

G. O. B.

UNITS OF 5TH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

TOTAL CASUALTIES from Noon on ... 16-8-18.....to Noon on ... 7-9-18.....

UNIT	KILLED		WOUNDED		MISSING	
	Off.	O. Ranks	Off.	O. Ranks	Off.	O. Ranks
D. H. Q.						
<u>8th Aust. Inf. Bde.</u>						
Headquarters						
29th Battalion	-	6	2	37	-	2
30th Battalion	2	13	5	84	-	2
31st Battalion	-	9	1	36	-	1
32nd Battalion	-	6	7	52	-	-
8th. A.L.T.M.B.	-	-	-	1	-	-
TOTAL.	2	34	15	210	-	5
<u>14th Aust. Inf. Bde.</u>						
Headquarters						
53rd Battalion	4	50	7	213	-	1
54th Battalion	2	26	9	158	-	7
55th Battalion	4	54	11	140	-	2
56th Battalion	2	29	11	238	-	17
14th A.L.T.M.B.	1	6	-	11	-	1
TOTAL.	13	165	38	760	-	28
<u>15th Aust. Inf. Bde.</u>						
Headquarters						
57th Battalion	1	11	2	54	-	-
58th Battalion	1	12	6	94	1	-
59th Battalion	1	20	7	122	-	1
60th Battalion	-	7	11	67	-	-
15th A.L.T.M.B.	-	-	1	10	-	-
TOTAL.	3	50	27	347	-	1
5th. A.M.G. Bn.	1	10	2	112	-	3
8th. Fld. Co. A.E.	-	-	-	8	-	-
14th Fld. Co. A.E.	-	3	-	16	-	-
15th Fld. Co. A.E.	-	1	-	12	-	-
5th. Pioneer Bn.	-	1	-	12	-	-
5th. Div. Sig. Co.	-	1	-	3	-	-
8th. Fld. Amblce.	-	-	-	3	-	-
14th Fld. Amblce.	-	3	1	3	-	-
15th Fld. Amblce.	-	-	-	4	-	-
A.A.S.C.	-	-	-	-	-	1
<u>5th. Aust. Div. Art.</u>						
Headquarters						
13th A.F.A. Bde.	-	1	2	4	-	-
14th A.F.A. Bde.	-	7	1	36	-	-
5th. D.A.C.	-	3	-	5	-	-
5th. D.T.M. Bde.	-	2	-	4	-	-
TOTAL.	19	281	86	1539	-	38

5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

BATTLE INSTRUCTIONS, SERIES "D", No.5.

1. INFORMATION.

- (i) The enemy's rearguards have been pressed back towards the HINDENBURG LINE. Our Light Horse patrols report the area west of railway line running from R.2.c to VERMAND clear of enemy. VERMAND is apparently occupied by Machine Guns.
- (ii) There are three lines upon which resistance may be expected:
 - (a) The HARGICOURT - LE VERQUIER - MAISSEMY - HOLNON Line.
 - (b) The old British line, VILLERET - PONTRUET - FAYET.
 - (c) The HINDENBURG Line.
- (iii) The 5th Australian Division front runs approximately R.5 - spur South of VENDELLES - SOYECOURT - through R.29 with patrols in advance.

2. INTENTION.

The Division will establish itself on the general line VENDELLES - point 116 in R.13.c. - high ground running due south from this point, maintaining touch with the enemy by means of the Light Horse squadron.

3. GENERAL PLAN.

- (i) The main guard of the 8th Australian Infantry Brigade will establish itself on the line described in para. 2.
- (ii) Reconnaissances by patrols will be pushed forward towards the BROWN line with the object of ascertaining whether the enemy intends to make a stand, and in this event to ascertain the line which he is occupying.
- (iii) It is anticipated that there will be a halt period of at least 24 hours.

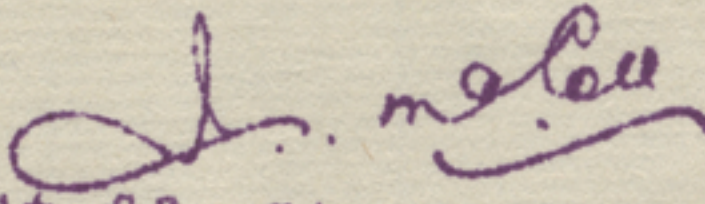
4. UTILISATION OF HALT PERIOD.

The halt period will be utilised:

- (i) To rest the advanced guard troops as much as possible.
- (ii) To reconnoitre artillery positions and to bring forward the artillery with a view to dealing with the enemy resistance on the HARGICOURT - LE VERQUIER - MAISSEMY - HOLNON position.
- (iii) To organise Brigade areas and lines of supply, and to perfect communications. A reconnaissance of the roads in the Divisional area will be made with a view to their classification.

5. ACKNOWLEDGE.

8th September 1918.


General Staff, 5th Australian Division. Major,

Issued at 6 a.m. to all recipients
of B.I., Series "D", No. 1.

Talbot Hobbs

S E C R E T

5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

19/9/18

Headquarters
19th September 1918.

REPORT ON OPERATIONS 31/8/18 to 2/9/18.

Ref. Maps: 62C, 1/40,000
62C N.W.)
N.E.) 1/20,000
S.W.)
S.E.)
"A", "B" "C" "D" attached.

1. GENERAL.

The 5th Australian Division had reached the line of the SOMME on the 29/8/18 and from that date to the 31/8/18 endeavours had been made to cross the SOMME marshes and obtain possession of the high ground in O.5., O.11., I.35., and thus form a bridgehead on the Eastern bank. This ground, also PERONNE and the village of PLAMICOURT, was held in force by the enemy. The SOMME was an impassable obstacle except where a footbridge was built across the marshes in O.3.d. but this was covered by enemy machine guns at close range; it was consequently impossible to attack across the SOMME South of PERONNE. To form a bridgehead in O.5., O.11., and I.35., it was therefore necessary, unless the enemy should voluntarily yield this ground, to attack it either

- (a) through PERONNE, or
- (b) in a Southerly direction East of PERONNE.

It was with this end in view that the operations described herein were carried out.

This report deals with the operations of the 1st and 2nd September only, and, although by the latter date, the high ground in O.5., O.11., and I.35., had not been captured by us, the enemy retirement was precipitated by these operations and this objective fell into our hands on the morning of 5th September.

2. ORDER OF BATTLE.

5th Australian Division

Major-General Sir. J. J. TALBOT HOBBS K.C.B., V.D.

14th Australian Infantry Brigade Group.

Brigadier-General J. C. STEWART D.S.O.

- 53rd Battalion
- 54th Battalion
- 55th Battalion
- 56th Battalion
- 14th A.L.T.M. Battery
- 14th Machine Gun Company
- 14th Field Co. Engineers (less 1 section)
- Bearer Sub-Division 14th Field Ambulance.

15th Australian Infantry Brigade Group

Brigadier-General H.E. ELLIOTT CB., CMG., DSO., DCM.

57th Battalion
58th Battalion
59th Battalion
60th Battalion
15th A.L.T.M. Battery
15th Machine Gun Company
15th Field Company Engineers.
Bearer Sub-Division 15th Field Ambulance

Divisional Artillery

Brigadier-General A.J. BEESLEY-BROWNE CB., CMG., DSO

13th Brigade A.F.A.
14th Brigade A.F.A.
12th Army Brigade A.F.A.
23rd Army Brigade R.F.A.

8th Australian Infantry Brigade Group was in Divisional Reserve.

3. DISPOSITION OF UNITS PRIOR TO OPERATION On the morning of 31/8/18, Brigade Groups were disposed as follows:-
14th A.I. Brigade Group in support Area N.11. and N.17.
15th A.I. Brigade Group in line holding the whole Divisional front which extended from O.15.a.7.7 to I.32.b.0.8.

Two Battalions were in line.
Two Battalions were in support.

4. PRELIMINARY MOVES AND ARRANGEMENTS

31/8/18

Divisional Headquarters moved from Q.30.c. to M.9.d.7.1.
Divisional Forward Report Centre was established at H.32.c.6.8.

At 9 a.m. information was received that 2nd Australian Division on the left had captured MONT St. QUENTIN in I.15.b. In order that the projected advance of the 2nd Australian Division to the HAUT-ALLAINES - BUSCU Road might be exploited the 14th A.I. Brigade was ordered at 9.30 a.m. to move by the OMMIECOURT Bridge to E. bank of the SOMME into the 2nd Australian Divisional Area and to attack S.E. to capture the high ground in O.11., O.5. and I.35. This was done in conjunction with the 2nd Australian Division attack.

The OMMIECOURT Bridge was found to be impassable and the Brigade moved via the BUSCOURT Bridge. The assembly of the Brigade in squares I.1 and I.7.a. was completed about 8 p.m.

The Plan of Attack had been communicated to Unit Commanders, but owing to a change in the situation on the 2nd Australian Division front, it became necessary to alter the Plan of Attack. Attack Instructions already issued were, therefore, held in abeyance, pending the results of a conference held at 6th Australian Infantry Brigade Headquarters (H.32.c.6.8) at 9 p.m. 31/8/18.

This conference was attended by the G.O.C. 14th A.I. Brigade, Brigade Major 14th A.I. Brigade, and G.S.O.II 5th Australian Division, Brigadiers concerned and Divisional representative of 2nd Australian Division, C.R.A. 2nd Australian Division and G.S.O.II (Operations) Australian Corps.

The 2nd Australian Division reported that they were holding a line as follows:-

FLORINA TRENCH on the right, GOTT MIT UNS and EISA TRENCH in the centre (i.e. 500 yards in advance of FLORINA TRENCH).

The enemy were reported as being established on the ALBERT and HAM railway and on the AVIATION GROUND in I.21.a.5.8. All ground East and South East of the above trenches was held by the enemy.

The 2nd Australian Division were not sufficiently strong to attack again on the whole of their original frontage and it was decided that the 5th Australian Division should take over that part of the attack area lying South of the E. and W. Grid line between squares I.15. and I.21.

The 2nd Australian Division intended to advance to the general line of DARNSTADT TRENCH.

The 5th Australian Division Plan of Attack was as follows:-

5. (i) GENERAL PLAN OF ATTACK.
- (a) The 5th Australian Division attack was to be carried out by the 14th A.I. Brigade Group supported by Divisional and Heavy Artillery.
 - (b) The boundary between the 14th A.I. Brigade and the 2nd Australian Division was to be the E. and W. grid line between squares I.15. and I.21.
 - (c) The objective for the 14th A.I. Brigade was:-
Phase I. I.18.c.0.0. to I.30.c.0.0.
Phase II. After the capture of the 1st objective support Battalions were to attack southwards, East of PERONNE, to capture the ridge in O.5. and I.35.
The 14th A.I. Brigade attack area included the following tactical features:-
St. RADECONDE
St. RADECONDE WOOD
ANVIL WOOD
ST. DENIS
PERONNE
 - (d) The attack was to be supported by artillery shoots on selected areas according to a time table as required by the G.O.C. 14th A.I. Brigade.
Artillery programme is shown on attached map "A". (This method of artillery support was adopted as there was insufficient time to work out a creeping barrage and make all necessary arrangements).
 - (e) Zero hour for both 2nd and 5th Australian Divisions was 6 a.m.
 - (f) 14th A.I. Brigade was to "jump off" from FLORINA TRENCH.
5th A.I. Brigade (2nd Australian Division) was to "jump off" from SAVE TRENCH.

