The National Archives Education Service

Medicine on the Western Front (Part two)

How did trench warfare affect injuries and treatment?

Printable Source Pack – Transcripts

Contents

Source One: ‘Shell Shock’ Cases (MH 106/2102) 4
Source Two: War Office report on ‘Shell Shock’ (WO 32/4748) 7
Source Three: Neurasthenia cases (a) (MH 106/2101) 12
Source Four: Neurasthenia cases (b) (MH 106/2101) 14
Source Five: Discharge of recruit form (MH 106/2101) 16
Source Six: An officer’s letter (MH 106/2154) 17
Source Seven: Shot for desertion (WO 71/1027) 18
Source Eight: Capture of Hill 60, 1915 (WO 158/216) 20
Source Nine: ‘Lessons’ learned from Hill 60 (WO 158/216) 22
Source Ten: Red Cross in action (ZPER 34/146) 23
Source Twelve: Weapons & defensive mining (WO 158/216) 24
Source Thirteen: Mining under the enemy (ZPER 34/146) 27
Source Fourteen: Propaganda kite (WO 95/1822) 28
Source Fifteen: ‘Liquid fire’ (WO 95/1864) 30
Source Sixteen: Being under fire (WO 95/1822) 31
Source Seventeen: Drawing of a trench siege (ZPER 34/146) 34
Source Eighteen: Trench Organisation (WO 95/1864) 35
Source Nineteen: Disinfection of wounds & first aid kit (ZPER 34/146) 39
Source Twenty: ‘General Mud’ (ZPER 34/148) .. 41
Source Twenty One: Rebuilding Trenches (WO 95/1864) 42
Source Twenty Two: Photos of daily life at the front (ZPER 34/148) 43
Source Twenty Three: Edith Cavell (FO 383/15) 44
Source Twenty Four: Report on mustard gas (WO 142/330) 45
Source Twenty Five: Box respirator gas mask (WO 142/183) 47
Source Twenty Seven: Treatment for gas cases (WO 142/183) 51
Source Twenty Eight: Women’s army in France (WO95/85) 52
Source Twenty Nine: Role of the VADs (WO 162/36) 54
Source Thirty: A woman’s war experience (MH106/2208) 55
Source Thirty One: First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (HS 7/7) 56
Source Thirty Two: Hospital Christmas Party (ZPER 34/148) 58
Source Thirty Five: Nurse killed in service (WO 399/3760) 59
Source Thirty Six: Nurse mentioned in dispatches (WO 399/15442) 60
Source Thirty Seven: Leaving the service (WO 399/1864) 62
Source Thirty Eight: ‘I look a pretty picture’ (RAIL 253/516) 64
Source Thirty Nine: ‘It is a warm shop’ (RAIL 253/516) 65

Source Forty: ‘Beastly complaint’ (RAIL 253/516) 66
Source Forty One: ‘A big dose of gas shells’ (RAIL 253/516) 67
Source Forty Two: ‘They were mostly mere boys’ (RAIL 253/516) 69

Source One: 'Shell Shock' Cases (MH 106/2102)

Probably over 250,000 men suffered from 'shell shock' as result of the First World War. The term was coined in 1917 by medical officer Charles Myers. At the time it was believed to result from a physical injury to the nervous system during a heavy bombardment or shell attack, later it became evident that men who had not been exposed directly to such fire were just as traumatised. This was a new illness that had never been seen before on this scale. The condition was poorly understood medically and psychologically. Take a look at the War Committee Report (WO 32/4748) on the condition to find out more about attitudes towards it just after the war. Today, the condition is known as post-traumatic stress disorder and the treatment and attitude to it are very different.

Extract of a medical case sheet for a soldier suffering from 'shell shock'. This man was finally invalided out of the army by decision of the Medical Board, 23 July 1916 (MH106/2102)

Medical Case Sheet			Army Form I 1237	
No, in Admission and Discharge Book 1139	Regimental 56947	Rank	Surname Milner	Christian Name J
Year	Unit		Age	Service
1916	14th Reserve Battalion R.F.A		25	6 yrs
Station & Date East Leeds War Hospital Harehills Road Leeds June 1/16	Disease <u>Shell shock Coarse tremor</u> Patient went to France Aug 1914 with the original Expeditionary Force- attached to R.F.A. - [Royal Field Artillery]-a large howitzer. During the retreat from Mons, at Cambrai, on Aug. 27th they were nearly captured- German infantry surrounded them & were only 300 yards away. They retreated stealthily, travelled sometimes all day & night. It is evident that the mental strain was considerable. At Ypres on April 1915 the explosion of a high-explosive shell lifted him from his feet & dashed him against the wheel of the howitzer. He was dazed & semi-conscious for a short time- on attempting to exhort his comrades to seek shelter (they were lying in the ditch) he found he could not speak. Weakness of the limbs supervened later & he was sent from hospital to hospital until 3 months later he reached Le Touquet near Boulogne. There ether was administered & as he regained consciousness he spoke & has retained speech ever since. He was sent to Leicester, England May 24/15 and on the crossing he developed tremor & that has with variations grown worse. Since then up to 2 months ago, when he improved to such an extent that he could shave. He has lost weight, his legs are wasted & he cannot now stand. He has difficulty in eating and drinking-the tremor varies, on the days when it is bad he has difficulty in passing urine, so that he will remain unrelieved for as long as 24 hours. At these times his tongue becomes foul & thickly coated. His pupils react normally to light & accommodation- his difficulty in reading arises simply from lack of confidence between the tremor of his hands & that of his head- there is blurring of the type. His memory & intelligence are good. His organs are sound. Urine: - Acid, Sp. Gr. 10126, Phosphates present, no Albumin or Sugar. …			

	The tremor ceases during sleep & grows worse under observation. The head movements are coarse, lateral & no doubt involve the facial muscles. The arms & legs remain quiet until inspection occurs-whilst the right hand or foot is being observed. The head movements are aggravated, the head being violently jerked to the right side- the inspection of the left side produces similar symptoms. Ankle clonus is present, [abnormal reflex movements of the foot] worse on the left side. K.J. [knee jerks] increased. Other reflexes normal There is no loss of sensation. H.H. Greenwood Capt. R.A.M.C.

Source One: 'Shell Shock' Cases (MH 106/2102)

Extract of a medical case sheet for 'shell shock'. This soldier later returned to duty in April 1916. (MH106/2102)

Medical Case Sheet Army Form I.1237

No, in Admission and Discharge Book T1937	Regimental 8900	Rank Private	Surname Spink	Christian Name H
Year	Unit		Age	Service
1915	3rd R. Warwicks		32	13 years
Station & Date East Leeds War Hospital Harehills Road Leeds Dec.30/15 Jan.5/16 11/16 Jan 11/16 Jan 19/16	Disease: Shell shock, Tachycardia., Right facial palsy On Oct 4/14 patient went to France & was fighting in the trenches until March 10.15 when, at Neuve Chapelle, a shell burst very near to him. He suffered from shell-shock & was off duty for 7 weeks. Eyesight was found depreciated & he was fitted with glasses- some deafness of the Right ear also resulted & this persists. He was sent to England finally on August 15/15, temporarily unfit, said to have gastritis & stayed in the Isle of Wight until Dec 4/15. When he came home on leave. He contracted pneumonia (he says) and was in bed until Dec. 27/15. He was admitted here Dec 30/15 suffering from pain over the heart. He now complains of that pain & pain across the epigastrium [middle of abdomen]. The heart beats violently, rapidly (100 bpm) but regularly. He has no cough & no organic lesion of heart or lungs can be found. Ordered rest in bed and …Digitalis [heart drug]…… The right side of the face is smooth & flaccid-the mouth drawn to the left, nose deflected to the left slightly. He grins markedly to the left, right side moves less freely. From Mar. 10/15 the face has been thus. From a photograph taken in Sept 1914 the change is clearly seen. Watch on Right side heard at 1 foot… Tongue coated, breath bad, teeth defective & carious [decayed]. Will the dentist kindly report This man has several carious teeth which should be removed. This I will do (under anesthetic) on Friday. Subsequently fillings and dentures will be necessary. C. Holland Child C.D.O …. He is still rather ill from shock- several sockets have bled very freely H.H.G.			

Source Two: War Office report on 'Shell Shock' (WO 32/4748)

Probably over 250,000 men suffered from 'shell shock' as result of the First World War. The term was coined in 1917 by medical officer Charles Myers. At the time it was believed to result from a physical injury to the nervous system during a heavy bombardment or shell attack, later it became evident that men who had not been exposed directly to such fire were just as traumatised. This was a new illness that had never been seen before on this scale. The condition was poorly understood medically and psychologically. Today, the condition is known as post-traumatic stress disorder and the treatment and attitude to it are very different.

The discussion of anxiety within this report does not match current opinion on the condition and may be upsetting for some readers.

Extracts from a report from the War Office Committee of Enquiry into Causation and Prevention of `Shell-Shock'. (WO 32/4748)

Extract One

Delimitation of term 'Shell-Shock.'

At our first meeting we decided that for the purposes of the enquiry we would treat 'Shell-shock' as falling under the following heads:-

(1) (a) Commotional disturbance [physical motion caused by a nearby shelling]

(b) and/or Emotional disturbance.

(2) Mental disorders

It will be convenient to state in general terms the reasons why the committee unanimously agreed to work on this basis.

Use and Abuse of the Term

We were charged with the duty of collating the expert knowledge derived by the Service medical authorities and the medical profession from the experience of the war, with a view to recording for future use the ascertained facts as to the origin, nature, and remedial treatment of 'shell-shock.' For this purpose we had to decide what 'shell-shock' is and what it is not. Without going too deeply into the history of the origin of the term, we conclude that it was born of the necessity for finding at the moment some designation thought to be suitable for the number of cases of functional nervous incapacity which were continually occurring among the fighting units. Undoubtedly 'shell-shock' signified in the popular mind that the patient had been exposed to, and had suffered from, the physical effects of explosion of projectiles. Had this explanation of the various conditions held good, no fundamental fault could have been found with the term. But with the extension of voluntary enlistment, and afterwards the introduction of conscription, it was discovered that nervous disorders, neurosis and hysteria, which had appeared to a small degree in the Regular Army, were becoming astoundingly numerous from causes other than shock caused by bursting shells. It even became apparent that numerous cases of 'shell-shock' were coming under the notice of the medical authorities where the evidence indicated that the patients had not even been within hearing of a shell-burst. On the other hand, it became abundantly plain to the medical profession that in very many cases the change from civil life brought about by enlistment and physical training was sufficient to cause neurasthenic and hysterical symptoms, and that the wear and tear of a prolonged campaign of trench warfare with its terrible hardships and anxieties, and of attack and perhaps repulse, produced a condition of mind and body properly falling under the term

‘war neurosis,’ practically indistinguishable from the forms of neurosis known to every doctor under ordinary conditions of civil life.

The Committee recognised, therefore, from the outset of the inquiry that the term ‘shell-shock’ was wholly misleading, but unfortunately its use had been established and the harm was already done. The alliteration and dramatic significance of the term had caught the public imagination, and thenceforward there was no escape from its use.

A combination of factors had led to a loose and indiscriminate use of the term ‘shell-shock,’ and a reconsideration of all the factors became imperative. From the technical point of view, as our colleague Sir Frederick Mott states in his valuable work on the subject of war neurosis, the conditions of functional nervous incapacity were in reality no new developments. Once their nature had been determined it was possible for the medical man who was previously familiar with the handling of cases of nervous and mental diseases to place each case under its proper caption. But, as Sir Frederick pointed out, only a comparatively few medical men prior to the war had had an opportunity of becoming thoroughly familiar with this very distinct branch of medicine, and it frequently occurred that a medical officer who was not so happily placed found himself in the position of having to deal with large numbers of such cases.

Extract Two

As regards the officially recorded cases of ‘shell-shock,’ there could be little doubt that included under this heading there were cases of many and various conditions. For instance disorders such as hysteria, anxiety neurosis and mental troubles of many kinds; and, the committee are in agreement with the bulk of opinion in saying that all these conditions can be regarded as reactions of the individual under stress of environmental circumstances, that they are bound together by their dependence upon fundamental psychological laws, and that any one case may be found to exhibit the characteristics of two or more types of reaction. Thus a hysteric may show signs of anxiety neurosis and may also exhibit evidence of congenital mental defect, while his irresponsibility in any specific conduct may be due more to his degree of mental defect than to his hysteria.

Extract Three

Absense of Statistics

Unfortunately we have been unable to obtain any reliable statistics covering cases of ‘shell-shock.’ It would have been desirable to record the number of cases of the disorder under the general term ‘shell-shock’ and to supply tables giving figures of the varieties of disorder classified under that head. The Committee have failed to obtain this information. Much statistical matter was unavoidably lost during the progress of the war, and other material of a statistical kind, buried in the archives of the War Office and other Departments is at present inaccessible. The Committee were advised by Lieutenant-General Sir J. Goodwin, that it could not, in fact, be obtained without a prohibitive amount of labour and expense and an expiration of time which would have postponed our Report until the Official History of the War is published; that publication which must be of supreme interest and importance will no doubt contain exhaustive information as to the casualties of the war.

Extract Four

‘Mental stress was by far the most potent cause of shell shock. The general effect of prolonged stress was much more important than the effect of specific incidents often emphasised. ‘Shell Shock’ due to emotional disturbance was vastly commoner than that due to commotional. There is evidence by those who saw much of these cases during the early stages that commotional disturbance had been distinguished by dullness and confusion rather than excitement. Tendon jerks diminished rather than increased, there was slight inequality of pupils and rupture of tympanum. In the later stages commotional disturbance could only be diagnosed where with history of explosion and in absence of visible lesions there were signs of undoubted organic nervous disease with or without emotional disturbance as well. Most cases of anxiety neurosis were wholly genuine to start with. Many remained so throughout, but some were consciously protracted and exaggerated later.

Asked whether he could distinguish genuine emotional neurosis from simulation or perhaps from mere cowardice, the witness said: ‘Frankly, I am not prepared to draw a distinction between cowardice and ‘shell-shock.’ Cowardice I take to mean action under the influence of fear, and the ordinary type of ‘shell-shock’ to my mind was chronic and persisting fear. I think the situation really is that the emotional mechanism of fear habitually stimulated, or intensely stimulated even on one occasion, can pass into a condition of over-action and that is practically what ‘shell shock’ is.’

Extract Five

1. The term shell-shock should be eliminated from official nomenclature, the disorders hitherto included under this heading being designated by the recognised medical terms for such conditions. Abbreviations such as N.Y.D. Nervous or Mental, or N.Y.D.N., D.A.H., etc should be avoided, as they are liable to become catchwords, and so react unfavourably on the patients themselves and on others.

