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# *First World War*

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**The Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders Museum  
&  
Historic Scotland**



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## Standard Grade History

Welcome to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum and Stirling Castle.

The questions for the pupils to complete have all been created specifically with the International Cooperation and Conflict section of the Standard Grade history course in mind. They aim to provide the pupils with an interactive learning experience of life for the Scottish soldier in the First World War.

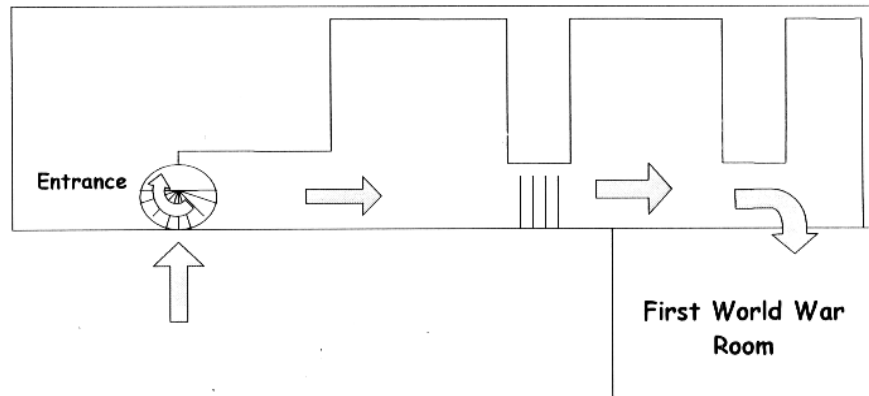
The questions allow the pupils to explore a variety of sources on display and to gain information from these sources, which will enhance their knowledge and understanding of the topic. In addition, a range of photocopied primary sources are included for you to use with the pupils back in the classroom. These provide a unique opportunity to practice Enquiry Skills questions with interesting sources.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy your visit and in so doing, enhance your skills in Standard Grade History.

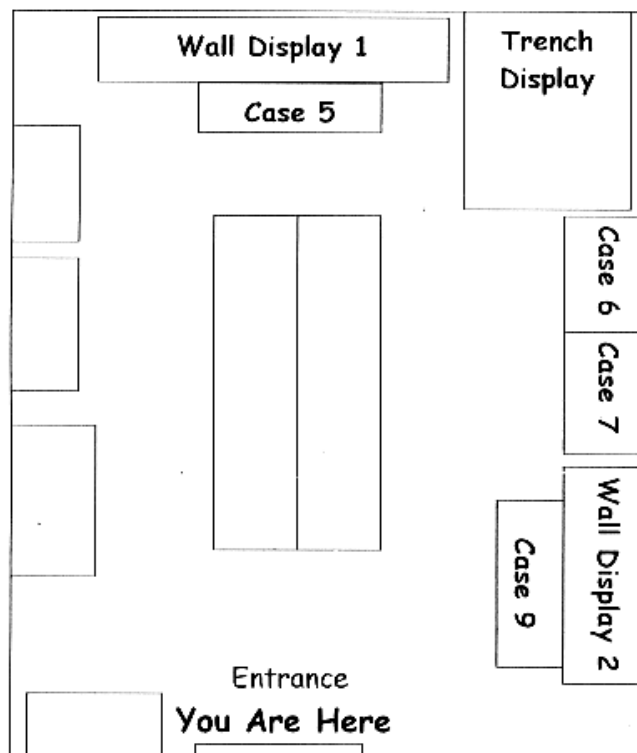
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## Map of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum

**Map 1.**  
(First Floor.)



**Map 2.**  
First World War Room.



# ANSWER SHEET

## WORKING WITH OBJECTS: General/Credit

- 1. Wall Display.** a. Gas, Shelling. b. 3am – 5pm, 14 hours. c. 2-3 thousand shells. d. A bit of a trench mortar.
- 2. Display Case 5.** a. Regimental badge on his Glengarry. b. Pte D McAree c. Cost, security
- 3. Reconstructed Trench Display.** a. Housewife Kit (sewing), Officer's Kit (shaving), hairbrush, shoe polish, Vaseline, tooth powder, soap. b. Repairs to his kit. c. When thrown in the air the cloth streamers made sure the grenade landed on its tip, which detonated the explosives. d. Inserted into the rifle barrel and fired using a blank cartridge. It was designed to make a grenade travel further than one thrown by hand.
- 4. Display Case 6.** a. Burned the eyes, skin, lungs and internal tissues. b. Their lungs filled with fluid and they drowned in their own mucus. c. The gas was released from cylinders relying on the wind or it was fired from a mortar in the form of a shell, which ruptured and spread the liquefied gas when it hit its target. d.i. Cotton wool soaked in water or an improvised chemical and held over the face, eye goggles. d.ii. A cotton hood impregnated with chemicals, held over the head and tucked into the collar. d.iii. A box which filtered the air. e. Allows the user to view the enemy without exposing themselves to gunfire.
- 5. Display Case 7. a & b.** Bayonet and scabbard, Lewis Machine Gun (photograph).
- 7. Display Case 9.** a. Trench mirrors worked by fixing them to a bayonet, stick or sword and raising them above the lip of the trench. b. The weapons on display are the German Pioneer Bayonet, trench club and British hand grenade.

## WORKING WITH OBJECTS : Foundation/General

- 1. Wall Display.** a. “ He was blown into the air by the bursting of a shell, his Greatcoat and equipment being stripped from his back. He received his injuries in falling on the ground and is now in hospital. b. Lance Sergeant Herd belonged to B Company. c. Pte Millar was struck by a piece of shrapnel. d. Pte Millar crawled into a shell hole.
- 2. Reconstructed Trench Display.** a. Housewife Kit (sewing), Officer's Kit (shaving), hairbrush, shoe polish, Vaseline, tooth powder, soaps. b. Repairs to his kit.
- 3. Display Case 6.** a. From 1915 onwards Chlorine and Phosgene gas was used to deadly effect which burned the eyes and skin, lungs and other internal tissues, the victim died, their lungs filled with fluid and they drowned in their own mucus. b.i. Cotton Wool Mask. ii. pH Helmet iii. Small Box Respirator. c. Allows the user to view the enemy without exposing themselves to gunfire.
- 4. Display Case 7.** a. HD Highland Division LG Lewis Gun. b. Lewis Gun.
- 5. Display Case 9.** a. Blood .b. 24<sup>th</sup> April 1917. c. Shrapnel d. The trench mirrors allow you to see round or over obstacles. e. British.

## STIRLING CASTLE: A Short Tour

The activity sheets concentrate on the military history of Stirling Castle during the First World War. A comprehensive display of this period can be found in the First World War Room. Further information regarding the history of the buildings can be freely found on plaques throughout the Castle.

## HANDLING BOX: Original and Replica Objects

This box is designed to allow Standard Grade pupils to access materials that will assist their knowledge and understanding of the First World War topic of the course.

The box contains a range of replica sources that the pupils can engage with directly. This will then allow them to complete a number of questions that will assist their learning. The session is designed to be teacher led and can be used in conjunction with a visit to the Regimental museum First World War room, where a wide range of Primary sources from the conflict are on display.



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**Section 2**

# ACTIVITY SHEETS

## FIRST WORLD WAR



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**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

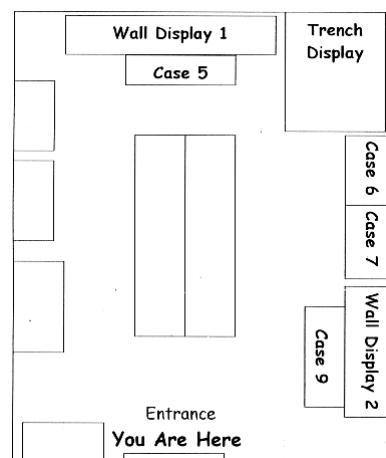
## WORKING WITH OBJECTS

Location: The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum

### GENERAL/CREDIT

Welcome to the First World War room.

- The display cases are numbered from 5-9. The case numbers match the question numbers.
- Wall Display 1 is above Display Case 5 and Wall Display 2 is above Display Case 9.
- Work in small groups, select a case and answer the questions.



