

*W. H. Hampton
Major*

ARMY BOOK 152.

Correspondence Book.

(FIELD SERVICE.)

AMIENS 8 AUG 1918

MESSAGES & NOTES

CONDOLENCE LETTERS

McSHARRY

HINES

SHAW

INCHES

6

5

4

3

2

1

4
18
31
30
9
102

150
37
750

750

L 510

Opened on

Closed on

L 328 1/3 = 0

L 291.3 = 0
37.10.0

5823

306
2558 1/2
55 1/2
423 1/2
1825
655

The Squares in this book are $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.

121
363 1/2
60 1/2
423 1/2

140

655
31
30
31
131

365
1825

731
2193 1/2
365 1/2
2558

L 105

60
30
15

(3 Copies.)

Narrative of the attack by 15th Bn.
on CERISY-GAILLY 8-8-18

Reference Sheet 62^d S.E. $\frac{1}{20000}$
62^d N.E. $\frac{1}{20000}$

At 1-30 AM 8/8/18 the Bn. moved from the position of readiness behind the Chateau in VAIRE-SUR-CORBIE to its No 1 Forward position in P3 a & b. Tapes had been laid & lamps placed to mark each Coy's right flank by the I.O. These proved of great value in preventing confusion, the Bn. was ready in position at 2-40 A.M. Men lying down in the Corn in Artillery formation and making small splinter proof walls of earth.

The morning was fine but foggy. Our Barrage fell at 4-20 am. The fog now became dense & it was impossible to discern men moving at more than twenty yards distance. At 5-30 am a runner brought message from C.O. 16th Bn. "He will move at 5-50 am."

Punctually at 5-50 am the Bn.

moved in Artillery formation to
its W2 forming up position near
Record WOOD in P. 12a, which
was reached at 6-49 am.
I saw CO 14th Bn. at this point we
decided to move on in confusion,
as far as Road running N & S through
Q1C & Q7a & there halt to sort
out any disarrangement of Coys.
~~through the~~ caused by the blank
wall of fog. On going round
my Bn. I found that all were
in their right positions, largely
due to the judicious use of the
Prismatic Compass by Coy Gunners.
The three tanks allotted to the Bn.
joined us here as well as a half
section of the 13th A.L.H. and an
Artillery Officer of the 110th How. Battery.
At 7-40 am. the Bn. moved again
on its way to the Blue line. The fog
was now lifting rapidly & a few
enemy shells were falling about
X roads in Q7. One of our own
heaves was persistently falling
short as we advanced about
1000x from the Blue line. ^{cease of}
At 8-20 am. ^{the attacking tanks} B, A & D Coys. with
C in support passed through

the 42nd Bn. who were digging
in on the Blue line. The Tanks
were well up & making good
progress. Bn HQ was established
on a high bank at Q 8 & 3095
from which a good view of the
village & high ground to the right
was obtainable.

At 8-40 am. Prisoners commenced
to appear including an M.O. & his
staff, identification 99th & 55th & 20th
R.I.R. by 9-30 am. over 300 had
passed through.

My I.O. reported at his return from
forward at 9-30 am that all our
objectives were gained. By the
dir & chattering of M.G.'s on the N.
bank of the Canal I conjectured that
the 58th Div. were not running to
schedule. This was proved conclusively
at 9-40 am. The enemy opening at
very heavy from our left & left rear
with Field & Machine guns on to
my right Company, inflicting several
casualties & forcing them to fall back
into the sunken road in Q 9 & 6. The
left Coy of the 14th Bn (COLE'S COY) were
also held up in a like manner.
The Adj. who had gone forward

returned at 9-50am & gave me
a clear outline of the position,
which was ~~this~~ as follows. The left
Co. and the left half of the Centre
Co. were on their objectives & covered
the approaches of all bridges,
but were coming under very heavy
fire from CHIPILLY and the ridge.
East.

The Right Company and right half
of the Centre Company had advanced
to a line running N+S through
Q9b30 + Q3d40, but were met with
withering MG fire from the Sanhen
road running N+S through Q9b80
to Q3d70, that they ^{eventually} were forced to
withdraw to the Sanhen road
running N+S through Q9b00 to Q9a50.
The right of the Centre Company had
established a post at Q3d54. At this
time all our tanks had received
direct hit from 77 guns firing from
CHIPILLY SPOR and were in flames
in "No man's land". We got in
touch with a 3rd Div. Mule Coy
and he attempted to go along the
CERISY-MORCOURT Road, but he
was forced to return on account
of the fire from 77's & a Minenwerfer.

about 0900. We got in touch with our Stokes Mortars to deal with this opposition and found they had no ammunition. This enemy strong point was also holding up the advance of the left Company of the 14th Bn.

