

AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Formation Headquarters

Item number: 1/14/4

Title: General Staff, Headquarters 4th Army

January 1917



AWM4-1/14/4

WAR DIARY

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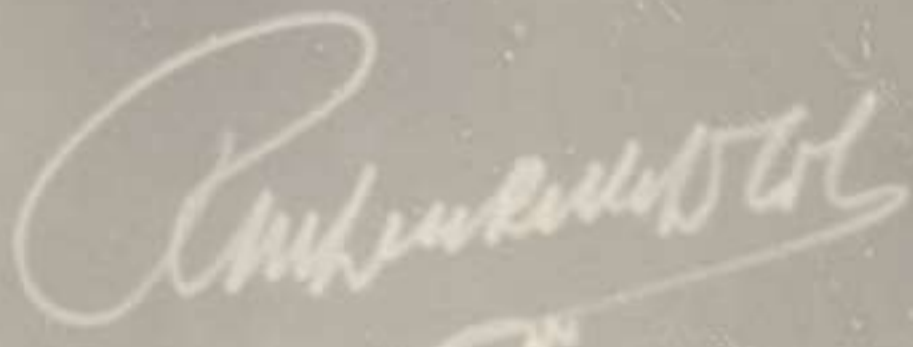
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or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

FOURTH ARMY (General Staff).

| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks and references to Appendices |
|------------------|-------|------|---|--------------------------------------|
| <u>QUERRIEU.</u> | 1916. | - | <p>The following readjustments of the Corps boundaries were completed by the morning of Jany. 4th. -</p> <p>The I Anzac Corps extended their right and took over from the XIV Corps as far as N.35.c.6.6.</p> <p>The XIV Corps extended their right and took over from the XV Corps as far as U.20.b.6.6.</p> <p><u>GENERAL.</u></p> <p>On Jany. 2nd O.A.D.258 was received, giving the C.-in-C's proposals for the 1917 campaign, and instructions as to taking over front from the French as far as BERNY.</p> <p>On Jany. 4th a conference was held at Army Headquarters attended by Corps Commanders and their Staffs, at which the Army Commander gave a brief resumé of the C-in-C's proposals as laid down in O.A.D.258.</p> | 355 |
| | | |  General, Commanding Fourth Army. | |

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FOURTH ARMY (General Staff).

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| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks and references to Appendices |
|-----------|--|------|--|--|
| QUERRIEU. | 1917. 6th to 12th Jany. 1917. | - | <p style="text-align: right;">356</p> <p><u>SITUATION.</u> The situation during the week remained unchanged.</p> <p><u>OPERATIONS.</u> There have been no operations of importance during the week.</p> <p><u>WORK.</u> Work has been continued in accordance with Corps Defence Schemes. Work on the repair of roads and railway construction is proceeding.</p> <p><u>ARTILLERY ACTION.</u></p> <p>The hostile artillery fire has been normal. The villages in the front area receive most attention. High velocity guns continue to fire into back areas, on occasions, MARICOURT, MONTAUBAN, BERNAFAY WOOD, LONGUEVAL, CONTALMAISON and BRAY having been shelled. A considerable number of our battery positions have been consistently shelled, at times gas shells being employed. One one occasion, about 75 out of 150 rounds fired by the enemy were blind. Our artillery has been active. Special concentrations of fire have been carried out against selected portions of the enemy's trenches and suspected billets. A heavy trench mortar was employed with great effect by the III Corps on the 11th. Suspected reliefs have been specially dealt with. Little aeroplane work has been possible, but on the 7th a considerable number of direct hits were obtained.</p> <p><u>AERIAL.</u> War flying was only possible on 4 days during the past week, and then only for a few hours. On these days, in spite of low clouds and mist, hostile batteries were located and some of these were engaged. A little successful photographic work was carried out on one occasion. On January 8th two indecisive combats took place.</p> <p><u>RELIEFS.</u> The following reliefs have taken place during this period :- On Jany. 9th the 4th Australian Division completed the relief of the 1st Aust. Divn. In accordance with the scheme for readjustment of the boundary between the XV and XIV Corps, by which the XIV Corps extended its right and took over the front line from the XV Corps as far as U.26.c.7.3, the following reliefs also took place:-</p> <p style="text-align: right;">....On</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">B/R 15</p> |

