

**AWM4**

**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,  
1914-18 War**

Formation Headquarters

**Item number:** 1/13/2 Part 3

**Title:** General Staff, Headquarters 2nd  
Army

July 1916



AWM4-1/13/2PART3

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS.

280

July 14th - 20th, 1918.

1. The enemy has shown increased activity during the past week with his trench mortars and minenwerfer, but his artillery has been comparatively quiet, DRANOUTRE and back areas, however, being shelled occasionally. Our artillery has carried out several organized bombardments of the enemy's positions with considerable effect and has cut wire at many points in front of the enemy's fire and support trenches. Our patrols and observers report that the enemy has not done much work in the repair of his front line and wire, but is still working assiduously on his support trenches and on the defences of WYTSCHAETE and MESSINES. The 24th Division successfully raided the German trenches, killing and wounding several of the enemy.

2. On the night of the 13/14th our six inch howitzers, which were changing position, emptied their guns on the enemy's position at O.26.c 9.0. The enemy put up a large number of flares and evidently expected something further to happen. During the day the six inch howitzers bombarded the enemy's trenches in PETIT BOIS causing considerable damage, and our 60 pounders silenced a hostile battery.

On July 15th the Corps Heavy Artillery, the Divisional Artillery and the Army Heavy Artillery Group co-operated in shelling a hostile battery. Our fire appeared to be accurate, some ammunition being exploded and the hostile battery not having fired since.

4  
5/35  
3. On July 16th our 4.7" guns silenced a hostile battery and our 6 inch howitzers stopped the fire of a minenwerfer.

In

In conjunction with the 50th Division Artillery they also bombarded the enemy's position from N.24.c 8.5 to N.24.d 2.6. Large quantities of timber were blown up, the parapet breached and the wire cut. The German reply was feeble. On the 17th July our heavy artillery bombarded the enemy's trenches near BOIS QUARANTE (28 O.7.central).

4. On the night of the 17/18th the 24th Division raided the German trenches opposite MESSINES. Several of the enemy were killed but no identification was made, the trench being under repair and the enemy all being in shirtsleeves. The enemy brought heavy machine gun fire to bear from his support line. On the 18th our six inch howitzers repeated their bombardment of the 16th inst inflicting still further damage on the enemy's defences at this point.

5. On the 19th July a large enemy working party was seen in GRAND BOIS. The artillery of the 50th and 2nd Canadian Divisions and our 4.7" and 60 pounder guns opened fire at 6 a.m. and 6.45 a.m., each time with great effect. In the afternoon a heavy burst of fire was opened suddenly on a hostile battery shelling HILL 63. The battery immediately ceased fire and has not fired since. Our 60 pounders searched along a new railway in 28 O.22.c & d and stopped the fire of a gun shelling DRANOUTRE. On the 20th July our six inch howitzers shelled 28 N.24.d 2.4 and 28 N.24.d 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ .9 in order to stop a hostile minenwerfer which was shelling our trenches. Our 4.7" and 60 pounder guns shelled the position at which our kite balloon reported a train had stopped.

282

6. The 24th Division has again come under V Corps but has now been relieved by the 20th Division. Several changes in the method of holding the line have taken place owing to the tactical situation.

Work in the construction of Trench Mortar Emplacements and Artillery Observation Posts and the deep laying of cable is progressing satisfactorily.

7. Casualties reported to V Corps from July 13th to July 19th inclusive are as follows :-

	<u>Officers.</u>			<u>Other Ranks.</u>		
	<u>K.</u>	<u>W.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>K.</u>	<u>W.</u>	<u>M.</u>
8.746 21/7 24th Division.	1.	5	1.	9	79	-
41st "	3.	7.	-	19.	160.	5.
50th "	2.	7.	-	27.	123.	-
Corps Troops.	-	1.	-	5.	9.	-
2nd Cav. Div.	-	-	-	-	3	-
	6.	20	1.	70	73	5.
		21.		75.	300.	
		21.			430	

G. F. Boyd  
for

Lieut. General,  
Commanding V Corps.

21/7/16.

XIV CORPS GENERAL STAFF WEEKLY SUMMARY.

283

From 6 p.m. 14th July to 6 p.m. 20th July (both dates inclusive.)

The principle events during the week have been:

- (1) The relief of the 20th Division by the 6th Division.  
On the night of the 14th/15th July the relief of the 20th Division by the 6th Division was commenced, and was completed on the night of the 17th/18th July. The G.O.C., 6th Division took over command of the Divisional sector at 6 p.m. on the 16th July; Headquarters being established at the new Right Divisional Headquarters at 10 ELM Camp (A.25.d.l.4), immediately North of POPERINGHE.
- (2) The transfer of the 20th Division to the V Corps on July 19th. The 36th Division (Ulster) being ordered to replace the 20th Division in Corps Reserve to the XIV Corps. On July 20th, the 36th Division commenced moving into the XIV Corps area, when orders were received that the 36th Division were to proceed to the V Corps, the 4th Division being ordered to replace the 36th Division as reserve to the XIV Corps, and to come into the XIV Corps reserve area.
- (3) The continuation of wire cutting which terminated on the 19th instant, for details of which see attached Artillery Summary.
- (4) Retaliation for the shelling of POPERINGHE, on the 15th instant.
- (5) Bombardment by the Guards Division in conjunction with the dummy raid carried out on the night of the 19th/20th opposite E.27.
- (6) The hostile shelling of YPRES on the night of the 20th/21st July.

++++-----

At 2 p.m. on the 15th July one of our 6" Mk.VII guns, having been moved up to a position immediately West of YPRES opened fire on MOORSLEDE, PASCHENDABLE and WESTROOSEBEKE, in retaliation for the shelling of POPERINGHE, which shelling was described in last week's Corps Summary.

The German artillery were extremely quick in getting on to this gun, and their fire was very accurate. A considerable number of shells fell into YPRES during the retaliation on this gun, Bridge 10 being broken by the shelling, but was repaired in time to prevent delay to the relief in progress. Two slight casualties occurred among the gun team.