(ii) DETAILED PLAN OF ATTACK OF 14th A.I. BRIGADE. (a) Boundaries. Brigade
Northern. E. and W. line between I.15. and I.21.
Southern. River SOMME

Inter-Battalion
 From junction of road with FLORINA TRENCH at I.20.a.2.2 to point where COLOGNE river cuts final objective (I.36.a.0.6).

(b) Objectives Left Line Bn. (53rd Bn)
Phase I. N and S line between I.23. and I.24. from northern Bde boundary to COLOGNE river.

Right Line Bn. (54th Bn)
PERONNE (inclusive)
(56th Battalion) from COLOGNE river - high ground I.35. and O.5. right flank refused to SOMME.

(c) Order of BATTLE. Phase II. The attack was thus to be made on a two battalion frontage, 54th Battalion on right - 53rd Battalion on left, the former attacking S.E. through St. RADECONDE WOOD and village and through PERONNE, the latter Battalion attacking East through ANVIL WOOD and St. DENIS WOOD and Village.

56th Battalion was to follow 53rd Battalion and then carry out Phase II.

55th Battalion was to follow and establish itself as a support to 56th Battalion.

(d) Allotment of Machine guns, L.T.M's, Engineer and Field Ambulance Personnel Machine Guns, L.T.M's etc. were distributed among Battalions under Brigade arrangements as follows:-
53rd and 54th Battalions each
 One Section, 14th M.G. Coy.
 One Section, 14th L.T.M. Bty.
 One Section, 14th Field Co. A.E.
 Detachment of Bearers, Bearer Sub-division, 14th Field Amb.

56th Battalion
 6 guns, 14th M.G. Coy.
 2 sub-sections, 14th L.T.M. Bty.
 1 section, 14th Field Co. A.E.
 Detachment of Bearers, Bearer Sub-division, 14th Field Amb.

55th Battalion
 2 guns, 14th M.G. Coy.
 1 sub-section, 14th L.T.M. Bty.
 Detachment of Bearers, Bearer Sub-division, 14th Field Amb.

6. ACCOUNT OF THE OPERATIONS.

See Maps "A" & "C" attached.

The conference at which the Plan of Action had been decided did not end until midnight so that in less than six hours it was necessary for the following to be done:-

(a) Infantry Brigadier to decide his detailed plan and communicate it to his Battalion Commanders.

- (b) Battalion Commanders to make known the plan to their subordinates.
- (c) Company Officers to explain the attack to their N.C.O's and men.
- (d) For the troops to be moved from their support position to the "jump off" position, an average distance of two thousand five hundred yards. There were no taped tracks and the night was exceedingly dark.
- (e) Artillery action to be passed down to batteries. Telephone communication forward of 14th A.I. Brigade Headquarters did not exist but Battalion Commanders had been instructed to be at Headquarters, 14th A.I. Brigade at 11.30 p.m. so that a minimum of delay should occur.

The artillery programme of the 2nd Australian Division commenced at 5.30 a.m. i.e. half an hour before Zero, with the result that the enemy counter battery and barrage opened at about 5.45 a.m. and was particularly heavy in the vicinity of CLERY and the adjoining roads and canal. This caused the latter part of the approach march to be carried out under heavy shell fire.

(i) The assembly was commenced by the march from the areas in I.1. I.7.a and H.6. southwards to the PRAGUE TRENCH, about 150 yards north of the FLORINA TRENCH, which was the "jump off" line. Here it was found by patrols that, on the left of the 53rd Battalion area, the "jump off" line was in enemy hands, and a violent hand to hand and grenade fight ensued, through thick belts of wire in good condition and against stubborn resistance, before "C" Company 53rd Battalion, could get into position. The 23rd Battalion on the left had a similar experience, with the result that the left of our attack was 25 minutes late in the assembly. Practically no prisoners were taken at this period owing to the violence of the fighting. The assembly of the remainder of the 53rd Battalion was uninterrupted, and they were in position at Zero (6 a.m.). The 54th Battalion (line right) reached the assembly position to time without encountering the enemy, but having sustained casualties from shell fire. The support and reserve Battalions also assembled to time.

(ii) The attack commenced at Zero and, with the exception of the left company 53rd Battalion, who were already involved, moved forward punctually to time, coming immediately under heavy M.G. fire from direction of Mt. St. QUENTIN and the Copse at I.20.b.6.5. Several strong continuous belts of wire had also been negotiated but, in spite of heavy casualties, the attack pushed on. By 6.45 a.m. the right Battalion had reached the causeway which the enemy blew up as they escaped across the town. The 53rd Battalion, with elements of the 54th and 56th Battalions, who were caught and became involved with the attacking unit during the early and unexpected fighting) were clearing the WOOD in I.21.c. suffering considerably from the enfilade fire from the North East.

By 7.15 a.m. the two right companies of the 53rd Battalion (which had already amalgamated into one on account of Officer casualties) had reached the eastern outskirts of the Cemetery in I.21.d. The left companies were suffering more severely but despite their severe losses they pushed on, and by 7.30 a.m. had linked up with the right companies on the line of the Cemetery.

Advance beyond this line was impossible owing to the converging fire from the Eastern ramparts of PERONNE, from St.DENIS and from St.QUENTIN. The artillery programme was, by this time, almost an hour in advance of the progress by the infantry, and the enemy were not controlled at all by our artillery fire.

The 23rd Battalion on the left of the 53rd Battalion had been unable to advance, leaving our left flank in the air, so it was decided by the C.O. 53rd Battalion to hold the line reached (I.21.b.3.8 - I.21.b.2.2 - thence along eastern edge of Cemetery to I.21.d.5.7, thence to I.21.d.4.4. where touch was gained with the 54th Battalion) and to use the company allotted him from the 55th Battalion to protect his northern flank. Up to this time the 54th Battalion had been unable to cross into PERONNE and were being held up by M.G. fire from the house tops.

One company of the 55th Battalion was already involved with the 53rd Battalion, and the 56th Battalion, who had been following immediately in rear of the 54th Battalion, had had a considerable amount of fighting in the mopping up of the WOOD in I.21.c. and now had one company in a very exposed position in advance of the 53rd Battalion line in I.22.c. and suffering heavy casualties. This company found itself in advance of the units on both flanks who were held up and eventually withdrew and connected up with the 54th Battalion on the right and the 53rd Battalion on the left. Meanwhile the remainder of the 56th Battalion found that the line had come to a standstill and so took up a defensive position in I.21.c. behind the right flank of the 53rd Battalion, and the remainder of the 55th Battalion acted similarly in I.20.b. making a defensive flank to the north if it should be required.

By 8.40 a.m. the 54th Battalion had succeeded in reaching the centre of PERONNE and was mopping up. They found that the swamps to the south of the town were impassable and proceeded with the mopping up, establishing touch with the 59th Battalion on their right by 8.45 a.m.

At 9.35 a.m. the line ran, from north to south, as previously shown for 53rd Battalion, included the whole of PERONNE West of a N and S line through I.28.a.2.C. along the waterways on the southern edge of PERONNE to junction with the 15th Brigade on the Causeway in I.33.b.

The remainder of PERONNE, i.e. the isolated north-eastern section, was still in enemy hands and offering considerable resistance.

At 10.50 a.m. it was believed that the line had been advanced to the vicinity of the Factory in I.16.c. and it was reported by the 6th A.I. Brigade that ^{the} St.QUENTIN had fallen and that their right was in touch with the 53rd Battalion in I.16.c.

Instructions were issued at 11.45 a.m. for the 56th Battalion to push south-east and connect up with the 54th Battalion who were in PERONNE in advance of our line to the north,

/and for

and for the 53rd Battalion to push on from the line held towards the final objective. This was attempted at about 1 p.m. but the northern ramparts of the town and the heights of St.QUENTIN were still in enemy hands and the advance was held up by M.G. fire.

At 1.30 p.m. the 6th A.I. Brigade again attempted to gain the crest of St.QUENTIN after 30 minutes hurricane bombardment. This attack was successful and considerably relieved the pressure on our left flank.

By 3 p.m. the 56th Battalion had succeeded in pushing one company into PERONNE and had established connection between the 53rd Battalion and 54th Battalion.

At 5 p.m. the 53rd Battalion again attempted to advance and succeeded in establishing a line approximately from I.22.a.8.9 to I.22.a.6.4.

The advance, however, suffered very severe casualties from the Ramparts on the N.E. outskirts of the town, in which portion the enemy were still holding out, and from St.DENIS. Elements of 53rd Battalion succeeded in establishing posts at St.DENIS about I.22 central, though enfiladed continuously by M.G. fire and suffered heavily from enemy artillery fire.

Touch had not yet been established with the attack of the 6th Brigade (as was thought from previous reports to be the case) but the 55th Battalion who were still forming a defensive flank to protect the left of the 53rd Battalion, ultimately gained touch by patrols in GOTT MIT UNS TRENCH and the flank was established facing N.E. and connecting the two attacks through I.21.a. and b.

At Brigade Headquarters the situation at this time was not clear, and continual reports were being received concerning enemy movement westward and concentrations in I.24. and that vicinity. At 6.30 p.m. the Brigade Commander, in conversation with the C.O's 53rd and 56th Battalions, gave verbal instructions for immediate report on the existing situation. This revealed the situation as previously given, with a definite line, (along the eastern outskirts of the Cemetery through I.21.d.7.5., I.28.a.2.6 and along the southern edge of the town) with both northern and southern flanks in touch with flanking units, and a few isolated posts in I.22.a. which were cut off from assistance and suffering heavily from converging fire. The enemy was still holding out in the N.E. Ramparts and his positions in St.DENIS WOOD were intact and doing considerable damage.

While these enemy positions were intact it was impossible to advance, and it was known that portions of our attack had reached St.DENIS and that the 54th Battalion was still fighting in the streets of PERONNE, with the result that at that time it was impossible to ask for further artillery preparation and bombardment of the enemy points of resistance mentioned.

The Brigade Commander issued orders at 8.15 p.m. to the effect that the line as given above should be established and the elements in advance of that line should be withdrawn to enable further artillery preparations to be carried out.

The line was being held by the 53rd Battalion on the left, with the 55th Battalion forming a defensive flank to their left rear, the 56th Battalion in the centre, connecting the 53rd Battalion from the Cemetery to the 54th Battalion in PERONNE and the 54th Battalion on the right holding the line of the waterways on the southern outskirts of PERONNE and connecting with the 15th A.I. Brigade on the causeway in I.33.b.