At 11-30am message was received from O.C. Cake Company reporting that Boche were coming over the spur into CHIPILLY & the low lying ground on N side of Canal & asking for Artillery to deal with this.

My Liaison Officer with the 3rd London arrived at 11.30am & stated that they were hung up. Their lines running through K27a & C K26d & K32 Central.

At 1pm. our Heavies shelled CHIPILLY with good effect. During this time the 14th Bn's right had continued their advance and had succeeded in capturing the Village of MORCOURT. Large numbers of prisoners making their way back along the CERISY-MORCOURT Road. Seeing these prisoners returning

The enemy in the Strong Point
who had up till now offered a
stubborn resistance, realizing that
further opposition was futile,
allowed, our advance to continue
and the position was captured
with over 50 prisoners, 12 Heavy M.G.'s
13 Light guns & One Minnengewerfer.
At 2-10 P.M. we were able to report
that all our objectives were gained
& Consolidated.
In this operation we captured
over 300 prisoners, two field guns,
two Minnengewerfers, 15 Heavy & four
Light M.G.'s, also inflicting very
heavy casualties on the enemy.
And lost 10 Officers killed, 3 wounded,
& 7 OR. Killed 2 Officers and
27 OR wounded.

Killed - Lieut B. J. Shaw D.C.

Five Copies.

War Diary 3
1 Other 1
Spare 1

Capt. R. Glasgow
as some
Lieut. F. Harker

HQ. 4th a. I. Bde.

Reference attached.

- (1) As regards para 3 No Battalion Order for the stunt was published. The order issued by Bde. was so clear & covered all the ground and I had so carefully thrashed out all details with my Coy Commanders, that I did not deem it necessary to publish an operation order.

Our job was a clean cut one - viz Capture & "knock up" CERISY-GAILLY & secure the Bridge Heads.

- (2) As regards para 2 My report already submitted covers events from 1-30 am. to 2-10 P.M. on 8/8/18.

Attached you will please find a brief narrative of events as they concerned this Bn. from that time until midnight 10/8/18 with one or two points gained from our experiences.

W. Hampton Major.
C.D. 15th Bde.

20/8/18

Wardham
Capt Koch
Capt. 1st

Six

2/8/12

CD 15th Mar

Continuation of Narrative of events
15th Bn. from 2-10 P.M. 8-8-18 until
midnight 10-8-18.

At 2-10 p.m. all objectives were gained
and Consolidated. Enfilade M.G.
and 77 mm Artillery fire was
still coming from the direction
of LES CELESTINS WOOD & CHIPILLY
SPUR but our Artillery was to a
great extent neutralizing this.

At 3-5 P.M. 7 Poole prisoners of
202nd R.I.R. found hiding in a
cellar in CERISY were brought to
Bn. HQ.

At 4 p.m. received phone message
from Brigadier that Mackenzie
would relieve me & Bn. would
move to vicinity of DUDGEON WOOD.

At 4-10 p.m. C.O. 1st Bn. arrived &
his Coy. Commrs. & details of relief
were mutually arranged.

The Bn. were disposed as follows:-
"B" Coy on left along Canal Bank,
"A" Coy Centre & "D" Coy on the
right, with "C" 2 platoons dug in
behind "D" & 2 platoons dug in
forward of the Cemetery.

At 7-20 P.M. the 58th Div. delivered their attack on the N bank of the Canal, on the WOODS + CHIPILLY CREST under a heavy Artillery Barrage. The two Vickers of the 24th M.G. Coy attached to me + 10th Coys L.G's assisting with covering fire at Boche movement on the ridge.

At 9 p.m. my Liaison Officer (Lieut Adamsmith) with 3rd London Regt returned and reported that the English attack had failed & they were back in their old place.

At 10 p.m. in accordance with orders, sent my Support Coy (C) to report to the HQ in MORCOURT + Carry for 16th / 9th.

At 10-45 P.M. the 1st Bn. arrived to relieve my left + centre Coys + a Company of the 2nd Bn. reported to relieve my Right Company.

Relief was completed at midnight, Companies digging in in terraces in Q 23 a + b. The HQ being established in a "dug out" in MORCOURT village.

