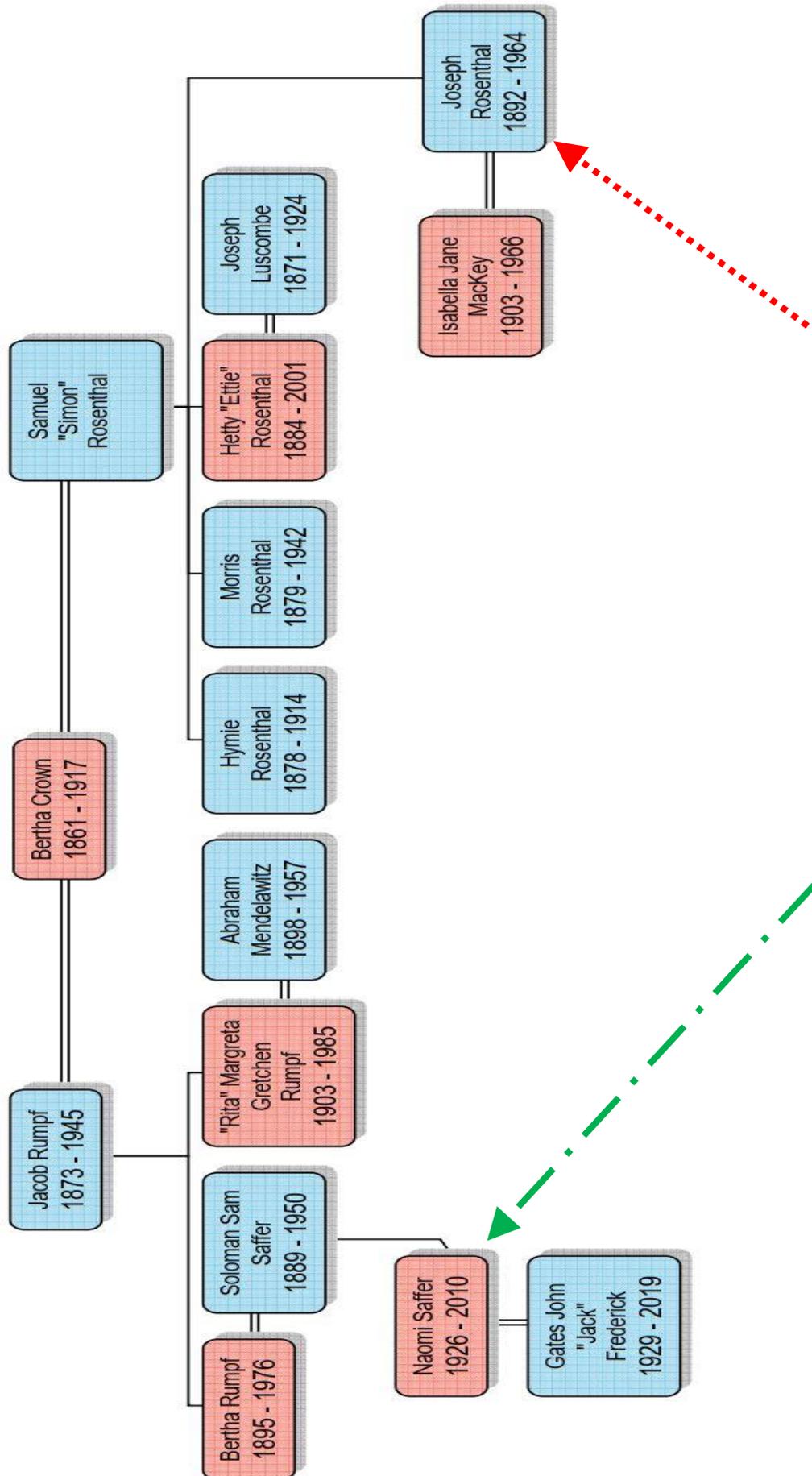
	Total	Death	
1 st Division	49,180	15,048	[Staff] Sgt Eric Danker ¹ Killed in Action At 11 th Farm near Hazebrouck April 17 1918
2 nd Division	48,523	12,588	In memory of Lieut Arthur Carse ² Died of wounds at Alexandria May 2 1915 Received in Gallipoli
4 th Division	37,659	9,048	In loving memory of my Dear Mother who past away October 30 1917, at Perth, W Aust. May her soul rest in peace.
5 th Division	30,700	8,321	
3 rd Division	29,384	6,617	
6 th	42	1	

