

I have tried to transcribe this verbatim, what I have printed in blue is what I believe my Grandfather meant or the correct name of the place he mentions, any place names in red I am still not sure about.

A G Marston's Notebook

Frontispiece:

Send reply to cable the same day as I got it, it was at Weymouth on the Oct 20/10/17

I got wounded on the 18th Sept we were out working on the road up near support near the **Hellogen Wood** (near Ypres as far as I know) as near as I know it was a shell it killed four or five and wounded five or six

Main Body of Book:

Left Melbourne 28th July 1916 arrived at Capetown 21st arrived Cape Verde Islands Sept arrived at Davenport (**Devonport**) 10th Sept and arrived Perham Downs 11th left Perham Downs 11th Nov arrived Folkestone 12th Nov left Folkestone 14th arrived at Boulogne the same night that was the first sight of France all the French people gave us good cheer as we went into camp we left Boulogne 15th Nov and arrived at Etaples on the 16th about 5 o'clock that's were we had to go to the bull ring pretty stiff training there we left Etaples on the 26th Nov and arrived at Albert the same night pretty late I was picked out for guard and from then all our hardships started I had to unload the bully beef and biscuits and stop on guard over them all night next morning the transport came and got them and then we had to walk out to the camp where they stayed all night when we got there we only had time to eat a dinner and off again for Troneswood (**Blangy Tronville**) they said 8 miles but I think it must have been double that I got foot sore and tired it was mud up to our boot tops all the way we got there at dark then we got put into companys then to a place to sleep so they decided to put us into the dry room that turned out to be a place dug out where they were going make it and it was raining all the time so we got some sheets of iron and put over the top of us and layed our blankets on the ground and turned in but we couldn't go to sleep for a long time as it was the first time that we had been near the shells bursting around us but we soon got used to them and off to sleep we got next morning we got a shovel and pick put into our hands and told to make our own so we made a dugout to hold three and it was still raining any way we dug a hole and stole some iron for a roof and stole some one elses chimony so we got fixed up in our new house safe and it done us all the time we where there well we had some good times there and some very bad times the worst time we had was at flues (**Flers**) in the

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big dugout 40ft deep but it used to drip all the time we used to go in the trench at night time into water up to our waist then come in just before daylight to bed into wet blankets all day to sleep it was terrible and Fritz shelling all day went to Divelwood ([Delville Wood](#)) and worked at Lougret ([Lougueval](#)) and then to Fricourt from Fricourt we went to Contalmason ([Contalmaison](#)) and camped in huts and we worked on a light railway the trains could not run on account of the ice on the rails so we had to pick it off with picks and it was cold even the little engine used to freeze over night and they used to have to light a fire around it to get it the ice out of the pipes

Well on the 15th Feb Fritz dropped a bomb on one of our biggest dumps and there was gas shells and all there it went off for four days I thought the end of the world had come while I was there I went down a french tomb the Germans had pulled out all the coffins and opened them up I suppose he was after the valables that were buried in with them but there was one that was good I think that they might have put a german officer in there but of course I never opened it to see it was about 20ft deep on Feb 25th the Germans got drove out of Bapaume from Contalmason ([Contalmaison](#)) we went to poizers ([Poizieres](#)) and from there we went to a place called Martinpuch ([Martinpuich](#)) and we got shelled away from there he got some of us there then we went to Barzantnie ([Bazentin](#)) on the 9th March then on the 14th March we to Butte De Warlincourt ([Warlencourt-Eaucourt](#)) the place that took so much fighting to get I don't think you could find a foot that hasn't been shelled up and just before you get to that place about a quarter of a mile is a farm house we were carrying bricks from it in sandbags to fill up shell holes in the road and he started to send over big ones we stayed behind a little bit of a wall that was standing for two shells but they came too close so we started off we hadn't got far when another came over and blew it up in the air and covered us with dirt so if we had stopped there well we would have there yet so we can thank somebody for that well we got to the butte we had to make a road around a big crater that Fritz had blown up in the road but it never took us as long to make it as it took him to blow it up you could have put the bottle yard in it and you would not see it so you can imagine what it must have been like when he put three in the road to Bapaume well on the road to Lesurs ([Le Sars](#)) he must have been rushing some troops up in a train but our guns must have caught it nice for they blew it all to pieces so we had to throw it off the line over the bank and we put another light railway in its place and we kept on their road right up to Bapaume then we had to put up the 2nd Division head quarters as Fritz was far enough for him to come up but he used to send over his long range shells but not very often one day he put one right through an engine the fireman only got burned a little but it was only a dud and just as well while we was in Bapaume I used to go into the town in the town hall and have cocoa at the comforts funds place in the town hall and one night the germans had a clock mine laged ([lagged?](#)) to go off in