The 58th and 59th Battalions were reported to be both on the East side of the River in that vicinity but their further advance was held up by M.G. fire from the direction of FLAMICOURT. At 8 p.m. it was decided owing to the crowded area in which they were to withdraw all but one company each of the 58th and 59th Battalions to the western bank of the river.

The two companies (one from each 58th and 59th Battalions) left on the eastern side of the river were to hold the posts at the road and railway bridges in I.33.d. and deny the crossings to the enemy.

It was obvious by nightfall that the cover occupied by the Machine Gun nests in the N.E. outskirts of PERONNE was proof against anything but a several hours heavy bombardment; it had been expected that the machine gun fire might be kept down by the bombardment and that the occupants could be dealt with as those had been who occupied the remainder of the town - by bayonet and bomb. Owing to the slow progress of the attack, due to the strenuous opposition, it was found that the artillery programme ran ahead of the attack and that even those nests silenced by our shells were able to come once again into action before our infantry approached.

The outstanding features of this operation were:-

- (a) The fighting preceding Zerc to allow "C" Company, 53rd Battalion, to reach its assembly position;
- (b) The negotiation of several belts of wire by the whole attack under heavy converging machine gun fire.
- (c) The entry of the 54th Battalion into PERONNE in the face of heavy artillery fire and a sweeping machine gun barrage across two narrow footbridges, and
- (d) The employment of an enemy gun by three privates of the 53rd Battalion, who brought a 77m.m. into action under heavy direct artillery and machine gun fire and used it with considerable effect over open sights against the enemy on MONT St. QUENTIN.

7. OPERATIONS 2/9/18.

At 9.30 p.m. after consultation with the G.O.C. 2nd Australian Division and the Corps Commander re further proposed action, the Divisional Commander held a conference at Headquarters, 8th A.I. Brigade, at which the following were present:-

Brigadier Generals Commanding
8th A.I. Brigade
14th A.I. Brigade
15th A.I. Brigade
C.R.A.

The Divisional Commander explained the Plan of Operations for the attack to take place the following day (2/9/18). This involved action by both 14th Infantry Brigade and 15th Infantry Brigade, supported by artillery. Owing to the bad state of the roads the car which was to have picked up G.O.C. 15th A.I. Brigade missed him and consequently he did not arrive at the conference until about 2.30 a.m. G.O.C. 14th A.I. Brigade had left the conference before this hour to take necessary action regarding his Brigade. Consequently although informed of the general plan for the 15th A.I. Brigade attack, he had not the opportunity of discussing the detailed plan with the G.O.C. 15th A.I. Brigade.

The attack was to be made in conjunction with an attack by the 2nd Australian Division on the left, whose objective was to be KOROS ALLEY and RUPPRECHT TRENCH thus gaining possession of the high ground on our left flank.

- GENERAL
- (a) The 14th A.I. Brigade was to attack eastwards North of PERONNE - objective N and S grid line between squares I.23. and I.24. i.e. to gain a footing on the ridge west of HESSE TRENCH. One Battalion was to carry on the mopping up of N.E. end of PERONNE.
 - (b) The 15th A.I. Brigade was to be distributed as follows:-
2 Battalions to follow the 56th and two companies 55th Battalions, then to move south through I.29. and attack ridge in I.35. and O.5.
1 Battalion to move through PERONNE and mop up Ramparts N.E. of PERONNE (assisting 54th Battalion).
One Battalion to hold the Divisional front on the west bank of the SOMME and, if possible, to gain a footing on the eastern bank.
 - (c) The infantry attacks were to be carried out under support of shoots on selected areas by the Arty.

INFANTRY ACTION.

- 14th A.I. Brigade.
- (a) Jumping Off Line - N and S Line 150 yards east of N and S grid line between squares I.21.a and b.
 - (b) (i) The attack was to be made by the 56th Battalion supported by two companies 55th Battalion, - all on a one company front - i.e. 6 companies in depth.
(ii) 54th Battalion was to mop up N.E. end of PERONNE.
 - (c) Northern Boundary of Attack. - E and W grid line between I.16. I.22.
 - (d) Objective. N and S grid line between I.23 and I.24.
 - (e) The frontage of attack was about 600 yards, opening out in I.23. to 1000 yards.
 - (f) On reaching I.23. the companies of 55th Battalion were to face south and protect flank, and if possible, advance southwards into I.29. and link up with 15th Infantry Brigade in I.35.

15th A.I. Brigade.

- (g) One Battalion (58th) was to move into PERONNE and at Zero plus 30 to attack RAMPARTS in I.22.c. and to mop up area in I.22.c. and I.28.a. and b. assisting 54th Battalion. The attack was to be made from West to East as artillery bombardment lifted.
- (h) Two Battalions (59th and 60th) were to follow 56th Battalion and two companies 55th Battalion in attack North of PERONNE. These Battalions were to attack the ridge in I.35. and O.5. moving south through I.29.
- (i) One Battalion (57th) was to hold the line on the west bank of the SOMME in O.3 and O.9. defensively, and if opportunity offered, to cross the footbridge through the swamp at O.9.c.8.1. to the eastern side.

ARTILLERY The action of artillery was to consist of bombardments of selected areas in accordance with a time table specified by Brigadiers concerned. These areas and time of shots are shewn on Map "B".

ZERO HOUR ZERO hour was to be 6 a.m. The time thus available to Brigadiers between receiving their instructions and the actual move of troops in accordance with the instructions was extremely short.

8. ACCOUNT OF THE OPERATION. 14th A.I. Brigade.

See Maps "B" and "D" attached.

2/9/18.

The attack, as planned, necessitated the withdrawal of the 56th Battalion (14th A.I. Brigade) from the line to the assembly position by ZERO (6 a.m.) and its place to be taken by the 54th Battalion. The relief was completed by 5.15 a.m. and the 56th Battalion was then moving into the position of assembly. At 5.30 a.m. the bombardment on the 7th Brigade front and the "Heavy" bombardment on the N.E. Ramparts of PERONNE opened. Our artillery fire was replied to by an enemy barrage even more intense than that experienced during the morning of the 1st September, and falling across the assembly positions of the 56th Battalion. This caused considerable confusion, and prevented, to a great extent, the transmission of information to junior leaders and men of the operation in hand. Before reaching the start line, the 56th Battalion had suffered heavily. All officers of three companies were casualties and the commands taken over and organised by the senior N.C.O. present. The two companies of the 55th Battalion who were to follow the attack, also suffered from the enemy counter barrage prior to Zero, but not so heavily as to affect their organisation. At Zero the attack commenced and was met immediately by a hurricane M.G. fire from the Ramparts (which did not seem to be affected by our bombardment, which was still continuing upon it) from St.DENIS and from the WINDMILL in I.17c. This converging fire inflicted considerable casualties on the 56th Battalion, one company only being able to push forward and that by the splendid courage, leadership, and example of the N.C.O. in command, Sgt.O'CONNOR. This company reached a point 300 yards in advance of the start line and there dug in, 35 strong. The two companies of the 55th Battalion, who were nominally to follow in rear, on seeing the situation and observing that the 56th Battalion had been unable to gain ground as a whole, worked forward on the left and succeeded in penetrating as far as the embankment running south from the BRICKWORKS in I.22.a.6.9. These two companies established along this bank and at 6.45 a.m. two platoons endeavoured to cross the embankment and work round the eastern flank of the Ramparts. This, however, was impossible, owing to the M.G. fire, and the attempt had to be abandoned. At 7.45 a.m. one company 55th Battalion succeeded in gaining a footing in the BRICKWORKS and by vigorous action forced the enemy to withdraw from St.DENIS, and established a line across the St.DENIS - Mt.St.QUENTIN Road just east of the BRICKWORKS.

Meanwhile Sgt. O'CONNOR had succeeded in dribbling men forward on his flanks, and by 9.30 a.m. had established touch with the 55th Battalion on his left at about I.22.a.6.2. Coincident with these events the 56th Battalion had established touch with the 59th Battalion (who were distributed along the line) on their right and who, in turn, had connected with the 54th Battalion south of the Cemetery. At 10 a.m. the approximate line held on the left sector was as follows: -

I.16.c.6.2 - the BRICKWORKS (inclusive) - I.22.a.6.2 -
thence to the Ramparts about I.22.c.2.6.

The N.E. Ramparts of PERONNE had now been cleared of the enemy by the 54th Battalion, assisted by portion of the 58th Battalion, and a post established at I.22.d.3.3 and three companies of 58th Battalion were moving through PERONNE to establish a line on the light railway to the east of the town. The securing of the right flank of the 55th Battalion by its junction with the 56th Battalion enabled them to attempt to advance their line to include St.DENIS which was undertaken at once. It was found on crossing the St.DENIS - ALIECOURT Road that the enemy was holding a strong outpost line in the western outskirts of St.DENIS WOOD and in the hollow immediately to the north. In the initial surprise the 55th Battalion were successful in capturing a nest of two machine guns with one officer and 10 other ranks, but the casualties suffered in the position gained were so severe that it was decided to withdraw the line near the BRICKWORKS. This was done about 2 p.m. the company being then only 2 officers 25 others in strength. Before 11 a.m. the 54th Battalion post at I.22.d.3.3 had been extended to the N and S by the 58th Battalion who were reported (about 3 p.m.) to extend from about I.22.b.2.0. to I.22.d.4.5 where they joined with one company 54th Battalion and extended their flank to the south from I.22.d.3.3 to the south-east corner of the RAMPARTS from which the line was continued along the southern outskirts of the town to the Causeway in I.33.b.

This was the situation throughout the early afternoon and it was anticipated that, should we be able to enter and establish in St.DENIS WOOD permanently, it would be possible for the whole line to advance. As the 55th and 56th Battalions were considerably reduced and their elements closely interlocked the Brigade Commander instructed Lieut-Colonel P.W. WOODS D.S.O. M.C. 55th Battalion, to take charge of the situation forward, to consolidate the line held and organise its defence with the 55th and 56th Battalions withdrawing any other elements into support. No further offensive operations were undertaken.

15th A.I. BRIGADE

The 58th Battalion was detailed to assist the 54th Battalion in the mopping up of PERONNE AND THE O.C. 58th Battalion proceeded to get in touch with 54th Battalion. 59th and 60th Battalions were detailed to push through after the 58th Battalion in that order, form up behind 14th A.I. Brigade, pass through them and gain the ground in O.5. These Battalions were to proceed via the northern outskirts of PERONNE to a selected jumping off line (extending from I.23.a.6.8 to I.22.c.6.8. and form up, 60th Battalion on the right and 59th Battalion on the left). The 60th Battalion was detailed to clear FLAMICOURT and CHAIR WOOD and then to push south and form a defensive flank along the line O.15.central O.6.a.central.

The 59th Battalion was to push on and secure the high ground in O.5.

The 57th Battalion was to remain and hold the line on the west bank of the SOMME in O.3. and O.9. and if opportunity offered to cross the foot bridge through the swamp at O.9.c.8.1.

The 58th Battalion met with strong opposition, especially machine gun fire, but continued to work eastwards through the N.E. portion of PERONNE and in this fighting took 4 officers and 100 O.R.'s prisoners.