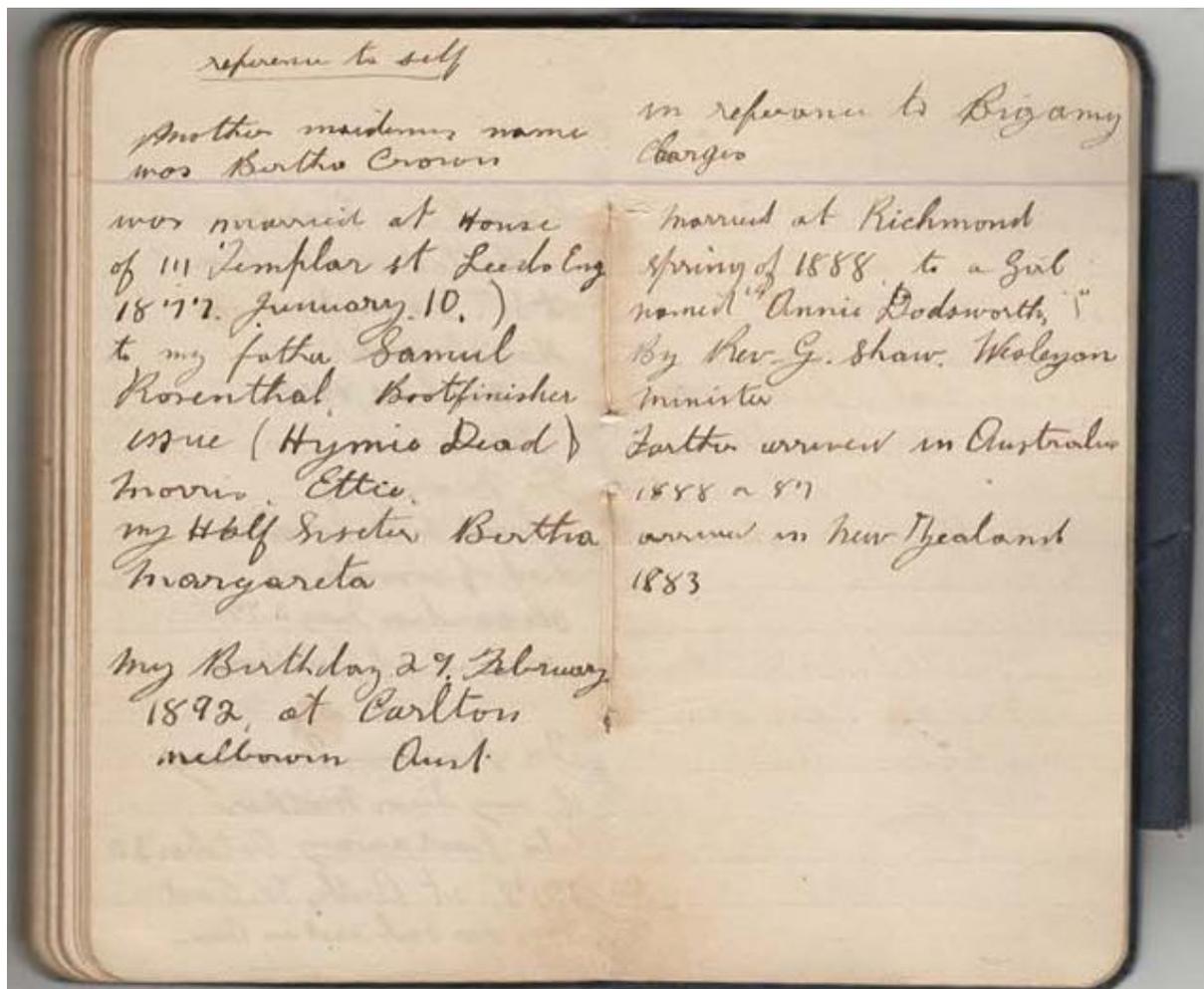
It is also established that 3 Australians were killed in Action in UK, one wounded and one died of wounds.
War Record Office, AIFHQ, London.

¹ Details of Eric Danker are given on page 147.

² What/who is the significance of Arthur Carse? ^{2nd} Lieutenant Carse was in a machine gun unit and died of gunshot wounds to head and shoulder 4 days after landing in Gallipoli. This was before Joseph had signed up. From the CWGC we see that he was in the Australian infantry A.I.F 16th Battalion. Son of William Macklin Carse and Clara Carse, of 11, Cargill St., Victoria Park, Western Australia. Born at Ascot Vale, Victoria. He is buried at Alexandria (Chatby) Military and War Memorial Cemetery, Q. 432. School mate? Family friend? We will never know.