POPERINGHE was not shelled again, but in the early hours of the morning of the 16th July, German aeroplanes dropped a few bombs on the Northern portion of the town, without causing any casualties.

A dummy raid was carried out on the night of the 19th/20th by the Guards Division opposite E.27. After wire cutting and a bombardment, including a bombardment by medium trench mortars during the day, our guns opened on the enemy's front line at 12.30 a.m., and later lifted to the support lines, and later back again to the front line, which was bombarded for 5 minutes. After another short pause

284

selected points in the support line were again bombarded. The enemy's retaliation was very feeble.

Patrols were immediately sent out, and reported the enemy to be very much on the alert but beyond this, and prevention of the enemy sending working parties beyond his front line trench, no results ~~was to have been~~ <sup>were</sup> obtained.

During the night of the 20th/21st the enemy shelled YPRES from 10.45 p.m. to 2 a.m. with heavy artillery - the chief points selected for his bombardment being The RAMPARTS, the KAAIE Salient and the CONVENT.

PATROLS.

Our patrols have been active throughout the week, but have met with little opposition except near the CANADIAN DUGOUTS. By means of strong patrols in this area we have been able to deny the enemy his former superiority East of B.14 along the ADMIRALS ROAD.

GENERAL.

Owing to the shelling of POPERINGHE on the 15th instant orders were issued that nobody was to enter POPERINGHE except on duty, all traffic being diverted by the Switch road. On the 17th instant this order was suspended, traffic being resumed through POPERINGHE.

AERIAL ACTIVITY.

There has been an increase in aerial activity - more hostile machines being seen over and across the line. Bombs have been dropped on several places close behind the line, without, however, doing any damage. These places include POTIJZE WOOD, YPRES and the REIGERSBURG.

WIND.

The wind throughout the week has blown from the N.W. or N.E. On the 17th, 18th and 20th the wind blew from the N.E., Gas Alert being consequently ordered.

CASUALTIES.

	<u>Killed.</u>	<u>Wounded.</u>	<u>Missing.</u>
Officers.	5	12	-
Other Ranks.	35	228	-
Total....	40	240	-

ARTILLERY OPERATIONS from July 14th to July 20th.

285

During this week wire cutting has been carried out daily by both Divisions. The Guards cut wire in the neighborhood of FORTIN 17 (C.7.d.1.7.) which received 550 rounds from 4.5" Howitzers. Wire was also cut in C.14.a. The 20th took as their targets wire on each side of the ROULERS RAILWAY, and houses and hostile observing posts between FREZENBURG and WESTHOEK. General results were satisfactory in spite of difficulties of observation on the Guards front. There is a diversity of opinion as to whether the 80 or 85 Fuze gives the better result.

Retaliation was slight considering the activity of our Batteries. Our front line from WIELTJE to RAILWAY WOOD, and front and support lines on the left of the Guards front were the chief targets. There appears to be a certain increase of Trench Mortars on the RAILWAY WOOD front and Trench Mortars were active on the left of the Corps front.

Counter-Batteries engaged hostile guns which were giving trouble to the wire-cutting Batteries.

On the 15th a 9.2" Naval Gun fired 4 unobserved rounds into LANGEMARCK in retaliation for the shelling of POPERINGHE. With the same object in view a gun of the 35th Siege, 6" Mk VII fired 42 rounds in all on PASSCHENDAELE, WESTROOSEBEKE and MOORSLEDE. This was from a forward position in YPRES, and the shoot was much interfered with by hostile shelling. On the 17th the 99th Siege, 6" Howitzers, fired 50 rounds on CANAL COT (B.12.b. Central) which is strongly fortified. The same Battery shelled FORTIN 17 on the 19th instant, while the 4th Siege, 6" Howitzers bombarded trench C.14.a.8.0 in conjunction with the Guards' wire-cutting.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

CANADIAN CORPS

July 14th to July 20th 1916



OPERATIONS

1. On the night of the 14th/15th a patrol of 25th Canadian Battn. under Licut GALE, with Cpl. CANNING and six men, saw two enemy patrols and immediately opened fire on and bombed the nearest one, which fled leaving one of their number badly wounded. He was brought in but died after reaching our trenches. He belonged to the 7th Company, 124th Regiment, XIII WURTEMBERG CORPS and had the Iron Cross.
2. Minor operations were carried out by the 3rd Canadian Division on night of July 17th/18th as follows:-
  - (i) By the P.P.C.L.I.  
A block in sap leading out from our trenches in I.30.b.3.3 was advanced 20 yards, bringing it within 30 yards of enemy's wire. Our covering patrol was not troubled by the enemy.  
The advanced enemy trench along GREEN JACKET RIDE in front of trench 53 (I.30.b.3.5 to I.30.b.5.6) was occupied and garrisoned. Blocks were placed at the following points:
    - I.30.b.3.5
    - I.30.b.4.4
    - I.30.b.6.6During the operation an enemy patrol was encountered but quickly retired when attacked with bombs.
  - (ii) By 42nd Canadian Battn.  
A Barricade 30 yards long was constructed about 40 yards in front of junction of CRAB CRAWL and left end of trench 56 in about I.24.d.9.3.  
At I.24.d.8.6, a party cut and disarranged enemy's wire. A section about 50 to 60 feet long was roped and pulled over to our front line. At the same time, an enemy post in sap opposite trench 57 (J.19.c.2.5) was attacked with bombs.
  - (iii) By R.C.R.  
Scouts approached the enemy trenches in the LOOP (J.19.a.3.7) and threw bombs among a large hostile party working there. Our Stokes also fired 25 rounds rapid at the same point.
3. About 10.30 p.m. on July 18th the enemy, after a severe bombardment of our trenches on MOUNT SORREL, lasting 2 hours, advanced from his trenches opposite trench 49, but was driven back by our rifle and machine gun fire.

PATROLS

Our front has been covered by patrols each night.

ARTILLERY

In front of our Right Division, enemy's artillery has remained comparatively inactive. There was some counter battery work.

