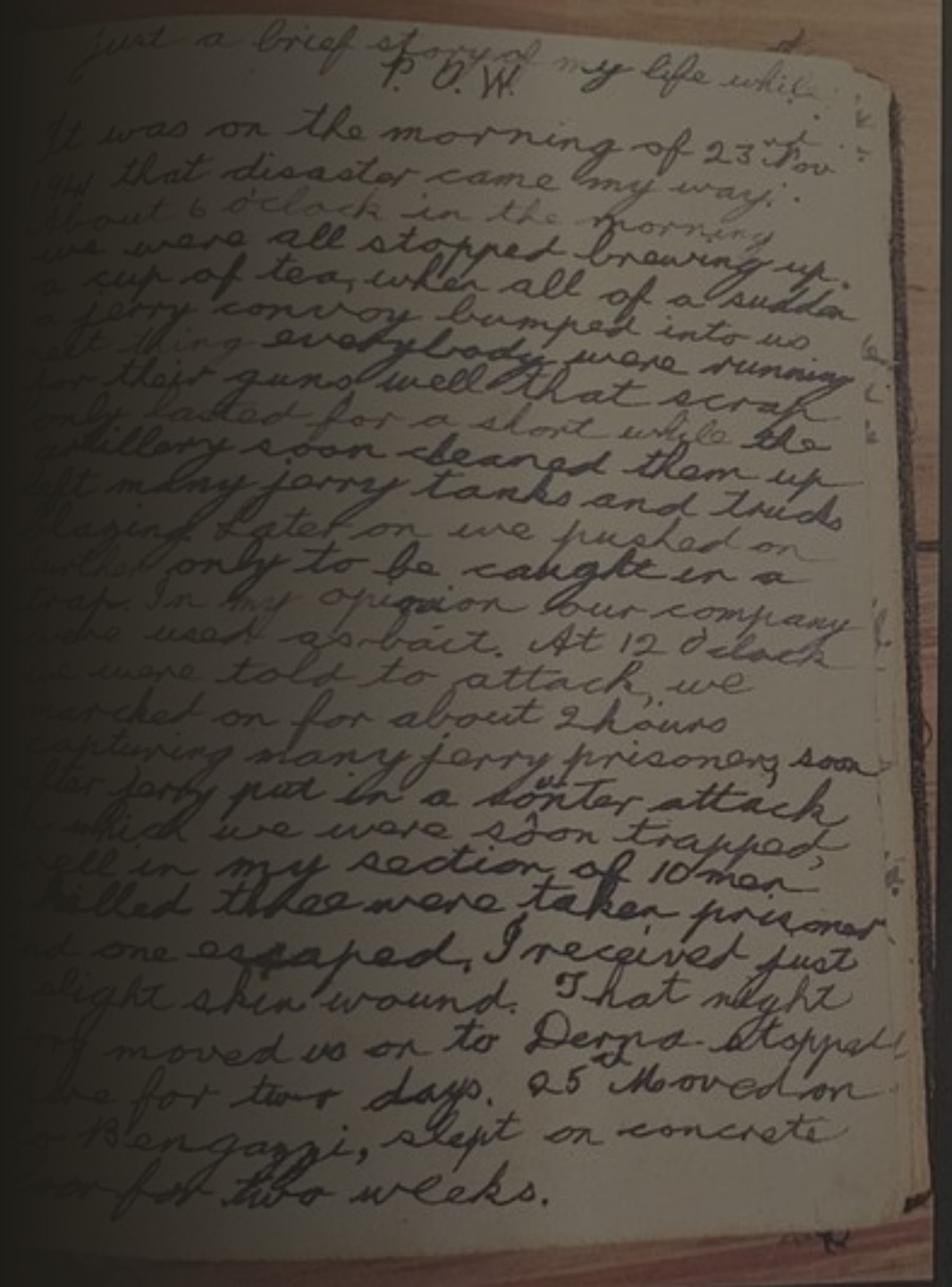
DSDN332 · PROJECT 3 · OWNING YOUR FUTURE

SIGNAL

A family's real words, verified by a human. Not invented by a machine.