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seven days and it did it get a big lot of our lads they were camped in the cellar I heard the thing go off it was about two in the morning and next morning we heard that 70 of our men were buried in the ruins well we were very short of tucker so one of our mates went into Albert to some but all he could get was some biscuits and paid 2^d a packet of six little ones another night we went out to work on the road and we could only go while it was dark well we got the load of stone on it an comming away the driver drove his horses into a shell hole well if you had layed them in there you couldn't have done it better but they were very quiet and just as well after that we came away from Bapaume and went to Aveloy (Aveluy) we had a good rest there and we used to go fishing we used to get a roll of wire matting and go out with it and drag it in to land well we got hundreds of them four sandbags full my word we had a feed from Aveloy (Aveluy) we went to moket farm and we went to do salvage work picking up the bombs shells and shell casings my word there is tons of stuff laying about well that's where I went to Ameins (Amiens) for the day and up before Orderly room the next day it was worth it for it is a pretty place I got off but the other six that came with me got 7 days pay stopped so I was lucky that time well next day we were called back to bapaume for fritz had broken through so we had to get into it again and going up near the line we were meet by some gunners with there breach blocks in there so we asked them what was doing they said you will soon know nice wasn't it anyway we soon found out he had captured a lot of our guns but we got them all back again and fritz paid very dear for that but we had a lot of work up there out every night Wiring talk about barbed Wire we put up I think miles of it we were camped out side of Vaux (Vaux-sur-Somme) and guns all around us every time they used to fire it used to shake your head nearly off he gave us a reseption and a send off the day we were going another day we went out to work at death Valley and fritz came over in airoplanes and fired his machine guns at us there was a scatter then the next day they had a fight over our heads two of our planes came to grief and one of fritz but it was two of our scouts so no credit to fritz when we first took the road over it was knee deep in mud and dead horses when we finished a motor car could go up of course they had a chance of being hit by shells but that is an everyday danger another night we got caught in a gas attack and we started for home but we got lost and walked into a battery of 18 pounders but we got home safe some of us got a little but I think that only two or three went away I got light duties so they put me on guard that night the next night was the night of the big stunt we were carrying bombs making strong points and digging saps we lost a lot of men there we carried out after the battle about 15 men that had been laying about for three nights we got mentioned for good work up at bullicourt (Beaulencourt) anyway we worked hard there I shant forget it for some time one night fritz or at least 4 in the morning he put over some shells one burst close and one piece went

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through the tent in front of ours between two men that was sleeping through there haversack and never touched they could mark a ticket don't you think so another night we went out to widen a trench and we saw some awful sights we had to walk over our own dead one chap was leaning over some boxes of bombs not a scratch on him concussion I think must have killed him we passed four chaps that had been gassed and when we came out one of them was laying down near a shell hole dead but that is only some of the awful sights that we come across up in the front came out and went back to Gordon camp and was just done up tired as well next day went into Albert they have the place all cleaned up now you would hardly know it and the people some of them have come back into it but of course the house are not built up again yet neat day one of the big heads gave us some praise for what we did at buillicourt ([Beaulencourt](#)) also read out a letter from the captain of the A.M.C. ([Army Medical Corps](#)) for help that we gave him carrying in the wounded so you see we do some good work went to Martinstart ([Martinsart](#)) and that is two miles outside of Albert some of our lads took some candle sticks from the church so then they put the place out of bounds next day we went into Bozencourt ([Bouzincourt](#)) and had some champagne ([champagne](#)) it is very cheap only 5 francs a bottle and it is good too but the lads got broke the next night so they raided the place next night and stole two cases so they put that place out of bounds as well next day we went to Aveluy Butts to practice rappid shooting we had to load and fire fifteen rounds at a target start from 100 yards and keep on walking if we stopped we were disqualfide and it takes some doing too we went to Ligny Thilloy ([Lingy-Thilloy](#)) from dog leg camp that was about eight miles with full pack and 100 rounds and it was hot as hell we wasent allowed to drink water on the march and they were right because it was too hot and the water here is like ice out of wells this place is about two miles this side of bapaume next day we went for a road march to Grivillers ([Grevillers](#)) on the 28/6/17 went out over old Battlefield and come across a fritz sniper in an old sap and I went through him he had a lovely position for a gun and he had thousands of emptys around him but a shell must have got him nicely and stopped him well that is where I got the Ironcross and coins and watch he had a lovely wallet but I gave that to my mate it stunk too much for me it was behind De Butte Warlin court ([Walencourt](#)) well we used to go out to Beaulcourt ([Beaulincourt](#)) to put up huts it was a walk of about ten miles every day nice don't you think on the 9/7/17 we used to have sham fights and we were to be the Huns nice the night befor we went out to look over the ground and found where the emeny had put up white rag where they could get through the barbed wire so we pulled it down and put up some more wire and I belive that we had a win that day well we left Ligny thilloy ([Lingy-Thilloy](#)) on 28/7/17 for Arques we got there at 2-30 the next day started from Aveluy at 4 in the morning we had twelve hours in the train after 10 miles walk with full pack 40 in a truck and all