About 8.20 p.m. on the 18th., hostile trench mortars opened a heavy bombardment, preliminary to the raid referred to above, on the RAILWAY CUTTING and HILL 60 sector. Trenches 35 to 43 were heavily shelled until about 11 p.m. Our Heavy and Divisional Artillery retaliated vigorously. Otherwise hostile artillery has been very quiet on Centre Division front, the inactivity on occasions being quite marked.

On the 15th and 16th July our 18 prs. and medium Trench Mortars were engaged in wire cutting, opposite Centre Division, on which details have been already forwarded.

Divisional Artillery has shelled the German Communication Trenches and Roads behind the lines intermittently by day



ARTILLERY  
(contd)

On front of our Left Division, enemy artillery has been fairly active during the past week shelling our trenches and the usual points in rear. On July 13th between 6.45 and 7.30 p.m. enemy heavily shelled CULVERT locality (I.18.a.2.7). 287

MINING

On the 15th July hostile mining activity was reported opposite trench 39 (I.29.c.6.1). Immediate steps were taken to counter this activity and, at 4.58 p.m., on the 16th July we successfully blew a canouflet. A considerable volume of debris was seen to rise after the explosion. The enemy's reply was very slight.

RIFLE and  
MACHINE GUN  
FIRE

Enemy rifle and machine gun fire continues to be fairly quiet on this front. Our snipers have been active and our machine guns have been very active nightly, firing on enemy patrols and working parties, working in conjunction with our patrols.

TRAINING

Special courses of instruction have been held for Colt, Vickers Maxim and Lewis guns, also for Stokes Mortars. The classes for grenade work, physical training and bayonet fighting have been continued and are greatly appreciated by all ranks.

WORK

The following work has been carried out:-  
Maintenance of tramlines and construction of new.  
Making tow-path along tramlines.  
Fixing gas emplacements and removing gas cylinders.  
Tunnelling at BLUFF.  
Work on Dressing Stations, Brigade and Battalion Headquarters.  
Experimenting with rotary boring machine.  
Making cellars shell-proof in DICKEBUSCH.  
Large working parties have been employed nightly under the Engineers, improving the front and rear defences. The battalions in the line have made good progress in the improvement of our front trenches, and in pushing out and connecting up saps in front. The buried cable system has been completed up to a point well forward on OBSERVATORY RIDGE, where deep bomb-proof signal dugouts are being constructed.

HEALTH of  
the TROOPS

The health of the troops in Canadian Corps continues to be good.

The average daily admissions of sick to Field Ambulances during the past week were 98 and the average daily sick evacuations were 26.

The following cases of "Enteric Group" etc., are reported:-

	<u>Enteric</u> <u>Fever</u>	<u>Enteric</u> <u>Group</u>	<u>Paratyphoid</u> <u>"B"</u>
1st Canadian Division	-	-	-
2nd Canadian Division	-	1	-
3rd Canadian Division	-	-	2
Corps Troops	1	-	-

There were 14 cases of infectious disease during the week.

CASUALTIES

<u>OFFICERS:</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>OTHER RANKS:</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>79</u>
	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>18</u>		<u>Wounded</u>	<u>348</u>
	<u>Missing</u>	<u>0</u>		<u>Missing</u>	<u>4</u>

*P. B. Ransford*  
Lieut-General,

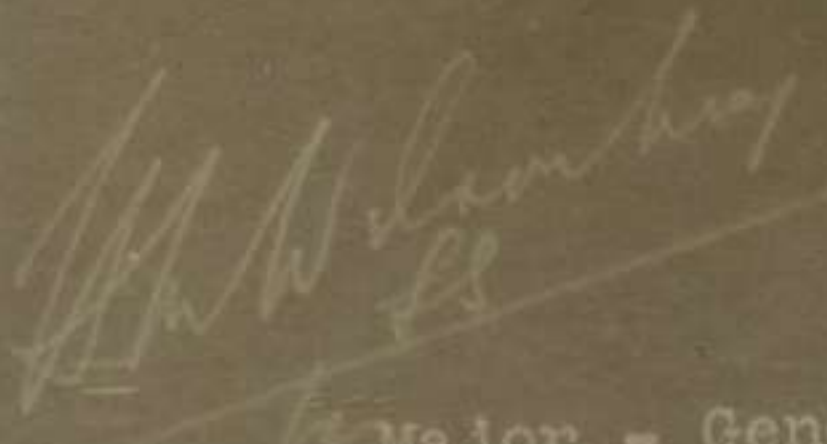
Commanding Canadian Corps.

Second Army.

41ST DIVISION SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS,  
from 6 p.m. 14-7-16 to 6 p.m. 20-7-16.

- 1.- A raid on hostile trenches N. of FACTORY FARM was attempted on night July 15th/16th, by 124th Infantry Bde, but failed owing to wire being uncut. Casualties, 2 O.R. wounded.
- 2.- Hostile billets at WARNETON, PONT ROUGE and LES ECLUSES were bombarded by the Divisional Artillery on night 16th/17th July. Enemy retaliation was slight.
- 3.- Wire cutting was carried out on July 19th, 20th and 21st on the whole Divisional front, which provoked some retaliation.
- 4.- The hostile artillery was quiet during the week except on July 19th when our batteries and billets were shelled intermittently during the day with 10 c.m. guns and 5.9 Howitzers.

20th July 1916.

  
Major - General,  
Comdg 41st Division.

SECRET

41st. Div.  
G.34  
(38/8).

289

Second Army.

Report on GAS ATTACK made on hostile trenches from trenches 127, 128 and 129 on the night of July 13/14th.

Zero hour was at 1 a.m. Owing to the variability of the wind, Zero was advanced one hour so as to ensure the right direction before a possible change to Northwards. The wind at that time was S.W. 4 to 6 miles per hour.

At Zero hour 440 cylinders were discharged from trenches 127, 128 and 129 and smoke was let off on the flanks of these trenches.

The gas and smoke travelled well and went straight over the German trenches.