During morning of 9/8/18 MORCOURT village was readily shelled at intervals. To save runners and linesmen 1st Bn HQ was moved at 2 p.m. to bank in Q 23 a b, b in close proximity to Companies. 5 P.M. American troops attacked on the N side of the SOMME and from 1st Bn. O.P. appeared to be making good progress.

At 8 P.M. received orders to send one Company to CO. 16th Bn. to act under his orders.

Thereupon sent my strongest Co. "B" 2 officers 910th. to support 16th Bn. who left where they assisted to dig the new line.

During night Hun planes bombed their old transport lines in Q 23 a & this "heavies" strafed the vicinity of MORCOURT intermittently.

10/8/18 1st Bn. less Company ("B") remained at Q 23 a & b, salvaging material and burying those dead.

At 10-30 P.M. 44th Bn. commenced to relieve us. "B" Company

in the line being relieved by a
Company of the 43rd Bn.
Relief was complete by 11-55 P.M.
Companies marching independently
to the Divonac Area in J24 C
North of SAILLY-LE-SEC. En route
roads, especially in the vicinity
of CERISY & MORCOURT were
bombed by Hun planes.

20/8/18

Rampson
Major
CO. 15th Bn.

Notes on the Operations ^{August} 8.9.10/18

(1) Tanks.

- (a) Should arrive at "forming up" position at least two hours before zero.
- (b) Conferences between individual Tank Commanders & Infantry Company Commanders as early as possible before "zero" day essential.
- (c) That the Tank Section Commander and Wn. Liaison Officer (Adjutant) move forward together close in rear of the attacking Companies for closer liaison between Tanks & Infantry.
- (d) An Infantry Scout should go forward in each Tank.
- (e) Every Tank working with a Unit should bear that unit's Colours or distinguishing mark.

2. R.A.F.

- (a) That at least a week before, a "skunk" several planes should patrol the front line about dawn, so that

enemy's suspicions should not be aroused on "Z" Day.

3. General

- (a) Considered that there were too many troops too close to the "Forming up place" for too long a period prior to "Z" day. If troops were further back, there would not be the abnormal amount of traffic on roads through having to deliver Rations Water, Iron Rations, Ammun & R.E. Stores. And it would be possible for hot meals to be served to the troops at regular hours & for the men to obtain unbroken rest.
- (b) More detailed arrangements might be made by "Q" for the clearing of the battlefield of Prisoners, Burial of Dead, Removal of Trophies & Salvage of other material.
- Too many fighting men, who can ill be spared from the Attacking Troops, are at present employed in this manner.
- (c) That Maps & Photos be issued to

the Nations as early as possible before "Z" day, to allow closer study of same to be made.

- (d) That Synchronization of Watches be more thorough.
- (e) That the opportunities for "visual" are not fully realized and exploited.
- (f) That until the supply of Stokes Mortar Ammunition is guaranteed, they are of very little value in the attack.
- (g) That the scale of issue of Pack Saddles is totally inadequate. If it is necessary to send up Nations per Pack Saddle, at least 30 per 18" are required.
- (h) That the delay in the Advance from the 1st Objective to the 2nd Objective was considerably too long. This could have been cut down by one hour & then allowed ample time for the Troops detailed for the 2nd Objective to reach their "jumping off" place, & thus prevent the enemy's defence suffering.

20/8/18

Hampton Major
O.C. 15th Bn.

HQ. 4th A.I. Bde.

Reference attached.

- (1) As regards para 3. No Battalion order for the stunt was published on account of the Casualties we suffered on the morning of the 6th and the lack of the necessary conveniences. It is customary to publish one, but on this occasion the order issued by Bde. was so clear & covered all the ground. And all details had been so thoroughly thrashed out with my Coy. Commanders, that I did not deem it necessary to publish an Operation order.
- (2) As regards para 2. My report already submitted, covers events from 1-30 a.m. to 2-10 p.m. on 8/8/18. Attached you will please find a brief narrative of events from that time onward till midnight 10/8/18 with some lessons gained from our experiences.
- 20/8/18

Hampton Major
C.O. 15th Bn

In the Field
27 August 1918

Dear Miss McSharry,
Long as this poor letter reaches you, the sad news of your late brother's death will have been notified you by the Refence Dept.

Since then, the Battalion has been continuously in the line and it has not been possible to write. It is the earnest wish of every man in the 15th that I should convey to you their very sincere regret and sympathy with you in your sorrow. For there is not one among us who does not feel that in the Colonel's death, we have lost the best C.O. in the A.I.F. and a very dear personal friend as well.