Classification of Casualties

1. Concussion or commotion attended by loss of consciousness and evidence of organic lesion of the central nervous system or its adjacent organs (such as rupture of the membrane tympani) should be classified as a battle casualty.
2. No case of psycho-neurosis or of mental breakdown, even when attributed to a shell explosion or the effect thereof, should be classified as a battle casualty any more than sickness or disease is so regarded.
3. In all doubtful cases it is desirable to have the classification determined by a Board of expert Medical Officers after observation in a neurological hospital.

Prevention

(A) Training – 1. Every possible means should be taken to promote morale, esprit de corps and a high standard of discipline.

2. Training should be sufficiently prolonged to ensure that the soldier is not only physically fit and efficient, but also that he has had time to acquire such a standard of morale as will enable him to put the welfare of his unit before his own personal safety.

3. Close observation should be made by officers, both regimental and medical, and by non-commissioned officers of the unit on individuals during the whole of their training, so that abnormalities from which mental or nervous instability may be inferred may not be overlooked. For this purpose there should be the frankest co-operation between regimental and medical officers.

4. The study of character, so far as it is applicable to military life, is recommended for all officers with a view to teaching Man-Mastership.

5. Special instruction should be given to Royal Army Medical Corps officers in the psycho-neurosis and psychoses as they occur in war; and selected officers should be encouraged to specialise in the study of these disorders.

(B) On Active Service – 1. The practice of withdrawal of officers and men showing incipient signs of nervous breakdown of over-fatigue for rest either in the battalion or divisional area should be officially recognised and systemised.

2. So far as the military situation permits, tours of duty in the front line in stationary warfare should be short, especially in bad sectors. Adequate rest and organised recreation should be provided for units when out of the line.

3. Monotony should be avoided by changing units, as circumstances permit, between fronts and sectors.

Leave home should be encouraged.

4. The promotion of all measures making for good sanitation and the physical comfort of the men, both in the line and also in rest billets and base depots, should receive constant attention.
5. Rest of mind and body is essential in all cases showing signs of incipient nervous breakdown, and when possible it should be given under conditions of security and comfort and freedom from all military duties.
6. The fullest use should be made of Convalescent Depots for re-training and hardening men discharged from hospital. These units should invariably be pervaded by an atmosphere of complete cure.

The above recommendations, suitably modified to meet particular circumstances, should be applied to the other fighting services.

Extract Six

Treatment

(A) In Forward Areas – No soldier should be allowed to think that loss of nervous or mental control provides an honourable avenue to escape from the battlefield, and every endeavour should be made to prevent slight cases leaving the battalion or divisional area, where treatment should be confined to provision of rest and comfort for those who need it and to heartening them for return to the front line.
(B) In Neurological Centres. – When cases are sufficiently severe to necessitate more scientific and elaborate treatment they should be sent to special Neurological Centres as near the front as possible, to be under the care of an expert in nervous disorders. No such case should, however, be so labelled on evacuation as to fix the idea of nervous breakdown in the patient's mind.
(C) In Base Hospitals. – When evacuation to the base is necessary, cases should be treated in a separate hospital or in separate sections of a hospital, and not with the ordinary sick and wounded patients. Only in exceptional circumstances should cases be sent to the United Kingdom, as, for instance, men likely to be unfit for further service of any kind with the forces in the field. This policy should be widely known throughout the Force.

Source Three: Neurasthenia cases (a) (MH 106/2101)

Two cases of neurasthenia which also give details of trench warfare and other injuries. The symptoms of this condition include physical and mental exhaustion with headaches or irritability and can be linked to depression or emotional stress. Many 'shell shock' cases displayed symptoms of neurasthenia. (MH106/2101)

Medical Case Sheet			Army Form I 1237	
No, in Admission and Discharge Book 1543	Regimental 6087	Rank Corporal	Surname Birtwhistle	Christian Name A.
Year	Unit		Age	Service
1914	1st Cheshires		32	16
Station & Date [4th Northern General Hospital] Lincoln 9.12.14. 14 Dec.	<u>Disease: Defective teeth & Nervous Debility (Neurasthenia)</u> He has only four front teeth-top side two molars, bottom side and he could not eat biscuits. On the 7th last month he was out scouting at 7.30 he got 1½ miles into enemies' lines by mistake he was on a bicycle & had orders to retire- when ½ way back Germans opened fire on either side of road- this corporal was last man. They put a log in front of bicycle & threw him head over heels into a German trench & two of them took him prisoner to their quarters. At 2.30 their [position] was blown for an attack & the 2 … left him & whilst they were away, through a hole in the hedge behind his trench he scrambled to a barn & then jumping into German trench & ran up it for 100 yards until he saw the telegraph lines of British troops. He then ran across the road, jumped into a trench 2 feet deep and then there were about 50 shots fired at him, then he saw the Bedfords Regiment & reported position of enemy to them. He has been subject to Neurasthenia ever since. He was sent to 14 General Hospital for 4 days & then sent on here. He is much better, sleeps well & eats well & no pains. He will be fit for furlough in a few days. B. McFarland, Captain.			

Source Three: Neurasthenia cases (a) (MH 106/2101)

Medical Case Sheet			Army Form I 1237	
No, in Admission and Discharge Book 47	Regimental 9030	Rank L. Corporal	Surname Barnes	Christian Name J
Year	Unit		Age	Service
1915	2nd Lancs Fusiliers		28	13
Station & Date [4th Northern General Hospital] Lincoln	<u>Disease: Neurasthenia 143</u> On 5th May at Ypres he got a severe attack of Gas Asphyxia & was three hours unconscious, his nerves were bad after that, he had a bad shock in the end of November, a Jack Johnson [type of shell] fell about 10 yards from him. It killed 4 horses, wounded 3 men & killed a civilian. In February three shells fell on the house he was in & the roof fell in on top of him but he was not much hurt. He was sent to Etaples Hospital for 11 days. He was sent then to Rouen. Arrived here 18th June, Complaining of pain in head, his nerves are completely shattered. He has bad teeth they want attending to. Old caries [dental cavities] and decayed teeth want removing and a new plate ordered [dentures]. Rest. Light diet and bromide mixture. B. Mc Farland Captain R.A.M.C. 4th Northern General Hospital			
6th July 9th July	Caught a feverish chill and referred to bed. Temperature down to normal but still complains of pain in legs and given only milk diet still.			

Source Four: Neurasthenia cases (b) (MH 106/2101)

Two more cases of neurasthenia which also give details of trench warfare and other injuries. The symptoms of this condition include physical and mental exhaustion with headaches or irritability and can be linked to depression or emotional stress. Many 'shell shock' cases displayed symptoms of neurasthenia. (MH106/2101)

Medical Case Sheet			Army Form I 1237	
No, in Admission and Discharge Book 5157	Regimental No. 9785	Rank Corporal	Surname Carnell	Christian Name George
Year	Unit		Age	Service
1915	1st North Staffords		41	1 yr 4 months-re-enlisted
Station & Date Sheffield 3 A.G.H. Oct.1st	<u>Disease: Traumatic Neurasthenia & bruises</u> Dug-out was blown in by German shell on 25th at Ypres- when drawing enemies fire to mask an attack on German trenches. Patient was buried in the debris and had to be dug out. He was unconscious at the time and taken to A.D.S. [advanced dressing station] that night- having to remain in trenches until dark-several hours. At first he lost his memory. Had pain in back and right knee. Feels light headed. Has been in bed ever since. Says he didn't sleep for 4 nights, and had morphia pills at Etaples No. 23 General [hospital]. Crossed over [to England] Sept. 30th. <u>Present Condition</u> Still complains of headache- base of skull & right parietal. No tenderness on pressure. Sleeps well now, but has not much appetite feels "light-headed" at times, & loses his memory-forgetting where he has put things, & what he going to do with them when he has them in his hand. Knee jerks +slight also… Has lost his sense of smell. Pupils react equally to light. No pain anywhere else. Has had synovitis of the right knee for some time off and on [synovium membrane in the knee joint becomes inflamed, causes entire joint to swell and become tender].			
4.10.15	Furlough [Leave] J. Sinclair White Lt. Colonel Royal Army Medical Corps			

Source Four: Neurasthenia cases (b) (MH 106/2101)

Medical Case Sheet			Army Form I 1237	
No, in Admission and Discharge Book 47	Regimental 3686	Rank Private	Surname Farrell	Christian Name Frank
Year	Unit		Age	Service
1915	2nd Lancashire Fusiliers		27	5 years
Station & Date Military Northumberland War Hospital	<u>Disease: Neurasthenia & effects of poison gas</u> On the 2nd May 1915 when at Ypres (St. Julien) in trenches he noticed a greenish yellow smoke approaching their position. The smoke rose to about 8 or 10 feet in the air & came slowly over them. He felt a choking sensation & as though his head would burst. He had a desire to lie down & the after a drink of water he vomited a green & yellow fluid. He had a greenish expectation (phlegm) with a painful irritating cough. After being taken to dressing station he was then sent to Hospital at Boulogne. Was there 7 or 8 days & then to No.6. Stationary Hospital at Le Havre- On admission here patient was in a highly neurotic condition, all physical signs of bronchitis which he had been treated for at Havre had disappeared- no abnormal physical signs except a shaky condition of hands. Treatment- Ordinary diet- had blepharitis of right eye- he says caused by gas			
13 July 15	Much improved			
17th July 15	Improving steadily			
July 22nd	Teeth attended to, and artificial denture fitted			
August 8.15	Patient's condition is very unsatisfactory, has lost weight steadily, 13lbs during 5 weeks. Sputum examined and T.B. not found			
22.9.15	Has made a slow recovery. Very neurotic & shaky when discharge was recommended.			

Source Five: Discharge of recruit form (MH 106/2101)

An army form used for discharge of a soldier 'not likely to become an efficient soldier'. (MH 106/2101)

Army Form B.204

Application for Discharge of a Recruit as not likely to become

an efficient Soldier

1. If passed by examining medical officer, but rejected by an approving officer.
2. If considered unfit for service within three months of enlistment.
3. If a non-European soldier of troops in the Colonies is considered to become an efficient soldier

This form will be accompanied by the Recruit's Attestation.

Regiment 2/2 West Riding Field Ambulance R.A.M.C. (T)

No. 530 Name Moss William Oliver

Date of Attestation 9th December 1915 [corrected to 1914]

Age 19 years 2 months

Height 5 feet 9 inches

Weight lbs

Chest Girth when fully expanded 34½ inches

Measurement Range of expansion 3½ inches

Passed at Emmanuel Institute Recruiting Area or Station Leeds

Medically examined by C.W. Eames, Major R.A.M.C. (T)

Approved by C.W. Eames, Major R.A.M.C. (T)

Cause of objection to be fully stated here:

This man has a weakly acting heart, beating 108 to the minute: he is unable to march any distance owing to dizziness: he is not likely to make an efficient soldier on this account. [In a Medical Board]

W.H. Smailes (Leit. R.A.M.C. (T)

Signature of Medical Officer

Remarks by Officer transmitting the Return

I agree with the above statement

Source Six: An officer's letter (MH 106/2154)

This short note was found amongst the records relating to the patient mentioned in the letter. It would seem to show the acute pressure on men serving at the front for officers and ordinary ranks. (MH 106/2154)

Dear Colonel

I write to you for your kind assistance in the matter of Bdr (A/Corporal) Duckworth. No 775598.

This N.C.O. is my clerk and was given a well-earned fortnight at ST. VALERY REST CAMP. Unfortunately after being there 3 or 4 days he developed eczema and has been sent to your hospital.

I should be exceedingly obliged to you if you could arrange to get him sent back to me straight from Hospital. I am exceedingly short-handed at present and have, only because he really merited it, released him for a fortnight's fresh air, but I cannot spare him longer. He would normally, have returned to me a week tomorrow. I am afraid this is perhaps a little irregular, my writing you direct but it is only my anxiety to get him back without his having to kick his heels at the base depot, and possibly losing him, that has caused me to write.

Anything you can do to get him back to me quickly, I shall be only too grateful for.
Yours very sincerely, A. J. Elston (Major R.F.A.) [Royal Field Artillery] (S/Captain 62 Division Party)

Source Seven: Shot for desertion (WO 71/1027)

These War Office documents concern the tragic case of 2nd Lieutenant E.S. Poole who was shot for desertion. Documents relating to his pardon in August 2007 have since been added to this file. (WO 71/1027)

CONFIDENTIAL

Headquarters,
69 Infantry Brigade,
25th November 1916

23rd Division

In reply to your A.252/460 dated 25th, I beg to report as follows:-

(i). 2nd Lieut. E.S. POOLE, joined 11th West Yorks. Regt.in May 1916 shortly before the Brigade moved to the Somme. He was present at the successful action of HORSESHOE TRENCH on 4th and 5th July but his company was not so actively engaged as the remainder of the battalion and remained in support at SCOTS REDOUBT during the night 5th/6th after the rest of the battalion was relieved.

His conduct on this occasion was satisfactory. On 7th July the battalion was bivouacked near BECOURT WOOD CHATEAU in the open in heavy rain for several hours immediately in front of our own guns which were firing incessantly. The noise and vibration were found to be very trying by all ranks. It is thought that this may have affected his future conduct.

On the same evening the battalion moved in the dark to FRICOURT in support of the 24th Brigade. 2nd Lieut. POOLE was then present but was reported missing the next morning. It was then thought that he had either been killed or wounded or had lost his way in the darkness. A report was subsequently received from a Field Ambulance that he had been admitted with shell shock on 7th July.

He did not re-join the battalion till September just before the Brigade moved again to the Somme.

He was not seriously engaged in action till the battalion moved up in support to MARTINPUICH on 2nd October five days prior to the capture of LE SARS. During the time the battalion was in the trenches underwent much hardship from the weather, the state of the trenches and the heavy shelling.

(ii). The state of discipline of the battalion has been excellent throughout. It has been repeatedly in successful action at the SOMME and Officers and Men have behaved with much gallantry.

(iii). Report by Lieut. Colonel BARKER, Commanding 11th West Yorks. Regt. Is attached.

Tough 2nd Lieut. POOLE must have known he was avoiding action I think his mental balance was upset and he wandered aimlessly away rather than with any deliberate intention.

(Sd). R.S. LAMBERT. Br. General, Commanding 69th Infantry Brigade.

Source Seven: Shot for desertion (WO 71/1027)

Headquarters,
69 Infantry Brigade 25th November 1916

Re. 2/Lieut. E.S.POOLE

With reference to your C.149 of today, I beg to state that I consider that the crime was deliberately committed, but that I do not consider the mental capacity of the officer is sufficient for him to have realized the seriously [sic] of his action.

(Sd). M. Barker.
Lieut. Col., Commanding
11th. West. Yorkshire. Regiment

I certify that 2nd Lieutenant E.S.POOLE, 11th. West Yorkshire Regiment was executed by shooting at on 9th December 1916 at POPERINGHE. Death was instantaneous.