The action of the enemy was as follows:-

At plus 1 min. when the gas was about half way over NO MAN'S LAND, a red light bursting into 4 or 5 stars was fired opposite trench 126.

Between plus 3 to plus 5 mins four more similar stars were fired. At plus 3 mins rifle and machine gun fire were opened by the enemy on the whole of the front attacked. This fire slackened at plus 6 mins and had ceased entirely by plus 12 mins.

The first shell arrived at our trenches at plus 7 mins, but the real barrage started at plus 10. It was not intense at any time and ceased in about plus 20 to plus 25 minutes.

No gas alarm could be heard in our trenches but a patrol on the right, opposite trench 124 who were near the German wire state that they distinctly heard whistles before the gas got completely across.

The night was absolutely quiet before the attack and as the alarm was not given more than one minute before the gas reached the enemy's lines, it is hoped that the gas caught the enemy while he was asleep and before he could put on his masks. The sudden cessation of rifle and machine gun fire might also indicate that a good number were put out of action.

14/7/16.

*H. Wilson*  
Major-General,  
Comdg 41st. Division.

## 2nd BRIGADE

## ROYAL FLYING CORPS

290

## SUMMARY of WORK

14th - 20th July 1916 (Incl).

Aeroplane Squadrons

Aerial observation has been interfered with during the week by low clouds rain and mist.

July 14th. Low clouds till 4 p.m. Twenty machines of 2nd Wing with nine machines of XI Wing carried out a bomb raid at 6 p.m. on WESTROOSEBEKE with 112lb. bombs, ordered by Second Army in retaliation for shelling of POPERINGHE. This was successful; one of the escort drove down a Fokker on enemy's side of the lines. 2nd.Lieut. Harrison dropped two 20lb. bombs on PONT ROUGE BRIDGE, result unobserved.

July 15th. Weather fine but very hazy. Four indecisive combats. Fourteen 20lb. bombs dropped on various points.

July 16th. Low clouds and rain all day. One indecisive combat.

July 17th. Low clouds and mist all day.

July 18th. Low clouds and rain all day.

July 19th. Cloudy till 5 p.m. afterwards clear. The Army Reconnaissance LILLE - TOURCOING - MOUSCRON - GHÉLUWE - HOUTHÉM - WAMBRECHIES was carried out at 2 p.m., and again at 7 p.m. by No. 20 Squadron. No activity seen. 2nd.Lieut. Thayre of No. 7 Squadron dropped two 112lb. bombs at mid-night on St. SAVEUR RAILWAY JUNCTION from 500 feet, successful. Six machines of No. 7 Squadron proceeded to BAIZIEUX on temporary attachment to No. 4 Squadron. No. 16 Squadron temporarily attached to 1st. Brigade.

July 20th. Misty in morning, fine later on. No. 20 Squadron carried out Army Reconnaissance over HOLLEBEKE - WERVICQ - RONCQ - MOUSCRON - LILLE - FORT ENGLOS. Unusually quiet. The town of LILLE north of the square was seen to be badly damaged by shell fire. 2nd.Lieut. Walters of No. 1 Squadron got within 30 yds. of a Roland machine - shot the Observer - machine last seen gliding down without its engine. Two sets of Army photographs were taken by No. 20 Squadron. Lieut. Teale and Corporal Stringer of No. 20 Squadron were killed landing in ground mist at ROELLE COURT. Captain Blatherwick and 2nd.A.M. Stanley were injured landing at FLERS. Ten 20lb. Hales bombs dropped at various points.

No. of successful reconnaissances	...	15
No. of patrols	...	97
No. of targets registered	...	68
No. of photographs taken	...	167
No. of prints issued	...	7787
No. of Stereo prints issued	...	41

Kite Balloon Sections

Balloons were up every day of the week except the 16th. when owing to wind and mist the only ascent was a short night one by No. 9 K. B. Section.

No. 2 K.B.S. reported a considerable amount of railway activity chiefly between COMINES and WERVICQ on the evenings of the 18th. and 19th. This Section also twice observed the enemy using a tactical railway to OOSTAVERNE and it is believed that the gun shelling DRANOUTRE was mounted on it.

No. 9 K.B.S. has been almost solely looking for enemy activity during the past week owing to operations in which ANZAC Corps have been engaged.

No. 2	ascents, targets registered	...	7
No. 9	- 17 ascents, targets registered		nil
No. 15	- no ascents, targets registered		nil

In the Field,

21st. July, 1916.

*A. W. Barton*  
Captain,  
for Brigade Major,  
2nd Brigade,  
Royal Flying Corps.

SECRET



Minor Operations. 41st Division. July 14/1916.

291

Report on a Gas Attack made by 3rd Battalion, Special Brigade, R.E. on the 41st Divisional front on the night of July 13/14, 1916.

Personnel.

1. The attack was made by personnel of Letter 'M' Company, 3rd Battalion, Special Brigade, R.E., commanded by Captain H.L. Bennett, R.E.

Frontage.

2. Two sectors of front, lying between the points named below, were prepared.

Reference : Sheet.28.S.W.4. (PLOWSTERPT) 1/10000.

U.15.d.2,9	)	30 Red Star.
U.15.b.2,1	)	30 White Star.
U.15.a.2,3	)	220 Red Star.
U.14.l.4,9	)	220 White Star.

A tracing showing the position of the sectors is attached.

Cylinders.

3. The 500 cylinders (250 Red Star and 250 White Star) required for the operation were placed in position on the night of July 13/14 without any casualties either to personnel or material. All cylinders were tested at GODSWAEREVELDE before removal to the trenches.

Date.

4. The attack was originally arranged for the night of July 13/13. No gas was however liberated owing to the fact that all members of a raiding party which had left our trenches earlier in the evening had not returned before zero.

The attack was postponed 24 hours to July 13/14.

Smoke.

5. Smoke clouds were maintained between the two sectors of the discharge and also on each flank. The smoke frontage of 550 yards was manned by personnel of 'M' Company. Pain's candles were employed.