I have known & been closely associated with your brother ever since he came to us from the 2nd Light Horse on Gallipoli. I was sleeping in the same shelter with him a few minutes before his death. To know him was to

love him, he had such a happy
knack of getting the best out of
men; a ~~strong~~ Commander & fine
soldier, he possessed such a keen
sensible sense of humour, that to
work with & under him was a
pleasure. He had been with us
so long & had come through so many
perils, that we had become so
regard him as invulnerable & the
thought of losing him never entered
our heads. The sudden & swift
blow when it came, was all the
more terrible. His end was peace
& he suffered no pain, terribly
injured by shell fragments, he
never regained consciousness & just
slipped quietly away to rest.

We buried his body that evening
in the CORBIE Military Cemetery, our
Padre, Father O'Callaghan performing
the Service. And there he lies,
sleeping peacefully, leaving behind
him a fragrant memory. A
memory of one who always did
his duty bravely & fearlessly &
of one, who was an inspiration
to us all to do our best
under all circumstances.

If there is anything I can do or
any information you desire, please
command me.

Dear Miss McSharry, please accept
my sincerest sympathy, may the
Father of all be with & comfort
you in your bitter loss.

Yours sincerely

Harford Simpson

Temp C.O. 15th 1914

In the Field
August 27th 1918

Dear Mrs. Thines,

Long ere this letter reaches you, the sad news of the death of your son Walter will have reached you through official channels.

Walter was one of our very best officers, both as a Capable & keen soldier and as a man. He was liked & respected by us all for his sterling qualities, he is a great loss to the Battalion.

The circumstances of his end are briefly these: In the morning of 6th August about 4 am. the enemy opened a heavy artillery fire on our Division, shells falling thickly in & around our sleeping places. Your son, had got clear of the shelled area; but was returning for some Maps (he was our Intelligence Officer) he had forgotten, when he was struck down by shell fragments. He was at once carried to the

Regimental Aid Post, but was past
all human aid & passed away
quite peacefully half an hour
later. He was so badly injured
that he suffered no pains & passed
out with a smile on his face.

His body was laid to rest
that evening in the Cemetery at
CORBIE. Chaplain Harper of the 16th
Wm. performing the Ceremony. He
rests next to his Colonel who
was killed the same morning.
Your son, Dear Mrs. Thines, was one
of God's best & I mourn one of
my best officers & a very dear friend.
Had he been spared to us, he would
have gone far. There is little I can
say to you in your sorrow, but please
accept my sincere sorrow & sympathy
with you in your cruel loss.
May the Father of All, help &
Comfort you.

Yours sincerely,

Barford Lampton
Major.
CO. 15th Wm.

In the Field.
August 27th 1918

Dear Mrs. Shaw,

Long ere this poor letter of mine reaches you, the Dept. will have notified you of the death of your gallant boy, killed in action on August 8th 1918.

On behalf of myself & brother officers of the Battalion, please accept our sincerest sympathy & grief with you in your sorrow.

"Bernie" was a boy to be proud of, a fine manly lad & rapidly developing into one of our very best officers. Loved & wrapped by all in his platoon, for, he still as a soldier & his cheerful manly way in hardship & danger.

He died a soldier's death, shot through the heart whilst leading his men against a German M.G. nest in the attack on C.F.R.I.S.Y.

That night, before passing on in pursuit of the retreating enemy, we laid his body to rest along with others of his Coy. outside the Village. A cross has since been

erected over the grave. He has
left a gap in our ranks, it will
be hard to fill. I have lost
a very dear friend, for I had a
very real affection for your bright
& brave young son. You dear
Mrs Shaw have lost a son, of
whom you should be very proud
indeed. On every occasion if they
were many, your boy has faced
death & danger in a wonderful
manner & set an example to all.
His own nation loved & respected
him & his untimely end has cost
quite a storm over this country.

Should I be spared to return
to my native town, I hope to
call & see you, for like your
son, I'm a Lancashire man.
Please accept my deepest sympathy
in your sad loss. May the
Giver of all help & comfort
you.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Sumner

CD. 15th Br.

Front Line and Support Coys. to the System of Trenches & Saps was heavy and Continuous. From that hour it gradually slackened and the shells fell mostly in AUGUR and CREPEY WOODS and the vicinity of the Hospital in X 24 C

Nature of the Gas used:-

There is much difference of opinion amongst Officers and Men regarding this.

Blue Cross at the outset undoubtedly predominated. Later Yellow Cross or so called Mustard was plainly identified.