### WALL DISPLAY 1 "Newspaper Cuttings"

Go to the back wall and look at the source on the wall above **Display Case 5** called *News from the front*. Read the article about Private Wright called *Heavy Shelling* and then answer the following questions:

- What were the two named methods that the Germans were using to attack the Scottish soldiers?
  - 
  -
- How long did the Germans shell the soldiers?
- How many shells does Private Wright think that the Germans had used?
- What bit of a shell does Private Wright believe hit him?

### DISPLAY CASE 5

Look at the artefacts and read the sources before you answer the following questions:

- What saved 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Charles Laing Warr's life?
- Who used the Kodak Box Camera?
- Why do think it was unusual to carry a camera during the war?

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## RECONSTRUCTED TRENCH DISPLAY

Look carefully at the display and answer the questions below:

a. Make a list of the personal items used by Lt WA Sutherland during his time in the trenches.

b. Why would Lt Sutherland and other soldiers need a *Housewife Kit*?

c. Why did the impact detonated hand grenade have streamers?

d. How was the rifle grenade fired?

e. Look very carefully at the trench bunker and make a list of as many items that you can see. The first one has been done for you:

Maps





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## DISPLAY CASE 7.

Look carefully in Display Case 7.

- a. Find an example of weapons technology shown in the case?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. What other weapons used by soldiers are in the display?

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## WALL DISPLAY 2 "Eyewitness Accounts"

Read the *Eyewitness Accounts* that are above Display Case 9.

- a. Use the accounts to write a paragraph describing what it was like for the Scottish soldiers to attack the enemy.

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## DISPLAY CASE 9.

Examine the contents of Display Case 9.

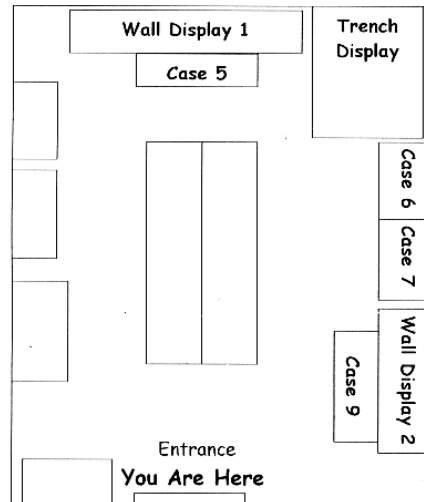
- a. Explain how the **Trench Mirrors** were used by the soldiers.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. Identify the weapons that are on display in the case.

# WORKING WITH OBJECTS

Location: The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum  
FOUNDATION/GENERAL

Welcome to the First World War room.

- The display cases are numbered from 5-9. The case numbers match the question numbers.
- Wall Display 1 is above Display Case 5 and Wall Display 2 is above Display Case 9.
- Work in small groups, select a case and answer the questions.



## WALL DISPLAY 1 "Newspaper Cuttings"

Go to the back of the room and find the framed newspaper cuttings above **Display Case 5**. They have the heading *News from the front*.

- a. Find the newspaper report about Lance Sergeant M B Herd and complete the following paragraph by finding the missing words:

He was \_\_\_\_\_ into the air by the \_\_\_\_\_ of a shell, his \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ being stripped from his back. He received his \_\_\_\_\_ in falling on the \_\_\_\_\_ and is now in hospital.

- b. To which Company did Lance Sergeant Herd belong?

- c. Look for the information on Private Archie Millar. What was Private Millar struck by on his shoulder?

- d. Where did Private Millar crawl to once he had been injured?

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## RECONSTRUCTED TRENCH DISPLAY

Look carefully at the display and answer the questions below:

a. Write a list of the personal items used by Lt W A Sutherland. The first one has been done for you:

i. Housewife (sewing kit)

ii.

iii.

b. Why would soldiers need a sewing kit?

c. Look very carefully at the trench bunker. Make a list of as many items that you can see in the bunker. e.g. Maps

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## DISPLAY CASE 6

Look carefully in Display Case 6.

a. Read the source Gas Hood (Helmet) c 1916 and complete the following paragraph:

From \_\_\_\_\_ onwards \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ gas was used to deadly effect which \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ and skin, \_\_\_\_\_ and other \_\_\_\_\_ tissues, the victim died, their \_\_\_\_\_ filled with \_\_\_\_\_ and they \_\_\_\_\_ in their own \_\_\_\_\_.

b. What are the three types of gas masks shown in the pictures?

i.

ii.

iii.

c. Why would British and German soldiers use periscopes?

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## **DISPLAY CASE 7**

Look carefully in Display Case 7.

- a. What do the following letters stand for?

HD

LG

- b. What type of gun are the soldiers firing in the picture?

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## **DISPLAY CASE 9**

Look carefully at Display Case 9.

- a. Look at the holster belonging to Captain John Duncan Mackie. What does it have dotted on it?

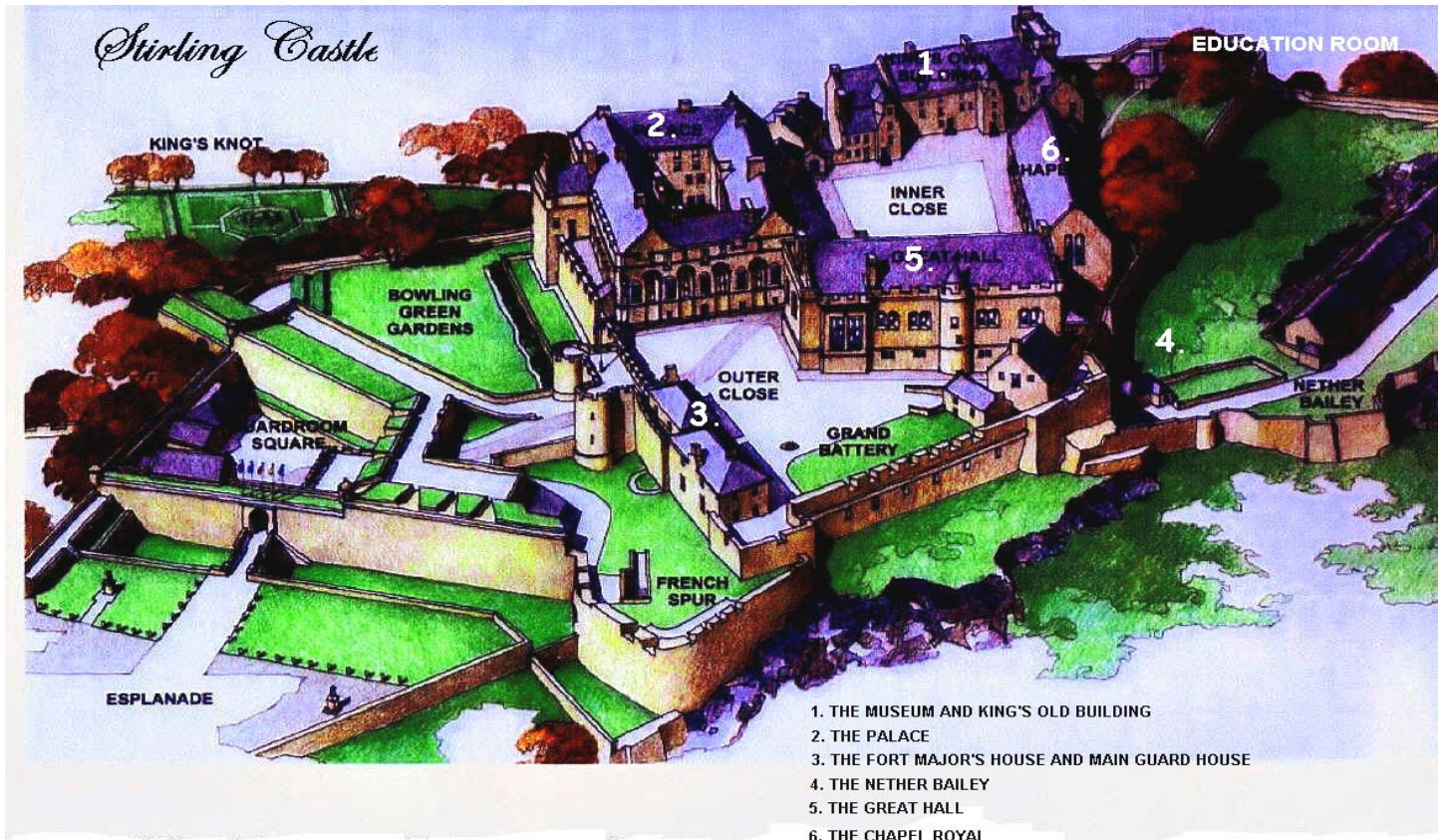
- b. When was he first wounded?