Medical Officer

Source Eight: Capture of Hill 60, 1915 (WO 158/216)

Report and map on the operations of the 5th Division 17-21 April 1915 about the capture of Hill 60, south east of Ypres. (WO 158/216)

Map shows the location of various work and assaulting parties and a system of C.Ts. [communication trenches] near Hill 60. (WO 158/216)

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1. I beg to forward herewith report on the operations of the 5th Division between the dates of April 17th and April 21st, dealing with the capture of Hill 60, South East of YPRES. Reports which go fully into details, by Brig. General R. Wanless O'Gowan, Commanding 13th Infantry Brigade and Brig. General E. Northey A.D.C., Commanding 15th Infantry Brigade, who in succession commanded the troops engaged in the operations, are attached.
2. Hill 60, a small, steeply-escarped hill, enabled the enemy to see into the ground behind the 5th Division lines, and was useful to him as an observation station. I considered its capture would strengthen my position.
3. Mining operations had been begun in the early part of March by Major Norton Griffiths R.E. and the 171st Mining Company, whilst the 28th Division was holding the line which the 5th Division now holds.
   It is due to the ability with which these mining operations were carried out that the assault on the hill was so immediately successful, and that the loss during the actual assault was small.
4. For some days before the attack, the 15th Infantry Brigade – then holding the trenches – were engaged in preparing positions to enable the assaulting columns to assemble.
   The 13th Infantry Brigade who were in reserve and part of which under Br. Gen. R.Wanless O'Gowan was to carry out the assault, were employed in rehearsing the assault on plans of our own and the enemy's trenches, spitlocked out on the ground.
5. During the night 16th/17th, troops destined for the attack (2nd Bn. K.O.S.B., 1st R.W. Kent Rgt., and 2nd Home Cos. Co. R.E.), under command of Brig. General R.Wanless O'Gowan, were moved into position.
   Mines were exploded at 7p.m. on April 17th, and the assault immediately took place and was successful. (Operation Order No.50 of 5th Division attached.)
6. Severe fighting ensued all night. The enemy kept up a constant and heavy artillery fire and attacked incessantly, using hand grenades freely and with great effect.

   At 1.30 am. on 18th, the Officer Commanding 1st Bn. Royal West Kent Regt. who had carried out the assault, reported that he had firmly established a good fire trench on the hill and dug two good communication trenches.

7. At 3.30am. the 2nd Bn. K.O.S.B's. relieved the 1st Royal West Kents in the new trench. Owing to casualties amongst several senior officers at the time, it would appear that a little ground was lost during this relief.
   At [in pencil - 5.30am] the 18th two companies of the 2nd Bn. Duke of Wellington's Regt. Were pushed up from ZILLEBEKE pond to the trenches and were replaced at the latter place by two companies of the 2nd Bn. K.O.Y.L.I. from YPRES.
8. At about 7am., from reports received it appeared to me that our troops had been pushed from the crest of the hill. I informed the G.O.C. 13th Infantry Brigade that if the hill had been lost it must be recaptured and that all available reserves are placed at his disposal for this purpose. (Telegrams G.393 attached).

About this time the 9th London Regt was ordered to march from OUDERDOM to YPRES and the 1st Bn. East Surrey Regt. at KRUISSTRAAT were directed to hold themselves in readiness to move.
Both these battalions were placed at the disposal of the G.O.C. 13th Infantry Brigade.
By 7.30 am. The 2nd Bn. Duke of Wellington's Regt. Had reached the front and were engaged in relieving the 1st Bn. Royal West Kent Regt. And the 2nd Batallion. K.O.S. Borderers; the latter two battalions were afterwards withdrawn into reserve.

9. During the 18th, our troops held their positions on the Hill under a tremendous bombardment and constant attacks by hand grenades but were slowly pushed back below the crest.
   Brig. General Wanless O'Gowan considered a counter-attack should take place in the evening. In this I concurred, stating that I considered it better that the attack should take place that evening rather than later when the enemy could have had time to strengthen his position. (Telegram G.461 attached).
   I subsequently issues orders for the recapture of the crest. (Memorandum G.475 attached).
   The Bedfordshire Regt. (15th Infantry Brigade) and the 1st East Surrey Regt. (14th Infantry Brigade were ordered forward during the afternoon to take the place of the 1st Royal West Kent Regt. And 2nd K.O.S. Borderers.
   The 59th Field Company Royal Engineers were also placed at the disposal of General Officer in Command, 13th Infantry Brigade and were employed throughout the remainder of the operation.
10. At 6 pm. Instead of 5 pm. As originally arranged) on the 18th, the hill was again attacked, the assault being carried out by the 2nd Bn. Duke of Wellington's Regt. And the 2nd Bn. K.O.Y.L.I. and at 6.55 pm. I heard that the hill was once more held in strength by us.
11. At 11.30 pm. I learnt that the position of the 2/D, of W. Rgt. and the 2/K.O.Y.L.I. on the hill was now satisfactory and that they were firmly established, but that the losses had been heavy and the men were a good deal exhausted.
    I accordingly ordered that these battalions should be relieved by the 1st East Surrey Regt. ½ Bn. 1st Bedfordshire Rgt. And the 9th London Regt. And that on completion of relief Brig. General E. Northey should take over command from Brig.General R.Wanless O'Gowan (Telegram G.A.116.attached).
    This relief was successfully accomplished.
12. During the 19th the hill and vicinity were held by the 1st Bn. Bedfordshire Regt., 1st Bn. East Surrey Regt., and 9th London Regt. Under a bombardment of tremendous intensity; officers who have served throughout the war describe it as the heaviest they have experienced.

Source Nine: 'Lessons' learned from Hill 60 (WO 158/216)

Report dated 4 May 1915 from Lieutenant General, 2nd Corps commenting on the lessons learned from the operation to capture Hill 60 in April 1915. (WO 158/216)

2nd Army,

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1. Herewith reports by the General Officers Commanding 5th Division, 13th Infantry Brigade and 15th Infantry Brigade, on the fighting on HILL 60 from the 17th to the 21st April.
2. On the 19th April I addressed to you a short report (2nd Corps/G.208) on the operations of the first two days, and I brought to your notice the fine work done by the battalions of the 13th Infantry Brigade under the command of Brigadier-General Wanless O'Gowan.
3. From the attached reports it will be apparent to you that an equally severe demand was made on Brigadier-General Northey and the 15th Infantry Brigade during the subsequent 48 hours to retain possession of the Hill.
   The 13th Infantry Brigade stormed the hill on two occasions; battalions of the 14th and 15th Infantry Brigades relieved them on the hill and have held on to it ever since, in spite of all the enemy's efforts to recapture it by fair means or foul. The battalions which share this glory are the 1st Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment, Queen Victoria's Rifles, 2nd Battalion Cameron Highlanders, and the 1st Battalion Dorsetshire Regiment. The 59th Company R.E. and the 2nd Home Counties Field Company R.E. gave the utmost assistance to their comrades in the Infantry.
4. I wish to record my opinion that the gallantry and endurance displayed by all ranks throughout these operations were beyond all praise. Our Artillery, greatly outnumbered, did all that was possible, with the aid of No.1 Squadron R.F.C., to assist the Infantry, but they could make little impression on the enemy's numerous guns and howitzers scattered in concealed positions, and the concentration of hostile artillery fire on the small hill top was intense, continuous and devastating.
   Our Infantry suffered many casualties also from hand grenades.
   Soldiers who refuse to be terrified or thrown back by a bombardment of this fury can stand anything. They cannot be beaten.
5. In my opinion the chief lesson to be deduced from this fighting is the importance of training our Infantry to the use of the hand grenade, and the necessity of equipping them with the least possible delay with abundant supplies of the Mills grenade – the most simple and effective grenade yet tested.
   Another lesson, not new, but again exemplified, is the impossibility of neutralizing the enemy's guns unless we have an equal or greater number of batteries, inexhaustible supplies of ammunition, and a sufficiency of aerial observers. This last implies a better equipment than we possess at present of aeroplanes fitted with wireless, and of wireless masts, receivers and operators attached to batteries.
6. The names of officers and men who peculiarly distinguished themselves have been forwarded to the Military Secretary, for inclusion in the next Gazette.

4th May, 1915.

[signature]

Lieutenant – General,

Commanding 2nd Corps.

Source Ten: Red Cross in action (ZPER 34/146)

Drawing from the Illustrated London News entitled: *Hot Food for the Wounded: A novel form of Red Cross Work,* 2 January 1915. (ZPER 34/146)

Hot Food for the Wounded: A novel form of Red Cross Work

Drawn by S. Begg.

With the Motor Field-Kitchen: Serving out soup to wounded, on the battlefield

This Red Cross motor field-kitchen for wounded is attached to the Allies' Field Ambulance Corps, which is doing such excellent work under the direction of Miss Jessica Borthwick. Its ready provision of suitable food – in the form, for instance, of hot coffee or soup – has been of the utmost value, for, next to dressing his wounds quickly, there is nothing so wise as giving the wounded man nourishment of one sort or another at the earliest possible moment. The vehicle is of 35-h.p., and can carry 3 cwt. Of concentrated meat extract for soup – a supply sufficient for 500 wounded men for four days. Each of the side-boxes beneath the car along the side between the wheels holds 1 cwt. Of the concentrated meat cakes. Inside, on the left, is an oven, with a patent stove beneath; and beyond it are two cooking-coppers – one for soup, the other for coffee – which boil thirty gallons in twenty minutes. A folding seat to the right can be let down, and with another support against the wall, covered with a mattress and used as a sleeping-place. Although not instinctively associated with the grave side of Red Cross work, the value of the motor field-kitchen service is indisputable.

Source Twelve: Weapons & defensive mining (WO 158/216)

This secret summary of operations of the Second Army, November, 1915 was sent to the Commanding Officer. It gives a really detailed insight into the nature trench warfare, 'defensive mining', weapons, and the conditions faced by the men, TNA Catalogue ref: (WO 158/216)

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS – 2ND ARMY
For the period
1st to 7th November, 1915
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1. The situation during the past week has been unusually quiet, a state of affairs which is reflected in the casualties, the lowest record since the weekly summary was started. The heavy rain in the early part of the week and the fog and ground mist of the latter have had the effect of curtailing activity. The rain has caused much damage to our trenches, and our troops have been busily engaged in the work of repair. Owing to the amount of work observed on the part of the enemy it is conjectured that he has been equally inconvenienced by the recent inclement weather. Both the enemy and ourselves have experienced difficulty in moving about under cover owing to the collapse of the parapets and the flooded state of the trenches. As a result there has been considerable sniping.
2. On November 1st a combined shoot of the Trench Mortars and Mountain Guns was carried out in the II Corps area against the enemy's trenches in I.5.b. and although the Trench Mortar ammunition was unsatisfactory considerable damage was done to the enemy's trenches. This operation produced retaliation on NOUVELLE HOUPLINES and Farm C.23.a.O.5. On November 4th NIEPPE was shelled by a gun, believed to be a captured French 120mm. Little damage was done.
3. There has been some retaliation for our shelling in the V Corps area, noticeably on November 5th when SANCTUARY WOOD, KRUISSTRAAT, the dug-outs West of ZILLESEKE POND, and the area between the latter place and YPRES were heavily shelled.
4. On the night of October 31st/November 1st the enemy made weak bombing attack against the Craters East of ST. ELOI, which had been occupied the night before. The attack was easily repulsed by our grenadiers and has not been repeated.
5. On November 2nd two men crawled over from the German lines to our trenches in I.30.b. They turned out to be Russian prisoners who had been captured nine or ten months ago and who had been brought over to the Western front to dig trenches for the enemy. Both men were still wearing Russian uniform.
6. Machine guns have been placed in positions enfilading [gunfire is directed across the longest part of an enemy formation] the enemy's trenches and sweeping their roads with long range fire.
7. On the right of the 6th Division our trenches in RAILWAY WOOD and North of ROULERS Railway were heavily shelled by Trench Mortars and Howitzers; our artillery and trench mortars replied to this shelling. An operation to deal with the enemy's trench mortars in this sector was carried out on the 7th at 2p.m. by the 6th Divisional Artillery, supported by the 60 pounders. Of the 2nd Group, H.A.R. The result of the bombardment has not yet been reported, but the Germans made practically no reply on that Sector.
8. On the Canadian Corps front the most noticeable feature of the week has been the defensive mining which has resulted in the enemy's activity being checked. In the early morning of November 1st Germans were heard working from our gallery opposite trench in N.18.a.9.9.

At 5-40a.m. it was judged that the enemy was within three feet of our gallery and a camouflet [enclosed cavity of gas] and was blown, 100 lbs of ammonal being used. The enemy's gallery was wrecked and a crater was formed 35 feet nearer our parapet than the charge had been exploded. It is believed that a German charge must have been detonated by the explosion.

On November 3rd German miners were heard working from our mine gallery 85 feet from our trench in N.36.a.3.9. At 6-40p.m., when it was judged that the Germans were within 5 feet of our gallery, a charge of 180 lbs. of gun-cotton was fired, which made a crater 40 x 20 x 15 feet. On November 4th the Germans were heard working in a gallery which was practically on the same level as our own opposite our trench in N.30.a.4.9. The enemy's gallery had been driven between two craters in this area. When it was judged that the enemy were within 3 feet of our gallery a charge was exploded.

A German gallery has been encountered in a working opposite the trench in N.30.a.2.7. The gallery had been followed some 80 feet towards the enemy's lines, where it was found to be barricaded with sand-bags. The water, of which there was about a foot in the trench is being pumped out to enable our miners to withdraw the sand-bags, and get as far as possible into the workings.

9. In co-operation with the 3rd Group, H.A.R., a systematic destruction of the enemy's strong places is taking place, and the superior weight of our artillery is being fully exploited.
10. The Royal Canadian Regiment arrived on the 3rd instant. The training of the troops when not on duty in the trenches is progressing well. The various Grenade Schools are now in good working order, and a large proportion of the personnel of the Infantry units have already been through a Course.
11. The weather conditions during the week have been unfavourable for Nos. 2 and 3 Groups, H.A.R., and, on the whole, the German artillery has not been as active as usual. Full advantage has been taken of such opportunities as the weather has afforded, and various places behind the enemy's lines have been shelled; a number of the enemy's batteries have also been engaged.
12. On November 4th five air fights took place between aeroplanes of the 2nd Wing R.F.G., in one of which a B.E. 2c. was attacked by four Germans. It had successfully driven off three when an F.E. of No. 6 Squadron came up to its assistance. The latter succeeded in bringing down a German FOKKER aeroplane in our lines in I.26.central. The wreckage unfortunately caught fire and nothing except the remains of a machine gun was salved. The B.E. 2c. was hit in the petrol tank and observer twice wounded.
    There is reason to believe that another Fokker was destroyed on the same day, in a fight between a B.E. 2c. of No. 5 Squadron and a machine of this type. At the conclusion of the fight the Fokker was seen to side-slip and disappear out of sight.
    In another of these engagements a Vickers of No. 5 Squadron attacked three Germans one after the other driving them away, and only broke off the fight when all its ammunition was expended.
    Four pilots of No.1 Squadron brought up aeroplanes from Paris during the week under very trying weather conditions.