Joseph Rosenthal's family. The red arrow (dots) points to Joseph (the diary's author) and the green arrow (dashes and dots) to where Naomi (who gifted the diary) fits in.





Reference to self[^]

Another maiden name was Bertha Crown. Bertha Crown was married at house of 111 Templar st Leeds, Eng 1877 January 10 to my father Samuel Rosenthal, Boot finisher. Issue (Hymie dead), Morris, Ettie[sic - Hetty(?)], my half sisters Bertha and Margareta.

My birthday 27 February 1892 at Carlton, Melbourne, Aust.

[^] See section Joseph Rosenthal on page 1 and page opposite for full ancestral information.

In response to bigamy charges.

Married at Richmond spring of 1888 to a girl named "Annie Dodsworth" by Rev G Shaw, Wesleyan minister.

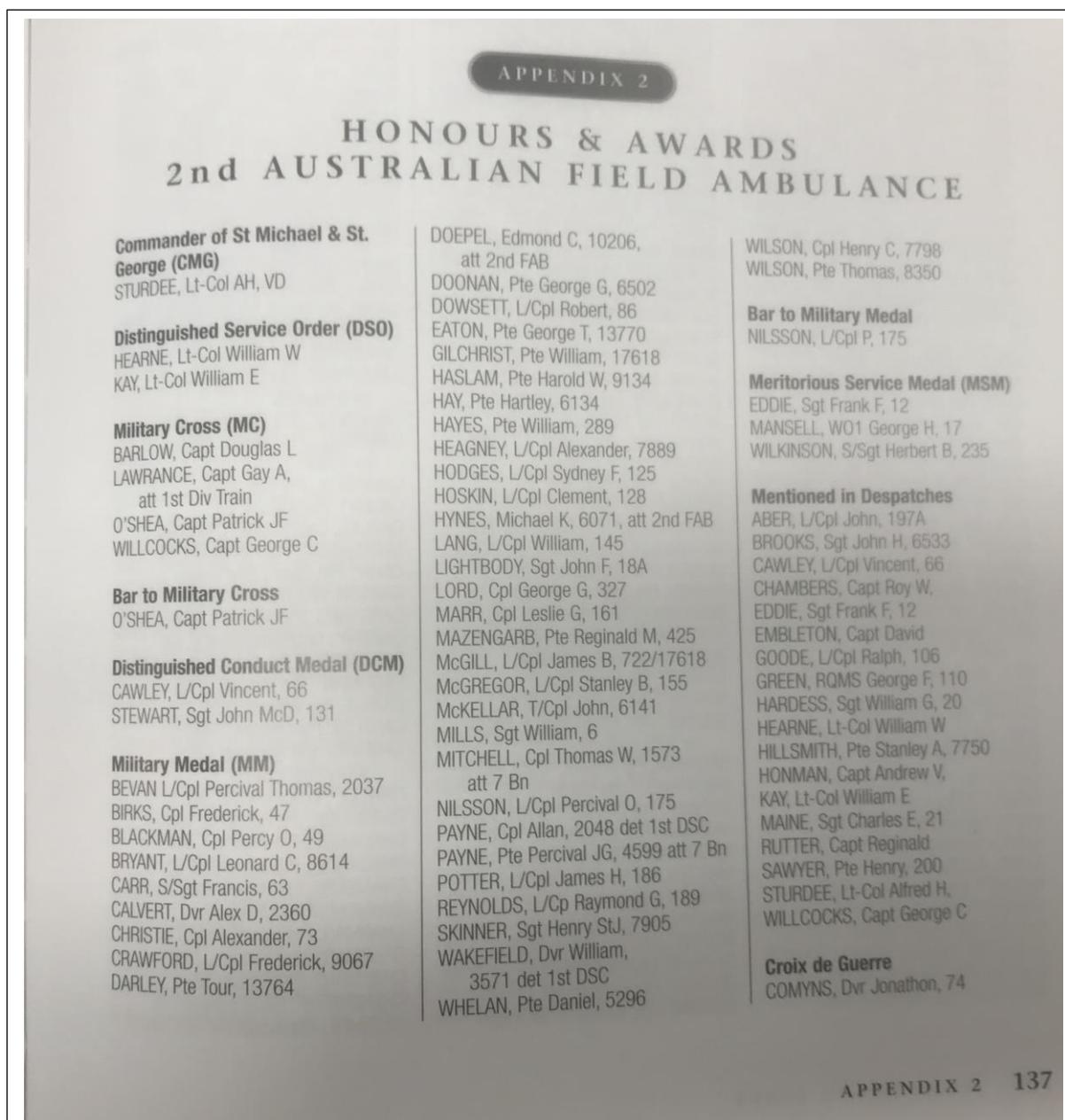
Father arrived in Australia in 1888 or 87. Arrived in New Zealand 1883.