The 59th and 60th Battalions moved according to plan, passing through very heavy machine gun fire and gas shelling. Owing to the heavy casualties suffered by the 14th Brigade and the intense machine gun fire from the Mt. St. QUENTIN Ridge in I.16, I.17. and I.18. which prevented any further advance at the time, the two Battalions by 10 a.m. were situated as follows:-
59th Battalion in line with Battalions of 14th Brigade from I.22.a.6.2. to I.22.a.7.9. 60th Battalion in rear lying in the open in I.22.a.

At 12.30 p.m. the 59th Battalion were endeavouring to push forward their right flank along the line of the railway through I.22.a. and b. to the road junction in I.22.b.33 pivoting on the 55th Battalion near the Factory at I.22.a.70.95.

The enemy artillery fire at this stage was intense.

From examination of prisoners it appeared that the 78th Division had evidently been placed in the line to retake PERONNE.

At 1.20 p.m. therefore, instructions were issued to the 15th Brigade to take special measures to cover all approaches to PERONNE from the direction of FLAMICOURT and CHAIR WOOD. The 25th Machine Gun Company (attached 15th Brigade) was accordingly disposed to cover these approaches and platoon posts were established by 57th Battalion to guard the bridges at I.33.d.3.9 and I.33.d.4.2.

In the meantime the clearing up of the N.E. extremity of PERONNE had been continuing and at 1.30 p.m. the advanced troops were digging in on the line I.22.c.9.5. to approximately I.28.b.0.9. A post was also put in at I.22.c.7.4. Machine gun fire was particularly severe at this time from FLAMICOURT I.29.central., and I.22.b. While these operations were being carried out in the vicinity of PERONNE, the 57th Battalion was endeavouring to cross the SOMME marshes in O.3. and O.9. The enemy however was holding the position strongly with machine guns and inflicted heavy losses on our patrols, forcing us to temporarily abandon any further attempts.

At about 6 p.m. the Divisional Commander held a conference of Infantry Brigadiers and C.R.A. at Headquarters 15th A.I. Brigade.

After receiving from Infantry Brigadiers the latest information regarding the situation on their Brigade fronts and flanks, the Divisional Commander decided that no further offensive action should be undertaken during the night, and that the 15th A.I. Brigade should relieve the 14th A.I. Brigade. This was carried out during the night.

The front line of the Division on the night 2nd/3rd September was as follows:-

I.16.c.7.0 - I.22.a.6.7 - I.22.b.2.0 - I.22.d.45.55 -
I.22.d.3.3. thence along eastern outskirts of Remparts -
I.28.b.3.8 - thence west along south edge of PERONNE -
along Causeway to I.33.b.4.0. - thence/along west bank of
SOMME.

9. ENGINEERS.

The distribution of Engineers and Pioneers was as follows:-

8th Field Co.A.E. was affiliated with 8th A.I. Brigade and on the night of 30th August had moved back with Brigade Group into Reserve at FAY.

14th Field Co.A.E. was affiliated with 14th A.I. Brigade and was located at H.35.a.O.O. near FLAUCOURT.

For the purpose of the operation, one section of sappers was to proceed with the Headquarters of each of the Assaulting Battalions to carry out any Engineers work which should become necessary in view of the probability of bridging being necessary on the COLOGNE river.

This company had one section detached with Divisional Pontoon Detachment, and one section in Reserve at Company Headquarters.

In order to assist the 14th Field Co.A.E. if any large works became necessary, "D" Company, 5th Pioneer Battalion was attached, to work under the orders of 14th Field Co. Commander.

15th Field Co.A.E. was affiliated with 15th A.I. Brigade in the line along west banks of SOMME, south of PERONNE, with Company Headquarters at Quarry, N.4.b.9.2.(FLAUCOURT) The natural employment of this company was to make crossings over SOMME CANAL and SWAMPS for 15th A.I. Brigade, the main bridges into PERONNE having been destroyed by the enemy.

The 15th Field Co. A.E. was to have the use of one section of each 14th and 8th Field Companies which were standing by with Pontoon Detachment.

5th Australian Pioneer Battalion was located at H.34. d.8.O. and its employment for the operations was to be as follows:-

- (a) Preparatory work up to 31st August was, assisting 15th Field Co.A.E. in the transport and erection of bridging material for crossing SOMME, and wide swamps. This was to be continued during the operations.
- (b) Repairs were to be carried out to all important roads and approaches to PERONNE bridges. One company was available to go, as previously stated, with the 14th Field Co.A.E., to assist them with any extensive works which might be necessitated.

WORK DONE 1st and 2nd September 1918.

8th Field Co.A.E. (less one section) was in Reserve with 8th A.I. Brigade and did not take part in action. One section assisted the 15th Field Co.A.E. on bridge work. 14th Field Co.A.E. One Section assisted the 15th Field Co.A.E. on bridge work S of PERONNE. Repairs to foot-bridges across the SOMME and swamps West of PERONNE were carried out, and one floating timber bridge in Canal was moved from I.25.a.6.6 to I.25.b.1.1. to join up with foot bridge across swamp at St.RADEGONDE. No Engineer work was found necessary by section which went with 54th Battalion so it returned to Company Headquarters by 3 p.m. on 1st September.

over debris) Foot bridge was erected by section accompanying H.Q. 56th
in front at } Battalion I.27.b.2.6 where main road bridge had been
destroyed.. Only other works required and carried out by
this unit were reconnaissance reports on roads, R.E.
dumps etc.

15th Field Co.A.E. This unit during the operations of 1st and 2nd September carried out the following works:-
Completed footbridge over 400 yards of SOMME and Swamps in O.3.d. requiring a total of 180 yards of bridging passable for infantry in file.
Completed one bridge at I.33.d.4.9. fit for Field Artillery by 12.30 a.m. on 1st instant and for motor transport later the same day.
Completed reconnaissance of roads through PERONNE, and of heavy bridges still intact at I.33.b.2.9. Enemy demolition charges (6) were removed from these bridges.
Completed foot-bridges across debris of demolished railway bridges leading across swamps S.W. of FLAMICOURT, and over demolished road bridge at I.33.b.4.4.
5th Australian Pioneer Battalion. Work carried on by this unit on 1st and 2nd September 1918 was :-
Repair and maintenance of principal roads, and further reconnaissance and reports on advanced roads.
Re-grading of approaches to deviation bridge for M.T. at I.33.d.4.9.
Assisted with men, and transport of material, in the construction of foot-bridges across SOMME, west and South of PERONNE.

PONTOON EQUIPMENT.

The whole Divisional Engineer Pontoon Equipment was on wagons, ready for immediate despatch where it might be required, but no occasion to use it arose during these operations.

10. ARTILLERY

Artillery support to the operations was rendered by shoots on selected areas at times required by Infantry Brigadiers concerned, vide maps "A" and "B" attached.

The feature of the artillery work (as with the infantry) was the extremely short time available between the formulation of the Plans of Attack and the commencement of the Attack. This rendered creeping barrages and elaborate arrangements impossible. Instructions were issued by telephone and confirmed as soon as possible by written instructions. Trace maps were delivered to Artillery and Infantry Brigades prior to ZERO Hour.

11. MACHINE GUNS

Machine guns supported the Infantry throughout the operations. No machine gun barrage was employed and all M.G. support was rendered with direct fire.

12. SIGNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Headquarters of Divisional Units were as follows:-

Divisional Headquarters	M.9.d.7.1
Divisional Artillery	M.23.a.5.5
14th A.I. Brigade	H.17.c.6.8
15th A.I. Brigade	I.32.d.2.5
5th M.G. Battalion	M.16.b.7.7.

(2) Telephone

All the above units were connected by telephone as were flank Divisions and Corps.
All lines were maintained fairly well with the exception of the 15th A.I. Brigade line. This Headquarters was situated in an area receiving considerable shelling and, consequently, much

interruption and trouble was experienced in regard to telephone communication.

(3) WIRELESS

Owing to the long distance between Division and Brigades a directing station with WILSON set was established at the Divisional Forward station at H.32.c.6.8. This was in communication with Corps, Divisional Headquarters, Flank Divisions, Divisional Artillery and Infantry Brigades. Owing to shelling trouble was experienced in maintaining communication with the 15th Brigade Forward Headquarters wireless set.

(4) Pigeons

None were available.

(5) Air.

Divisional Dropping Station was situated at M.9.d.7.1. Messages were dropped accurately from contact planes throughout the operations.

(6) Despatches

Roads were fairly good and good weather obtained, so that a rapid and efficient D.R. service was maintained.

Forward of Brigades, cyclists and runners were used.

(7) Visual

Where possible, visual signalling was employed forward of Brigade Headquarters.

13. MEDICAL ARRANGEMENTS.

The area around PERONNE was a difficult one as regards evacuation of wounded. The bad roads and long routes (necessitated by lack of bridges in the vicinity of PERONNE) was very trying for patients and very heavy on ambulance cars. The evacuation of all wounded was successfully carried out in spite of the heavy casualties and adverse conditions and reflects great credit on bearers and other A.A.M.C. personnel concerned.

Bearer sub-sections of 14th and 15th Field Ambulances were attached to 14th A.I. Brigade and 15th A.I. Brigade respectively.

R.A.P.'s of 14th Brigade were located as follows :-

53rd Battalion	I.25.b.
54th Battalion	I.20.c.
55th Battalion	I.13.b.
56th Battalion	I.13.a.

It was intended to open up a more direct evacuation route from the bridge at H.24.d. using horse ambulances back to A.D.S.

The evacuation of the 14th Brigade wounded was necessarily at first along the route of evacuation of the 2nd Australian Division through CLERY - FEUILLERES - A.D.S. HERBECOURT. Wounded were carried from R.A.P.'s by 14th Field Ambulance bearers by squad relays to a Ford Ambulance Post at H.6.d.5.0. P.O.W. were also used to carry out casualties and evacuations proceeded in a steady stream with no accumulation.

From the Ford Post H.6.d.5.0. the wounded were taken to a Sunbeam Ambulance Post at H.10.b.6.4. and from thence to A.D.S.

After 24 hours, bridges being available, the evacuation route was shortened by nearly six miles by placing a Ford car at HALLE I.19.a.7.6. and evacuating to H.24.d. Horse vehicles then took cases to Sunbeam Post H.29.d. where 2 cars were stationed and these evacuated to A.D.S.

A limber with medical stores was attached to the Bearers and moved forward to the Advanced Motor Post, thus R.M.O's expended stores were at once replaced. When the 14th Brigade was relieved on the night 2nd/3rd September, the area was left without any wounded remaining to be evacuated. Casualties from the 15th Brigade were evacuated via foot bridge I 33.central down to R.A.P. in O.2.central., thence to Left Motor Post O.7.b. The main motor post for the 15th Brigade was at FLAUCOURT and another in H.56.b.