13. The Kite Balloons [balloons which could fly in high winds and used for military observation] were able to carry out work on the 5th instant only, though ascents were made every day. On the 5th instant a train on the COMINES-WARNETON Railway was reported to, and shelled by, No.3 Group, H.A.R. Several other targets were reported on the same day, and successfully engaged by No.3 Group with the assistance of the Kite Balloon observers.
14. Casualties for the period are as follows:-

	Officers			Other ranks		
	K.	W.	M.	K.	W.	M.
II Corps …	-	6	-	15	105	-
V Corps …	3	21	-	64	216	-
VI Corps …	3	6	-	33	150	-
Canadian Corps	-	7	-	27	158	1
	6	40	-	139	627	1

TOTAL CASUALTIES =	Officers	46
	Other ranks	767
		813

Source Thirteen: Mining under the enemy (ZPER 34/146)

Article with drawings from the Illustrated London News entitled: *They send us in front with a fuse an' a mine' sapping and mining under the enemy's trenches*, 27 February 1915. (ZPER 34/146)

'They send us in front with a fuse an' a mine' sapping and mining under the enemy's trenches.

Drawn by A. Forestier. (Special Article in this Issue)

Image captions, L-R, top to bottom.

Mining. Trench and Sap – A perspective view. – After the Explosion. Organisation of defences by joining crater with shell-holes.

Section from A to B. Section from C to D.

Lip of Crater. Plan of Gallery. Mine. Enemy Trenches. Approximate Diameter of the Crater. Lip of Crater. Section of Gallery.

Gaining about one foot of ground per hour: sapping towards the enemy's lines and blowing up a section of his trenches. To prepare for an infantry advance.

These very interesting illustrations of the methods used by the Royal Engineers in sapping and mining operations should be studied in conjunction with Colonel F.N. Maude's article on the subject on another page. With reference to the same subject he writes also as follows: "When, as in the present campaign, fire-trenches get very near to one another, the problem arises how to make good a further advance without unnecessary loss of life. This is where the 'sapper' comes in. When a spot has been chosen in the trench for the intended advance, under cover of darkness, men rapidly shovel the earth of the parapet away, and the sapper starts digging from the face of the trench a narrow cut only 1 foot 6 inches wide, and anything up to 6 feet deep, leading straight for the enemy. After a few hours (five or six) he has cut through the width of the parapet and now turns sharp to the right (or left), and continues to dig his trench for about 20 feet or so, parallel to the original trench and at right-angles to his first direction. Then he turns another right-angle towards the enemy and advances another 20 feet, when he again turns to his left (or right), and so on. As soon as there is room for a second man to work without sticking his pick into his leader in the dark – an accident that is not infrequent – a second man starts digging a similar 18-inch stretch, following the same line as the first man, and after him comes a third; so between the three we get a 4 foot 6 inch trench, which can be widened out to any required degree. The earth from the excavations is thrown always to the side from which the enemy's fire comes, so in course of time a series of mounds, called 'traverses,' are formed on the tongues of earth B, etc., and other parapets arise on the sides from which the enemy's fire can endanger the men at work. If the enemy is very much alive, the men work down to a full 6 feet in depth. If and when it slackens, the leader only goes down half the depth, working in a kneeling position – this is called a 'kneeling sap' – as soon as the enemy freshens up, the leader goes down to the full depth again. It is a very slow process, but it is very sure, and comparatively safe.' [drawing copyrighted in the United States and Canada.]

Source Fourteen: Propaganda kite (WO 95/1822)

Extract from an intelligence summary by B. Pakenham, Major, General Staff, 12th Division, 10 July 1915, describes a German attempt at intimidation in the form of a paper kite in the trenches. (WO 95/1822)

This-copy-is-to-be-destroyed-on-receipt-of-a-new-one.

12th Division No.I.R.14.

12th Division.

Intelligence Summary No.14.

Artillery.

Two hostile machine guns are suspected as being located at C.4.b.0.5. and U.28.a.3.5. These enfilade support trench 110.

A shield, possibly of a machine gun, has been seen at U.22.a.9.2.

The activity of machine guns is reported by 63rd Brigade to have increased lately, but no movement has been noticed at all.

A second dug-out has been made in the German third line trench at U.22.a.9.2. The other dug-out previously reported is at U.22.a.8.9. Both look like observation posts. B/64 shelled them with shrapnel, but the effect could not be judged.

C/64 has kept a watch on the canvas screen covering a gap in the parapet of the BIRDCAGE at U.22.a.2.4. At 6.30 p.m. 8th, a large party of Germans passed the opening, carrying picks and shovels – they were shelled, and no movement has been observed since (to 5p.m. 9th).

65th Brigade reported work going on again in U.28.d Black earth was thrown up. Digging also reported in trench U.22.c.3.8.

Right Section.

36th Brigade (up to 8.30 a.m. today)

A brown paper kite was found on night 8/9th in front of the right section of our line (Trenches 90 to 94), covered with German writing, of which the following is a rough translation: -

“You can fill your trenches with devils – we Germans fear nothing in the world, and we Germans await victory, which has already long been evident. Englishmen, how badly you shoot! You will be served as the Russians – the Russians are defeated – soon you will be.

We Germans can hold out longer, as with our German Army there are no rabble who surrender and desert like the English soldier - - - army crowd.

You Englishmen – we have wine, sausage, and meat – your ….. Englishmen are hungry and thirsty.

You will yet comprehend who will be victorious: we Germans must be victors – if you still wish to fight it will go with you as with the Russians.

You stupid soldiers! Do not let yourselves be misled and do not believe your superiors that Russia and France have up to now been victorious: they have been defeated by the Germans. The writing on this has been done by 2 German soldiers which we are.”

The wire in front of trench 94 was found to be cut last night for about 30 to 40 yards, probably by a German patrol…

Source Fifteen: 'Liquid fire' (WO 95/1864)

Extract from a Report of the 14th Divisional Artillery at Hooge describing a bombardment with 'liquid fire', the first use of a flamethrower [mechanical device to project a long, stream of fire] (WO 95/1864)

REPORT of 14th Divisional Artillery

On the operations at Hooge from 12 mn. 29/30th to 12mn. on the 30/31st July 1915.

30th July At about 3 a.m. a violent bombardment opened in the direction of Hill 60. The 47th and 48th Brigades on being asked relied that all was quiet on their front. The 46th & 3rd D.A. were then asked if they required any assistance but replied no. Shortly after (about 3.15a.m.) O.C. C/48 who was looking over the parapet of the G.H.Q. 2nd Line trench saw a sheet of flame go up apparently behind the stables He immediately opened fire at a rapid rate, and reported to 48th Brigade H.Q. that the Germans were using liquid fire. The S.O.S. signal was immediately taken up by the remainder of the Brigade and passed to the other Brigades, long before it was received from the Inf. The fire ran down G4. And G.5. trenches as fast as a man could run, the flames appearing about 10ft. high. The Germans were seen by the F.O.O. in SANCTUARY WOOD, advancing across the open in massed formation and they were mown down by the artillery fire. The enemy commenced an intense bombardment of our trenches coincident with the liquid fire but not a shot had been fired before. The smoke and dust of the shell fire obscured the view and owing to the heavy fire all communication forward was cut very shortly after and batteries continued firing on their night lines until the Infantry Brigade H.Q. notified that all the trenches on the north of the MENIN ROAD had been lost and requested that fire be turned on to the road opposite the CRATER and 100 yards each side of it; this was at 5a.m.

Nothing could be seen from the O.Ps on HILL 40 and no definite information could be obtained as to the exact line we were holding, hence it was impossible to shorten our range until 5.30 a.m. when a report was received that the enemy was pressing G.3. Two guns were immediately switched to support this.

At 5.45. a.m. news was received that the enemy was holding the north end of OLD BOND STREET which was immediately shelled.

It was then that news was first received of any definite line held by us –viz: ZOUAVE WOOD G.3.-G.2.-G.1. At the same time another report stated that G.2 was being hard pressed and another battery was turned on to this area.

Source Sixteen: Being under fire (WO 95/1822)

An intelligence summary from B. Pakenham, Major, General Staff, 12th Division, for July 1917 which provides an insight into being under fire and further extract of a report which provides detail about the nature of trench warfare. (WO 95/1822)

12th DIVISION.

Intelligence Summary No.7.

36th Brigade Area. The 29th Trench Howitzer Battery shelled the enemy's trench opposite Machine Gun House (C.4.c) between 3.30 a.m. and 4.30 a.m. this morning, placing one shell in the crater and 4 or 5 in fire trench and on parapet, also damaging their barbed wire.

The enemy, between 8.15 a.m. and 10 a.m., shelled our trenches 95 and 97 and the communication trench leading from the latter. Two blue chequer pigeons were seen flying from enemy's lines towards ARMENTIERES yesterday evening.

9th Royal Fusiliers report that their whole line was traversed by enemy machine guns whilst the former were strengthening their parapets.

The Germans are reported to have made a fresh support trench opposite MACHINE GUN HOUSE.

37th Brigade Area. The enemy shelled HUNTER'S AVENUE about 9a.m. today with shrapnel.

A German shell burst through the parapet of trench 120 about 4 feet from the ground – the fuze was marked

K.Z.14.

S.W.N.15.

246.

At 9.25 p.m. 2 rifle grenades were thrown into our trenches – one shell from B/64 put a stop to this annoyance.

A recess was noticed in the S.W. parapet of the BIRDCAGE yesterday. A machine gun was thought to be there before. It is now possible to see through the recess.

Fresh brown earth seems to have been thrown up West of Saphead U.28.a.7.8.–before this, clay had been thrown up.

At 11.30 p.m. last night an enemy's working party was seen in C.4.b.4.6.

Sounds of hostile sapping are reported about 80 yards in front of BURNT OUT FARM (U.28.a.5.4). Sounds of transport were heard between 12 midnight and 1 a.m. this morning on the road running N.E. through LOOPHOLE FARM (U.22.d.2.4).

A German national flag was seen at 6.45 p.m. in the German front line trenches just N. of the BIRDCAGE – 2 periscopes were also seen near the flag.

Snipers were active against our trenches 100 and 101 (C.4.a) before dark last night.

A German aeroplane was observed at 7.45 a.m. this morning flying over PLOEGSTEERT WOOD.

At 9.15 p.m. last night a patrol of 1 officer and 3 men of the R. W. Kents went out in front of trench 120 to harass a working party believed to be there – but they did not meet the enemy.

(Signed) B. Pakenham

Major

GS 12 Division

3/7/15

35th Brigade (continued).

18 Whiz Bangs were fired at trench 111 at 2.30 a.m.

A shell is reported by 7th Suffolk's to have burst close to TILLEUL FM yesterday evening with the following lettering on the Fuze: -

H Z

SIMSON 15

209

Lieutenant GRIGGS accompanied by 2 bomb throwers and 4 snipers patrolled from 9.45 pm, to 1.30 am, last night in front of trenches 106-108 to within 50 yards of hostile trenches which are here about 400 yards distant. He discovered a snipers nest cleverly concealed in long grass about 100 yards in front of the German Lines.

No patrols or working parties were met, and comparative quiet prevailed along the line.

Hostile (snipers) appear to be few but their shooting very good.

During the day the enemy has been actively employed working on his parapets and communication trenches; one party being successfully dealt with by our guns.

Two (2) very large periscopes appeared opposite trench 115, and disappeared when fired at.

Smoke was seen to come from German Lines opposite the Berkshires; out of 3 rifle grenades fired, one landed in the German trench and drew a reply of 12 rifle grenades of which only one fell in trench 114, and failed to explode.

One rifle grenade was fired at a working party and exploded close to it in the trench; the Germans did not reply.

<u>Transcript 2</u>

…

37th I. brigade. (Right Section)

One of the snipers of the 6th Buffs brought down a hostile sniper at 3 p.m., opposite trench 96. The enemy has been strengthening the parapet of his trench opposite trench 96, and opposite the right end of this trench the enemy had a machine gun placed in the open 20 yards in front of his trenched.

During the morning the enemy shelled SEVEN TREES FORT without doing damage.

The front of the 6th QUEENS (trenches 90-94) was comparatively quiet except for occasional sniping.

Last night HEADQUARTERS FARM was shelled.

It is reported that the enemy cre p up to the belt of trees about C.4.d.0.5. in order to fire their flares with greater effect over our trenches.

The enemy's working parties have been cutting grass and repairing their entanglements.

Both from BARKENHAM HO and CARTERS FM (C.10.d.1.8 and C.10.d.1.2) the enemy has been seen digging what seems to be support trenches on the right bank of the LYS.

Two (2) German mines were blown up at 7.15 pm this evening in front of trench 98; it is not yet known whether these were intended to be offensive or defensive.

It is reported that there is no damage done.

B. PAKENHAM, Major,

General Staff,

12th Division.

11th July, 1915.

Source Seventeen: Drawing of a trench siege (ZPER 34/146)

Article with a drawing from the war artist of Illustrated London News entitled: Trench-to-Trench siege-war: The allies making an offensive movement. 2 January 1915. (ZPER 34/146)

The Trench-to-Trench siege-war: The allies making an offensive movement.

Drawn by Frederic Villiers, War Artist of 'The Illustrated London News.' One of the correspondents invited to go to the front by the French Government.

Bayonet-attack supported by concentrated shell-fire: any advance against German trenches in the neighbourhood of arras.

Describing his drawing, Mr Frederic Villiers says: 'The German trenches are now negotiated by bayonet-attacks, with the assistance of concentrated shell-fire which hardly any entrenched troops can withstand. The sketch shows an advance in the neighbourhood of Arras. Over 300 guns were brought up to assist the advancing Allies, and a deadly shell-fire was poured into the enemy's position, with the result that our men were able to gain the trenches with little loss. In this way, day by day, the enemy is slowly and surely pushed back towards the Rhine.'

Source Eighteen: Trench Organisation (WO 95/1864)

This war diary extract gives a lot of information about trench organisation, the nature of operations, munitions and casualties. (WO 95/1864)

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS 14th (LIGHT) DIVISION

June 30th to July 6th 1915.

(a) Brief Summary.

No operation of importance has taken place during the above period.
On the morning of July 5th the enemy attempted to rush our barrier on the YPRES – ROULERS railway near our point of junction with the 6th Division. The attempt was at first successful but a counter attack was at once organised and with the assistance of the N. Staffords (17th Infantry Brigade) the enemy was driven back and the barrier retaken.

On the morning of July 6th, in accordance with orders received from the 5th Corps, the enemy's position was bombarded from 5.30am to 6.45am with satisfactory results.