- c. What is stuck in the bible in the display?

- d. What were trench mirrors used for by the soldiers?

- e. Are the hand grenades in the display British or German?

# STIRLING CASTLE



## A Short Tour

Welcome to Stirling Castle, since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, men and women from many different regiments have lived and worked here. During the First World War, it was a recruiting centre for large numbers of men from all over the country. They were given their papers, uniforms and were medically inspected before being sent to overnight accommodation either in the Castle or in temporary camps surrounding it. Two squadrons (43<sup>rd</sup> and 63<sup>rd</sup>) of the Royal Flying Corps were also formed during this period and they regularly flew training flights from an airfield below the Castle.

- As you go round Stirling Castle, think about the role it played during the First World War and how it has changed over time.

"I was given a card with my regimental number and sent down to the gymnasium where I was inspected and marked fit" *Soldier, Stirling Castle, c 1914*

"He reported to a Sergeant who was taking the names of the reservists as they arrived. He was given a card with his name and regimental number and sent down a flight of stairs to the gymnasium." *Recollections of H.B. Todd, Stirling Castle, c1914.*



### 1. The Museum & Inner Close

**Location: The Inner Close.** The Museum buildings contained dining rooms, a mailroom, offices and accommodation for permanent staff. The building to the left of the Museum was a barbershop and sports store. The Inner Close was often used as a parade ground.

"That evening the 6th of August they were assembled fully dressed and equipped for active service on the parade ground and marched to the gymnasium to await the time for proceeding to the station." *Recollections of H.B. Todd, Stirling Castle, c 1914*

### 2. The Palace

**Location: The Palace or Outer Square.** The lower floor to the front of the Palace contained a canteen, recreation rooms and a school. The upper floors to the rear of the Palace contained a dining room and accommodation for permanent staff. A cookhouse was attached to the back of the Palace, it has now been demolished.

"Breakfast is either ham, kippers or salmon and bread. Tea is bread, jam or oatcakes. Dinner consisted of stewed sausages, dough balls and plenty of spuds" *Soldier, Stirling Castle, c1918*

"In the morning it was practically impossible to get any breakfast but they eventually managed to get a slice of bread and butter and a little tea." *Recollections of H.B. Todd, Stirling Castle, c 1914*

### 3. The Main Guard House and Fort Major's House.

**Location: The Outer Square.** The building on your right was the Regimental Sergeant Major's House (the Fort Major's House c 1858). The building on your left was offices for the Commanding Officer, Adjutant, and the Quartermaster.

Recruiting Staff, Stirling Castle, October 1916

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**Those groups with insufficient time may wish to advance to No.5 The Great Hall**

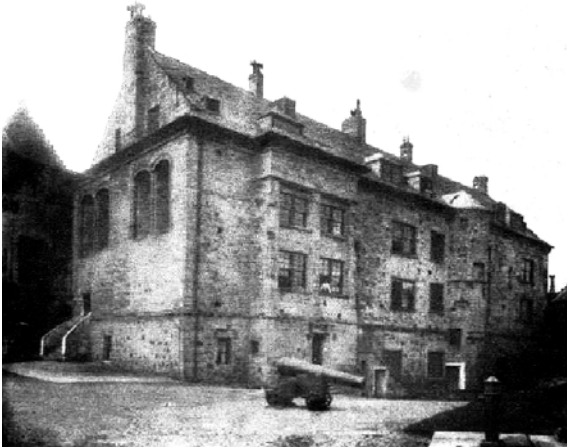
#### 4. The Nether Bailey.

**Location: The Nether Bailey.** An assault course covered the hills in the Nether Bailey and the buildings were used as transit stores.

"He was deeply impressed with the efficient way mobilisation was going on."  
*Recollections of H.B. Todd, Stirling Castle c 1914.*

#### 5. The Great Hall

**Location 1: The Great Hall.** The military subdivided the Great Hall to provide soldiers with living quarters. Trainee and permanent soldier's rooms were on the upper floors and a NAAFI shop, toilets, and washing facilities were on the lower floors.



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#### 6. The Chapel Royal

**Location: The Chapel Royal.** The Chapel Royal was converted into bedrooms during the First World War.

"The Castle was crowded with serving soldiers, recruits and reservists amid the latter had to find accommodation for sleeping anywhere they could."  
*Recollections of H.B. Todd, Stirling Castle, c 1914*

### **Return to the Douglas Gardens Education Room**

**i** Many of the military buildings in Stirling Castle were demolished. A large building once existed in the dry ditch at the entrance of the Castle. Originally used as a gymnasium it was converted into a medical inspection facility during the First World War.

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# HANDLING BOX

Location: The Douglas Gardens Education Room

## Original and Replica Objects

Work with your teacher to answer the following questions.

1. By looking carefully at the artifacts how can we identify the German grenade?
2. Draw two pictures to illustrate the difference between a British and German grenade.

Picture A:

Picture B:

3. Examine the coins carefully and identify which King ruled Britain during the First World War?
4. What do you think soldiers would have kept in the flask?
5. Read the source titled *Collection Of Information Regarding the Enemy* and answer the following questions:
  - a. When was this source printed?
  - b. What type of information did the General Headquarters require at all times?

- c. Why should prisoners be searched as soon as possible after their capture?
- d. Identify the German word for a pay-book?
6. Look closely at the cap badges then answer the questions below:
- a. Can you identify an example of new technology that was introduced during the war?
- b. Write down two other types of weapons used during the war that are on cap badges?
7. The handling box contains a cross of remembrance. Which flower is used as a symbol of the loss of life in the First World War?
8. Read the information on the Field Service Post Card. Why do you think that the soldiers were not allowed to write full information in sentences on their card?
9. a. Make a list of the contents of the personal kit pouch. The first item has been identified for you:
- Shaving**
- b. Who was the owner of this personal kit pouch and what was his army number.
10. What type of gas mask does the box contain?
11. Compare the First World War uniforms (originals) with the modern uniform.

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**Section 3**

# First World War

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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**The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum**



# Captain John Aidan Liddell.

## VC

Diary and Letters, France, 1914-15.

### August 1914

"Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup>. Arrived Stirling 1.30am, and found Station Hotel crowded with 7th Battalion Officers. However, managed to get a room."

"Thursday 6<sup>th</sup>. Breakfasted in Castle."

"Saturday 8<sup>th</sup>. Orders from Perth to be ready to move in one hour. Paraded at 10.45 for move. Left in first train about 12 midnight."

"Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>. Paraded at 6.45 and left to take 2nd draft. Packed up in the morning. Paraded at 6.45 and left Arsenal Station 7.40. Given 3 minutes to entrain 93 men."

### September

"Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup>. Arrived St Nazaire 9pm. lay outside."

"Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup>. Rest camp on a ploughed field overlooking sea. No food, water, or accommodation, as the staff had only arrived yesterday afternoon from Havre."

"Friday 4<sup>th</sup>. Orders to move at 11 o'clock in command of Brigade. 1200 troops on train."

"Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup>. Moved a little closer to enemy's line. Started at 1 a.m. Battle commenced again about 5.30. At intervals, shells bursting all round us. In the morning two men struck by splinters. Reported that 12 guns and 300 prisoners were taken last night. Enormous gun fire going on, and Bucy le long, just  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile over north, heavily shelled. Venizel getting its share, and all the woods. Large French flank attack supposed to be going on in afternoon. Enemy must be retiring, as firing got more distant about 4pm but just as heavy. Turned out at 7.30 to dig trenches, about 10.30 recalled to be moved up immediately. Pouring in torrents the whole time. When ready to move off order cancelled. Endeavoured to sleep but got absolutely soaked. Pools of water where I was lying. Shelling continues."

"Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup>. Four shells burst pretty well over our heads about 9 o'clock. Excellent straw shelters. Washed in a ditch."

"Thursday 17<sup>th</sup>. Battle still going on. Sent out at 10.15 with ten men to find some RFA men who had to be buried. Found nine of them killed by a shell. While we were digging, Germans commenced shelling the town, some of the shells coming short into the field we were digging in. Lay down

behind a heap of earth and waited for 1 ½ hours, as the battalion had left. Shells going all over the place, town being blown to pieces."

## October

"Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup>. Heavy shelling started around midday. Very solid infantry attack commenced at 2.15. I moved the guns up to the corner of the field and tried to help. Managed to get a certain amount of ammunition up by hand. Kept the gun in action until about 3.45. Guns steaming like chimneys, ammunition short, and impossible to get up enough."

"Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>. Stood to arms at 5, after having been woken several times during the night by heavy rifle fire. Retired through the village and sheltered in field, with deep ditches all over. Battle started as soon as light and we have much more artillery. Announced that 230 are unaccounted for. Later, still shelling. 198 men, 5 officers is the latest and most accurate count."

"Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>. Shelling commenced as soon as it was light, shrapnel bursting all round the shelter trenches. The mess cart arrived about 8 o'clock, having been ordered for 5 o'clock, and pulled up outside the cottage headquarters we were in; started unloading, when a shell bust, startling the horse. Gurgan went to its head, and was immediately struck in the temple by a shrapnel bullet. Six casualties altogether in morning, one more in evening. Cleaned the bad gun and discovered a defect, side plate spring."

"Saturday 24<sup>th</sup>. Much quieter during the night. The 47 Sikhs have arrived just behind and also a whole division at Lavertie. Shelled the north of La Soutellerie about 7.30. Desultory fighting through the day. At 4.50 a vigorous attack began, and there was a terrific noise. All our guns going as hard as they could. Died out about 7.30. At 8.10 started again, stopped about 10 minutes later. 10.45 recommenced, did not last long. Other furious fusillades at 1 o'clock and 3.30 approximately."

## November

"Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup>. Quite night, but very heavy shelling commenced at daybreak and continued until about 9.30. Enemy advanced a bit during night, and digging like rabbits about 400 yards in front. Gun got onto some of them with effect."

"Thursday 5<sup>th</sup>. Four 'stand to arms' during the night. Heavy rifle fire and a few shells from enemy, but no one to be seen. Don't think they left their trenches. Very foggy again, and only one burst of rifle fire."

"Friday 6<sup>th</sup>. Very foggy all morning. Little sniping and no shelling until 2pm."

"Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>. Only one alarm last night."

"Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>. Attack on the left about 8 o'clock. Heavy shelling from both sides. Very severe shelling all day. Estimated by artillery observer at 1000 shells along Battalions front. 50 casualties, 2 officers. Lasted from 8.30 in the morning until 4.30pm."

"Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>. Rained in torrents during night, gale of wind at times and sleet. Trenches a quagmire."

"Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup>. Started to rain during night and was still pouring when I left for Iouplines at 6. Breakfast at Headquarters. Afterwards shave; bath, first since St Omer and change of clothes. Excellent lunch and walked into Armentieres with Atkin. Very little left in shops. Civilians repairing their houses."

## December

"Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>. Headquarters in the morning. In evening the Germans had a concert. Sgt. Minnery went out in response to an invitation from the German Lines, and had a chat with a soldier who knew Glasgow well. Beautiful night."

"Friday 25<sup>th</sup>. Christmas day. Rather foggy, still freezing. In afternoon Germans brought two barrels of beer over to Welsh Fusiliers. Our men and theirs walked over to the halfway fence and had a chat. Astonishing sight. Walked over, Kennedy, Thomson and all of us, and had a long chat. Met the man from Glasgow, and gave him tobacco in exchange for cigars. Also newspapers. Talked to a lot of them in English and promised to send more papers over each night as far as the halfway fence. They are all confident that the Russians are beaten, and that the Austrians are in Belgrade. Victory for them in 6 months. They all seemed very friendly, lots of handshaking and *Aut wiedersehen* on parting, which took place at dusk due to their officers recalling them."

## January 1915

"Thursday 7<sup>th</sup>. Rained all night and very dark. Most of the trench fell in and there is a minimum of 5" of water in the trench and trench still collapsing, earth being poached into sticky mud. By midday, the trench was waist deep in places. A coy had one man up to his neck and only dug outs for two men. Officer's mess fell in."

"Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>. Froze last night and most of day. Felt ill; lay down on arrival at billets."

"Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>. Remained lying down."

"Monday 25<sup>th</sup>. Went to Field Ambulance, in a wagon about 11am. Stayed on a mattress on the floor all day."

"Thursday 28<sup>th</sup>. Left for hospital ship about 11am. Sailed about 1pm. arrived Dover about 3. Hospital train thence to Woolwich, and then to Herbert Hospital."

"Saturday 30<sup>th</sup>. Left for Sheffield with three weeks leave. Applied to join RFC, and was sent to Shoreham May 4th."

## February

"Saturday 24<sup>th</sup>. Arrived St Omer 3.30 a.m. eventually got to RFC headquarters and was attached to No.7 Squadron here."

## Letters from Captain John Aidan Liddell, VC, France.

November 6<sup>th</sup>

My Dear Mother

We are still in the trenches, as I told you in my last letter, my guns and self were attached to another regiment. Just a week since I wormed my way in. The German trenches are only 400 yards away, so one cannot show one's head much. We have very deep, narrow trenches, only about 18 inches wide, with wider places here and there. They shell us regularly, but have only made one attack, 50 prisoners and over 100 dead, buried all by the one company, 18m width. They are a Bavarian reserve regiment. Poor little lads, not one seemed to be more than 20 years old. One whose papers I had to take to headquarters was only 17.

I have a little area to sleep in, about 4 ft long, 3 wide, and 3 high, burrowed out in the side of the trench, with a waterproof sheet over the opening. I can have a candle burning, which makes it feel quite cheerful. I was disturbed during the last paragraph by a violent burst of rifle fire on our right, but it died out very quickly. The nights are very misty now, and it is impossible to see more than 30 yards or so in front. So, on the least alarm one has to be jumping up and standing to arms. Some nights are much quieter than others, but there is generally a vigorous fusillade for ten minutes or so twice or three times a night. Being separated from the battalion, I don't get any letters or parcels, but I hope to rejoin soon. I had my boots off and changed my socks today, the first time since 18th of September.

Been kept busy since then. Everybody, including the Germans I imagine, is longing for the war to finish. It is fearfully tiring and monotonous (if that can be applied to a day of heavy shelling) but everybody keeps very cheerful. The regiment I am with has been in these trenches since September 22nd, the day after the battle I told you about. You will see in the papers we lost five officers that day. Had to retire and were unable to move the wounded. Left them in a house (one of the sole standing ones) with a Red Cross flag, so I suppose and hope the Germans are looking after them. Two were killed I believe, but no one was quite sure.

The Kaiser has been over here. Thank heavens; he ordered Calais to be taken against the will of his generals, and has apparently failed. Bungled it as usual.

Well, good-bye, Love to all.

From Aidan. Could you send a few more envelopes?

November 17<sup>th</sup>

Dear Mother

I'm afraid my last letter was not very cheerful in tone. I was rather fed up at not being relieved with the Middlesex. However, I only stayed in those trenches two days longer, when I got an order to rejoin the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. I fully expected a rest, but we marched straight



to some other trenches the day after I rejoined, which I did in the dead of night). So here I am again, having been in contact with the enemy since the 30th of last month. It freezes hard at night now, and for the last five days, (today was fine) has rained heavily.

Makes this life rather uncomfortable. This part of the line has been very busy, but both sides seem rather fought to a standstill.

My Burberry is just about done. All this pushing along trenches has worn it round the sides, and at the elbows. Could you order me another from the London people who have my measurements? Made of stout gabardine, cavalry pattern, and lined with heavy fleece. Not detachable lining like the last one I got from them, but with the fleece firmly stitched in.

Boots too are done. Bartley in Piccadilly has my measurements, but they must be ever so much larger than the last pair of shoes he made me. They were small even with thin socks and I like wearing two pairs of very thick ones.