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the packs so you can see there werent much room in it to sleep I got a seat by the door my feet hanging out of it so I was lucky still in Arques 9/8/17 on guard in a brewery and I am cook for the boys and had a good time plenty went into St Omar (St Omer) a very pretty place to but fritz used to drop bombs on it it was only two miles from Arques they used to bring a lot of wounded down on the barges and there were some bad cases that was when they brought the first cases down from that mustard gas well we left for a place called Larbersel and got there safe a little over five miles not a bad place next day we had a march past General Birdwood and it rained like hell all the time after we done that we halted as we thought for dinner we sat down and started to get our dinner into when down orders came to fall in then you should have heard us good job no women were about so we had to fall in and get back to where we were camped before we had a feed well next day we had to go out and make make a practice trench for the bombers to practice in rifle bombs while I was there the captain came and asked me if I would like to go to the rest camp well I didn't want to go but he said you want a rest so he put my name down so off I went next morning we were up and away at 6-30 walked about eight to the station and it started to rain well we never got a truck until seven that night and it was an open one at that the place was called hazelbrook (Hazebrouck) well we got there at three in the morning wet through we or what could layed until morning the we started for a place called Ambelors (Ambleteuse) we got their at 12 o'clock for dinner we had dinner then we had a look around the place we could see england but little I thought how soon I was going there well we were supposed to have 14 days there but it was cut short as we had to pack up and clear out one morning to got to the line we got back to hazelbrook (Hazebrouck) and started for where we were camped but they were gone up the line so we had to camp there for the night next morning we started off again to where the head quarters was and they got us a motor lorrie to take us to belgium (Belgium) and it was some ride to Ypres well we got there all right I got there just in time to meat the boys going up to the line and they wanted me to go out with them but I was too tired so I went to bed but I soon found out I couldn't sleep there was guns all around me and big ones at that they used to shake one but next night out I went we used to go out as soon as it was dark in motor cars as it was that far well we used to go out every night and it was terrible I have never seen shells fired like it and the amount of damage done to that place well we got cut up there the is where I got my little crack then I went to the first clearing station from there to poperinge (Poperinge) from there to No 8 red cross a verry nice place from there after 4 days in bed to the train from the train to Clais (Calais) to Dover in the boat then to No 2 Military hospital or clink the to 3rd A A Hosp from there to Wymouth from Wymouth to Sutton Vuy and I am there yet I went to london for leave had a look at the horse guards marble Arch hide park (Hyde Park) in fact nearly all over

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the place. On the 22/1/18 I went to Bristol on the 25/1/18 got word of money in the commonwealth Bank left O.T.B March 1st got to Warminster at 9 in the morning got to a place called Southhampton 12 o'clock and marched to the common to the rest camp had to stop three days as the channel was blocked left there on the 4th/3/18 at 6-30 and got to havre (Le Havre) at two in the morning got off the boat at 8 o'clock had to walk 8 kiloes (kilometers) to the camp and it rained and snowed all the time stayed here 3 nights left Havre on the 7/3/18 and in the train from 4 o'clock in the evening till 11 o'clock the next morning left Castre (Caestre) on the 9th and got to the boys at three in the afternoon 10/3/18 at Neppie (Nieppe) two platoon went out to the job and six got wounded 11/3/18 started to go out to job got as far as the light train and orders came to return to the camp there was a raid on 12/3/18 and at about 12 o'clock fritz sent over 8 mustard shells put on in one of the billets and killed and wounded about 50 men we moved out then and had to make dugouts Kempy and myself made one for ourselves 10/3/18 went out to C T rivetting very quiet 13/3/18 on the same job reveille at 4 o'clock 14/3/18 stayed at home in the day going out tonight to join up front line left our camp at five in the evening and got back about half past three but it was very quiet in the front line. 15/3/18 fritz put over some more big shells shook our dugout 16/3/18 our platoon stopped in for a rest. 17/3/18 went out to Umpire Avenue C T to work fixing up the trench it was a lot livelier than before 18/3/18 went out to the same job shells were about the same but we had to walk home about 8 kiloes (kilometers) 19/3/18 out on the same job it rained all the time and coming home fritz shelled off to night he is putting shells into Baylieu (Bailleul) 20/3/18 shifted camp again and going out to same job send over gass and could not do our job so came back 21/3/18 fritz blew up trench and we had to repair it very quiet 22nd/3/18 on the same job had to about this time fritz broke through walk home the line was blown up. 23/3/18 went on sick parade 24/3/18 went out to same job and had to walk both ways about 16 kiloes (kilometers) 25/3/18 went out same job 26/3/18 went out from Neppie (Nieppe) and got to a place called Wulvergen (Wevelgem) 27/3/18 out training 28/3/18 done half days drill some talk of moving out in the morning. 29/3/18 went for a march standing by ready to move at any minute otherwise nothing doing on our front. 30/3/18 church parade and pay day. 1/4/18 moved out and came about 30 kiloes (kilometers) in light railway to huts then marched to miteron (Meteren). Leaving here miteron (Meteren) to night 7-30 to entrain for the somme got into the train 1 o'clock in the morning and got out at Amiens at 3 next afternoon and had to walk eight kiloes (kilometers) to a place called paulville (Poulainville) 5/4/18 left poulinville (Poulainville) 6/4/18 at 10 o'clock walked to within 13 kiloes (kilometers) of Albert just got here and he sent over some shells. Left camp again for