Much work has been done during this period to improve our line, the main idea being to construct support and some assembly trenches close up to our fire trenches; this ground is generally speaking covered from direct observation except by aircraft, whereas the ground in the neighbourhood of CAMBRIDGE road and WITTE POORT farm is frequently swept by shell fire day and night.
We have now four main communication trenches leading from G.H.Q. 2nd line to our front line, and steps are being taken to prolong one of these further to the West.

Much work has been done burying cables and it is hoped that communications will shortly be on a more satisfactory footing.
Visual signalling from a point close to the front line has been established.

Total casualties, killed and wounded –
Officers, 13. Other ranks 293.

(b) Diary.

June 29th. During the night 29th/30th June the relief of the 43rd Infantry Brigade by 41st Infantry Brigade was carried out. This was completed at 4.45 am.

----------June 30th.

Intermittent hostile shelling during day especially about Y wood and the ARRET. Enemy redoubt about I.18.A.6.9 shelled by 4.5" and 6" Howitzers, at 6 p.m. with very good results, 8 dead being seen near parapet.

At 6.10 p.m. an enemy aeroplane was hit by our R. Marine Anti-Aircraft gun and the machine, after vol-planing [controlled dive] at a sharp angle, descended into enemy lines.

The night passed quietly, wind westerly.

Casualties –	officers 2.
29th/30th June	other ranks 51.

July 1st. A quiet day. Wind slight N.W.

All indications pointed to the fact that the enemy work in I.18.A.6.9 was not occupied during the day. It was visited by an officers' patrol during the night. The patrol proceeded to within a few yards of the redoubt and found a small enemy party at work repairing it; no wire was seen.

At 7p.m. our artillery bombarded enemy work I.12.C.8.8 with effect. 2nd Group H.A.R. co-operated.

Casualties -	officers 3
30th June/1st July	other ranks 30.

July 2nd. During night 1st/2nd July the 8th Rifle Brigade successfully bombed old German trench opposite D 10. At 2p.m. the enemy work I.12.A.3.7 was bombarded and enemy retaliated with gas shells.

Weather very hot. Wind slight S.W.

Casualties -	officers 3.
1/2nd July	other ranks 49.

July 3rd. The night 2nd/3rd July passed quietly in the trenches, but the enemy shelled YPRES with gas shells. The enemy continued this shelling at intervals during the day and our artillery retaliated.

During the day the 47th F.A. Brigade and 48th F.A. [Field Artillery] Brigade (less D/48) withdrew to rest area West of POPERINGHE. The artillery in action consisted of two groups –

Group I (Lt. Col. PACKARD, D.S.O.) 46th F.A. Brigade and C/49 How. Brigade.

Group II (Col. DOWELL) D/48 F.A. Brigade B and D 49 F.A. Brigade 6th Siege battery, 2nd Derby Battery. T.F.

Weather fine, wind north light.

Casualties -	officers 1.
2nd/3rd July	other ranks 20.

July 4th. During the night 3rd/4th July the enemy shelled G.H.Q. 2nd line, otherwise all was quiet.

At 10.30 a.m. enemy mortars shelled our trenches D7 and D8, but were silenced by our 4.5" Howitzers. Some 42 c.m. shells were put into the ASILE D'ALIENES just west of YPRES at midday.

The enemy continued shelling all day, many gas shells being fired.

Under instructions from 5th Corps the 2nd Derby Battery (5" Howitzers) reverted to 46th Division at 6 p.m. on July 4th.

Weather very hot and sultry. Wind slight S.W.

Causalities -	officers nil.
3rd/4th July	other ranks 41.

July 5th. During the night 4th/5th July the 8th Rifle Brigade holding the Northern sector of our line were heavily shelled.

No. 12 trench heavily shelled at 7.30 a.m.

At 8.30 a.m. the barrier on the YPRES – ROULERS railway was knocked down by shell fire.

At 9.20 a.m. a trench on the North side of the railway was blown in, LIEUT. BACHUS 8th R.B. and two sergeants being buried in the debris.

At about 9.30a.m. a party of about 20 Germans rushed the parapet just South of the line and having crossed the railway started bombing down the trench. By this time Lieut. BACHUS and his sergeants had been dug out and the enemy made no further headway. Lieut. SMITH N. Staffords (17th Infantry Brigade 6th Division) joined Lieut. BACHUS and a counter attack with bombs was organised. Meanwhile Captain CAVENDISH, 8th R.B., had organised another counter attack and had reached the point of the Southern communication trench where it had been clocked. Once these two bombing parties were organised the situation was soon cleared up, the Germans pushed back, and communications restored by a party of Engineers. Casualties in 8th R.B. 3 N.C.O's killed, 1 officer and 14 riflemen wounded.

The rest of the day passed quietly. Some gas shells.

Wind moderate westerly.

Casualties -	officers 2.
4th/5th July	other ranks 47.

July 6th. The night 5th/6th July passed quietly. The 8th Rifle Brigade occupied the old French trench running from North end of D10 to communication trench D12.

In accordance with orders from the 5th Corps, a bombardment of the enemy's line took place from 5.30 a.m. to 6.45 a.m. This attack was intended to screen an attack made by the 4th Division just S.E. of DOESINGHE. The result of our fire was on the whole good. The enemy's parapets were knocked about and his work in I.18.A.6.9 was damaged. Observation was difficult and the damage done to wire could not be clearly seen.

The enemy replied by concentrating a very heavy fire on our support and assembly trenches, evidently expecting an attack, but about 6.43 a.m. switched his fire back to our front line. By 7.20 a.m. his fire had died down.

Nothing of note occurred during the day.

At 10.15 p.m. a report was received from 41st Infantry Brigade that our trenches near WITTE POORT FARM had been heavily shelled from Hill 60. The 5th Division and 2nd Group H.A.R. were asked to turn some fire on this part of the enemy's line.

The 43rd Infantry Brigade were detailed as Reserve to the 5th Corps at 11.40 p.m.

The rest of the night passed quietly.

Weather fine, wind slight S.E.

Casualties -	officers 2.
5th/6th July	other ranks 55.

(sd) V. Laufen
Major General
Commanding 14th (Light) Division

Source Nineteen: Disinfection of wounds & first aid kit (ZPER 34/146)

Article describes the problem of wound infection and tetanus with photographs of soldiers' first aid kits and drawings of dressings and bandages. 27 March, 1915. (ZPER 34/146)

Science Jottings.

The disinfection of wounds

According to Sir Rickman Godlee, who lectured on the subject at the Royal Institution about a fortnight ago, the war has turned the practice of surgery upside down. Whereas all serious operations of late years have been carried out in hospitals or nursing homes with the full ritual of asepsis – clothes, veils, and gloves of surgeons and assistants sterilised by intense heat, sterilised cotton-wool swabs instead of sponges, and so on – the operator in the field finds he has to work in his soiled uniform on patients who have lain for hours, if not for days, in the most insanitary conditions possible, and whose wounds, like their skin, have become crowded with disease and pus-forming microbes. Moreover, the much laboured soil of Belgium and Northern France turns out to be far more hurtful than the unworked plains of Manchuria and the wind-swept veldt, and to be teeming with the germs of tetanus, gas-gangrene, and other horrors. Result – that the suppuration of wounds after operation, of late years unknown in hospitals, with or without tetanus and gangrene complications, are rife at the base as at the front, and the 'Died from Wounds' appears a great deal too frequently in our casualty lists.

Sir Rickman's advice in the circumstances savours of the heroic. Tetanus, he would guard against by the immediate injection of anti-tetanus serum, and gangrene by 'free and deep' incisions. There remain to be dealt with the streptococci and other pus-forming microbes which he says – no doubt rightly – are responsible for the frequent suppuration of wounds. These he would dispose of by the application of undiluted carbolic acid, this being apparently the only modification permissible by him of the "raw German creosote" which, he tells us, was employed by Lister when laying the foundations of his great work of antiseptic surgery. This will, he admits, cause some sloughing of the wound, but the slough or scab will be in itself antiseptic, and will therefore help to prevent further ills. His remedies are certainly not open to the reproach of want of 'thoroughness.'

Is there, however, any real necessity for all this butcher's work? The anti-tetanus injection may pass, because tetanus – Anglicé, lock-jaw – is a disease at once so painful and so horrible that no temporary inconvenience to the patient should stand in the way of any attempt to alleviate its horrors. Slashing the borders of the wound for gas-gangrene has, indeed, been largely employed during the earlier stages of the war by both French and English surgeons, although more as a counsel of despair than of perfection. It is not, however, the only remedy possible, and its wholesale adoption is not to be recommended without the fullest inquiry. The application of undiluted carbolic acid is extremely painful, and would in most cases cause the patient at least as much suffering as the original would itself. It can be little consolation to our wounded soldiers, when slashed and cauterised by friendly hands, to reflect that the executioners of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries who, after removing the feet and hands of their victims by means of a mallet and cleaver, plunged the bleeding stump into boiling pitch, were following a treatment like that recommended by the most distinguished surgeons of the twentieth. Our Allies have here, as in other matters, done their best to fill up our deficiencies. MM. Veillon and Mazé showed some time ago that a solution of sodium nitrate in as high a state of dilution as 1 in 1000 would wonderfully diminish that production of gas in gangrenous cases which, like most of our ills, is due to certain bacteria. In the February Comptes-Rendus of the French Société de Biologie, it is

recommended that it should be given internally as well as used for washing and dressing the wound. Carbolic acid or phenol dressings as a prevention of tetanus and other complications were highly praised in a letter received by the present writer from a Swiss surgeon before unknown to him apropos of a former article in this column; but the prescription was for a solution so diluted as to cause no pain to the patient. The French army surgeons have also, as has been said here more than once, advised the application of iodine to all wounds at the earliest period possible; and out contemporary, La Nature, a few weeks back contained illustrations of the tiny bottles of the tincture supplied to a certain number of French soldiers by the generosity of a compatriot, wherewith they were advised to paint their wounds. There are, no doubt, other bactericides that might be used with good effect; and, on the whole, it may be said that science would be better employed in the present crisis in discovering new and more effective methods of treatment than in counselling a return to mediæval ways. – F.L.

Caption one: Useful for Soldiers: Medicine and refreshment in compressed and portable form. No.1 (In the centre) is a little bottle of anti-toxic serum for inoculating against tetanus (or lock-jaw). No. 2 indicates tabloids of tea – one or more for each cup. No.3 is labelled ‘Hypodermic Morphine Sulphate.’ These tabloid articles are supplied by Messrs. Burroughs and Wellcome.

Caption Two: Quicker and Easier than bandages: The ‘Tabloid’ adjustable head-dressing. This dressing for head-wounds (made by Messrs. Burroughs and Wellcome) in the form of a cap can be applied in a few seconds, and remains comfortably in position. It can be washed, sterilised, and used repeatedly. The diagrams show the method of adjusting and the dressing in position.

Caption Three: The Soldier’s first-aid vade-mecum: a case of ‘tabloid’ remedies and appliances. The ‘tabloid’ medical equipments in handy portable cases, made by Messrs. Burroughs and Wellcome, have been used by officer in many campaigns, and also by war-correspondents, airmen, and explorers. The uses of most of the articles in the case are familiar. Nos. 7 and 10 contain No.s 7a and 10a respectively. Kola Compound (4) made of kola nut and coca leaves, allays hunger and thirst, and sustains strength. Potassium permanganate (5) is an antiseptic disinfectant. Jaconet is a thin cotton fabric. ‘Vaporole’ Iodine Tincture (7a) is painted on wounds, to kill germs. The point of the container is broken and used as a brush.

Source Twenty: 'General Mud' (ZPER 34/148)

Article with photographs from the Illustrated London News entitled: *Natural hardships: The campaign against "General Mud" on the British Western Front*, 16 December 1916. (ZPER 34/148)

Natural hardships: The campaign against "General Mud" on the British Western Front

(Official photographs)

Photograph captions (Top row from Left to Right)

Clad in waterproof sheets and trench-waders: A working party about to start off in the rain.

Bringing up supplies under difficulties: transport-wagon(s) reach a point where the road is completely underwater.

A branch of the service that goes on in all weathers: A field-kitchen in the mud

Photograph captions (Bottom row from Left to Right)

Rescued from mud into which he sank to the arm-pits: A mire-soaked soldier

"Eight miles or so of quagmire [boggy ground]…All slimy and glutinous in a series of swamps": A general view on the Ancre.

Muddy but cheerful: A British soldier who had rescued a comrade.

On the British front "General Mud for some time has proved a formidable foe than the Germans. It was he, in fact, who saved the latter from the full effects of our offensive coming to their aid at a critical moment. The difficulties and the dangers which our troops have been exposed by bad weather were described recently by Mr. Phillip Gibbs; "The men in the trenches", he writes "are having a hard time. Up in the front lines there is no comfort, no shelter, no rest for them, and they need all their courage and strength to endure their wetness, their coldness, and the foul conditions into which they have been plunged by a month of rain…The rains… created a condition of things in and behind the lines quite fantastically disagreeable, and men who were living and fighting on our front where it drops below the high ridge of the Flers line are reminded of this time at Ypres in the first November of dismal memories. The Canadians…have been telling me the tale of their experiences with that kind of laugh which men give when they come safely out of hideous adventures. It was a sheer fight for life against natural hardships, and the other fighting, against human creatures… seems to them now of less importance than their struggle with the inhumanity of the weather…Away behind them…stretched eight miles or so of quagmire, through which on dry days our armies had fought since the beginning of the Somme battles. It was that great battlefield churned up by shell-fire and mine-explosions during the four months and more of ceaseless bombardment, and now all slimy and glutinous in a series of swamps. What had been an hour's walk on summer days became a weary and difficult trudge in winter, and then men floundered between the shell-holes and the mud-hills like lost souls in infernal darkness. Men carrying munition-boxes slipped and fell in the mud. Men carrying food supplies failed to reach the front lines because they had fallen up to their necks in the ice-cold water of deep pits, and were crying out for rescue. The question of getting up supplies to the fighting men became a vital problem."

Source Twenty One: Rebuilding Trenches (WO 95/1864)

Extract from a Progress report from the commander of 41st Infantry Brigade describing how the trenches which they have recently taken over were being reconstructed and improved, 15 October 1916. (WO95/1864)

…

1. S.21 [Map reference] has been made into a food fire trench, and the Southern half of the front has been wired. A certain amount of barbed wire has been entangled from tree to tree.
2. The wiring of R.2 has been carried out, but the Southern side is not yet completed. It is the intention to run the communication trench outside the supporting point. This has not yet been taken in hand, but the fact was noted and pointed out to the Commanding Officer who took over on relief.
3. The trench leading from R.3 to the railway has twice been made good, and a certain amount of wire put out, but this trench is invariably shelled by the enemy, and it is very difficult to make satisfactory headway.
4. The joining up of trench H.21 with H.22 proceeded slowly. Only 3 bays have been reclaimed. Work done in this trench has several times been destroyed by the enemy's guns.
5. A second barrier on the Sunken Road has been completed.
6. Parties have been detailed both b day and night to work on supporting point R.4. This work is being converted into an independent all-round work. A start has been made in diverting Muddy Lane so as to pass South of the supporting point clear of the wire.
7. Parties were detailed nightly for the construction of new battalion headquarters just West of WITTEPORT FARM. The excavations were almost ready to receive the framework.
8. DUGOUTS. A few sappers were attached to the Headquarters of each battalion, which ensure that the dugouts were erected in accordance with the approved design. Large quantities of dugout frames were carried up into the trenches, and erected under R.E. [Royal Engineer] supervision, but the main difficulty and cause of delay has been in obtaining and carrying up enough logs for roofing.
9. Trench boards have been put down in the communication trench leading from Cambridge Road to R.2. Formerly this trench was almost impassable in wet weather. A start has also been made to floor-board the trench leading to R.3. The laying down of trench boards has been carried out simultaneously with the drainage at numerous points in the front line trenches.
10. Machine Gun emplacements have been constructed in H.17, H.19, H.20, R.4 and F.9, and further emplacements have been commenced in R.2 and X.1.