Finale

And so, after 1,272 days away at war, ends Joseph Rosenthal's diary. An epic adventure!

As we have seen, some didn't come back. Of the 1,600 officers and men who served with the 2nd Australian Field Ambulance, 51 did not return.

They were brave men which is recognised by this list of Honours and Awards.



List of unit Honours and Awards from the book Wounds & Scars (see Bibliography).

To give some perspective of the enormity of the task that Joseph and his comrades undertook the following statistics are quoted from the ANZAC part of the Department of Veteran Affairs.

The Australian Government recorded 215,585 casualties during the war. Over 80% of those casualties occurred on the Western Front, in Belgium and France.

The weapons used in trench warfare created horrendous injuries for both sides in the war. In the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), for example, most wounds were the result of flying metal.

During their service, many of the 331,781 AIF troops and medical staff were injured more than once:

- *over 50% were hit by shell fragments or shrapnel bullets from artillery fire*
- *40% were hit by high-velocity bullets from rifles or machine guns*
- *12% were affected by chlorine or mustard gas*
- *2% were hit by bombs or grenades*
- *only 0.3% suffered bayonet wounds*

Many health risks also developed into large-scale problems on the front.

Those who served lived and work in crowded spaces, which helped to spread bacterial, viral and parasitic infections. Unhealthy living conditions for soldiers (and sailors) included:

- *poor diet*
- *lack of sleep*
- *exposure to cold*
- *contact with mice, rats, fleas, lice and other parasites*

Appendix 1- Abbreviations

Like any institution jargon and abbreviations are used extensively. Where necessary these have been addressed by footnotes. In the case of abbreviations, not all have been extended. Thus the below table is designed to assist the reader.

AAMC	Australian Army Medical Corps
ADS	Advanced Dressing Station
AGBD	Australian General Base Depot
AMC	Ambulance Medical Corps
AGBD	Australian General Base Depot
AWM	Australian War Memorial
CCS	Casualty Collecting Station
CWGC	Commonwealth War Graves Commission
DOW	Died of Wounds
KIA	Killed in Action
OC	Officer in Charge
RAP	Regimental Aid Post
RMO	Regimental Medical Officer
RTA	Returned to Australia

Appendix 2- Aid Posts

This excellent article was found on the Net at website Ypres and the Great War by Simon Farr. <http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~dccfarr/index.htm>

Although it refers to the British army it provides a very good description of how the medical services operated.

The First World War made greater demands on the medical services of all the nations involved than another previous conflict. The BEF in France and Belgium alone suffered 2,690,054 battle casualties throughout the campaign, of these 677,515 were killed or died of wounds. Just over 12% of the total number of British soldiers who served on the Western Front were killed or died, and nearly 38% were wounded. Consequently the Royal Army Medical Corps grew from less than 20,000 men in August 1914 to over 140,00 by November 1918.

For those who became casualties to first link in the treatment chain, were the regimental stretcher bearers, whose task it was to collect the seriously wounded from No Man's Land and take them to a regiment aid post.

Regimental Aid Post (RAP) - commanded by a regiment Medical Officer and a senior Royal Army Medical Corps NCO. These posts would be near the support lines. The condition of the wounded man would be assessed and logged. If the wound was deemed non-debilitating he would be classified as "walking-wounded" and dispatched to one of the Divisional Collecting Post. Stretcher cases were removed to to the nearest Advanced Dressing Stations.

Advanced Dressing Stations (ADS) - commanded by a Royal Army Medical Corps Captain and orderlies. These were normally sited behind the front lines in a suitable building or



Australian Advanced Dressing Station near Ypres (20th Sept. 1917).

dugout. Here the casualty would be thoroughly examined and in emergency cases operated on. After appropriated treatment and logged the wounded were transported to Main Dressing Stations. Examples of which were at Bedford House and Belgium Battery Corner.