Clasp Knife with tin opener also disappeared with my haversack. I can get the latter replaced locally. Woolly gloves would be nice also. The cardigan and the humbugs and chocolate I got yesterday when I joined the battalion again. Waistcoat very comfy indeed, and the hankies were much needed. I devoured Ivelcon soups with much relish this morning, very good indeed.

Other foodstuffs, such as anchovy paste, Pate de foie gras, the St Ivel veal and ham pie with eggs, mentioned in the Ivelcon box, mixed biscuits, cakes (in tins), especially the latter, would make a very welcome change in the rations, which is practically all we are able to get in this trenched existence.

We mess by companies nowadays, and little comforts such as the above are always very acceptable. There are three of us only messing together at present.

Most important of all, which I nearly forgot, my air pillow was alas stolen; I am desolate at nights without it. It must be a thin one, which one can fold up into one's pocket.

Gaiters, black Stohwasser pattern, are also going to pieces. Also a pair of military spurs, chains, straps, and instep protectors. Last but not least, my wristwatch strap broke and the watch is lost. If you could get one of those luminous ones, I would be very grateful.

I'm afraid this letter is full of wants, but what with thefts, losses and wear and tear, I am becoming less well equipped than I was at the beginning. Just remembered collapsible knife, fork and spoon.

The battalion had another engagement while I was away and lost fairly heavily again, you will have seen that though by the casualty lists. So I didn't miss much by staying in the trenches, although my trials were more extended. It was very trying for the men, as there was a certainty of there being some casualties every day and the uncertainty as to whose turn it would be next. One saw a lot in the newspapers at the beginning of the war, about the Germans' rotten rifle fire. Well, they have some extraordinarily good shots. There were always a few on the look out all day, and woe betides anyone who happened to show the least bit of his

head above the parapet. They didn't miss very often, if time was given them to get aim. There was a high brick wall behind part of the trenches, which they shelled to pieces.

There was a communication trench behind this, where the men used to cook by day. If anyone showed up against one of the holes in the wall he was sure to be fired at.

Altogether their snipers were extraordinarily good. Of course our men played the same game and as the Germans seemed very careless about walking about behind their trenches, we more than got our own back. One of the prisoners we got said they had 800 dead in their lines. That, I suppose, was during a length of time our brigade had lost about 150 or so altogether, so they didn't do so well.

I've just wrapped up in my blanket 3 waterproof sheets and a German bivouac cover I found, and I am feeling tolerably warm and quite ready for sleep. Three German machine guns are firing on our left, at what I can't make out, as there is no rifle fire either from their side or from ours.

However I hope it doesn't mean I have to turn out, as I am quite snug. Also my feet feel almost warm. As they have been wet now for some ten days or so, I don't know whether they are there or not sometimes, they get so cold and numb. I am hoping we don't have to spend Christmas in these trenches, but I suppose it's quite on the cards.

I wrote to Uncle Matt, congratulating him, a week or two ago and heard from him three days ago.

Time for a little shut eye.

Lots of love to all,  
from Aidan

"Everyone has a dugout shelter, and a coke fire and some utensil or other. One can be very snug in ones rabbit hole. Also as meals are practically the only distraction, housekeeping becomes quite interesting. The little fires make excellent toast and as we quite often get an issue of ration butter, piles of hot-buttered toast can be consumed. Of course just when one has an opportunity of cooking most luxurious stews, they cease to issue fresh meat. However, a large field of leeks is cut in half by our trench, and Ivelcon -cum- leek soup, and bully-beef-cum leek stew are very good. If you have any spare mufflers or helmets or woolly gloves at home, remember that I have a gallant little band of, at present survivors, but full strength, sixteen men, who are really nobody's children, and don't really get their fair share of the things sent to various companies by the relations and friends of the officers belonging to the said companies, in spite of my efforts and free booting excursions. "

Captain John Aidan Liddell, France.

22/58

*The photograph of Captain Liddell was sent to the museum by Major Guy Cassie in July 1958. It belonged to Miss Astley Campbell, late Nursing Sister and Matron of the King of Belgians Hospital at La Paure, Belgium 1914-18 who nursed Captain Liddell, when he was shot down in his plane, His wounds were severe, but she admired his cheerfulness and courage. After the operation for the removal of his leg etc, he became worse and she arranged with Lord Athlone, living with King Albert, that Mrs Liddell should be brought over to see her son. In 1915 this was not easy to arrange. Knowing that he had only a short time to live, and hearing that he had been awarded the Victoria Cross she got Lord Athlone to supply to the Palace for the award to be sent over. This was done and was pinned on Captain Liddell, he managed to rally to Miss Campbell's voice so he knew that he had received the award.*

*Afterwards Miss Campbell arranged that his body be sent to his home in Hampshire enclosed in a packing case. She attended to the removal by ship home. The photo given to her by his mother was taken before he transferred to the Flying Corps, and she was very glad to give it now to the regiment. Miss Astley Campbell was given the Order of the Queen Elizabeth of Belgium, and was also one of the eleven only who has been given the International Red Cross Medal. She ended the war as Assistant Matron of Netley Hospital, Southampton and was President of Surbiton S.S.A.F.A and a member of the British Legion for 36 years.*

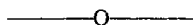
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LONDON GAZETTE No. 29272  
of 20/23 AUGUST, 1915.



Captain,  
3rd Bn. Princess Louise's  
Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders  
and Royal Flying Corps.

**LIDDELL, JOHN AIDAN.** For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty on 31st July, 1915, when on flying reconnaissance over Ostend-Bruges-Ghent he was severely wounded (his thigh being broken) which caused momentary unconsciousness, but by a great effort he recovered partial control after his machine had dropped nearly 3000 feet, and notwithstanding his collapsed state, succeeded, although continually fired at in completing his course, and brought his aeroplane into our lines half an hour after he had been wounded. The difficulties experienced by this officer in saving his machine and the life of his observer cannot be readily expressed, but as the control wheel and throttle control were smashed and also one of the under-carriage struts, it would seem incredible that he could have accomplished his task.





## **Pte William Stean Ypres**

The Colonel called it "Aypray"  
The Captain called it "Eeps"  
While "Tommy" called it all  
things-  
And "Wipers" came for keeps.

Old wipers was a grand place  
Before the war began,  
Her stately buildings, graceful  
As ever planned by man.

Around that ancient city  
which "Jerry" wanted bad,  
We dug a line of trenches-  
A horse-shoe shape it had.

That salient was wicked,  
As casualties proved;  
Tho' it was real inferno,  
We never were removed.

With shells from all directions;  
from front and either hand;  
And snipers all around us;  
You ought to understand.

In daylight we were crouching  
With mud up to the eyes,  
Observing from the loopholes

For "Jerry's next surprise.  
In places he was near us-  
A road might just divide-  
To move was seeking trouble;  
To stretch was suicide!

"Whiz - bang !" The shrapnel  
rattled;"Ker - up "- the  
fifteen -inch; grenades, and  
bombs and "minnies";  
We hadn't time to flinch.

But night-time was like a  
nightmare. With flames and  
thuds, and frights  
Trench-mortars, liquid-fire,  
yes, and countless Veri-lights.

Sharp cries of pain co-mingled  
With orders shouted; crass!  
Explosions and eruptions;  
Machine gun fire and gas.

That we could quite survive it,  
Was more than we dare think;  
Defeat stood there before us  
But not a man would shrink

The punishment was awful  
Yet sternly we held on;  
To poor old shattered Wipers  
Tilt most of it had gone.

When "Jerry" threw the sponge  
up  
We held that bit of line;  
The' few who helped to build it  
Went forward to the Rhine.

Yet those who fell in action  
Are famous, ever more  
Wilt Wipers be remembered  
For Glory and for gore.

# Official War Diary, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. The Battle of Loos, 21<sup>st</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> September 1915

Nr Bethune 21.9.15 In Billets, Heavy Bombardment on our front by British.

22.9.15 In Billets, Reinforcement (20) arrived from Base.

23.9.15 In Billets, during morning proceeded to trenches near Cambrin in the afternoon. Packs and blankets in Bethune.

Cambrin 24.9.15 In Trenches, Four men wounded.