15/10/16.

[Signature] Brig-General, Commanding 41st Infantry Brigade

Source Twenty Two: Photos of daily life at the front (ZPER 34/148)

Article with photographs from the Illustrated London News entitled: *The domestic side of war: catering, mending, and hair-dressing for British troops at the front*, 12 August 1916. (ZPER 34/148)

(Official photographs, the Press bureau)

Photograph captions (Top row from Left to Right)

The important item of water-supply: A pipe laid at the terminus [end] of a light railway, and soldiers having their bottles filled.

Another very important matter-keeping soldiers well shod: Highlanders at work on the repair [of] boots.

Part of a vast catering organisation for the best-fed army in the world: serving rations up in sections.

Photograph captions (Bottom row from Left to Right)

“Haircut, please!” A Scottish trench-barber’s hair-dressing establishment somewhere in the British lines.

Plying the needle and the iron: tailors of the active type making [and] mending clothes.

A personage of great importance: an army cook engaged at a field–kitchen in preparing dinner for the troops.

The war is not all fighting, as may be seen from these photographs taken behind the lines during the British advance on the Wester Front. Between the base and the firing-line there are countless forms of activity, of which a few are here illustrated. A very interesting impression of all the supplementary work that is needed to keep up our armies at the front was given the other day by Lord Northcliffe, in his article on “The Army behind the Army”. “Presently”, he writes “we come to the roads where one sees one of the triumphs of the war, the transport which brings the ammunition for the guns and the food for the men, a transport which has to meet all kinds of unexpected difficulties. The last is water, for our troops are approaching a part of France which is as chalky and dry as our South Downs…Difficult as economy and war are to mate, I have on the occasion of this visit, and in contrast to the days of 1914, seen nothing wasted…Today there is enough food and a greater variety of foods than before, but there is no waste that is visible even to an inquisitive critic. Coming to the front, not only in the high commands and among regimental officers and along the L. of C. (lines of communication) is a pleasing proportion of Scotch folk, who, while generous in the giving of ambulances, are not accustomed to waste anything in war or at any other time. Today, almost before the reek and fume of battle are over… the Salvage Corps appears on the bloody and shell-churned scene… Elsewhere I saw men using the most modern Northampton machinery for soling and heeling any pair of old boots that would stand the operation, and such foot-gear as was useless was not wasted, for by an ingenious contrivance, invented on the spot by a young Dublin bootmaker, the upper parts are being converted into bootlaces by the thousand”.

Source Twenty Three: Edith Cavell (FO 383/15)

Statement issued from Foreign Office commenting on the execution of Edith Cavell.: (FO 383/15)

FOREIGN OFFICE

October 1915

The Foreign Office are informed by the United States Ambassador that Miss Edith Cavell, lately the head of a large training school for nurses at Brussels, who was arrested on the 5th August last by the German authorities at that place, was executed on the 13th instant after sentence of death had been passed on her.

It is understood that the charge against Miss Cavell was that she had harboured British French and Belgian soldiers and had assisted them escape from Belgium in order to join the colours.

So far as the Foreign office are aware, no charge of espionage was brought against her. The Foreign Office desire to state that in this country no woman convicted of the assisting the King's enemies, even when found guilty of espionage has hitherto been subjected to a greater penalty than a term of penal servitude.

Source Twenty Four: Report on mustard gas (WO 142/330)

Extract and photograph entitled: *Discoloration of the skin over the neck, chest and arms with blistering,* both from a Report of the Chemical Warfare Medical Committee on medical aspects of mustard gas production, TNA Document ref: (WO 142/330)

…

II. – Physical and Chemical Properties of Mustard Gas

Mustard gas is a colourless fluid which becomes pale yellow on exposure to light, and it has a pungent odour variously described as resembling oil of mustard or garlic. The vapour has a penetrating nature and will pass through ordinary clothing, rubber and even leather, and it is almost impossible to remove this body from them except by prolonged boiling, which, of course, in the case of leather articles it is impossible to carry out.

III. – physiological and pathological effects of mustard gas.

Both these bodies produce practically the same effect upon the human system, and their effects for all practical purposes may be considered the same.

The vapours of dichlor-diethyl sulphide and mustard gas produce no immediate physiological or pathological changes, but after a few hours the skin becomes severely inflamed, and inflammation of the eyes and the mucous membrane of the air passages ensues. The parts of the skin which are most commonly and certainly most severely affected are the exposed surfaces and those where there is increased perspiration: the skin over the genitals, between the buttocks, and the thighs are invariably involved.

Inflammation of the skin may be of varying degrees from simple erythema or discoloration, as if the skin had been painted with a solution of silver nitrate, to severe destruction of all the skin tissues, resembling in the latter case the lesions produced by scalds. The photographs (vide plates following page 8) show the distribution of the skin lesions in a series of typical cases.

The contact of these bodies in a liquid state with the skin is similar in effect to that of the vapour, but more intense in action.

In a typical case of poisoning by these bodies conjunctivitis is most intense, and oedema of the eyelids is pronounced. Iritis and corneal ulcers with subsequent opacities have been recorded.

The inhalation of vapours of dichlor-diethyl sulphide and mustard gas produce inflammatory changes upon the mucous membrane of the respiratory passages from the nose downwards, and copious expectoration is one of the principal features. In severe cases there may be acute inflammation of the windpipe and bronchi with actual necrosis of the mucous membrane, while in other cases bronchitis and broncho-pneumonia may supervene. In the latter class of case secondary infection is often set up.

As a result of respiratory trouble following poisoning by mustard gas, fibrosis of the lung may be set up and an X-ray examination of the chest should be made in every chronic case so as to estimate the amount of fibrosis produced.

Aphonia may be a prominent symptom with or without laryngitis. In the latter case it may be functional in nature.

The effect of inhalation of these bodies on the pulse rate is to increase it in a large number of cases, and sometimes the frequency of the pulse rate exceeds 170 per minute. The blood pressure in the majority of cases of poisoning by mustard gas is sub-normal. A very frequent symptom of mustard gas poisoning in an accentuated second sound in the mitral area, a symptom which may be of great diagnostic value.

Microscopic examination of the blood reveals an unusual number of platelets, but otherwise practically no abnormalities.

Associated with the inhalation of these toxic vapours we may find acute pain in the gullet and in the stomach with nausea and vomiting. The vomiting may persist for weeks after the other symptoms have disappeared. Gastric and intestinal symptoms follow when food or drinks which are contaminated with this lethal body liquid or gas are taken. In addition to pains in the gullet, stomach and small intestines, nausea and vomiting, there may be diarrhoea with or without blood in the stools.

Albuminuria of two or three days' duration has been found in the majority of cases which arise among workpeople employed in the manufacture of mustard gas, but casts are not frequently found. In severe cases the albuminuria may persist for some weeks.

Headaches are a common symptom associated with mustard gas poisoning. They may be general in character or specially localized to the frontal region where there may be tenderness over the frontal sinus. Intercostal neuralgia of a persistent nature is frequently recorded.

Clinically, the majority of cases of poisoning by mustard gas may be classified into three types:-

1) Those in which the main symptoms are those of inflammation of the skin, conjunctivitis and perhaps pharyngitis.
2) In this class, in addition to the above named symptoms there are laryngitis, aphonia and bronchitis of a simple type. For a few days the temperature may be raised to 101'F or 102 'F., and the pulse rate is increased.
3) These cases are of the septic type of broncho-pneumonia or bronchitis and are much more serious in character than the two preceding types.

Source Twenty Five: Box respirator gas mask (WO 142/183)

Instruction leaflet to explain to soldiers how to use a box respirator for protection during a gas alarm. (WO 142/183)

Directions of use of small box respirator.

At ordinary times, the haversack containing the Box Respirator is to be carried slung over the right shoulder, WITH THE FLAP FASTENERS NEXT THE BODY.

(A) To Change to the Gas Alert Position:

(1) Pass the left arm backwards through the sling so that the haversack hangs in front of the body.

(2) Raise the haversack on to the chest by pulling the sling with the left hand until the brass stud on the sling is low enough to button on to the leather tab on the left side of the haversack.

(3) Take the coil of whip cord out of the haversack, pass it through the ring pointing to the right of the haversack, round the body, and tie it firmly to the ring pointing to the left of the haversack.

(4) Unbutton the snap fasteners, but keep the flap closed towards the body to protect the respirator from wet.

(5) **Unfasten the buckle of the tape which keeps the box in the haversack, and lift out the box; remove the indiarubber stopper from the bottom and then put the box back in the haversack.**

(B) On the Sounding of the Gas Alarm:

1) Open the haversack by pulling the cover forward, and grip the mask with the right hand.

2) Take the mask out of the satchel and seize it with both hands, the fingers gripping the edge of the mask and both thumbs pointing inwards and upwards UNDER the elastic. Throw the chin well forward ready to enter the mask.

3) Push the chin well into the mask and at the same time draw the elastics over the head AS FAR AS THEY WILL GO, i.e. till the central tape is tight.

4) Holding the metal mouth tube in the right hand outside the mask, push the rubber mouth piece well into the mouth and draw it forward so that the rubber flange is between the teeth and the lips, and grip the two small rubber projections with the teeth. Then start breathing in and out through the tube.

5) Open the nose clip by pinching from the outside the circular wire spring below the goggles; push the clip buttons on to the lower part of the nose and release the spring, making sure that the nostrils are closed.

6) Complete the fitting of the mask by pulling it well on over the jaw and by smoothing the edge all round the face.

7) Do not attempt to speak while wearing the respirator except in case of necessity.

8) If it is necessary to speak, breathe in deeply, grasp the metal tube outside the mask and carefully remove the mouthpiece from between the lips – care being taken not to move the nose-clip.

9) After speaking, immediately replace the mouthpiece and make certain that the nose-clip is properly adjusted.

10) If the eye-pieces become dull they can be cleaned by inserting the forefinger into the pockets alongside the goggles and wiping the inside of the windows. The eyepiece is held with the other hand while this is being done.

11) If the nose-clip slips off the nose, replace at once.
12) After use, carefully dry the mouthpiece and eye rims from the inside and also inside surface of the mask, so as to remove the condensed moisture resulting from the breath.

Replace the stopper in the bottom of the box when the gas-alert is no longer on.

Source Twenty Five: Box respirator gas mask (WO 142/183)

Extract from notes from the War Office [Chemical Warfare Department] about the box respirator gas mask which explain how it worked, TNA Catalogue ref: (WO142/183)

The small box respirator.

General description.

The small box respirator consists essentially of a box connected by means of a breathing tube to a mask constructed to fit closely over the face. When the respirator is in use, all air inhaled by the wearer passes through the box along the breathing tube into the wearer's mouth. The box contains granules which absorb the poisonous gases, so the air passing along the breathing tube is pure.

Exhaled air, on the other hand, does not pass through the box. It is diverted through a side tube and expelled from the respirator by the working of two valves, one, in the bottom of the box opening on inspiration and closing on expiration, and the other, situated on the breathing tube just outside the face-piece, opening on expiration and closing on inspiration.

The mask, besides containing the mouth piece, is provided with goggles and a nose-clip, and fits tightly across the forehead, down the sides of the cheeks, and under the chin. It is held in position by elastics which are slipped over the head and arrested in the proper position by a head tape.

The fabric of the mask is impervious for reasonable lengths of time to all gases, and therefore provides protection for the eyes against lachrymation [watering]. The goggles, if steamy, can be wiped by inserting the forefingers in the temple pockets provided in the mask. The nose must be closed by the clip in order to prevent any breathing into the face piece and to ensure that inspiration and expiration take place only through the mouth-tube. The apparatus is carried in a special haversack which is divided into two compartments, one containing the box and the other the mask.

DETAILED REFERENCE TO THE VARIOUS PARTS OF THE SMALL BOX RESPIRATOR.

THE BOX. – This is an oval, corrugated metal tin. In the bottom is inserted a push-in lid carrying the inlet valve: this can be prised out for inspection. The valve consists of a circular rubber disc fitted on a stud in the centre of a perforated metal plate and covering the perforations. On inspiration, the rubber disc lifts, allowing air to enter; on expiration, the disc is pressed down, closes the perforations and prevents expired air from passing through the box. In the bottom of the box is soldered an arch-shaped brass gauze, concave to the base of the box. The chief function of this gauze is to equalise the resistance offered to the passing of air through the middle and outer portions of the contents, and thus to ensure that the air passes uniformly through the whole of the purifying chemicals. The filling of the box is as follows:-

From bottom to top:

(1) A layer of special charcoal in small granules
(2) A layer of strongly alkaline and oxidising granules
(3) A second layer of special charcoal in small granules. The layers of granules are separated by iron wire gauze: on the top of the last layer of charcoal are placed
(1) A piece of cheese-cloth soaked in paraffin wax
(2) Two pieces of towelling moistened with glycerine
(3) An iron wire gauze, strongly ribbed to prevent the ends bending upward.

The moistened towelling prevents any dust from being drawn up the breathing tube into the wearer’s mouth: the waxed cheese-cloth prevents the glycerine draining into the charcoal.
The entire contents of the box are held in position by two strong springs pressing down on the iron gauze (3).
The lid is soldered on and provided with a metal outlet tube to which the breathing tube is fitted.
The box, so constructed, protects against all poison gases, including lachrymators [chemical that causes tears to flow]

…

Source Twenty Seven: Treatment for gas cases (WO 142/183)

An extract from a secret report from War Office [Chemical Warfare Department] about the treatment of severe gas cases. (WO 142/183)

SECRET

The Effect of Oxygen Treatment in Chronic Cases of Gas Poisoning

J. Barcroft, F.R.S. Capt. G.H .Hunt, R.A.M.C. (D.F.) Miss Dufton,

(Communicated by J. Barcroft, F.R.S.)