Battle plans.

6. The time table was compiled so as to permit of the cloud from each sector reaching the enemy's trenches at the same moment. Smoke followed after a short interval.

- Zero Gas released from left sector.
- 0.1 Gas released from right sector.
- 0.2 Smoke candles started.
- 0.20 All gas turned off.

No raid was organised to follow the clouds.

Zero was at 1 a.m. (July 14th) and was officially issued before 10.45 p.m.

Wind Conditions.

7. The limits of wind were ~~S.S.W.~~ to W. The weather forecast promised a change through W. to N.W. during the night. Zero was accordingly changed from 2 a.m. to 1 a.m.

At 1 a.m. the wind was blowing at 5 miles an hour from the S.W.

Effect on the Enemy.

8. The first alarm given by the enemy was a red rocket fired opposite the right flank of the left discharge when the gas had travelled one-third of the distance to the hostile trenches. The rocket was followed by four or five others from the same place; they were, apparently, fired by the same sentry. On the left of the discharge the gas reached the enemy's lines before any rockets were fired. About 10 rockets in all were sent up. They burst at their greatest altitude

/into

into 3 to 5 stars. None reached any considerable height and probably would not be visible for any great distance behind the enemy's line. This may account for the slowness of the artillery in opening fire. No green flares were fired.

No sound alarms were heard from observers in our lines, but a patrol posted near the German lines at zero to the right of the cloud, stated that whistles were distinctly heard.

Rifle and machine gun fire started at about + 0.3 minutes. On the left, the fire started later, ceased sooner and was less vigorous than the fire on the right. By about + 0.10 minutes small arm fire ceased.

Enemy artillery was slow to open fire. The first shell came over at + 0.7 minutes, increased at + 0.10, slackened at + 0.30 and entirely ceased at + 0.40. Field guns were almost exclusively used.

As it was decided to send no raiding parties to the hostile trenches, no direct evidence of the effect on the enemy is known. The markedly sluggish response of the enemy indicates that the attack was unsuspected by him.

Cylinders Discharged. 9. No gas was discharged on the right sector (60 cylinders) as already stated.

Of the 440 installed in the right sector, 416 were completely emptied. This represents a complete discharge of 95% of the total, exclusive of cylinders partially emptied.

Casualties. 10. No infantry complained of gas immediately after the attack. A few men reported sick about 20 hours later, but the cases were very slight. Infantry

were

294

were removed from the fire-trenches during the discharge.

Four men of the Special Company were slightly gassed.

Personnel.

11. The Company Commander reports that the behaviour of all ranks throughout the attack was excellent.

16/7/16.

*R. A. Bensford*

Major, R.E.  
Commanding 3rd Battn.  
SPECIAL BRIGADE, R.E.



For the period 6 p.m. July 21st to 6 p.m. July 28th 1918.

1. During the past week the following alterations have taken place -

The 18th Division has arrived and has been placed under the V Corps.

The 4th Division having arrived from the Fourth Army has relieved the Guards Division.

The 29th Division is in process of arriving.

The 20th Division, less Artillery, has left for the Fourth Army.

The Guards Division is in process of leaving for the Reserve Army.

The 3rd Canadian Divisional Artillery having arrived from England, has gone into the line.

The 41st Division has come under the V Corps, the front of which now runs from the River LYS to the VIERSTRAAT WITSCHEDE road.

Enemy's  
Artillery  
activity

2. The normal places have been shelled, but the fire has been less intense. Though enemy's heavier guns appear to be still present they have done less firing than usual; his minenwerfer on the other hand are becoming constantly more active, especially west and northwest of WITSCHEDE and in the neighbourhood of WIELTJE and MOETELDE ESTAMIERI.

Our artillery has carried out several concentrated bombardments with good results.

Raids.

3. The enemy has made five distinct efforts to obtain identifications, four of these being on the XIV Corps front. He succeeded in only one case, on the night of the 25th/26th, when three of our men were apparently taken prisoners.

On the night

On the night of the 26th/27th the 41st Division carried out two raids on a larger scale than usual -

(i) One Company of the 124th Brigade raided enemy's trenches near LE GHEER. The Germans were found ready in front of their own wire. Thirty of these however were killed, and their front trenches were penetrated. These were found to be full of dead as a result of our bombardment. Efforts were made to bomb up to the German support line, but as this was heavily manned the raiders withdrew.

(ii) One Company of the 123rd Brigade carried out a raid near LE TOUQUET. The hostile barrage was heavy and only a few men succeeded in entering the enemy's trenches.

R.F.C.

4. With the exception of the 21st instant the weather has been unfavourable for observation.

On the 21st bombs were dropped near AUBERS, on the railway at VYRWEGE, and QUESNOY.

On the 22nd MENIN station was bombed. An attempt was made to attack hostile balloons but was abandoned owing to the weather.

Mining.

6. On the night of the 25th/26th the enemy blew what appears to have been four charges at the BLUFF, forming a crater 150 yds. x 60 yds. The presence of the gallery had been suspected and the trenches previously cleared. Our casualties were only about 15. The Canadians occupied the crater. Little damage was done to our defensive gallery, and our line is actually improved by the addition of a valuable observation post.

There has been some underground activity and camouflages by the enemy in the neighbourhood of HILL 60, ARBACH WOOD and CORDONNERIE.

Casualties. 6. Casualties for the period were as follows :-

	<u>Officers.</u>			<u>Other ranks.</u>		
	<u>K.</u>	<u>W.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>W.</u>	<u>M.</u>	
V Corps	5	81	2	45	284	4
XIV Corps	2	18	-	31	160	3
Canadian Corps	5	25	-	77	448	23
2nd ANZAC Corps	1	6	-	31	205	8
41st Division	-	19	-	88	179	7
	<u>13</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>219</u>	<u>1006</u>	<u>45</u>

Total - Officers 94  
 Other ranks 1,515  
 1,607

V CORPS.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS.

July 21st - 27th, 1918.

