



## Source 3

Letter written by a British soldier in August 1916

(Catalogue ref: RAIL 253/516)

### How to use this source:

Study this source carefully. It contains information that could be useful in your presentation on life in the trenches. As you study the source, ask yourself:

- Why are some parts of the letter blacked out?
- What jobs did this soldier have to do?
- How did he feel about what he had to do?
- According to this letter, what did the Germans think?
- Which aspects of trench warfare does this source provide information on?
- How could this source be used in your final presentation?



## Source 3

2181. Coupl. C. Hemball

Extract from letter dated August 13<sup>th</sup> 1916 10

After leaving the hospital came the chase after the battalion! I went by train to [redacted] & had four hours to wait there, thence to [redacted] once again, the transport were lying just behind [redacted] & I stayed with them for the two days I told you I was resting, from there I went straight into Hell, the battalion were in reserve in [redacted] & after two days there, into the front line in High Wood - otherwise [redacted] - phew! We were up there for just a fortnight, in the three positions I mean, all bold, good old 51<sup>st</sup>, no glory, but damned hard & risky work, consolidating the positions gained as the papers say! it doesn't look much in print, but my God, I'd sooner go "over the bags" any day, every night we were groping about in "no man's land" digging advanced trenches & saps ready for the next move & on reconnoitering patrols - crawling about on hands & knees, finding out where Fritz had dug himself in. On several occasions we ran into him on the same game, result - an exchange of bombs & oaths & a scuffle for your own lives before they found you with their machine guns. If you could take one of their party back with you, so much the better! We managed it one night & they're just as fed up as we are, say we don't know what it is to be under a bombardment!!!