At the conference September 1917, I communicated the results of internment in oxygen of a gassed patient (Dutton). He had suffered from nocturnal dyspnoea, polyerythrocythaemia, and his pulse rate was several minutes later than normal in returning to its original rate. These symptoms were abolished or very much reduced by residence for five days in 35-45% oxygen. It remained to be seen whether the cure was permanent.

Sixteen patients have now been treated in this way, the results may best be summaried by a statement of the military classes to which these belonged when the treatment began and that into which by a combination of the treatment and exercise it would be possible to place them. The military classes may be stated as follows:-

Class A. fit for general service.

Class B. Fit for garrison duty.

Class C. fit for sedentary employment.

The following table gives the cases in this way.

Case	Number of Internments in treatment	Class before treatment		Class to which cases can be raised.	
Stevens	1	B		A	
Dutton	2	C3		B	
Jones	2	C3		C1	
Ashe	1	B		A	
Alexander	1	C3		B	
Cail	2	C3		A	
Dixon	2	C3		A	
Hamblen	1	C3		A	
Arnold	1	C3		B	
O'Brien	1	C3		B	
Harris	2	C3		B	
Freestone	1	C3		B	
Frost	2	C3		A	
Prior	2	C3		B	
Churchill	1	C3		A	
Larking	1	Bed		C	
Summary Class		A	B	C	Bed
Class 16	(Before treatment	0	1	14	1
	(After treatment	7	7	2	0

…

Source Twenty Eight: Women's army in France (WO95/85)

Extract from War Diary from Dieppe base for W.A.A.C, [Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) which later became known as the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps], October 1917. These sources reveal the work women did behind the front line in France in order to release more men to fight. (WO 95/85)

War Diary W.A.A.C- Dieppe

October-1917

Strength- 118

Administrators-	5
Clerks	13
Drivers	10
Signals	10
Storekeepers	3
Bakers	37
Cooks	25
Housemaids, etc.	15

Source Twenty Eight: Women's army in France (WO95/85)

Extract from War Diary from Calais base for W.A.A.C, [Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) which later became known as the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps], February 1918. (WO 95/85)

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY W.A.A.CORPS 32				
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and information	Remarks & references to appendices
	1918			
Calais	2.2		ARRIVALS 16551 Worker Flinn arrived from St. Omer, Worker Wildish arrived from St. Omer Arrival of draft of 5 (Household) from U.K. of these three were despatched to Queen Elizabeth Camp Vendroux. DEPARTURE Four telephonists to Rouen	
	3.2		DEPARTURE Miss Hyne A.A. to Queen Alexandra Camp, Miss Meakin A.A. from Queen Alexandra Camp to Beaumarais	
	7.2		ARRIVAL From UK Miss Gladys Piggot A.A. and five workers from UK	
	9.2		ARRIVAL C.C.[Command Controller] W.A.A.C inspected Queen Mary Camp and princess Elizabeth Camp Beaumarais. 1814 Worker Currall and 8557 Worker McBryde from St.Omer DEPARTURES Miss I. Casson A.A. to Vendroux at the opening of Queen Elizabeth Camp with 9 Household staff and 29 forwomen and Workers transferred from A.S.C. (B.S.D.) Calais.	
	10.2		DEPARTURES 1364 Forewoman Hills F.W. to UK in order to undergo Administrative Course of Instruction	
	13.2		Arrival of Mrs Eldred D.A. from Grezancourt for duty at Munitions Camp. Beaumarais. Departure of Miss Ramsay A.A. on leave to U.K.	
	14.2		Arrival of a draft of thirteen (storekeepers and clerks) for Ordnance, Audruicq and Base Depot	

Source Twenty Nine: Role of the VADs (WO 162/36)

Notes from a meeting chaired by the Secretary of State about the role of Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs). (WO 162/36)

Conference file: [initials]

At a Conference in the S. of S. Room on Monday July 30th 1917, the question of the employment of the General Service section of the V.A.D. in France was discussed.

Present: -

The Secretary of State,
The Hon. A.Stanley M.P.
Lord Donoughmore,
Lord Chilston,
Mrs. Furse,
A.G.,
D.G.AM.S.
D.O.
D.D.O
A.G.XI.
Mrs Chalmers Watson,
Miss Dunham.

The Hon. A. Stanley advocated that the V.A.D. should supply these women on certain modified terms of service but with the same rate of pay allowed for the W.A.A.C. performing similar services in other directions. They should also be subject to [t]heir own general rules which would approximate but might not [b]e identical with those of the W.A.A.C.
The A.G. was opposed to similar rates of pay being [g]iven for similar services in the same localities unless the [c]onditions of service, etc. were identical, and held that only one [c]ode of discipline should obtain.
The S. of S. [Secretary of State] eventually decided to give a written [d]ecision on the lines that :-

1. All women working in Hospitals should be found by the V.A.D. on V.A.D. conditions of service and rates of pay.
2. Inside the hospital they would be subject to the discipline of the Matron of the hospital.
3. Outside the hospital and off duty there should be one disciplinary code for all women working in France.
4. V.A.D. Motor Ambulance Drivers should wear V.A.D. uniform, but accept W.A.A.C. conditions and rates of pay. Whilst on duty they would be subject to the V.A.D. disciplinary code but off duty they would come under para. 3.
5. That there should be one period of leave to England for all women serving in France, both V.A.D. and W.A.A.C.
6. The S. of S. further stated that he could not allow [t]he same rates of pay for women undertaking to enrol for 1 year [o]r the duration of the war, whichever is greater as for women [w]ho undertook to enrol for a lesser period.

Source Thirty: A woman's war experience (MH106/2208)

Medical case sheet for a member of the Women's army who was suffering from anxiety, described as 'Hysteria'. (MH 106/2208)

Medical Case Sheet			Army Form I 1237	
No, in Admission and Discharge Book 558	Regimental No. 319	Rank Wkr.	Surname King	Christian Name Lily
Year	Unit		Age	Service
1918	Q.M.A.A.C./Graville Unit 6 [Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) later called Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps]		28	18 month
Station & Date No. 1 (Presby. USA) General Hospital [Etretat] 23/9/18	Disease: Debility and Anaemia. Hysteria Civil History: Always in good health. Five or six years ago breakdown from overwork. Past History: Always well until two months ago at Rouen. Air raids make her nervous. Headaches like a boring in her head. Very nervous. Hearing has been bad for months. Present Illness: Went to bed six days ago with very sickly weak feeling and headache, with pain in the back of her neck. No other pains. No globus [feeling or sensation of a lump in the throat] but has boring sensation in head. Physical examination: Marked nervousness. Coarse tremor. No thyroid enlargement. Heart: not enlarged but rapid, irritable, Sysy. [systolic] Murmur along [left] border. Lungs: negative. Spleen? No anaemia. Diagnosis: Hysteria with marked effort syndrome [Anxiety reaction characterized by quick fatigue, shortness of breath, rapid heartbeat, dizziness, and other cardiac symptoms, but not caused by disease of the heart] Recommendation England. Will not be fit for duty for three months at least. … This worker may be transferred to U.K. for a change of air & surroundings. 17.10.18 …			

Source Thirty One: First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (HS 7/7)

This is an extract from a document which is part a collection of histories and war diaries (1944-1954) within the Special Operations Executive. The whole document outlined the history of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY) corps 1907-1947. (HS 7/7)

SOME BRIEF NOTES OF F.A.N.Y. CORPS HISTORY 1907-1947

1907	The Corps entitled The Voluntary Aid Nursing Yeomanry was founded in this year.
1909	The earliest constitution of which a copy is extant is dated July 1909 the Commanding Officer at this time was Captain E. C. Baker. On October 23rd 1909 members gave an exhibition of ambulance work and riding at a Military Tournament and Torchlight Tattoo held at Preston Park, Brighton. The Corps was then a Horsed unit. Training was continued from this date up to the present time, except during the years 1915-1920 when the Corps was on active service.
1910	Colonel Ricardo became Commanding Officer. Shortly afterwards the Corps came under the personal control, of its own officers, and the uniform was changed from a scarlet tunic , dark blue riding skirt and forage cap, to Service khaki.
1914	On the declaration of war the Corps, now mechanized, volunteered for Service overseas. September. The first unit went to Belgium, and retired in October on Calais, where the Hospital Lamarck (200 beds) with attendant ambulances was staffed for the Belgium Army.
1915	Staff provided for the Camp de Ruchard, Convalescent Camp, Belgium
1916	January. Ambulance convoy at Calais for the British October. Ambulance convoy at Calais for the Belgians.
1917	January. Auxiliary Hospital 76, Port a Binson for the French.
1917-18	The following convoys of various sizes were provide for the French: Chateau Thiery, Pontoise, Epernay, Chalons, Bar-le-Duc, Vitry-le-Francois, Sezanne, St.Dizier. A mobile Convoy which eventually proceeded with the French to Strasburg.
1918	St. Omer Convoy for the British. Cap. Martin Convoy for the British. The Belgium Convey at Calais advanced with the Belgian Army, finishing as the Corps de Transport at Brussels. After the Armistice, the Belgian Units helped with the Service de Reparations in Bruges, Cabour and Brussels, and drivers with the British Unit were transferred to work with Graves Commission. In addition to the 1914-1915 General Service and Victory Medals, the Corps gained 135 decorations: these included (British) 18 Military Medals, 10 Mentions in Despatches; (French) 1 Legion of Honneur, 1 Croix de Guerre with Palm, 32 Croix de Guerre; (Belgian) 1 Order de Leopold 1st Class, 6 Ordre de Leopold 2nd Class, several Medailles de l'ordre Elisabeth, and several Croix Civiques.
1919	The Corps continued its peace activities after the cessation of hostilities. It resumed driving for various Hospitals. Camps and training courses were held annually throughout the Inter war period and the Corps offered its services to the Government for transport work in any emergency.

1926	A new constitution and Active and Reserve Lists of Members were made. General Strike. At the request of the War Office the Corps drove staff cars for the Army, transported food supplies for Aldershot, Kensington and Woolwich; and also drove for Scotland yard. Large numbers attended camp.
1927	Advisory council was formed. Official recognition of the Corps by the War Office. (Army Orders April 14th 19127; p.939 of the Army List.)
1927 onward	A great recruiting drive, and expansion down the years continuing to the present war period. Increasing numbers at every Camp. Increasing facilities granted by the Army for the purposes of training.
1928	Sections corresponding geographically by Army Commands with a number of sub-sections were started.
1929	In addition to other Hospitals the Corps drove for Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton for ex-servicemen, Roehampton. Owing to the increase of calls a Special Reserve was formed for this type of work.

Source Thirty Two: Hospital Christmas Party (ZPER 34/148)

Drawing and short article from the Illustrated London News entitled: *Wounded soldiers as Christmas entertainers: singing at the children's party at St. George's Hospital*. (ZPER 34/148)

Wounded soldiers as Christmas entertainers: singing at the children's party at St. George's Hospital.

Christmas festivities at St. George's Hospital: Children out-patients joining in the chorus of 'Sister Susie's sewing shirts for soldiers,' sung by wounded soldier.

Christmas festivities this year were kept chiefly for the soldiers and the children, and at the great London hospitals, where there are many wounded men and little patients are always numerous, there were merry scenes. At St. George's Hospital, where there are 330 patients, a concert was given to the sick and wounded soldiers, and Christmas-trees were provided in the out-patients' department and in the children's wards. At the party for the children out-patients the usual order of things – that is, the entertaining of wounded soldiers – was reversed, and the men themselves for the most part entertained the youthful guests, who are here seen joining heartily in the chorus of 'Sister Susie.' Besides the concert, they had tea, with crackers, oranges, and so on, and present off the Christmas-tree. The expenses of the festivities at St. George's were borne by a special Christmas fund, to which many Governors of the hospital and other friends subscribed, including the staff and the students.

Source Thirty Five: Nurse killed in service (WO 399/3760)

Letter on behalf of the Army Council sent to the sister of staff nurse Charlotte Edith Henry, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve Staff (WO 399/3760)

Charlotte Heinrick, (Henry) was a senior nurse believed to have been one of the 144 who lost their lives on 26th February, 1918 when the Hospital Ship, *Glenart Castle* was torpedoed by a German U-boat. Charlotte, with her four sisters, changed her name by deed poll to Henry to avoid anti-German sentiment.

C.2. Casualties. 45/E.F./1710. 7 July, 1918

Madam,

I am commanded by the Army Council to inform you that it is regretted tht no further report has been received concerning Staff Nurse C.E. Henry, believed drowned on 26th February, 1918, on the occasion of the loss of the Hospital Ship "Glenart Castle".

In the view of the circumstances connected with the loss of this vessel, and the lapse of time, no hope can now be held out for there being any more survivors. The Army Council are therefore regretfully constrained to conclude that Staff Nurse C.E. Henry was drowned at sea on the 26th February, 1918, and that this will now be officially recorded.

I am to express to you the sympathy of the Army Council in your bereavement.

I am, Madam,

Your obedient Servant

(Sd.) B.B. Cubitt

Miss L.G. Henry

175, Clapham Road,

London, S.W.9

Source Thirty Six: Nurse mentioned in dispatches (WO 399/15442)

Letter to certify that Miss Mabel Leigh Whiffin, R.R.C. [Royal Red Cross] served in the Territorial Force Nursing Service, 29 March 1920. (WO 399/15442)

Miss Mabel Leigh Whiffin served in the Territorial Force Nursing Service at home and in France from 14 May 1915 until 23 February 1920. She was a highly effective matron who later had breakdown after her service in the war.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

MISS MABEL WHIFFIN R.R.C.

has served in the Territorial Force Nursing Service at home and in France-:

From:- May 24th 1915

To:- February 23rd 1920

When she was demobilised.

Miss Whiffin has the highest professional ability and is an excellent organiser. She possesses great tact, common sense and sound judgment, and maintains excellent discipline. She has a very pleasant personality and a cheerful temperament and inspires her Nursing Staff with zeal and loyalty. Her Hospitals have been run most smoothly and efficiently and her general influence has been excellent.

Miss Whiffin was mentioned in Despatches by Sir Douglas Haig in November 1918 and was awarded the Royal Red Cross 1st Class in February 1917 for good work and valuable service.