Main Dressing Stations (MDS) - commanded by Royal Army Medical Corps Major. Situated up to 3 miles behind the Advanced Dressing Stations, based in huts or large tents. It

was here that treatment began in earnest, wounds were treated and those whose injuries were serious were dispatched to Field Hospital made up of several Casualty Clearing Stations. Examples of which were at Gwalia

Field Hospitals - commanded by Royal Army Medical Corps Lieut. Col with a staff of specialist surgeons, physicians and nurses. It was here that the badly wounded received attention. Examples of which were at Brandhoek and Lijssenthoek. After some time the Field Hospitals began to specialise in different types of wounds, ailments and conditions, thereby further improving survival rate.

Base Hospitals - Those casualties deemed beyond treatment of the Field Hospitals were taken to Base Hospitals, these were based at places like Calais, Boulogne and England.

Appendix 3- Photographic Sources

This diary has been extensively illustrated to make it more interesting, to give the reader some idea of what Joseph and his comrades were going through and to provide some sense to Joseph's words – a picture speaks a thousand words.

Some care has been taken to, as far as possible, provide the source of these photos. As can be seen from the following list there are many and varied sources. The author hopes that this goes somewhere towards satisfying copyright issues.

AWM. Various. *Australian War Memorial*. [Online] <https://www.awm.gov.au/>.

BFW. <https://battlefieldwanderers.net/europe/england/>. *Battlefield wanderers*. [Online] <https://battlefieldwanderers.net/>.

BWW. HMT Ionian. *BirtwistleWiki*. [Online] https://www.birtwistlewiki.com.au/wiki/HMT_Ionian.

CHA. Chateau de Contay. *Chateau de Contay*. [Online] <https://chateaudecontay.fr/>.

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CWA. <https://collections.wa.net.au/>. *Collections WA - Australian Army Museum of Western Australia*. [Online] <https://collections.wa.net.au/>.

FLR. *www.flickr.com*. [Online] <https://www.flickr.com/photos/>.

GOO. Google Maps. *Google Maps*. [Online] <https://www.google.com/maps/>.

IL. Military heritage. *Ipswich Libraries Qld*. [Online] <https://www.ipswichlibraries.com.au/ipswich-our-military-heritage/>.

IWM. <https://www.iwm.org.uk/history>. *Imperial War Museum*. [Online] <https://www.iwm.org.uk>.

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JWIRE. *jwire.com.au*. [Online] jwire.com.au.

MH. <https://www.mundaringhistory.org/military-history-mundaring-area?lightbox=dataitem-kwx6axxq>. *Mundaring and Hills Historical Society*. [Online] <https://www.mundaringhistory.org/>.

MVI. <https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/articles/1848>. [Online] <https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au>.

NAA. Various. *National Archives of Australia*. [Online] <https://www.naa.gov.au/>.

NSWSL. NSW State Library. *NSW State Library*. [Online] <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/>.

OTH. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/wwi>. *Office of the Historian*. [Online] <https://history.state.gov/>.

OXF. Oxford's Community Collections. *Oxford's Community Collections*. [Online] <https://oxford.omeka.net/s/collections/item/58730#c=&m=&s=&cv=&xywh=-1504%2C-89%2C4044%2C1776>.

RHP. Horros Western Front 1914-1918. *Rare Historical Photos*. [Online] <https://rarehistoricalphotos.com/>.

RHPFH. Photos by Frank Hurley. *Rare Historical Photos*. [Online]
<https://rarehistoricalphotos.com/western-front-photographs-frank-hurley/>.

RHPHH. Rare Historic Pictures - Hans Hildenbrand. *Rare Historic Pictures*. [Online]
<https://rarehistoricalphotos.com/hans-hildenbrand-german-front-in-rare-color-photos-1914-1918/>.

SJMC1. <https://sjmc.gov.au/how-did-soldiers-get-to-the-western-front/>. *Sir John Monash Centre*.
[Online] <https://sjmc.gov.au/>.

SLWA. Various. *State Library of Western Australia*. [Online] slwa.wa.gov.au.

SP. Springfield College. *Springfield College*. [Online] <https://springfieldcollege.contentdm.oclc.org/>.

TAF. *The Australian Front - Shrapnel and Smiles 1917*.

UNK. Unknown. [Online] Unknown.

VWNA. *Vitural War Memorial of Australia*. [Online] <https://vwma.org.au/>.

Appendix 4 – Map of Campaign

I found this map in the book *The Broken Years* (see Bibliography) and it was the only map that could be found that had most of the places in France and Belgium the Joseph visited during his war years. It is reproduced here to assist the reader in identifying where the incidents reported in the diary took place.



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Additionally several books have been read and provided background. It is pleasing to note that Joseph's experiences dovetail with others.

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