1. Many reliefs have taken place on the front held by the V Corps during the past week, but no other event of importance has occurred. The enemy's minewar and trench mortars have been active during the past week opposite the left division and our artillery have retaliated.

2. On the night 20th/21st July our 60 pdrs. and 4.7 guns fired at a train on the new COBLENZ metre gauge railway. On the 21st the enemy's minewar were active, but our 8-inch howitzers stopped their fire by shelling the enemy's trench roadway opposite MESSINES, on which one of the minewar is believed to be situated. Our 8-inch howitzers also retaliated on a hostile trench mortar in the vicinity of BOIS QUARANTE. Several anti-aircraft guns were engaged by our heavy batteries in support of an aerial reconnaissance.

3. The 22nd July passed quietly. On the afternoon of the 23rd the enemy's trench mortars again became active opposite BOIS QUARANTE and our 8-inch howitzers retaliated, inflicting considerable damage in that neighbourhood.

On the 24th July the enemy's trench mortars were active and our 8-inch howitzers and the divisional artillery bombarded their suspected positions.

4. On the 25th the enemy again trench mortared the fronts of the 33rd and 30th Divisions and fired a few 5.9 shells apparently registering. The Corps Heavy Artillery and the Divisional Artillery retaliated.

On July 26th the enemy's minenwerfer were particularly active. Our 6-inch howitzers bombarded the enemy's front and support lines with considerable effect and also shelled the hostile trench mortar positions. Our 9.2 howitzers bombarded the enemy's craters at N.24.a.6.6 $\frac{1}{2}$  and obtained 13 direct hits throwing up a large amount of material. Counter battery work by our heavy guns against the enemy's 5.7 howitzers was also undertaken.

On July 27th the enemy's trench mortars were active opposite WYTSCHARTSE and were again engaged by our heavy artillery who obtained a direct hit. We also bombarded the enemy's trenches in the vicinity.

5. The Canadian Corps has taken over one brigade front as far South as the VIERSTRAAT - WYTSCHARTSE road. The V. Corps has gradually extended southwards and now holds its old front as far south as the River LYS, the 50th, 36th and 41st Divisions being in the line. The 20th and 24th Divisions have been relieved and have left Second Army areas, and the 18th Division has been transferred to the II Anzac Corps. The 41st Division only came under the V Corps tactically at 12 noon on the 26th. An account of its doings has not, therefore, been included in the above summary. The casualties of that Division have, however, been included.

6. Casualties reported from July 20th to 26th inclusive are as follows :-

302.

3.

	<u>Officers.</u>			<u>Other Ranks.</u>		
	K.	W.	M.	K.	W.	M.
20th Division	-	1	-	3	14	2
24th Division	1	-	-	1	6	-
36th Division	-	1	-	-	9	-
41st Division	-	8	-	23	88	-
50th Division	4	10	2	18	128	2
Corps Troops	-	-	-	-	6	-
2nd Cavalry Div.	-	1	-	-	13	-
	<u>5</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>264</u>	<u>4</u>
		28			313	

*W. B. ...*

Lieut. General,  
Commanding V Corps.

28th July, 1916.

SECRET

XIV CORPS GENERAL STAFF WEEKLY SUMMARY.

303

From 6 p.m. 21st July to 6 p.m. 27th July (Both dates inclusive.)

The principal events which have taken place during the week are the moves of Divisions, which owing to the XIV Corps being transferred from Second Army to the Reserve Army, had to be carried out at short notice.

On July 23rd orders were received that the XIV Corps was to be transferred to the Reserve Army and consist of the Guards Division, 6th Division and 20th Division.

The XIV Corps to be relieved by the VIII Corps from the Reserve Army, which Corps is to consist of the 4th Division, 29th Division and 38th Division.

Headquarters of the XIV Corps to close at LA LOVIE CHATEAU at 6 p.m. on 29th July and re-open at MARIEUX at 4 p.m. on 30th July.

On July 24th the 20th Division, which as stated in last weeks summary had been transferred to the V Corps, commenced entraining for the South.

On July 27th the 20th Division was concentrated in the Reserve Army area with Headquarters established at BUS les ARTOIS, and on July 29th will be in the line with Headquarters established at COUIN.

On July 25th the Guards Division commenced being relieved by the 4th Division, this relief finishing on July 28th, command passing from the G.O.C., Guards Division to G.O.C., 4th Division at 4 p.m. 27th July.

On completion of this relief the Guards Division concentrate in the XIV Corps Reserve Area with Headquarters at ESQUILBROU.

On July 29th the Guards Division will start entraining for the South and will be concentrated in the Reserve Army Area by August 1st, with Headquarters established at BUS les ARTOIS.

On August 3rd the Guards Division will be in the line with Headquarters established at BERTHANCOURT.

On July 29th the 6th Division will commence to be relieved by the 29th Division, which latter Division commenced to arrive in the XIV Corps area on the 27th July.

This relief is to be completed by the night of August 1/2nd, the command passing to the G.O.C., 29th Division, at 12 noon - August 1st. On completion of relief 6th Division to be concentrated in XIV Corps Reserve area.

When in the Corps Reserve area the 6th Division is to be relieved by the 38th Division, which latter Division entrains for the Second Army area any time after midday July 30th.

On August 2nd the 6th Division will commence entraining for the South and will be concentrated in the Reserve Army area on August 4th with Headquarters established at BEAUVAL. On August 5th the 6th Division will come into the XIV Corps Reserve in the Reserve Army area with Headquarters established at BUS les ARTOIS.

Artillery Transfers. The 20th Divisional Artillery now covering the 6th Division in the line, is not to be relieved, and will be transferred to the 29th Division.

29th Divisional Artillery remains down South and joins the 20th Division on arrival in the Reserve Army area.

The Guards and 6th Divisional Artillery accompanying their respective Divisions to the Reserve Army area.

OPERATIONS.

1. During the week the enemy has tried on four occasions to obtain identification. Four raids have been attempted by the enemy, only one of which succeeded.