(Signed) Sidney Browes

Matron-in-Chief

TERRITORIAL FORCE NURSING SERVICE

29th March 1920

Source Thirty Six: Nurse mentioned in dispatches (WO 399/15442)

Letter from Miss E.S. Innes, Territorial Force Nursing Service, at the 2nd Northern General Hospital Leeds, 19th December, 1920. (WO 399/15442)

TERRITORIAL FORCE NURSING SERVICE

2nd Northern General Hospital,
Leeds,
Miss E.S. Innes
Principal Matron

The General Infirmary at Leeds
December 19th 1920

Dear Madame Maud

I did not feel when writing my last letter to you that I had the right to say a great deal about Miss Whiffin, but now I think you ought to know the circumstances, and also I do hope you will be able to advise and help us. Poor Miss Whiffin has had a complete mental breakdown and yesterday it was decided that that she must be taken to a Hospital for cases of that kind. The Doctors felt that was her only chance. It is a tragedy, because I am sure no woman could have had a more active and acute brain. She was so clear and definite in everything, as I am sure you know. I found her a very great help and had a very great admiration for her and felt that one could always trust her opinion and advice. It is heart breaking to see her as she is now. She has had many worries during all her war service and although we did not realise at all at the time, as she never thought of herself. Things must have made a deep impression on her. In some of her wanderings she imagines and talks of air raids and yet the Doctors, who were in France with her, tell me so she was more calm & collected & full of care for others. In all her wanderings there is something that has happened in the past which has suggested her delirium. The Doctors consider that her condition is due to the great strain of work during the war & since, and we do hope that she will have a pension, as even if she recovers, she will not be fit for her work again. Can you help us because we do want to make this right for her? She has done so much & never spared herself in any way. The officer now in charge of Becketts Park, who was the Colonel before the Hospital was transferred to the Ministry of Pensions has reported the matter to Miss Davies, but I felt you would be glad to help us too and so I am taking the liberty of asking for your help. It is terribly sad and we are very upset as everyone, men & women who worked with Miss Whiffin admired her greatly.

Miss Whiffin was on duty on the 11th December,

Yours sincerely E.S. Innes

Source Thirty Seven: Leaving the service (WO 399/1864)

Letter from the Matron-in-Chief to Miss C.L. Carnegie commending her good service, 10 February 1920. Letter to certify that Miss Christina Carnegie, A.R.R.C. served in the Territorial Force Nursing Service, 27th March 1920. Letter from Sister Carnegie to the Matron-in-Chief thanking her for her kind testimonial. 1st April 1920. (WO 399/10281)

10th February, 1920

461/A/20 (T.V.4.)

Dear Madam,

As you are being demobilised from the Territorial Force Nursing Service I wish to take this opportunity of thanking you for the good work you have rendered during the war. You work has been excellent and has been fully appreciated by al[l] those under whom you have served. I wish xx you all happiness and success in your new life.

Her Majesty Queen Alexandra has graciously given her permission for you to retain your T.F.N.S. Badge as you have completed over four years good service during the War.

I am, Madam,

Your obedient servant,

(signed) Sidney Browne

Matron-in-Chief, T.F.N.S.

Miss C. L. Carnegie.

27th March 1920

This is to certify that

MISS CHRISTINA LAURIE CARNEGIE, A.R.R.C.

has served in the TERRITORIAL FORCE NURSING SERVICE at home and in France from

August 14th 1914 to

February 14th 1920

when she was demobilised.

Miss Carnegie served in France from October 1914 to June 1919. She has excellent professional ability and is a capable organiser. She is untiring in energy and zeal for the welfare of her patients, and has a very good influence on her subordinates. She has a very pleasant manner and a most cheerful disposition. She is a most excellent Surgical and Medical Sister and has done splendid work both at Casualty Clearing Stations and in the Base Hospitals in France. Miss Carnegie has rendered excellent service for five and a half years and was mentioned in Dispatches in 1916 and again by Sir Douglas Haig in March 1919. She was awarded the Royal Red Cross, 2nd Class, in January 1917 for good work and valuable service.

(Signed) Sidney Browne.

Matron-in-chief.

Source Thirty Seven: Leaving the service (WO 399/1864)

Kilgraston House

Bridge of Erin [Earn?]

1-4-20

To

The Matron in Chief

Dear Dame Sidney

I beg to thank you very much indeed for the testimonial received from you to-day.

I am most grateful for it and for all your appreciation of my war services.

I would like to take this opportunity of telling you what a tremendous help, and how much we valued all you great kindness and encouragement to us during our services under you.

I am

Most honoured madam

Your obedient servant

C L Carnegie

Sister TFNS.

Source Thirty Eight: 'I look a pretty picture' (RAIL 253/516)

This is one of many letters sent by staff of the Great Western Railway Audit office at Paddington who had enlisted to fight in the First World War, A.E. Rippington describes his injuries. (RAIL 253/516)

Albert Edwin Rippington, undated, England. Born: 21 November 1893, Regiment: 5th London Rifle Brigade, discharged due to injury November 1917, Died: 1982

Dear Ernie,
Thanks very much for your letter and kind wishes. My wounds are getting on all right and they have discovered eleven in all. It is hard not to be able to get up, but I suppose a month will soon be slip by. My people came to see me yesterday and the day before.

You ought to see my face. They cannot shave me because I have scraps of shell sticking in, and as I had not had a shave for about a week before I was wounded, I look a pretty picture.

Well old chap, I am glad I am wounded to get out of that hell, and if you ever meet a chap that says he wants to go back call him a liar.

If you could manage to come down at any time I should be delighted. I have not received any letter from Dalton but perhaps will get it later. That will be the time old chap when I look into the office on my way home. We'll manage to get a drink then. Well I must close now and I expect you will have quite enough trouble to read what I have written already. Hoping to be with you all,

Your old pal,
Rip.

Source Thirty Nine: 'It is a warm shop' (RAIL 253/516)

This is one of many letters sent by staff of the Great Western Railway (GWR) Audit office at Paddington who had enlisted to fight in the First World War. W.C. Davies gives his personal insight on trench warfare and it is clear that hospitals behind the line were not always places of safety. (RAIL 253/516)

William Charles Davies, 15 March 1916, France. Born: 12 November 1884, Joined GWR: 12 January 1900, Regiment: Royal Army Medical Corps, Regiment number: 31223, Rank: Lance Corporal; Sergeant, Retired: 1944.

Sunday
Dear Charlie,

How are things going with you now? I expect like the rest of us will be glad when the better weather sets in for there is no doubt about it, it has been rough lately.
Since I last wrote to you we have shifted to another part of the line and it is a warm shop, for both sides must have all guns they can find and it is nothing but one long duel all day and every day but thank goodness it gives over a bit a night so that one can get on with their work. You see of a night the flashes of the guns can be seen so plainly that is why they do not fire a lot then.

Just on our right our people retook some trenches we had lost, oh what a rough time the poor devils had, snow and mud as much as you like and they had to lay in it for two days and grub could not be got to them. I expect there have been a few more from Paddington called up by now, it seems if the authorities mean to have all the men they want and if they can't get them one way they will another, and it certainly looks as if they will be wanted for out here. One cannot see any signs of an early settlement. I see by the papers that the air raids have been busy in England again.

I suppose you have not seen anything of them yet, has Rory Moore had any more frights? We have the taubes [German aircraft] over our hospital nearly every day or night and I can tell you we got some starts at times. The nearest we have to them since I have been here is just one yard from the main door, at 12.30 it blew in two pairs of double doors and shattered on end of the building to bits but not a great deal of damage to life which after all is the main thing. The arrangements we in work is five or six days up the line and four or five down if you are lucky. Of course at times these arrangements go to pot when there is an attack and we get a warm time and I should like to enlarge on these things but of course you understand I cannot.
Give my kind regards to all and trusting you are well.

Yours Will (Davies)

Source Forty: 'Beastly complaint' (RAIL 253/516)

This is one of many letters sent by staff of the Great Western Railway Audit office at Paddington who had enlisted to fight in the First World War. A. Smith describes his illness, enteric [typhoid] and treatment but also comments on his experience of the war. (RAIL 253/516)

Arthur Smith, born: 8 March 1895, Regiment: Railway Troop, Royal Engineers, Regiment number: 87760, Rank: Lance Corporal, Returned to office: 16 June 1919, Retired: 30 September 1955

Ward No. 17
Addington Park War Hospital
Croydon
Surrey

19th November 1916

Dear Sir, (Slater)

I expect you wonder what has become of me as you have not heard from me for such a long time. The reason is that since the 20th September I have been suffering with enteric (typhoid). The exact diagnosis of my case being para typhoid B. I have not been up three weeks until next Friday, but since I first got out of bed I have made splendid progress. I was in an isolation hospital in France for six weeks and previous to that in a General Hospital for eight days. I arrived here late last Wednesday night after a very decent journey. This is a beautiful palace surrounded by a park in which we can walk about and we are allowed to go to the post office which is quite near. I am quite happy and comfortable here, it is a splendid hospital. We have a concert or cinema nearly every night in the big hall. Food is good and plentiful. How long it will be before I am considered fit again I have no notion, as a rule it takes months for a person to get right again.

It is a very funny and beastly complaint. During to the whole time I have been in hospital I have received every attention and kindness. During the months of July and August when I was in the Somme district I had a very rough time, was nearly worked to death and had little sleep. At one period we had to commence work at 2am but we were supposed to rest in the day but we could not get any. However, it was all in a good cause and we got through it. Ambulance trains were loaded up at the station where I was and we saw some awful sights. English and German wounded. Perhaps I picked my fever up at this place, but one never knows. While I was in the isolation hospital in France I was kept for three weeks and two days on liquids but I am pleased to say that the doctor has now put me on ordinary diet. With the kindest regards and best wishes to all, I remain yours obediently.

A. Smith

Source Forty One: 'A big dose of gas shells' (RAIL 253/516)

This is one of many letters sent by staff of the Great Western Railway Audit office at Paddington who had enlisted to fight in the First World War. 'Frosty' describes gas poisoning, trench organisation and medical transport. (RAIL 253/516)

Richard Charles Stanley Frost, born: 30 January 1888, Regiment: 8th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders; Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, Rank: Private; Second Lieutenant, Died: 1962

1998 Signaller S. Frost
Ward A.4
Ford House Military Hospital
Devonport
Devon
23/8/16

Dear Mr Hunt,

I expect you have heard at the office about me being in England suffering from gas poisoning, and as it is quite a long time since I last wrote to you, no doubt a few lines will be acceptable, to explain matters.
We left the trenches at Vimy Ridge on July 5th, and marching back about 14 miles we eventually reached a village named Ostreville for the purpose of having a divisional rest. The signallers thought an orchard would be very convenient to erect bivouacs in, so when we were busy carrying out this idea an old Frenchman appeared at the scene, and raised objections. However he agreed at last to allow us in at one end of the orchard, thinking, I suppose, that we would wander about his place! We had an enjoyable time here for six days, and then had to return to our old billets near Mount St. Eloi until the whole of the division had retired. We guessed by this move that our 'rest' was over, and the following days were spent in marching, and travelling by motor lorries and train until we arrived at Mericourt Station on July 21st near Albert.

After a delightful swim in the river near the billet we marched off the following night, to take part in the 'big push.' We slept in an open field that night near Fricourt farm, and were rather rudely awakened by a few German shells landing near us.

For five days we were lying in reserve in this district, and occupied our time in watching an army of men at work in the valley, making roads, railways, boring for water and laying down water pipes, also practicing attacks in the old trenches. It was very interesting to see the great amount of artillery, busy practically all day and night, and to read their messages sent by visual signalling [often using lights] from a ridge across the valley.

Our period in reserve being up, we moved to Mametz Wood to lie there in support for five days, before going into the trenches at High Wood. On arrival at the edge of the wood at night, we were welcomed by a big dose of gas shells and shrapnel, which was applied steadily throughout the night by the German artillery. Having to assist in putting our signalling gear into a hole for safety, I was prevented from using my respirator for the first quarter of an hour, as we could not see on account of the darkness and dust made by the ammunition columns rushing along the road, and it was during this time that I must have breathed in enough gas to put me out of action. Afterwards of course respirators were used, when we were settled in holes by the roadside for the night.

I remained with the battalion until I was sent to the casualty clearing station on August 3rd and reached Rouen hospital the next day. I had to wait until the 9th and crossed the channel from Havre to Southampton on the New Zealand ship *Marama*, with about 800 other patients, the day after. It was a splendid boat with every convenience for carrying wounded men, and the sisters and orderlies were colonials.

It was last Friday week when I arrived here, and must say it is very comfortable and quiet. I had to remain in bed until last Saturday, but of course I cannot do any route marching yet! So I have to take life quietly, which is no hardship I can assure you after France. I am on an ordinary diet, and taking medicine.

I hear you have Mr Symons back again, is that so? And is he back in the same old spot? I hope he is pretty fit, although I suppose there must be something wrong with him, to be back again.
I suppose things are as quiet as usual with you. Have you had your holidays yet? This is about your time I believe. I shall be glad of a few lines when you have time, to hear the latest about the office. I hope you are keeping fit, also Mr J.B. Taylor and Mr Woodhams and with kind regards to you all. Yours sincerely,
Frosty.

P.S. It is a treat to write a letter without the censor's shadow over one!

Source Forty Two: 'They were mostly mere boys' (RAIL 253/516)

This is a copy one of many letters sent by staff of the Great Western Railway Audit office at Paddington who had enlisted to fight in the First World War. It was sent to R. Gilson's mother and it was typed up so his fellow workers could read it in the office at home. Gilson describes a bombardment and anti-gas equipment. (RAIL 253/516)

Richard Gilson born: 20 September 1887, Regiment: 4th Seaforth Highlanders, Rank: Acting Colour Sergeant, Died: 1961

British Expeditionary Force
Wednesday 12/5/15

My dear Mother,

Have just come through a particularly nasty period. We went into the trenches on Wednesday night and on Sunday morning at 5am our Artillery commenced bombarding the German trenches and after 20 minutes had elapsed we went over the parapet. My goodness what a reception the Huns had in store for us, they simply swept the ground with machine gun fire and shrapnel. Poor old 'C' coy. caught it hot and Neuve Chapelle seemed to be a fleabite compared with this. It was found impossible to make any advance in our quarter, so I dug myself in and awaited events. It was horrible suspense, as I seemed to be the only man untouched, all around me, and being personally acquainted with each man made matters worse, in fact, it's all wrong to call them men, as they were mostly mere boys.

About early afternoon I was hailed from the trench as to whether it was possible for me to get back. I replied in the affirmative and decided to run the risk of getting potted on the way. So I commenced crawling on my stomach until about a few yards from the parapet, then made a spring and rushed headlong over the top, nearly spoiling the features of a few who happened to be in the trench and were not expecting me. We were relieved that afternoon, but some of the fellows did not get in until nightfall and these experienced another bombardment… Billy Hastings is quite fit and the only pal left. We have been resting since and getting information about the (illegible) but by all reports we shall be up again soon. No rest for the wicked it is said, and if true we must surely be a bad lot.

What a terrible thing about the Lusitania, and with so many Americans aboard. Should imagine there will be more trouble. Have received box and letter dated 6th and am most thankful for everything you are all doing for me. (censored.)

As regards the pads, (masks of cotton pads which served as gas masks), all we were served out with were made 'on the spot' and consisted of a piece of gauze and tape and were steeped in a solution of bicarbonate of soda, prior to this charge. I lost all my belongings except the Gillette (razor) so should be glad of a few toilet requisites when next you are sending a parcel. Do not trouble about towel and perhaps Frank would get me a shaving brush. Must now close. Much love to all. From your affectionate son,
Dick