



Source 6

'Gommecourt Wood', a poem by Private G Getley, 1917
(Catalogue ref: WO 95/2686)

How to use this source:

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

- How do you know this poem was about the attack on the Somme?
- According to the poem, what was the mood of this soldier and his mates?
- What happened to Bagley and how did it affect the writer?
- What was Private Getley's job?
- What is the general attitude in this poem towards the war?
- Will you use this source in your presentation?



Source 6

Gommecourt Wood.

On July the 1st the attack was made
 On Gommecourt Wood by the Staffs Brigade
 We did not care, nor did we fear
 For we were as happy as men when they're full of beer.

Up "Derby Dyke" we went
 Whizz-bangs and bullets the Germans sent
 But on we went as brave could be
 Certainly thinking it would be a victory.

On my way to my surprise I did see
 A fellow with a "bleat" whose name was Bagley
 Although he seemed cheerful and wished me good luck
 I replied I can't come with you till that wood we have took.

The company runner I professed to be
 Taking messages was then my duty
 A message was given me so to Headquarters I ran
 It is always my motto to do the best I can.

So back to the boys I quickly made my way
 Thinking every moment I should fall on the way
 But as luck would have it I reached them alright
 If I could only catch the Kaiser I'd burst his "bloomer" kite

W^o. Wachin got wounded the platoon officer was he
 He led us into action as calm as could be
 Serg. Spinks was then left in charge of the platoon
 Although not fond of bacon, he could always "scoff" pontoon

Many a brave hero fell
 We did our duty though it was like being in hell
 Good luck to the Staffords I wish them success
 God bless them and grant them happiness.