25.9.15 In Trenches, Attack on September 25th 1915 near Cambrin, The ground between our trench and the Germans was flat except where a pieces of mines had been exploded which made craters with sides 8 to 9 feet high completely screening the German trenches except for a gap of about 60 yards, one crater known as Etna touched our lines, one side of which had been held by us and the other by the Germans for some months. The wire in the gap had been previously cut by our artillery and the assault had to pass through this gap to reach the German trenches. This distance across was about 80 yards.

The two leading companies were "D" on the left, Captain H de B, Purves B' on the right Lieut H A Campbell. A. company, ...?.... Company Captain J C Aitkin, C Company Captain Wardlaw Ramsey in reserve, at 5.45 am. the artillery opened fire and 5.50 the gas was turned on for 40 minutes, the last 5 minutes combined with smoke. At 6.30 a.m the assault started, the morning being very still, the gas hung about and was inclined to come back which hampered the leading platoons, No 16 platoon 1Y' Company Lieut. Bullough and No 5 Platoon 'B' Company 2nd Lieut Gillespie advanced and succeeded in reaching the German front trench, on the appearance of the assaulting parties the German opened a heavy machine gun and shrapnel fire. 1 more platoon of 'B" Company succeeded and in crossing the fire trench, but were unable to reach the German trenches and support the leading Platoon: owing to the heaviness of the fire the remaining Platoons were unable to cross the fire trench, "A' company endeavored to cross but were also unable to make any headway.

The machine guns came into action under Lieu McPherson to support the advance, but could make no impression on the enemy fire. The supporting Batteries fired rapid shrapnel but were hampered by the closeness of the lines. As no advance was possible the Platoon in front returned to our lines, and further attempt was abandoned. Of the ? Platoons that reached the German trench 11 returned in the ? Lieu Furlough was seen to fall on the German wire and 2nd Lieu Gillespie on the German parapet.

Serge McClure and about 10 men of 5 Platoon were seen to jump into the German trenches the remainder of these 2 Platoons were wiped out

### Casualties

Officers :- Captain C Aitkin, killed. Captain R B Ward law. ? Wounded  
Lieu J M Miller killed, Lieu O E Smith killed, 2Lieu H Kerr killed, 2Lieu W  
G Fallow field killed, 2Lieu L C Fraser killed, 2 Lieu A McPherson wounded,  
2Lieu L J Fraser wounded, 2 Lieu R Bogie, wounded, Lieu J R Furlough  
missing believed killed, Lieu E P Buchanan, wounded. Lieu E P Buchanan,  
wounded, 2Lieu W R Kennedy killed 2 Lieu A O Gillespie missing believed  
killed. 2 Lieu J D ? Wounded and died of wounds,

### Rank and File 315

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## Recollections of H B Todd MC, DCM, MM

### The Battle of Loos, 25<sup>th</sup> September 1915.

"When the Great War broke out in 1914 James Macintosh was employed as a Postman at Glasgow. He had previously served in the army for a period of just over 8 years and was still attached to the reserves when the call came. He completed his delivery of letters for the last time at 9-10p.m. on the evening of the 4th August 1914 and then with a colleague who was also a Postman, walked to his house to see if his mobilisation papers had turned up. They had not, but both men knew that their instructions to join the colours would arrive in the morning and they were tremendously elated at the prospect of active service."

"Macintosh made his way home about quarter to ten to break the news to his wife. His two children, boys aged two and a half and eleven months were asleep and in any case were too young to realise the gravity of the situation."

"On reaching Stirling they proceeded to the Castle to report. Macintosh was astonished at the sight he saw in the Castle and he was deeply impressed with the efficient way mobilisation was going on. He reported to a Sergeant who was taking the names of the reservists as they arrived. He was given a card with his name and regimental number and sent down a flight of stairs to the gymnasium."

"The Castle was crowded with serving soldiers, recruits and reservists amid the latter had to find accommodation for sleeping anywhere they could. In

the morning it was practically impossible to get any breakfast but they eventually managed to get a slice of bread and butter and a little tea."

"That evening the 6th of August they were assembled fully dressed and equipped for active service on the parade ground and marched to the gymnasium to await the time for proceeding to the station."

"About 8.15p.m they left the Castle, which many of them were never to see again."

"On the morning of the 25 Sept 1915, Sgt James Macintosh worked his way along the reserve trench issuing the rations as best he could. The company had assembled in battle order at 5.45 am, the attack being timed to commence at 6.15am."

"All the night through and right up to a few minutes before the attack commenced our artillery had kept up a steady bombardment of the enemy's position. It was hoped that many casualties had been inflicted and that the enemy's trenches and strong points had been severely damaged. The attacking troops had been issued with extra days rations and an additional 50 rounds of ammunition."

"the gas was let off, the British guns lengthened their range and the infantry went over. No sooner had the platoon got out of the trench via the scaling ladders they met a blast of machine gun and rifle fire."

"It was long odds against any men ever reaching the enemy's position alive. About 150 yards could be attained in face of a deadly and accurate fire from rifle and machine guns besides high explosives and shrapnel from the offensive field guns,"

"No.5 platoon emerging from the assembly trench they found themselves inhaling the gas that had been discharged against the enemy. The wind had not carried it across and it had drifted into shell holes and along the ground."

"Immediately they topped the scaling ladders an amazing sight met their eyes. The enemy had lit fires along his parapet with the object of dispersing the gas cloud when it reach the ? . These fires together with the smoke and bursts of the shells which were throwing clouds of dirt in the air and empty black, yellow and white smoke as they burst made up a picture that rivalled the infernal regions. The din was terrific, the whine and crash of the machine guns, the whistle of the bullets following on the crack of the rifles made an appalling din."

"No 9 Platoon made a dash forward but they had only gone about 20 paces when the officers shouted down and each man threw himself down."

"There were no signs of movement from the two platoons that had proceeded them and the only evidence that they had passed onwards was



the dead and wounded that littered the ground.”

“Before attempting to continue the advance Fraser determined to find out where the platoons had disappeared to he asked for a volunteer to go forward and find out. Several men volunteered instantly and he selected Private Murray, a regular soldier from Govan. Murray got to his feet and started running in a zig-zag manner in order to give the enemy marksmen as difficult a target as possible. He had only run about few paces when a bullet struck his rifle close to where it was gripped by his right hand. The impact tore the rifle from his hand and he fell forward on his face. The men of the platoon believed that he had been killed or badly wounded but it was not the case as after a pause of a few seconds he sprang to his feet and ran on, this time he ran on jumped the British front trench and was lost to view.”

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2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant CB Robertson

“7 October, The Somme Front. The dugouts are big and deep and dark, very safe .The trenches vary from 15 yards apart to 600 and as both sides could do a lot of damage with bombs I don't think either of us are very active with them. Today we left our billet and marched about 7 miles further forward. ”

“Feb 6. The trenches, Belgium. We are in for a rather stiff six days, two days of this, two days in a barn, still in the shelling area, then two more days here and then back for six days of peace and quietness. Walking up the line was the worst part of the lot. When we got to about 1000 yards from the firing line the bullets began singing around.”

“Cleanliness is impossible as water is so scarce... Another thing is the lack of hot food. The only thing in that way you can manage is a little hot cocoa, perhaps twice a day. Otherwise we live on bully beef, sardines, biscuits, butter and jam. Of course if a man is wet, cold and dirty and doesn't get decent meals he is liable to get seedy.”

“12 April. We only have four trenches which hold 120 men, and as we have 200 (thanks to many drafts) 70 men are staying in support and it has fallen to my lucky lot to be in charge of them. After 4 days trenches we have 4 days 'demi-repos' about a mile back in a wood. Some parcels have arrived - the ham, soup, sweets, and clothes and today the pork pie, caramels and almonds - many thanks.”



PLS. PLEASE  
above No.)

# Lance Corporal Frank Henry Coleman

ARMY FORM B. 104-82.



Infantry Record Office,  
Gay St., Perth  
5<sup>th</sup> October, 1914

Madam,

It is my painful duty to inform you that a report has been received from the War Office notifying the death of:—

(No.) 9/17945 (Rank) Lieut./Capt.  
(Name) Francis Henry Coleman,  
(Regiment) Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders  
which occurred in France.  
on the 20<sup>th</sup> September, 1914.  
The report is to the effect that he Died of Wounds.