A feature of the shelling was that all ranks talk of a Shell which made a "ping" on explosion like a "ricochet." Bullet and Smeel like burnt rubber, others speak of it as smelling like "fye solution."

This shell many say burst in the air like birdseye.

Saw of the opinion that many types of Gas shell were used during the bombardment, which

Report on Gas Bombardment of
15th Bn. night 24/25 Augst. 1918
Ref. Sheet. HATTENCOURT.

At 11-30 P.M. the enemy put down a
very heavy Gas Shell bombardment
over the whole of my sector.
This continued with great severity
until 2-30 am. when it eased
off considerably, but gas intermittent
shelling of about three gas shells
per minute continued until 4-20 am.

The opening nature of the bomb-
ardment was that of a heavy
Barrage and fell on the Front
line and Support Companies in
S. 19, particular attention being
paid to AUGUR WOOD.

This Barrage lifted at 11-45 pm
and moved on towards the
Reserve Coy. in X. 29 which it
reached about midnight.

About the same time thirty
5.9 Blue Cross Shells fell around
15th Bn. HQ at X. 28 & 47.
Until 2-30 am. the shelling of the

lasted almost five hours.

Evacuations yesterday & to-day
are as under:-

	off.	on.
A Coy (Support)	3 -	43
B " (R. line)	-	2
C " (R. line)	-	31
D " (J. ")	2 -	43
Bn HQ (Liasmen & Sign)		4
Total		5 - 123

The Relief of the Bn. by 1st & 2nd Bns.
59th French Infantry Regt had just
commenced and to this fact I
attribute the majority of the
Casualties. The relief had to be
completed before daylight and
so men had to move about

Precautions

The S.B. Co were immediately seen
men kept quiet with their heads
above the trench and where
possible sat on the parapets.
Respirators were not removed
until signs had been made
for Gas by an Officer.

The depth of the Shelled area

over 3000 yards, as far back as
Barrage the concentration of Gas
was quite strong at the time
I left at 5-0 am. 25/8/18.

Undoubtedly many men were
affected as they came out on
relief through, not wearing their
Spl. B's as they moved through
the Reserve Area, where there
was no perceptible smell, but
which must have been still
full of Gas.

Early in the Bombardment about
11-30 P.M. all forward telephone
lines were cut and from that
time until 3-45 am my only
means of communication forward
was by runner.

The relief by the French started
at 11 P.M. It was not completed
until 4-30 am and so caused
many of the B's to be in a heavily
gassed area for over five hours.
The night was beautifully fine
and clear with hardly any
wind. Towards dawn it became
foggy.

26/8/18

Samuel Major
C.O. 15. E/8th

4th A.I. Bde Hq.

Your confidential, unnumbered
note to hand.

I am ready to hand over
my Command to Lieut-
Col. C.M. Johnson DSO at
any time.

May I request that my
application for C.O.'s Special
leave be expedited.

ALLONVILLE

1/9/18

R. Thompson

Major

C.O. 15th Bn.

Des Runner
(Pte O. Leary)

new entry
M. J. M.

1 to be as
W

SECRET
&
URGENT.

Adjutant.

W. may have to move
at short notice. Get out
preliminary inspections and
warn all Company Commanders.
I will bring all available
information on return, will
be back about 11:30 P.M. and
will see Coy. Commanders, Q.M.
T.O. and I.O. then at my
Billet.

33% including BAND not to
exceed 120 ACFT. Men
Time is short - probable date
8th inst.

Wdc I.O. will give CHATAWAY
Maps to night.

COISY
9-30 P.M.

6/9/18

J. Sampson
Major
CO. 15th

Dear Craig,

All goes well.

1st Div. are on their objectives
+ 74th (Germany) on their left
are progressing steadily.
Prisoners for 8th Div are! —
57 officers 1148 O.R.

Casualties about 440

Please send Car for me
about 11 o'clock.

P. J. Sampson
Major
Liaison Officer.

10 am.
18/9/18

Lieut. Col. J. F. McSharry
C.M.G. D.S.O. M.C.

Miss. Mary McSharry
"Nyawa"
Eagle Junction
Brisbane
Queensland

Lieut. W. J. Kines

Mother ~~_____~~ Mrs. C. Kines
14 Anderson St
Zeehan
Tasmania

Lieut. B. J. Shaw.

Mother ~~_____~~ Mrs. Rosa Shaw
12 Church St
Launceston
Tasmania

W. J. Rogers 8/1/6

2nd do.

Eng. Bn 26/10/16

Gen. Sec. of Secord

employed on some capacity