Brendan Dutton

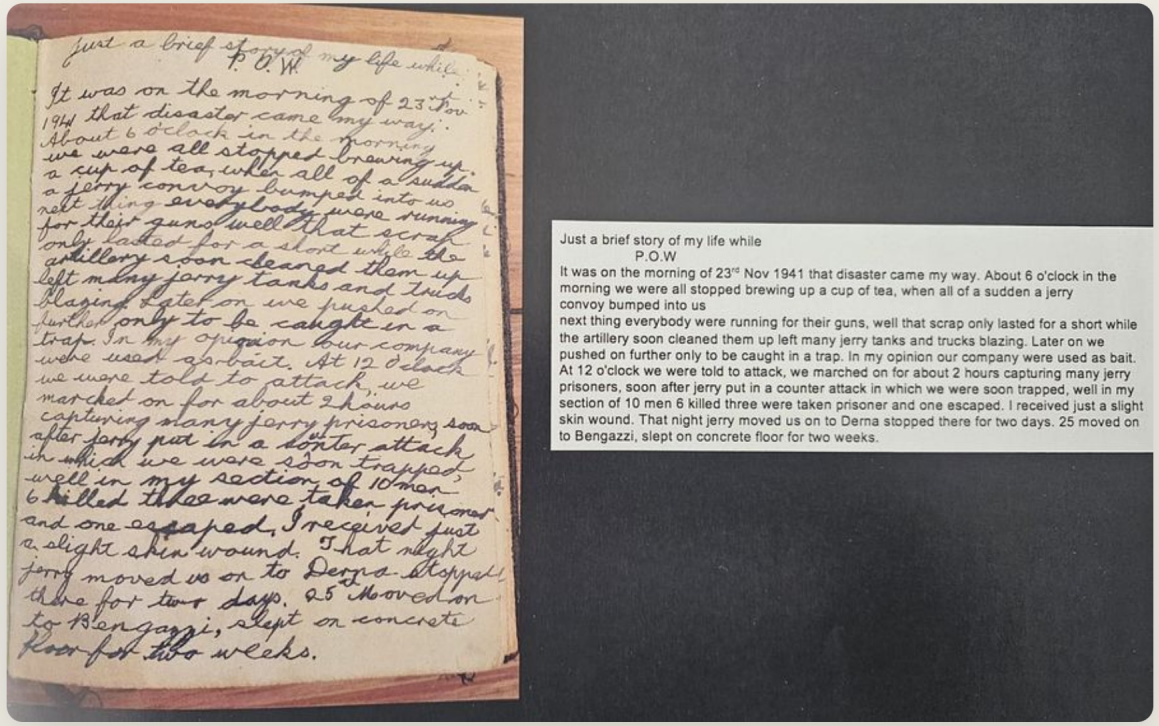


WHERE IT STARTED

One diary, written in a POW camp

Norman Henry Jones, my great grandfather, was captured in North Africa on 23 November 1941. Italian camps, an escape after the armistice, the partisans, then home to Wellington in 1945.

He wrote it down. The handwriting is hard to read.



Just a brief story of my life while
P.O.W
It was on the morning of 23rd Nov 1941 that disaster came my way. About 6 o'clock in the morning we were all stopped brewing up a cup of tea, when all of a sudden a jerry convoy bumped into us
next thing everybody were running for their guns, well that scrap only lasted for a short while the artillery soon cleaned them up left many jerry tanks and trucks blazing. Later on we pushed on further only to be caught in a trap. In my opinion our company were used as bait. At 12 o'clock we were told to attack, we marched on for about 2 hours capturing many jerry prisoners, soon after jerry put in a counter attack in which we were soon trapped, well in my section of 10 men 6 killed three were taken prisoner and one escaped. I received just a slight skin wound. That night jerry moved us on to Derna stopped there for two days. 25 moved on to Bengazzi, slept on concrete floor for two weeks.

THE PROVOCATION

There's already an industry that trains AI on a dead person's messages, so it can keep saying things they never said.

HereAfter AI | StoryFile | Seance AI

SIGNAL goes the other way.

THE OTHER PATH

Trains an AI to keep generating plausible new things a person might say, on someone else's server.

SIGNAL

Uses AI once, to help transcribe what a person actually wrote. A human confirms it. Then the AI's job is done.

HOW IT WORKS

01

Add a page

A photo of a diary or a letter.