By His Majesty's command I am to forward the enclosed message of sympathy from Their Gracious Majesties the King and Queen. I am at the same time to express the regret of the Army Council at the soldier's death in his Country's service.

I am to add that any information that may be received as to the soldier's burial will be communicated to you in due course. A separate leaflet dealing more fully with this subject is enclosed.

I am,

Coleman,  
Gay St.,  
Perth

Madam,

Your obedient Servant,

W. P. Haig Capt.  
for Officer in charge of Records. Vol. 2.  
Record Office.



*France.*

My Dear Mother + Dad

"Just a few lines to let you know how I am getting on. I would have written before, but I have been waiting until I got settled down. A matter of fact I am not settled down yet but I couldn't wait any longer as no doubt you will be anxious to hear from me. Well as you know I am not allowed to say much but I will give you as much news as I possibly can. I am feeling in the best of health which is the main thing. I had a splendid journey coming from England the sail across from \_\_\_?\_\_\_ was lovely arriving in Boulogne about 3.30 we stayed the night \_\_\_?\_\_\_ on Sunday morning we started for this camp about twenty miles march. I was pretty well done in when I got here you may be sure. The boys are splendid lads, to see them going up to the trench any would think they were off for a show \_\_\_?\_\_\_ jolly singing and shouting. I have had no word about my job yet but the Colonel says he is waiting for word from the War Office. I wont be staying here for long but if you write me soon I might get it before I leave here at any rate "

" With love from your affectionate son ,

Frank"

Lance Corporal FH Coleman, 10<sup>th</sup> Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

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## The Christmas Day Armistice

Official War Diary, 1914 France

23<sup>rd</sup> Dec. Germans heard morning transportation West to East.

10 pm 2nd Lieut Bankier arrived with 34 men.

24<sup>th</sup> Dec. Work carried out in communication Trench.

25<sup>th</sup> Dec. Very quite day. Germans came out of their trenches unarmed in afternoon and were seen to belong to 133<sup>rd</sup> and 134<sup>th</sup> Regiments. The position was ....?..... by Lieut Anderson. The Germans asked for leave to bury 10 dead. This was granted.

26<sup>th</sup> Dec. A few shells were fired at and in rear of our trenches, one going through the house used as an orderly room.

## **Official War Diary, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. 1914**

23<sup>rd</sup> Dec. Settling down into billets. Quiet day.

24<sup>th</sup> Dec. Brigade route march. Lt and Adj. Boyle rejoined from sick list.

25<sup>th</sup> Dec. Xmas Day. Company training. All ranks delighted with their Majesties and Princess Mary's presents, and "Daily News" plum puddings.

26<sup>th</sup> Dec. Company Training.

27<sup>th</sup> Dec. "A" and "B" Companies commenced line of entrenchment E of Boeseguem on left of 2nd Camerons. Very cold day

## **Personal Diary, Capt J.A. Liddell**

"Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>. Headquarters in the morning. In evening the Germans had a concert. Sgt. Minnery went out in response to an invitation from the German Lines, and had a chat with a soldier who knew Glasgow well. Beautiful night. "

"Friday 25<sup>th</sup>. Christmas day. Rather foggy, still freezing. In afternoon Germans brought two barrels of beer over to Welsh Fusiliers. Our men and theirs walked over to the halfway fence and had a chat. Astonishing sight. Walked over, Kennedy, Thomson and all of us, and had a long chat. Met the man from Glasgow, and gave him tobacco in exchange for cigars. Also newspapers. Talked to a lot of them in English and promised to send more papers over each night as far as the halfway fence. They are all confident that the Russians are beaten, and that the Austrians are in Belgrade. Victory for them in 6 months. They all seemed very friendly, lots of handshaking and *Aut wiedersehen* on parting, which took place at dusk due to their officers recalling them."

## **Extracts from 'NO 'ELL IN HOUPLINES Christmas Day 1914' The Thin Red Line Magazine.**

"Just after mid-day there were shouts along the lines "The Jerries are out of their trench" I can tell you we were on the firestep like lighting our rifles in our hands, bayonets fixed and our fingers pretty near the trigger. Then we saw they were really unarmed and shouting and waving their arms; we could hardly believe our eyes. "

"The order came along. "Stand To, but hold fire." As they came forward it would be hard to describe our feelings. They would be about half-way towards our trenches when someone shouted, "Look! Some of our men are out in the open too." Our fellows were unarmed out there, and quite a number of us joined them."

"The Jerries and our men met approximately half-way between our respective forward defences. We were all shaking hands and clapping each other's shoulders. "

"By this time we could hear accordion music and singing, from their trench. We were the same as them; after all we were all tradesmen in our own particular sphere - soldiering."

"Some of the men in the Platoon on our left had made a "ball" from paper, rags and string and went their "dinger" for about twenty minutes, until the ball fell to pieces and that was that. Soon, as the sky was getting overcast, our company officer ordered us back to our trench. Grasping hands once more, Scots and Germans saluted each other and made for their respective trenches, leaving No Man's Land to its eloquent emptiness once more. No shot was fired by either side till midnight."

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## Diary, Lt Col HG Hyslop, DSO, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Somme 1916

"25<sup>th</sup> June. Bombardment of German trenches began. The day was divided up into periods in which various kinds of bombardments with guns, trench mortars and machine guns took place. This continued for some days and was part of the scheme for a general attack further south."

"29<sup>th</sup> 30<sup>th</sup> June. Heavy bombardment. We blew up a mine and had a demonstration of smoke bombs."

"1<sup>st</sup> July. The attack on the Somme started this morning."

"6<sup>th</sup> July. There is a flying ground here which we have visited and which is very interesting. We shown the different kinds of machines but there was not much actual flying going on."

"21<sup>st</sup> July. After rounding Fricourt Wood we came to the Mametz Valley. This was just full of transport and gun teams, the place being black with them and this continued right up to Mametz Wood. The Germans, however had now had time to concentrate more guns, and that afternoon and night they gave the valley a bad time and in consequence the horses were by next day much reduced in numbers and the remainder were taken further back. Batteries seemed to be everywhere, most of them just in the open without any attempt at cover, and the noise was tremendous."

"24<sup>th</sup> July. At 8pm the Germans counter attacked from the SWITCH TRENCH. Our guns got down to them at once and very few approached our trenches."

"25<sup>th</sup> July. Heavy shelling on both sides. We advanced our trenches a little in the course of the night. The Bazentin Woods are hardly worthy of the name of woods. The trees have been literally blown to pieces, there is no green to be seen and only a few battered tree trunks remain standing. Round here is the German 2nd Line and this area is the most deserted, the most forsaken I have ever seen."

"26<sup>th</sup> July. We were relieved at night by the 153rd Brigade and went back into bivouac behind Becordel. The relief was unfortunately rather delayed and the last company "B" and Headquarters were caught in a barrage of asphyxiating shells mixed with others. We had to put our gas helmets on as the fumes are very poisonous, but the difficulty of moving in the dark over the broken ground made many men lift their helmets to see, and consequently a good number were gassed, though not many very seriously. A number of men were however hit by shells and altogether we had a number

of casualties. I spent four of the worst hours of my life in this barrage, shells dropping round one and of all kinds, and to make matters worse just before I got away they hit a bomb magazine and sent the bombs and smoke candles flying all round me. A curious feature of this gas was that a good many men who had not felt it much at first went sick a couple of days afterwards from the effects."

"13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> October Training. Weather better. We have an encampment of Tanks near us, and as I had not seen them before I was much interested. They are weird objects and move very slowly and deliberately. I cannot help thinking they will make excellent targets for the German light guns, and they look as if they could get bogged down in the mud very easily."