14. CASUALTIES. Casualties suffered were as follows:-

	KILLED		WOUNDED		MISSING		TOTAL	
	Offs.	O.Rs.	Offs.	O.Rs.	Offs.	O.Rs.	Offs.	O.Rs.
14th A.I. Bde.	10	116	31	627	2	54	43	797
15th A.I. Bde.	2	32	20	230	1	-	23	262
5th M.G. Bn.	1	5	1	88	-	3	2	96
5th Div. Engrs.	-	4	-	22	-	-	-	26
5th Div. Arty.	-	4	2	22	-	-	2	26
Other units	-	4	3	38	-	2	3	44
TOTALS	13	165	57	1027	3	59	73	1251

The percentage of losses of Assaulting Brigades and M.G. Battalion are:-

	Strength on going into action		Percentage KILLED		Percentage WOUNDED		Percentage MISSING		Percentage TOTAL CASUALTIES	
	Offs.	ORs	Offs.	ORs	Offs.	ORs	Offs.	ORs	Offs.	ORs
14th A.I. Bde	68	1624	14.7	7.1	45.6	38.6	2.9	3.3	63.2	49.0
15th A.I. Bde.	62	1610	3.2	2.0	32.2	14.3	1.6	-	37.1	16.3
5th M.G. Bn.	41	738	2.4	.6	2.5	11.9	-	.4	4.9	13.0

15. PRISONERS CAPTURED. Prisoners captured during the operation were:-

<u>Officers</u>	<u>Other Ranks</u>
40	800

16. BOOTY CAPTURED The following arms and material were captured by Brigades as under:-

<u>14th A.I. Brigade</u>	<u>15th A.I. Brigade</u>
5 Field Guns	18 machine guns
91 Machine Guns	1 Heliograph
4 Minenwerfer	1 Electrical Exploder
1 Field Cooker	1 Range finder
	1 belt filler.

In addition, large quantities of ammunition, M.G. belts, and belt boxes, and a large number of rifles were captured also a stone crushing machine, 1 workshop wagon and 1 G.S. wagon.

17. DEDUCTIONS. ARTILLERY

(1) When, as in these operations, time for preparation is so limited, and consequently elaborate artillery support such as a creeping barrage cannot be arranged, the form of the artillery support available is necessarily less effective and does not render the close support or covering fire which is so necessary to infantry when attacking an enemy in a prepared position. Therefore,

(a) Provided the situation will permit of a temporary delay, it is considered that it would be preferable to postpone the action sufficiently to allow of a more elaborate and detailed artillery programme to be worked out.

As it is very often essential to assemble troops during darkness, the delay so occasioned would be probably 24 hours.

(b) As the artillery support is not so effective it follows that the infantry will have more fighting to do and will consequently advance much more slowly. The average rate of the advance of the artillery bombardments which are covering an infantry advance must be much slower than is the case with creeping barrages.

(2) Preparatory bombardments prior to Zero eliminate the surprise effect obtained by the simultaneous opening of the infantry attack and the artillery bombardment, and consequently the enemy barrage or counter preparation is put down while our infantry are still assembling.

It is considered that the destructive effect on the enemy of bombardments, immediately preceding ZERO are outweighed by the value of the surprise effect which would otherwise be gained, and the saving of casualties during assembly.

(3) The use by the enemy of gas contained in H.E. shells, and therefore unnoticed by our troops for some time, during the approach march and assembly of our infantry caused a number of our men to be temporarily incapacitated.

It is considered that this method of employing gas is very effective.

INFANTRY

(1) The rate of advance of the infantry was calculated as commencing at 100 yards in three minutes and decreasing to 100 yards in four minutes, and artillery programme was arranged accordingly. This rate was too fast for the reasons stated in sub-para (1) (b) of Para. 17 - Deductions.

(2) It is necessary that during training, senior N.C.O's. should be given the opportunity and practice in handling Companies in Tactical Schemes. This is shown by the fact that 3 companies of the 56th Battalion had all officers made casualties before Zero hour on 2/9/18 and the N.C.O's took charge. These N.C.O's did magnificent work, but had they been less capable, serious results might have obtained.

- (3) It is suggested that to avoid a common mistake made in giving map references - i.e. such as giving H for I and O for N - that the letter should be printed in each 1000 yards square and be of the same size as the numbers of the squares, e.g.,

H 36	I 31
------	------

ENGINEERS

The cork float footbridge material supplied from the Base is too cumbersome in the present form, but is an excellent idea as it cannot be sunk by rifle or machine gun fire. If a more compact and collapsible form were used, much more could be transported by a lorry, than in its present form.

MEDICAL.

- (1) While ambulance cars have to work over roads in a bad state of repair, it is important that a first aid lorry or workshop lorry be attached to the A.D.S. to effect immediate repairs to cars.
- (2) Ford ambulances, as usual, proved invaluable. A reserve of these is necessary, so that a Division in line can draw one or more to replace those temporarily out of action.

J. Dalby Hobbs.

Major-General,
Commanding 5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

SECRET.

G1/ 3088

8th Infantry Brigade	Divisional Artillery
14th Infantry Brigade	Divisional Engineers
15th Infantry Brigade	Divisional Signal Co.
5th Machine Gun Bn.	A.D.M.S
5th Pioneer Battalion	"AQ" Div. Train.

1. It is considered that the nature of the operations in which this Division will probably be employed in the future will be an "exploitation" battle - i.e. similar to the advance from the GREEN line on 8th August 1918. The Division will probably be organised in Brigade Groups as was the case on that date. The extent of the advance is likely to be considerable and will call for great physical endurance on the part of the troops.

2. In Training, particular attention will therefore be paid to the following subjects, which will be taken up at once:

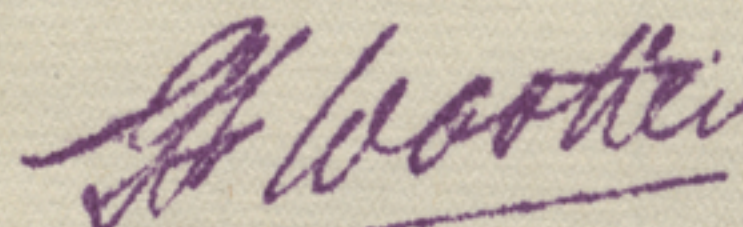
- (a) MARCHING. Commencing with comparatively short distances and light kit, and increasing to long distances with full kit. This applies to all troops who are not normally mounted. March training will also be carried out by the artillery and by 1st Line Transport of other units
- (b) MARCH DISCIPLINE. This refers to all units. March discipline is to be cultivated to the very highest degree. Attention is directed to Field Service Regulations Part I, chapter III, Sections 24, 25, 26, 31, and 33.
- (c) TRAINING IN OPEN WARFARE. Platoon, company, and battalion schemes.
- (d) MAP READING. For junior officers and more especially for N.C.O.'s.
- (e) MESSAGE WRITING, i.e. to convey all available information clearly and distinctly in the fewest words possible. In this connection it must be impressed on all concerned that whenever possible the time at which the matter or event described took place is of great importance and should almost invariably be included in the message. Attention is directed to F.S. Regs Part I, Chapter II, Sec.15. Instructions re Tank Training will be issued later.

3. In order to entail good results in marching long distances on successive days, it is essential that apart from strictly observing all the rules of march discipline and care of men on the march the following receive the most careful attention:

- (a) Care of feet - washing, feet inspections, etc.
- (b) Fitting of boots. If possible, old boots should be used for marching. Men who now require new boots or who will in the normal way require new boots in the near future must be very carefully fitted and must be provided with the new boots immediately, so that they can break them in during their period of training.
- (c) Fitting of equipment.

4. Infantry Brigades and Divisional Units will forward to Divisional Headquarters a statement shewing what training is to take place in the subjects set out in para. 2. (over and above that already contained in the training syllabuses submitted).

20th September 1918.


MAJOR,
General Staff,
5th Australian Division.

G.O.C

G.S.O.I

G.S.O.II

G.S.O.III



I.O

G.T

ANTI - TANK LINES.

The attached photographs show two types of anti-tank mines used by the enemy on this Army front.

Mines similar to those seen on photo No. 1 have been found N. of LA BASSEE and are constructed as follows :-

Several 12" x 3" wooden planks 11' - 13' long with 9" x 1" pieces nailed along the sides were placed level with the surface of the ground. On the underside of each plank at about 3' from each end a small iron plate 3" x 3" was fastened, with a wire nail driven into the centre. These were directly over two 8" shells with mushroom shaped striking pins. These pins had a copper shearing wire through them enabling them to withstand ordinary pressure without shearing. Any heavy weight would shear the copper wire and allow the striking pin to go forward and detonate the shell.

The planks or platforms were held clear of the top of the striking pins by means of two wooden pegs driven into the ground at each end as in illustration.

There was no difficulty in discovering the exact positions of the mines as they were very poorly camouflaged with a little earth and grass and had a wire entanglement built of screw picquets and plain wire around them.

Removal. - It is perfectly safe to lift the planks and remove the shells.

Those seen in photo No. 2, W. of the FLEURBAIX - FAUQUISSART road, have not yet been reached but is probable that they consist of single 8" shells placed in rows and actuated in the same manner.

Where these lines of anti-tank mines cross a road a crater has been blown.

General Staff (Intelligence),
Fifth Army.
28th September, 1918.

