

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE (GREAT) WAR

by

**Captain H King, MC and Bar
Seaforth Highlanders**

June 1916

I join the 19th Divisional Signal Coy

The 19th Division was stationed at St Gratien, a small village lying about 8 kilometres NE of Amiens. Major Grange was the OC and Capt Bell the 2nd in command. When I reported in the evening of the 14th, I found preparations in full swing for a 'Big Push', which was due to commence in about a week's time. But the weather was extremely bad, and it was postponed at the last minute.

But meanwhile, the system of communications was perfected. It was arranged that I would be in charge of a visual post.

At this time, the front line, as far as the 19th Division was concerned, extended from east of Becourt at the south, to west of La Boisselle. The visual post of which I was to be in charge was on the high ground to the NW of the Albert-Becourt road, and was also on one of the main communication trenches to the front line in the sector opposite to La Boisselle.

There was a deep valley between the post and the village of La Boisselle. Our front line was at the base of the near slope, and that of the Boche on the far slope. Both were out of sight of the visual post. But an extensive view was obtainable over all the ground beyond as far as Mamety Wood to the right, Poyieres to the front and Authuille Wood to the left. The purpose of this post was to enable us to get into communication with the forward troops after they had advanced. It was hoped to reach Poyieres by the end of the first day.

During the week previous to the opening of the offensive, we were occupied in building the post, and completing the cable systems. For the two or three days previous to the attack, we occupied the post and fixed up the various apparatus. There was in particular a large semaphore arm which was fixed to a tree and was intended to signal to the troops after they had reached Poyieres. It was worked by a cord from the OP. We had a telephone line, and also were in communication by helio to Millencourt, to which village the Divisions moved a few days before the opening of the offensive.