On the night 20/21st July a patrol left the enemy's line opposite A.1. They were dispersed by our Lewis guns.

2. At about 9.30 a.m. on the 21st July, 3 parties of the enemy were seen crawling up opposite D.20 and D.21. Each party was composed of from 6 to 10 men. At the same time enemy machine guns firing from the HIGH COMMAND REDOUBT swept our parapet. The dead ground had enabled the enemy to get within 35 yards before they were seen. Two Lewis guns and the men holding the posts in these trenches immediately opened fire and the Germans retired throwing bombs behind them as they ran. Several were seen to fall. At nightfall a patrol went out to search the ground, but the enemy kept a ~~patrol of machine gun fire~~ barrage of machine gun fire in front of the spot for an hour, and when this had ceased the patrol was unable to find any dead Germans. The enemy crawled up in two lines, bombers in front, bayonet men behind.

3. On the night of the 23rd/24th July the enemy attempted a small bombing attack on WIKLETJE, evidently with the intention of obtaining prisoners to establish identification. The enemy crawled up to within bombing distance and bombs were thrown at the junction of B.10 and CAVAN trench; they were, however, easily driven off by our rifle fire and bombs.

4. On the night 25th/26th July a working party was employed in reclaiming the derelict trench E.25, whilst a wiring party was out in front. About 1 a.m. the wiring party returned and was apparently closely followed up by an enemy raiding party, who suddenly threw a volley of bombs into the middle of the working party. The trench was held by two hopping posts and a Lewis gun, but owing to the confusion caused by the presence of the working party, the former were unable to drive off the enemy until some casualties had been inflicted upon our troops. The enemy also succeeded in carrying away prisoners, and three of our men are missing.

A patrol which was sent out immediately, was unable to find any dead Germans, with the exception of these three men missing - nothing else was captured.

5. OUR PATROLS.

Have been active throughout the week, especially along the ADMIRALS ROAD and on the extreme left of the line. Very little has been seen of hostile patrols throughout the entire front.

Two day patrols were carried out - one from FORWARD trench and one near CANADIAN DUGOUTS. During the latter a German flag was cut down from a tree and brought in.

6. ENEMY'S ARTILLERY.

The enemy's artillery has been fairly quiet during the week. The usual places being shelled, but with less intensity. His heavier guns, although undoubtedly present, have fired on fewer occasions. On the other hand his minenwerfers have been rather active, particularly against D.20, D.21 and E.24 - E.27. They were very quickly silenced by our retaliation. One minenwerfer was definitely located at COLLE BARRI.



305

7. ENEMY'S WIRE.

The enemy has been particularly active on repairing wire throughout the week, and in spite of our machine and Lewis gun fire, which has been directed on damaged portions every night, he has succeeded in mending most gaps.

8. ENEMY AIRCRAFT.

Hostile aircraft was active at the beginning of the week, bombs being dropped near REIGERSBURG and HILL TOP FARM. During the latter portion of the week, weather has been unsuitable for flying and little has been seen of hostile aircraft.

9. WIND.

The wind has been slight, and has blown continually from N. and N.E., Gas Alert being consequently ordered throughout.

10. CASUALTIES.

	<u>Killed.</u>	<u>Wounded.</u>	<u>Missing.</u>
Officers.	2	12	0
Other Ranks	31	160	3
	-----		
Total....	33	172	3
	-----		

ARTILLERY OPERATIONS from July 21st to July 28th.

----- 306

During the night 20/21st experimental wire cutting was carried out by the 20th. Results tended to prove that Batteries should fire at a range of not more than 2500 yards, that Trench Mortars should co-operate at a range of not more than 300 yards, to assist in clearing a passage, and that Infantry must be prepared to complete work done by Artillery.

Otherwise, the activity of Divisional Artillery has been confined to retaliation, and shelling of Working Parties, Billets and suspected O.P's.

On July 22nd, 99th Siege, 6" Howitzers, carried out shoot on Datum point (PILCKEM MILL), and "A" point C.13.b.9.8., as an experiment for general registration.

On July 24th and 25th, 4th Siege, 6" Howitzers, fired on Minenwerfer in the neighbourhood of VON KLUCK GOT., which had been annoying our Infantry. On the same day, the 86th Siege, 12" Howitzers, shelled the enemy's strong point at CANAL GOT., B.12.b. central.

As our Heavy Artillery have fired little during the last week, the enemy's shelling has been comparatively slight.

## CANADIAN CORPS

## SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

July 21st - to July 27th, 1916.

307

OPERATIONS

On July 21st between 11 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. a bombardment was carried out by the 3rd Canadian Divisional Artillery and the Canadian Corps Artillery of the enemy's positions about HOGS, the BIRDCAGE (J.19.e. and J.18.e.) and STIRLING CASTLE (J.13.d.) apparently with very good effect.

The enemy's trenches were considerably damaged and much material was thrown up. The enemy's retaliation was practically nil.

The VIERSTRAAT Sector (Trenches M.1 - C.4 inclusive) was taken over by the 6th Canadian Infantry Brigade from the 149th British Infantry Brigade (55th Division) on the nights of the 21st and 22nd.

On the afternoon of July 25th the 2nd Canadian Div. Artillery in cooperation with the 6" Hows. of the Canadian Corps Heavy Artillery shelled the enemy's T.M. emplacements in BOIS QUARANTE - PICCADILLY FARM and the ST. MEOI Craters from 2.45 to 3 p.m. and again from 3.30 to 3.45 p.m.

As a result two heavy explosions took place in BOIS QUARANTE and PICCADILLY FARM respectively. The enemy's retaliation was feeble.

At 9.55 p.m. on 25th the enemy exploded a large mine under the Eastern end of the BLUFF. Parties who had previously been told off in case of such an occurrence immediately occupied the Crater and commenced to consolidate it.

A barrage was placed on the enemy's front line trench from ST. MEOI to the CANAL by the C.F.A. 2nd Canadian Division. This barrage was maintained with varying intensity until the front was reported quiet at 11.30 p.m. The enemy's attempt to approach the Crater was frustrated by our artillery and machine gun fire. The Eastern end of the BLUFF was destroyed but otherwise no material damage was done.