No 1

Crater in Road
with light bridge

21 HA. B 485.
36 5247
15.9.18-13
5000. f 19 1/2.

Line
of
Anti-Tank
Mines

No 2

92 HAB 129
35 AB 146
16.9.18.16.184
G500H

Crater in Road

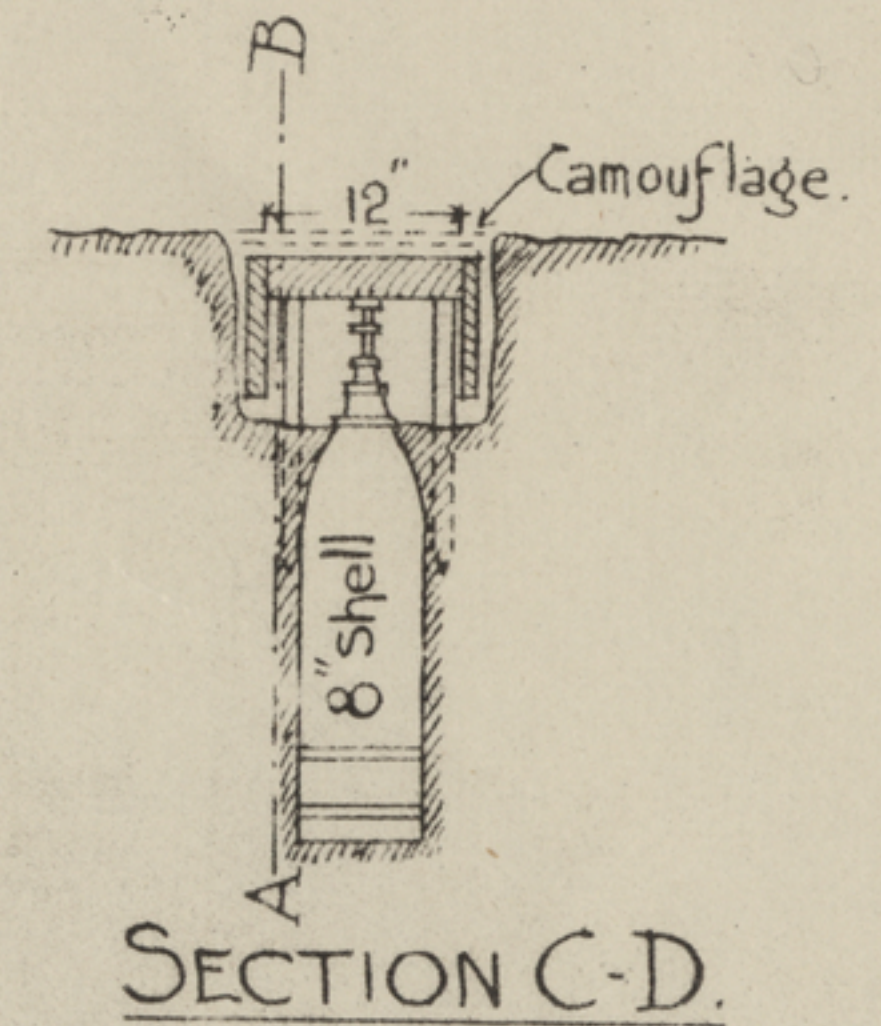
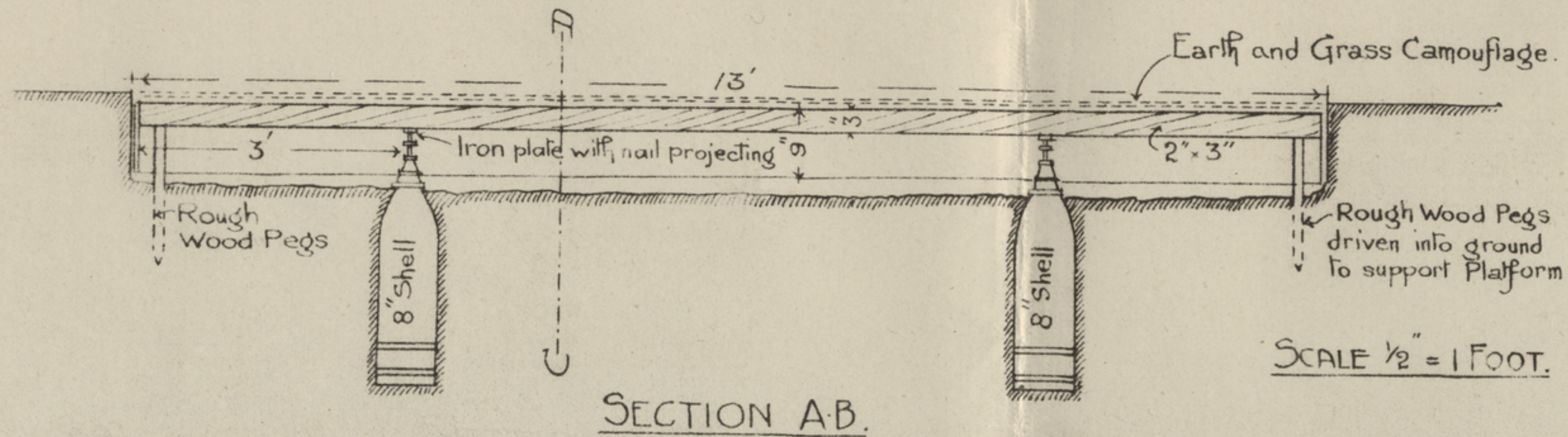


Line of

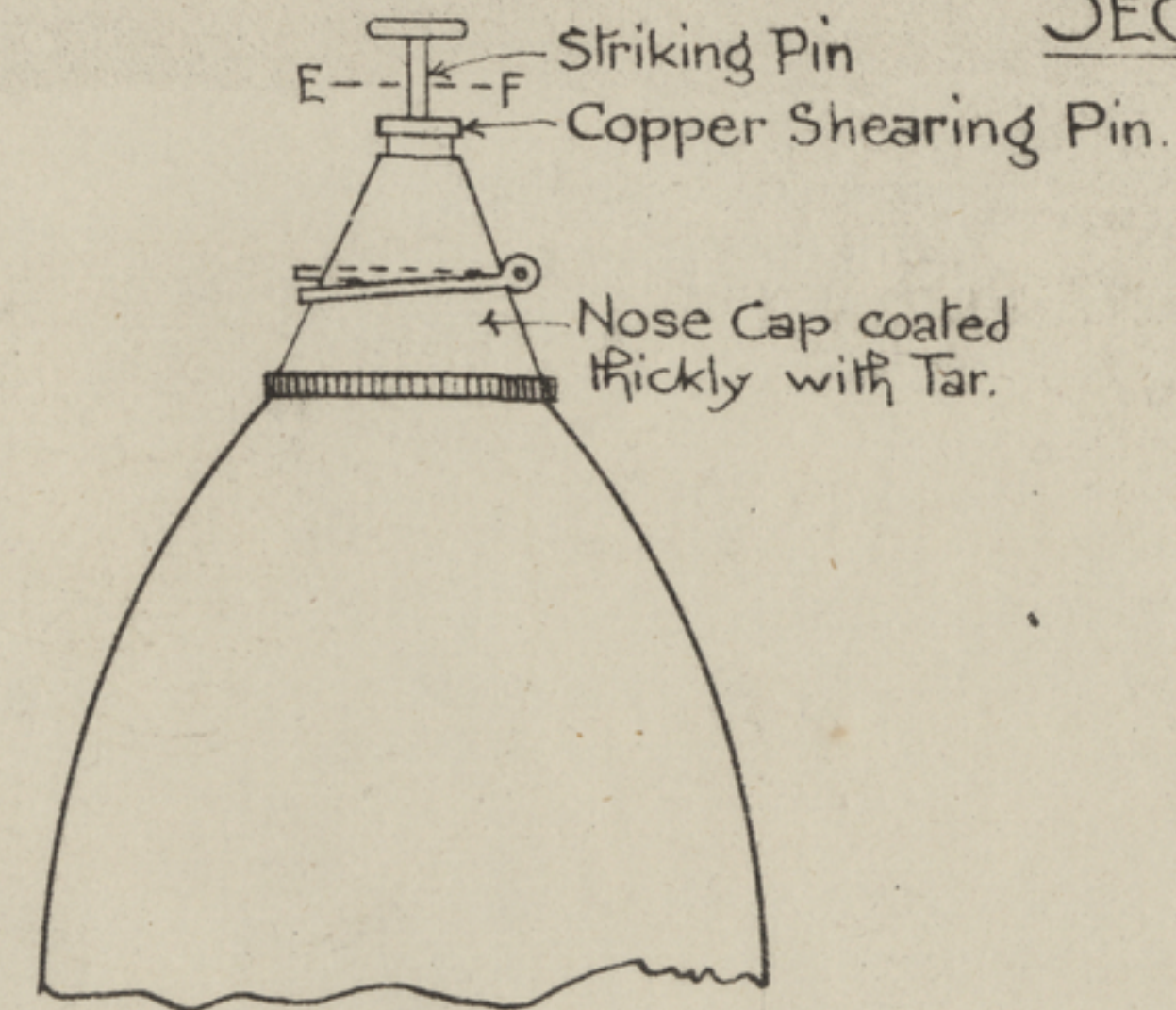
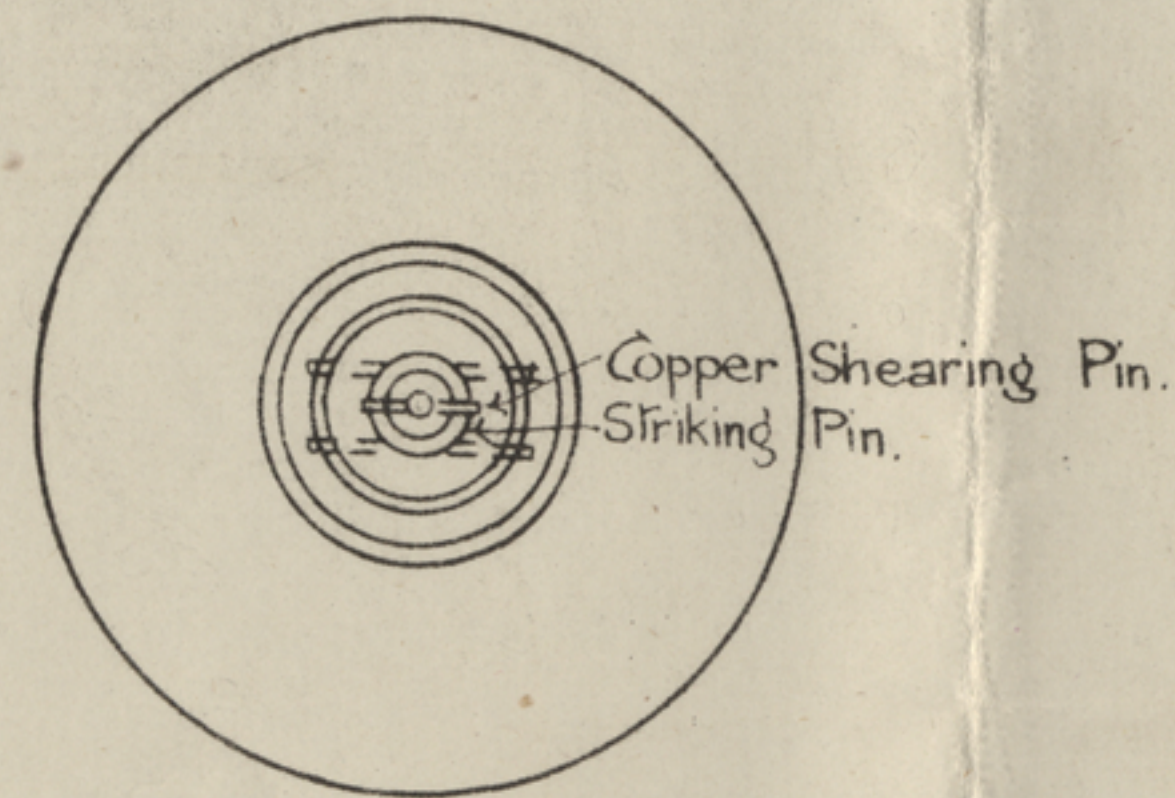
Anti Tank Mines

Line of Anti Tank Mines

SKETCH SHEWING DETAIL OF ANTI-TANK TRAP, FOUND AT S 17: (SHEET 36) ON 25.9.18.



SCALE $\frac{1}{2}$ " = 1 FOOT.



$\frac{1}{4}$ FULL SIZE.

H.Q., FIFTH ARMY GENERAL STAFF (1) DRAWING SECTION.
No.....
Date.....

5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 3rd SEPTEMBER to 27th SEPTEMBER 1918.