02

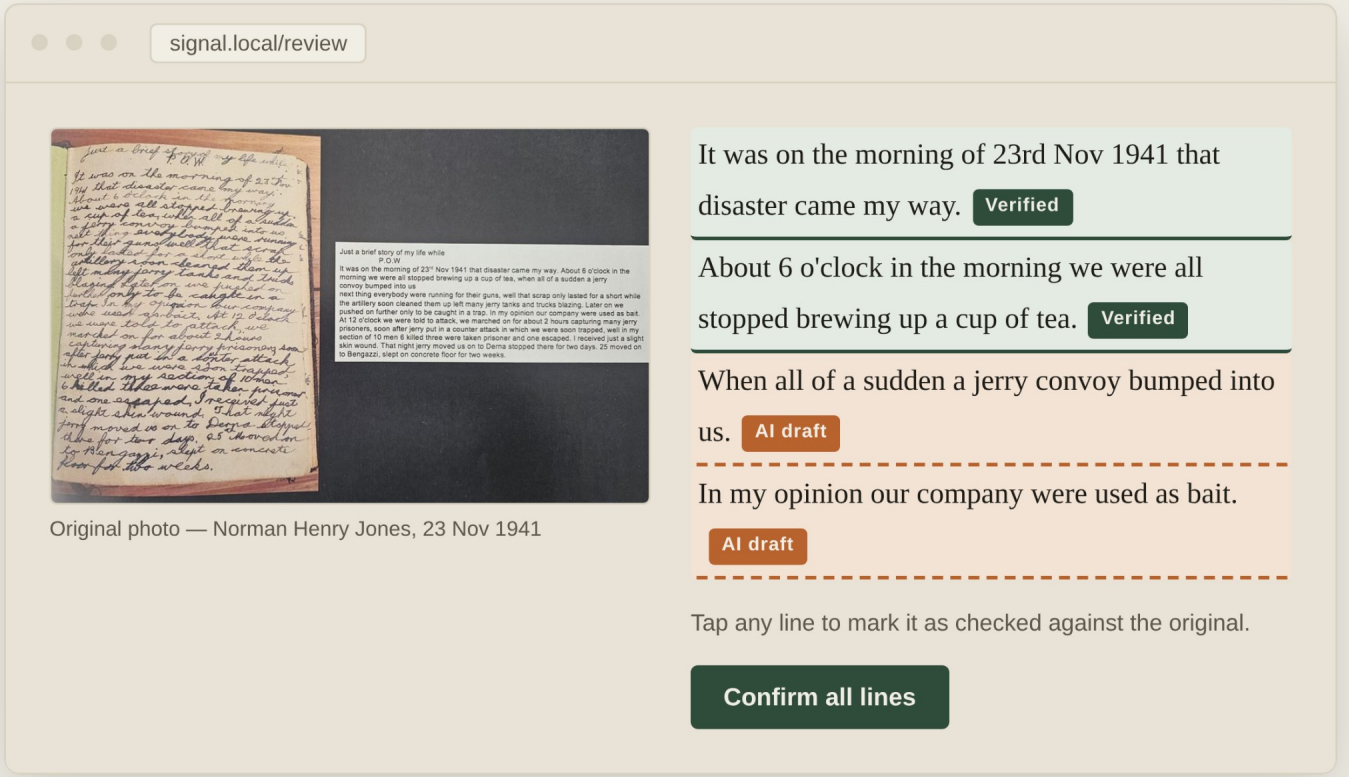
Confirm what's true

AI drafts. A person checks every line.

03

The timeline

Each entry credited to who confirmed it.



LIVE DEMO

Let me show you the prototype.

Running locally with Docker at localhost:8080

WHO IT'S FOR

Right now family history lives in a shoebox, or on someone else's cloud.

Families

An afternoon of transcribing becomes something everyone can read and add to, without one person stuck as keeper of the pages.

Community groups

Marae, migrant community associations, local museums and libraries. Their own archive, not handed to a platform that answers to someone else.

THE BUSINESS MODEL

Free to own. Paid for help. Never paid for access.

Tier	Price	Who it's for
Self-hosted	Free, forever	Anyone with a computer or home server
Hosted	Small paid plan	People who don't want to run a server
Setup and support	Paid service	Libraries, museums, community groups

Ghost and Plausible Analytics already run this open core model.

BUILT

Self-hosting, for real

Most of the friction in "just run it yourself" is the setup. So that's the part I built.

1 Install Docker Desktop (free, any OS)

2 Download the SIGNAL folder

3 Run docker compose up

4 Open localhost:8080

Runs on your own machine. Nothing leaves it.

FUTURE VISION · NOT BUILT, ON PURPOSE

An animation made from a verified story, voiced by a family member.

How do you animate a real moment without inventing details nobody wrote down? SIGNAL's whole position is that AI doesn't fill gaps with something plausible. That has to apply here too.

AI can help you read what's real faster.

It doesn't get to decide what's true.

SIGNAL · BRENDAN DUTTON · BUILT AROUND THE DIARY OF NORMAN HENRY JONES