ARTILLERY

Retaliation and registration have been carried out daily by our artillery and several working parties have been fired on and dispersed. The enemy's artillery activity has been normal on this front during the past week against our trenches and the usual points in rear.

MINENWERFERS AND TRENCH MORTARS

The enemy's minenwerfers have been very active against our front and support trenches. Our retaliation has been effective.

PATROLS

During the week our patrols have been active along the whole front, reporting on our own and enemy's wire.

On night 24th/25th instant a patrol from the 25th Battalion encountered a German patrol and wounded two of them, but failed to take any prisoners.

On night 25th/26th two men of the same battalion, while in a Listening Post, wounded and captured a German of the 246th Minenwerfer Company, but he unfortunately died after being brought into our trenches.

MINING

On the night of July 21st 1916, while digging in forward trench No. 49 on MOUNT SUREL, one of our working parties came on an enemy gallery at a depth of about 6 feet. To protect our trench, we exploded a small charge in the gallery. On night of 22nd July 1916, at 10 p.m., enemy exploded a small charge in

MIRING (contd)

this gallery immediately in front of trench 49, making a crater about 8 feet in diameter but causing no casualties and doing no material damage. We occupied the crater.

308

MACHINE GUN & RIFLE FIRE

Enemy's machine guns have been particularly active at night. The approaches to our communication trenches received special attention. Rifle fire has been normal.

WORKING PARTIES

Large working parties have been employed nightly carrying on our policy of work in this area. The front trenches have been materially improved and the work on system of deep living trenches and communication trenches in rear steadily carried on nightly. In addition to the buried cable already finished to a point well forward on OBSERVATORY RIDGE, 200 men are employed nightly burying cable forward to MOUNT SORREL.

TRAINING

Training of Brigades in Divisional and Corps Reserve in all forms of trench warfare has been steadily carried on. The work of training our men in the quick consolidation of captured trenches is under way, the procedure being to destroy a trench with trench mortars and afterwards send parties of men to reverse and clear it, then construct dugouts quickly and provide cover from the subsequent enemy bombardment.

HEALTH OF TROOPS

The health of the troops in Canadian Corps continues to be good.

The average daily admissions of sick to field ambulances during the past week were ninety and the average daily sick evacuations were twenty nine.

The following cases of "Enteric Group" are reported:-

	Enteric Fever	Paratyphoid "B"
1st Canadian Division . . . . .	1	3
2nd Canadian Division . . . . .	1	3
3rd Canadian Division . . . . .	1	1

There were 8 cases of infectious disease during the week.

CASUALTIES

OFFICERS:	Killed	5
	Wounded	25
	Missing	Nil
OTHER RANKS:	Killed	77
	Wounded	448
	Missing	23

*J.G. Bill Meakin*

Lieut-General,

Commanding Canadian Corps.

28th July 1916.

2nd AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND ARMY CORPS.

Period from 6 p.m. 21st July to 6 p.m. 27th July, 1916.

3097

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS.

1. ENEMY'S ARTILLERY. Generally normal. On 21st July fired 761 rounds against several of our Batteries. A 21 cm. was observed to fire from V.26.b.1.9. Breach was made in the parapet at I.21.b.12.14. Fired 527 rounds on 22nd July, 150 of which were at C.27.e. On 24th July fired 706 rounds.

OUR ARTILLERY. Our Artillery normal during this period.

3. INFANTRY. Our patrols discovered several working parties (enemy) all of whom were dispersed by machine gun fire on 21st July. On 22nd July a patrol in C.17.e. met a superior hostile patrol and a bomb fight ensued. The German patrol was driven off and our patrol returned with a man killed and 3 wounded.

MORTARS. Trench Mortar Batteries fired with excellent results, much damage being done to enemy's parapet and timber was seen blown into the air.

5. REMARKS ON ENEMY. Enemy's working parties have been hampered by our Machine Gun fire. Enemy is suspicious of our activity, as he searches NO MAN'S LAND nightly with machine guns and uses searchlight along his wire. All grass near his wire is being cut. He frequently throws bombs into his own wire.

CASUALTIES.

	<u>Killed.</u>		<u>Wounded.</u>		<u>Missing.</u>	
	<u>Officers</u>	<u>O.R.</u>	<u>Officers</u>	<u>O.R.</u>	<u>Officers</u>	<u>O.R.</u>
New Zealand Division	1	11	1	95		8
5th Australian Division	-	20	5	110		
<u>TOTAL.</u>	1	31	6	205		8

Ø One since died of wounds.

TOTAL CASUALTIES. 261.

28th July 1916.

Lieut.-General.  
Commanding 2nd A. & N.Z. Army Corps.

158  
6/14/16

SECRET.

*7 units of 41st Div.*  
*no 41 Div.*  
*G 708.*

Second Army

*310*

41st DIVISION SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS  
from 6 p.m. 21-7-16 to 6 p.m.  
27-7-16.

1.- A simultaneous raid by one company from both 123rd and 124th Inf. Bdes was carried out on night July 26th/27th. One company, 20th Durham L.I., 123rd Inf. Bde, which attacked N. of the LE TOUQUET - WARETON Railway, encountered a heavy Barrage on leaving our trenches and found enemy in strength behind his parapet. Only two small parties succeeded in reaching the enemy's trenches, which they bombed for a short period.

One company, 10th Queen's Regt, 124th Inf. Bde, opposite PICKET HOUSE, succeeded in entering the German front line trench, which had been considerably damaged by our artillery fire. Some Germans were killed in front of their parapet, and other German dead were found in the trench. A bombing attack made on the German support trench met with considerable opposition, and was forced back. Identifications obtained showed 104th Regiment, Normal.

2.- The remainder of the week has been quiet, and hostile artillery has been less active than usual.

*[Handwritten signature]*  
*98*

Major-General,  
Commanding 41st Division.

27-7-16.