1. The operations involving the capture of PERONNE have already been dealt with in a previous narrative.
2. On the night 2nd/3rd the 15th Australian Infantry Brigade relieved the 14th Australian Infantry Brigade and the latter moved into the support area (HALLE Area).
On the morning of the 3rd the 8th Australian Infantry Brigade crossed the CANAL and moved into support area relieving the 14th Australian Infantry Brigade which withdrew across the Canal into Divisional Reserve.
3. During the night 3rd/4th September the 15th Australian Infantry Brigade advanced their line on the left and established a line from I.16.b.8.1. on the North to I.22.d.2.8. on the South, connecting at this point with the old line running round the East side of PERONNE and along the Canal between PERONNE and FLAMICOURT.
4. Consequent on the III Corps extending its right flank to I.12.a.0.0. on night 4th/5th, the 8th Australian Infantry Brigade was ordered to take over the same night, that portion of the front held by the 7th Australian Infantry Brigade and the 15th Australian Infantry Brigade within the following boundaries:
North- E & W. grid through I.7.central, I.12.central.
South- E. & W. grid through I.19.central, I.23.central.
In the meantime the 15th Australian Infantry Brigade was advancing along the railway at PERONNE and at 12.10 a.m. FLAMICOURT was in our possession and by 8.30 a.m. 5th the line on this portion of the front ran as follows:
I.34.central - I.34.b.2.6. - I.34.b.5.7 - I.28.b.6.1 -
I.28.b.8.4 - I.29.a.1.6 - I.23.d.1.4 - thence along DARMSTADT TRENCH to the Northern Brigade Boundary. On the right our patrols were in advance to a distance of 1,000 yards maintaining touch with the enemy.
The 8th Australian Infantry Brigade on the left were also established in DARMSTADT TRENCH.
By 11 a.m. the trench running E and W. immediately N. of DOINGT was occupied and patrols were pushing through DOINGT.
5. In order to conform to this advance on the South and also a proposed advance by the III Corps on the north the 8th Australian Infantry Brigade under cover of a heavy artillery bombardment on selected areas advanced their line capturing BUSSU.
By 5.30 p.m. the general line ran about 300 yards E. of BUSSU to CARDINAL WOOD where troops were held up by heavy machine gun fire, thence South along road running through I.24.c. and I.30 a & c, I.29.d.9.1, thence South along road through I.36.c., I.6.a & c and I.12.a.
We were in touch on both flanks (the 16th H.L.I. who had crossed the SOMME joined with the 15th Australian Infantry Brigade at I.12.c.6.1).
6. During the night 5th/6th the Division was relieved in its present sector by the 3rd Australian Division and side-slipped southwards taking over the new area as shown on attached map.
Orders were issued that the advance would be continued on the 6th

/between

between the new boundaries, the 8th Australian Infantry Brigade Group under Brigadier-General E. TIVEY C.B., D.S.O., V.D., acting as the Advanced Guard.

7. ACTION OF THE ADVANCED GUARD.

The Advanced Guard composed as under concentrated in the vicinity of LE MESNIL:

VANGUARD.

1 Squadron 13th A.L. Horse (less 1 troop)
31st Battalion on right.
29th Battalion on left
1 section Field Artillery attached to each Battalion.

MAIN GUARD.

1 troop 13th A.L. Horse
8th Australian Infantry Brigade (less 2 battalions)
30th Battalion on right, 32nd Battalion on left.
8th Field Coy. A.E., 8th Machine Gun Coy.
8th L.T.M. Battery
5th Army Brigade R.H.A.) less 2 sections.
298th Army Brigade R.F.A.)

On the 6th September the Advanced Guard rested on the GREEN LINE. Brigade Headquarters which was situated temporarily at ETERPIGNY moved up and established itself at P.21.a.3.7. at 10 a.m.

At 7 a.m. on 7th September the Advanced Guard moved on to the RED LINE through 14th (British) Brigade on to the BLUE LINE. Opposition was very light and easily overcome, Artillery dealing with machine gun positions etc., with good effect. Light Horse patrols preceded the infantry and did excellent work, locating enemy strong points etc.

On reaching the BLUE LINE enemy machine gun fire became heavy and a light barrage of 77 m.m. and 4.2" was placed down on our advancing troops.

At 10 a.m. the Brigade established a Battle Headquarters in MORSE COPSE (Q.14.d.central).

A Cyclist Lewis Gun Section attached to the Advanced Guard, patrolled all roads forward of the infantry, working in conjunction with the Light Horse. This Section did very valuable work, and engaged the enemy on three different occasions.

On reaching the BLUE LINE orders were received to dig in as there would be no further advance for the time being.

On the afternoon of 9th September the 29th Battalion (left) and 31st Battalion (right) advanced their lines forward about 1000 yards to high ground running along centre grid line in R.7, 13, 19, 25, improving the position and giving a good command of VENDELLES and all valleys forward.

Orders were received on the 9th September for the relief of the 8th Australian Infantry Brigade by the 13th Australian Infantry Brigade.

The relief took place on the 10th September and was completed by 10.30 p.m. The Brigade on being relieved moved back into the LE MESNIL Area and Brigade Headquarters established at O.4.b.4.2.

8. The 5th Australian Division (less Advanced Guard) moved as the Main Body. The 14th Australian Infantry Brigade keeping close touch with the Advanced Guard.
9. The Division was relieved by the 4th Australian Division between the 9th and 10th/11th September and withdrew to the LE MESNIL Area.

10. Work done by Engineers and Pioneers.

(a) Between the 4th and 5th September.

8th Field Coy. A.E. Completed reconnaissance of roads, dumps, and railways, developed wells and removed land-mines from main road N.E. of PERONNE.

14th Field Coy. A.E. remained in reserve.

15th Field Coy. A.E. carried out the following work.

- (i) Constructed bridge fit for Field Artillery at I.28.c.2.9. connecting PERONNE and FLAMICOURT, at site of demolished bridge by 3.55 p.m. on 5th September.
- (ii) 13 road-mines removed at I.28.a.2.9. (main PERONNE Road).
- (iii) Track for foot traffic built across SOMME swamps at O.3.b.7.6. eastward from Canal Lock.
- (iv) Bridge in DOINGT repaired and made fit for M.T.
- (v) Made reconnaissance and reports of wells, materials, roads etc.

5th Pioneer Battalion.

- (i) Cleared main roads PERONNE and BIACHES, and filled in many large shell craters.
- (ii) Re-graded approaches to M.T. Brigade at I.33.d.4.9.
- (iii) Removed large obstacle of carts, wire, telegraph poles, and other debris erected by enemy across main road into PERONNE at I.21.d.5.0.
- (iv) Reconnaissance of roads in area captured up to 5th September.

(b) Between 6th and 8th September.

8th Field Coy. A.E. carried out the following work:

- (i) Reconnaissance of roads in Divisional Area.
- (ii) Exploitation of water supply.
- (iii) Reconnaissance of Decauville track.
- (iv) Reconnaissance of R.E. Dumps.
- (v) Assistance to 8th Australian Infantry Brigade and Battalions in constructing Headquarters.

14th Field Coy. and one Company 5th Pioneer Battalion.

Reconstructed bridge to take Field Artillery at LAMIRE FARM O.15.a. This bridge was completed at 4 p.m. on 7th September.

These units commenced re-construction of Bridge at ETERPIGNY (O.21.a) on 8th September. This Bridge is to take M.T.

15th Field Coy. A.E. remained in reserve with 15th Australian Infantry Brigade and whilst awaiting developments, carried out the reconnaissance for suitable site for M.T. Bridge near ETERPIGNY.

As the site selected necessitated the construction of a road for the Eastern approach it was decided not to undertake the work immediately.

The reconstruction of the ETERPIGNY Bridge was commenced on 8th September.

5th Pioneer Battalion. (less one company) carried out work as follows:-

- (i) Repair of roads and removal of debris in villages to allow transport to pass.
 - (ii) Made detours round road craters, and finally filled them in.
 - (iii) Exploitation of water supply.
 - (iv) Repaired bridge at (I.2.c.9.6. to take M.T.
- 5th Australian Divisional R.E. Dump was established at P.29.c.9.7. on the 7th September.

11. Prisoners and material captured:

1 officer
31 other ranks
1 machine gun

12. Outstanding features of the Advanced Guard operation.
- (i) The marked assistance given by Artillery moving in close support to Infantry.
 - (ii) The valuable work done by mounted troops in keeping touch with the enemy and getting information back quickly.
13. From the date of relief till 27th September the Division remained in rest area and carried out training, importance being given to musketry, tank training and route marching.
14. On the 27th the Division moved forward to take part in the operation to break through the HINDENBURG DEFENCES. This operation will be dealt with in another narrative.

J. Talbot Hobbs.

Major-General,
Commanding 5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

5th October 1918.

506
g.s.H.

G.I.

A.Q.

8 Bde

14 Bde

15 Bde

No. 329.

FOURTH ARMY.
11th Nov., 1918.

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION.

CONTENTS:-

1. SITUATION.-The line runs:- W. of GRISMONT - EPPE SAUVAGE
- WALLERS-TRELON.
Hostilities ceased at 11.00 a.m. to-day.
2. RESERVES - No fresh divisions reported on the Army front.
3. ENEMY ACTIVITY.
 - (a) Aircraft. - Nil.
 - (b) Artillery. - Nil.
 - (c) Movement. - General Eastward movement by road and rail.
4. PRISONERS.- Since Aug. 8th 76,772.

-----OOO-----

Last Summary. Issued by
Fourth Army.
D.S.H.

* * 1. SITUATION NOVEMBER 10th & NIGHT 10th/11th INST.

Our advance was continued during the day, and our line runs:-
W. of GRISMONT - EPPE SAUVAGE - WALLERS-TRELON.

* * 2. RESERVES.

(A) Fourth Army Front.
No further identifications reported.

(B) and (C) Flank Armies' Fronts.
No identifications of divisions from rest or close reserve reported.

185th DIV., reported in yesterday's Summary to have been in close reserve in the BAVAI area on 7th/8th inst. has reinforced the front for the third time on this battle front S.W. of MONS, having relieved the 6th Div.

This division was withdrawn from near SOLESMEs on 25th ult., after losing more than 2,100 prisoners in the course of two engagements.

JAEGER DIV. is stated by prisoners to be in close support behind the 4th DIV., N.E. of MAUBEUGE.

(D) 197th DIV., which was reported as engaged on the front E. of DUN s/MEUSE (See Fourth Army Summary, No. 324, of 7th inst., under para. 2 (D)), is still considered in reserve although it has probably been disbanded, after sending one of its regiments to the 241st Div.

(E) The divisional engagements on the battle fronts in the Western Theatre since the commencement of the Allied offensive on the 26th September are as follows :-

Total divisions engaged....	158	YPRES battle front.,,	42	engagts.
Engaged twice.	89	CAMBRAI - ST QUENTIN		
		front.	133	"
Engaged three times...	25	SERRE - AISNE front.	17	"
Engaged four times....	2	OHAMPAGNE - ARGONNE		
		front.	82	"
			<u>274</u>	
Total divisional engage- ments.	<u>274</u>		<u>274</u>	

Excluding 30 divisions withdrawn after suffering severe casualties during the past two weeks, there are 8 enemy divisions available in reserve in the Western Theatre, of which 1 is fresh.

