

Some said "Goodo"; Others, "Now we'll have to roll up the barbed wire & fill in the shell-holes!"

Certainly the momentous news was accepted in a very matter of fact way.

Headquarters that night held a bit of a corroboree, and a few of the diggers had an argument with a jar of rum; that's about all that happened.

Practically all our letters from Aussie written after the signing of the Armistice, expressed the wish how much the folk would have liked to have been with the troops to witness the great excitement on Nov. 11th. They would have gone home very disappointed I am afraid.

We stayed in MONTREHAIN for a month and during that period took things easy. About Nov. 11th Lt. Col. St. Clair became our C.O. On 15th Nov. General Grimwade left the 3rd Division & was succeeded by Lt. Col. Allsop.

Ever since Sep. the 3rd Div. Artillery has been "motherless" - in other words has been separated from the remainder of the Div., which went to ABBEVILLE after the BELLICOURT stunt. This separation has many disadvantages, in so much that, stores, especially Canteen goods & clothing come to us in dribs and drabs, and even our allotment of leave seems to get lost at times.

A few days after the signing of the Armistice, each Battery and Headquarters, had a bunch of "Squareheads" attached for fatigue duty. All agreed this was an excellent idea, but why wasn't it thought of whilst the "Guerre" was in progress?

Rumours soon began to reach us of a move, and we half expected that it would be as part of the Army of Occupation to the RHINE towns. So there was much polishing & shining to which the Diggers did not take too kindly. We saw to it that our Huns did their share of the "Yakka", needless to say!

Nearly every afternoon Football Matches were played & some very fine games resulted.

On Dec. 12th we said good-bye to MONTREHAIN & travelled until the 14th, passing through BOHAIN. VAUX, ANDIGNY, MOLAIN, MAZINGHEIM, CATILLON, GROISE, PRECHES, AVESNES, ST. HELAIRE, finally pulling up in HAUTMONT, a manufacturing town, situated astride the River SAMBRE, south of MAUBUEGE. The residents extended a hearty welcome to the Aussie troops, and the latter were soon "well dug-in", and from then on were treated like "one of the family".

Shortly after arrival the 3rd Div. Artillery Concert Party, "The Courtiers Costume Comedy Co.", which had been working hard at rehearsals etc. whilst the Brigade was at MONTREHAIN, gave their first performance. The company was formed from Members of the Div. Art. & proved a very popular success.

Christmas Day was celebrated in various ways by the BATTERIES, but the inevitable "recoberies" were more or less the same, ahem! The townsfolk ably assisted by the Diggers, sung and danced the New Year into being.

On the 2nd January, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, inspected the 3rd Div. Artillery, and men who had gained Military Honors were presented with their medals.

On Jan. 5th, General Grimwade returned to the Div. as C.R.A. & Lt. Col. Macartney as C.O. of the 7th Brigade. Ten days later Col. Macartney became Acting C.R.A. & Major Fanning became 7th Brigade's C.O.

During our stay in HAUTMONT much time was devoted to sport, such as horse racing & Football and our nights were pleasantly whiled away, either at the "Courtiers", The Cinema, Euchre Tournaments or the Battery Dances. Each Battery held dances in turn & in spite of the absence of fine raiment & dancing slippers, these little affairs went off most happily. There was no lack of female partners either! (Oh it's quite alright Aussie Girls - only a very small percentage of the boys got married in Hautmont!)

At last the day we were all waiting for, arrived. The day on which we were to be rid of some of our four-footed pals - the horses! They were "the one fly in the ointment" - war or no war they had to be watered, fed & groomed. Did I say groomed?

Every few days saw a decrease in their numbers, but still they did not disappear fast enough for us.

We had some good snowfalls about this time, and the troops & civies had some ding-dong snow fights, and for several days Hautmont was converted into a miniature "Western Front".

An epidemic of Spanish Influenza showed itself in January, and for some weeks it raged. Illness was rife in the Units, and deaths from "Bronco-Pneumonia" were numerous. Funerals passed through the town