"18<sup>th</sup> October. Marched to LEALVILLERS and went into bivouac. Very wet and ground in a dreadful state. The roads were just crowded with troops and transport; it took us nearly 4 hours to march 3½ miles. The Tanks are curious creatures. On each side are two armoured turrets containing a 6 pdr. gun or Vickers machine guns, an endless caterpillar tread winds round each side of the Tank each of these treads are worked by separate engines. The heavy wheels which are dragged behind help in steering. They can move across almost any country but are very slow (from one to two miles an hour) and are very liable in rough country to go out of order. "

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## Lieutenant Hugh Adam Munro

"Sunday 16th May, Merris. Got one of the latest respirators today - black gauze with a pad soaked in the mixture. Supposed to be quite efficient.

"Thursday 10th May. A distressing experience one's first shelling. The long drawn out whistle leaves one horribly uncertain for some time where the shell is going to land. Better on the march when you have only the bursting shell, the whistle drowned by marching feet. Reassured by Ghurka officers who sat and smoked and read papers outside doors of their tottering offices and headquarters."

"Friday 21st May. Indians came trooping in across fields from fire trenches; great many wounded, some going back along, others on stretchers, past our trench."

"Friday 4th June. Place taken over from Canadians. Macintyre giving instructions in Gaelic to his platoon (Ballachulish) and getting answers in same tongue. The Artillery Observer was astonished, hadn't heard Gaelic before."

F R A N C E.

7/4/18.

Dear Mrs Wilson,

I regret very much having to inform you that your son Robert was killed in action on the 22nd day of March. BOB, as he was known to us all, was shot through the head during a German attack on our position. He suffered no pain whatever, as he was unconscious during the brief ten minutes which elapsed ere his soul passed away. I was beside him when he was struck, and I tried to rouse him, but his eyes saw not, neither did he speak.

Bob was a gallant soldier, and did his duty nobly and well. He fell in a gallant action fighting for a good cause. Nothing I can say will bring you back your hero but you will be relieved to learn the circumstances of his death. We all of us miss Bob very much and he was a friend indeed to all our sergts.

May GOD Who took away the precious life He gave, give you grace and strength to say "Thy Will be done!" We all feel very much for you all at this trying time.

Yours in sympathy,

(Signed) N. LOGAN, Sergt.

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# Pages from the Notebook of Sgt Sydney Oldham

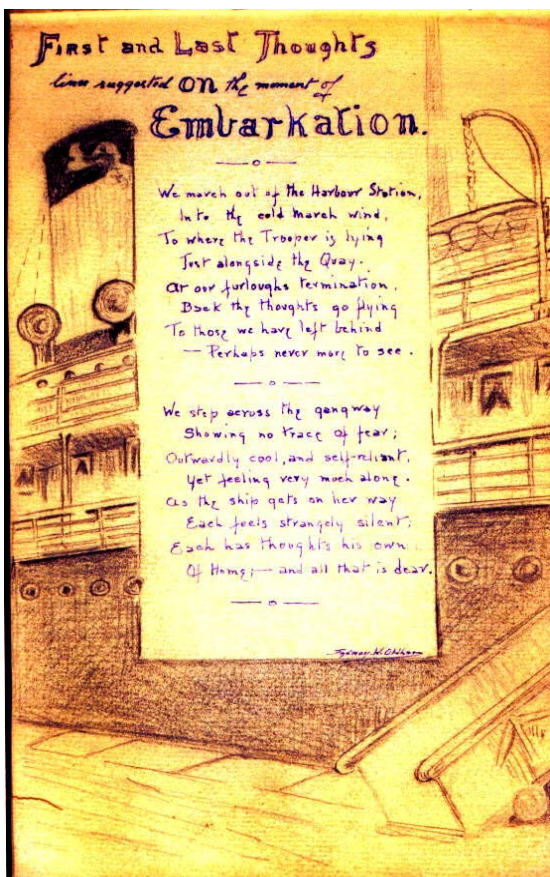
First and Last Thoughts, Lines  
suggested on the moment of  
Embarkation.

\_\_\_\_\_o\_\_\_\_\_

We march out of the Harbour Station,  
Into the cold March wind,  
To where the Trooper is lying  
Just alongside the Quay.  
At our furloughs termination,  
Back thy thoughts go flying  
To those we have left behind  
— perhaps never more to see.

\_\_\_\_\_o\_\_\_\_\_

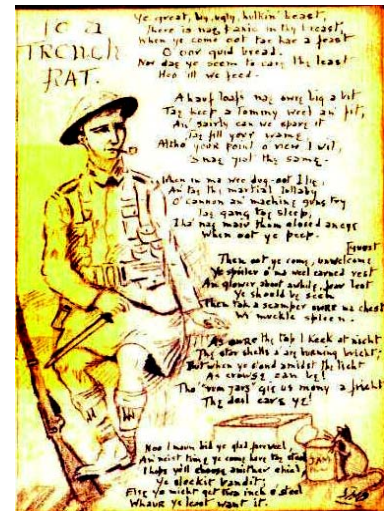
We step across the gangway  
Showing no trace of fear;  
Outwardly cool, and self-reliant,  
Yet feeling very much alone.  
As the ship gets on her way  
Each feels strangely silent;  
Each has thoughts his own  
Of Home; - and all that is dear.



To a Trench Rat

\_\_\_\_\_o\_\_\_\_\_

Ye great big, ugly  
hulking beast,  
There is nae panic  
in the breast,  
When ye come oot  
tae hae feast  
O' oor guid bread. Nor dae ye seem to  
care the least, hae ill we feed.



A hauf loaf nae oure big a bit  
Tae keep a Tommy weel an' fit,  
An' sairly can we spare it  
Tae fill your frame, Atho' your point view I wil's nae,  
see just the same.

When in the wee dug-oot I lie,  
An' tae the martial lullaby O' cannon an'  
machine guns try tae lay gang tay  
sleep, Tha' nay mair than closed an eye  
When oot ye peep.

Then oot ye come, unwelcome guest ye  
spoil a weel earned rest  
A glower about  
awhile oor least  
Ye should be seen  
Then tak a scamper oore me chest  
spleen

As oore the top I keek at nicht  
Tae star shells a burning bricht  
But when ye stand  
amidst the nicht  
As crouse can be!  
The "jam jars" gie as mony a fricht  
The deil cair's ye!

Now I must bid ye glad fareweel  
An' next time ye came here tae steal  
I hope ye'll choose a nither cheil  
Ye sleekit bandit: Flic ye micht get  
twa inch a steel  
Whaur ye least want it.



## WHILE THE BULLETS WHISTLED

### And the Big Guns Roared

#### GRAPHIC STORY BY A TERRITORIAL

A private of Alexandria and Renton Company of the Dunbartonshire (sic) Territorials, the 9<sup>th</sup> Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in a letter dated 1<sup>st</sup> April home to a friend in the Vale of Leven, gives some of his experiences at the front. He is a member of the machine gun section.

They had a warm time of it in the trenches, he states, and it was no joke getting into them. As they get nearer the trenches the roar of the big guns was something terrible. When about half a mile from the trenches the bullets commenced to whistle past them. His section were carrying a Maxim gun, striped, six ammunition boxes, spare parts box, and a few other things belonging to the gun. There they were

#### Staggering Along

falling into ditches, sometimes being up to the knees in mud. In the middle of this up would go one of the German "flares" and down they all flopped to the ground. All the time the bullets were whistling around them. This went on for about half an hour, and by that time they had reached the trenches in safety.

They relieved another machine-gun section. Two men took two hours' guard at the one time. When not on guard they could try and get a few hours' sleep in the "dug out". This, however, was almost impossible with the roar of the big guns and the bullets whistling past.

While some of the Regulars were passing along the trench about three o'clock in the morning one poor fellow was shot clean through the head. Another poor fellow of the same battalion was killed the same way about half an hour afterwards. So fierce was the German fire that they had to let them lie in the trench till the next night.

Later the Dunbartonshire Territorials got orders to move to a further advanced position in the firing line. The job in getting to this trench was

## Something Awful

and made one feel very -?-. What with the roar of the rifle fire and the flares being sent up it was anything but a joke.

The South African campaign was bad enough but this beat it easily. At last dead beat they arrived at their trench and mounted their gun, where they were on duty all day. When the flares were sent up when they were in the trenches, if one was not smart enough in getting down they would sure to be hit.

The casualties of the battalion numbered thirty.

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The typed script follows the original extracts as closely as possible; any mistakes in grammar and spelling have not been corrected.

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