*
* * 3. ENEMY ACTIVITY.

Weather: - Fine.

(a) Aircraft.

Hostile aeroplane activity still remained slight. As a result of air fighting during the period, 6 E.A. were destroyed, and 1 E.A. was driven down out of control. Five of our machines are missing.

(b) Artillery (up to 3 p.m., 10th Nov., 1918).

With the exception of some intermittent shelling of HESTRUD, there was no hostile artillery activity.

(c) Movement.

All movement reported yesterday was again Eastward. The chief centres of activity reported were BAIVES, THUIN, GOZEE; the CHARLEROI - FLEURUS, FLORENNES - ROSEE, and RANCE - FROID-CHAPELLE roads; and EPPE SAUVAGE.

Railway activity was above normal in CHARLEROI, WALCOURT, BERZEE and CHIMAY; practically all rail movement seen was Eastward.

*
* * 4. PRISONERS.

The number of prisoners who have passed through Corps Cages and C.C.S. since August 8th, is 76,772.

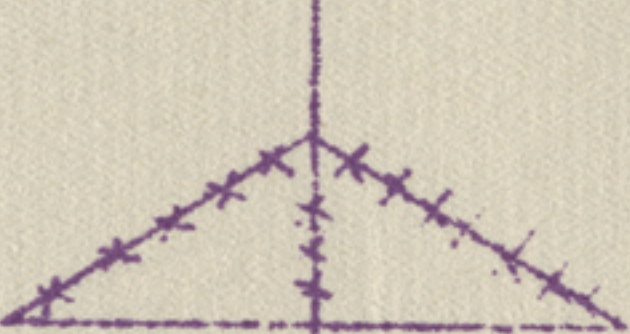
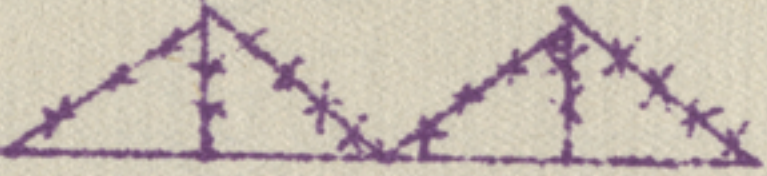
GENERAL.

Hostilities ceased at 11.00 a.m. to-day.

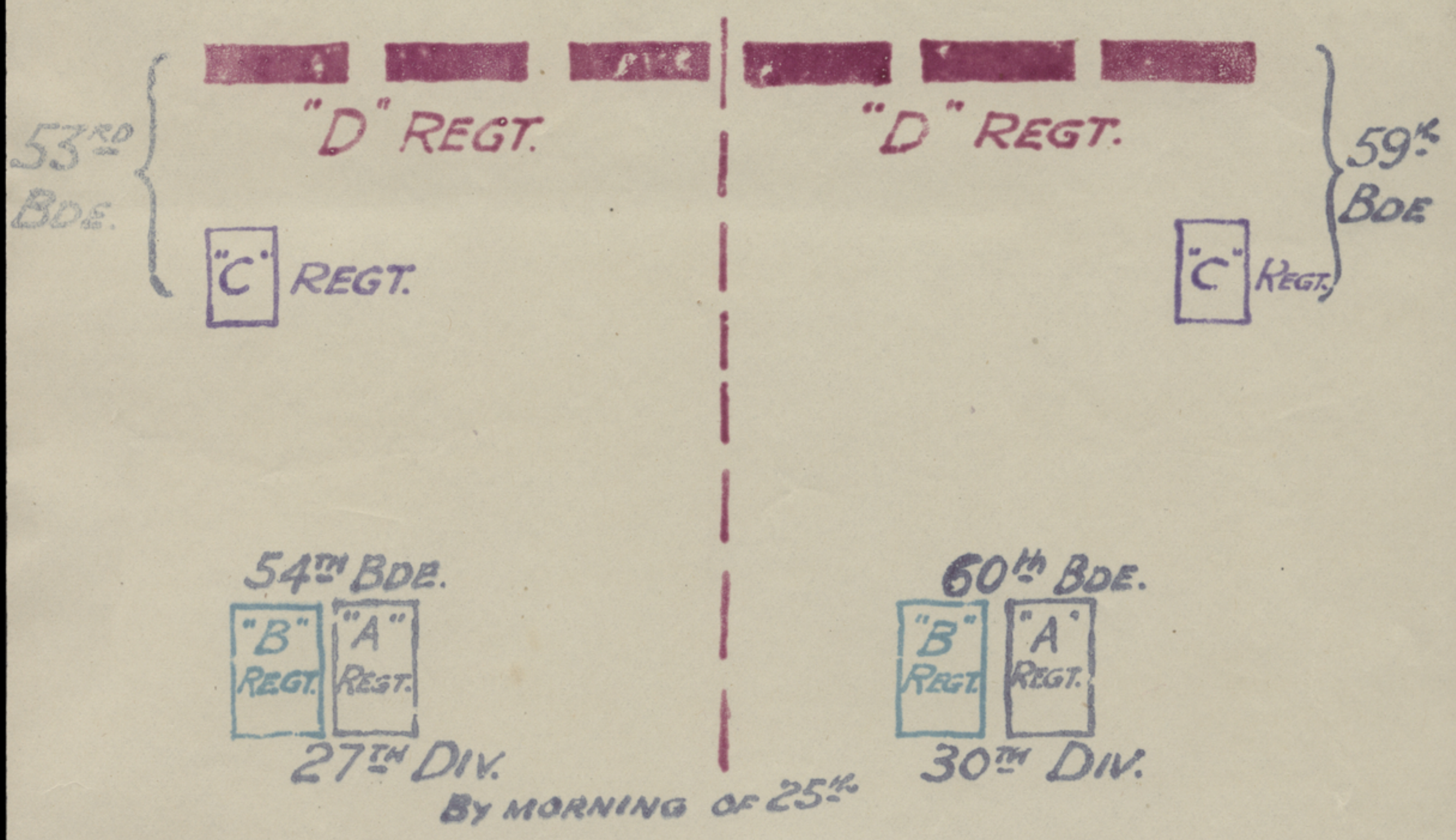
W. H. Murray
Lieut.-Colonel,
General Staff, Fourth Army.

(L)

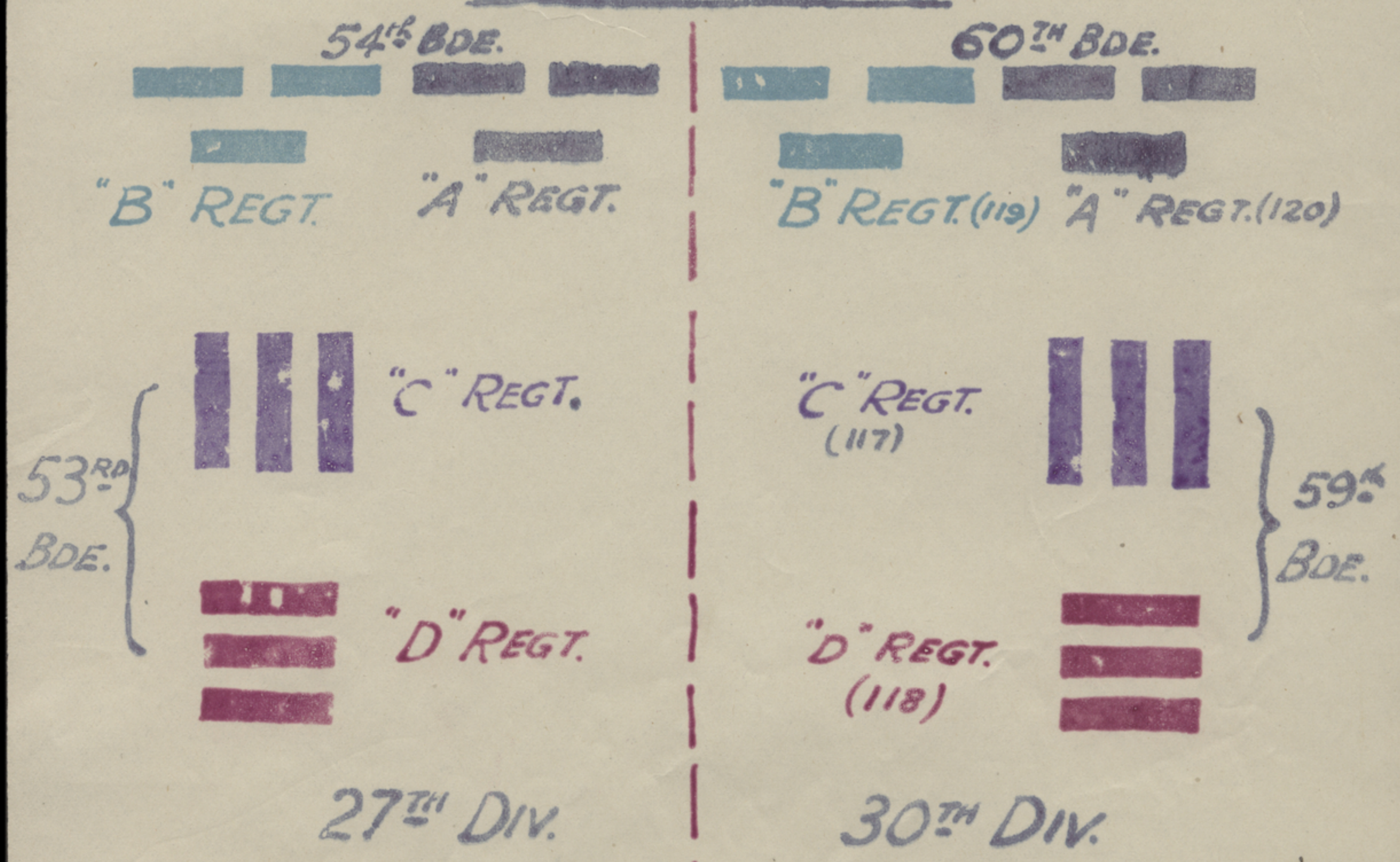
WIRING PER 1,000 YARDS OF FRONT.

	Wire No. Coils	Screw Pickets		Lorry Loads	Tank Loads	Man Hours by night	Man hours by day
		Long	Short				
SINGLE DOUBLE APRON	200	400	800	2	1½	600	400
							
	2.5	1.07	0.9		4.47		
		<u>Weight</u>		<u>Tons</u>			
DOUBLE DOUBLE APRON	400	800	1600	4	2½	1200	800
							
	5.00	2.14	1.8		8.94		
		<u>Weight</u>		<u>Tons</u>			
						Allows for equal number of men wiring & carrying from small dumps along the line of wire.	

- DIAGRAMMATIC -
PRELIMINARY DISPOSITIONS



- DIAGRAMMATIC -
BATTLE DISPOSITIONS





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