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aveloy (Aveluy) about 7 miles camped in trench for one night raining this morning 7/4/18 making dugouts wet through in reserves

9/4/18 went out and dug strong point had to walk about 15 kiloes (kilometers) there and back was just about done up when we got back the job was just behind Albert just missed a machine gun bullet 10/4/18 was on gass guard 11/4/18 a day off 12/4/18 put on guard over transport a soft job 16/4/18 still on guard in transport lines. 23/4/18 still on guard the two guns along side of the wagon opened up last night for the hop over of the Welsh for Aveluy Wood every time they fired any candle would go out the report nearly deafens one 24/4/18 Bombardment started and the guns along side woke me up about 5 o'clock fritz sent a lot over and some pieces were flying about over our camp shelling batteries in wood awful 29/4/18 a big bombardment on all night a few days ago one of the horses got killed and the lads made a raid on it and eat nearly the lot even to the tongue. May 1st we left Warloy (Warloy-Baillon) 2 o'clock and arrived at beacourt (Behencourt) about 4-30 left beacourt 9-30 2nd/5/18 and arrived Daours (Daours) about ¼ to 3 the same day just as we got into town fritz dropped some bombs near us. left Daours 9-30 3/5/18 and got back to Warloy about 4-30 called back 4/5/18 went out and dug trench 5ft wide 4ft deep 3ft bottom 5/5/18 out again on the same job 6/5/18 going out tonight barb wiring 7/5/18 went out and put up barbed wire rained all the time wet through got back 3 o'clock in the morning that same day got orders to move out again to querrieu (Querrieu) stopped there overnight then on to Buisy (Buisy) on the 8/5/18 on the 9/5/18 went out and dug another trench 10/5/18 moving out to the same camp as 6/4/18 dug in on the 12/5/18 went out to make a dugout for a dressing station started 9 in night till 3 in morning 20 went out to did C.T from old front line to new the worst time I ever had 22/5/18 out at two this morning on the job for dressing station dugout till ten o'clock 25/5/18 last night fritz came verry near to bombing our camp out he got onto a dump of cordite it lit the place up for miles around 24/5/18 left for a camp near the line and the same night went out to Bouer and dug a trench it was pretty lively. 25/5/18 out on road patrol 26/5/18 on the same job road patrol doing Buire mericourt rivermont (Mericourte-sur-Somme) and Helliey (Heilly) left Helliey (Heilly) for Buzie (Buisy) on the 15/6/18 Buzie (Buisy) for Villirs Brittenuys (Viller-Bretonneaux) and shelled out many times gassed a lot of our men with mustard gas left Villers Briteriu (Viller-Bretonneaux) with the advance captured guns in Ahounard camped at warfiery (Lamont-Warfusee) left warfuisse (Lamont-Warfusee) for Blangy Tronweld (Blangy-Tronvill) stayed there for 10 days then came forward to warncort left there and came on to bassy to the canal fish in thousands from there camp to Vaux (Vaux-sur-Somme) aerodrome from there to perone (Peronne) from percone (Peronne) to hindenbourg line (Hindenburg Line) from there to Naroy had to hop over took stores up to lads caught in gas

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barrage from Naroy to peroine (Peronne) in train to amiens (Amiens) walking 27 kiloes (kilometers) to a place called penois (Pernois) stayed there a month then came to Bertrie (Berques) by train walked to Bohain about 17 miles then on to grande sayte (Grand-Synthe) then on to this place Charleroi and am in a good billet with issues every thing done for me and a bed am still in charleroi and having a good time three good meals a day about two bottles of wine everyday no you can't growl at that sent a cable to Alice for money on the 23rd feb to go on leave but don't know if I will get it in time to go so far.....