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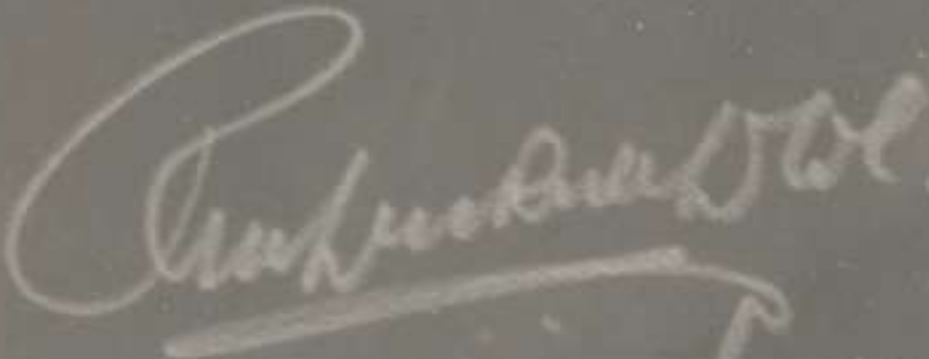
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FOURTH ARMY (General Staff).

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| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks and references to Appendices |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|------|--|--------------------------------------|
| QUERRIEU. | 1917. 6th to 12th Jany. | - | <p>On the night 8/9th Jny. the 17th Division extended its right and took over the 20th Divn. front as far as U.2.c.1.1.</p> <p>On the night 9/10th January, the 20th Division extended its right and took over from the 8th Division the front as far as U.20.b.3.2.</p> <p>On the night 10/11th, the 'Guards' Division took over the front from U.20.b.3.2 to U.26.c.7.3, the 8th Division thus withdrawing entirely from the line.</p> <p><u>GENERAL.</u></p> <p>(a) On the 7th Jany. a conference was held at Army Headquarters for the purpose of arranging details of the proposed relief with the French. Representatives of the French were present.</p> <p>(b) On the 10th Jany. Fourth Army No. 305/5 (G) was issued, showing the positions of Corps boundaries as they would appear when the relief of the French had taken place.</p> <p>(c) On the 11th Jany. instructions were issued (Fourth Army No. 305/6 (G), to the I Anzac Corps to take over the line then held by the III Corps, in accordance with pre-arranged programme of reliefs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">  General, Commanding Fourth Army. </p> | 357. |

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FOURTH ARMY (General Staff).

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| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks and references to Appendices |
|-----------|--|------|--|---|
| QUERRIEU. | 1917. 13th to 19th Jany. | - | <p><u>SITUATION.</u> The situation during the week remained unchanged.</p> <p><u>OPERATIONS.</u> At 9.0 p.m. on Jany. 13th a small party of the enemy attempted to raid a detached post of the 4th Australian Division at N.19.b.5.7. The enemy were successfully driven off leaving two dead. Our losses were nil. At about 3.0 a.m. on January 16th a party of about 60 of the enemy made a raid on the trenches of the 4th Australian Division at N.21.c.7.9. The party was successfully driven off leaving four dead near our parapet, and it is believed they suffered a considerable number of further casualties. Our losses were nil.</p> <p><u>WORK.</u> Work has been carried on in accordance with Corps Defence Schemes. Work on repair of roads and railway construction is proceeding.</p> <p><u>ARTILLERY ACTION.</u></p> <p>During the week the hostile artillery has been rather less active. Long-range guns have shelled BRAY and MARICOURT and on occasions the neighbourhoods of MARTINPUICH, EAUCOURT L'ABBAYE, FLERS, the valley E. of MAMETZ WOOD, CONTALMAISON, Some of our battery positions have been shelled by night, gas shells being employed in addition to the ordinary H.E. On two separate occasions the enemy has shelled his own trenches, from which rockets were at once sent up. Our artillery has been active, several working parties have been dispersed and suspected reliefs dealt with; the roads and tracks in the neighbourhoods of ROCQUIGNY, LE MESNIL, MANANCOURT, NURLU and MOISLAINS being specially dealt with. Concentrated bombardments have been carried out against selected portions of the hostile line, these have been reported effective, a large amount of debris from the trenches being thrown into the air.</p> <p><u>AERIAL.</u> No flying was possible during this period except on the 16th January, and even on this day the weather was so unfavourable that little work could be done.</p> <p><u>RELIEFS.</u> The following reliefs have taken place during this period :-</p> <p style="text-align: right;">....on <i>Prus</i></p> | <p style="text-align: right;">358</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Bk 16</p> |

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks and references to Appendices |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|------|--|--------------------------------------|
| QUERRIEU. | 1917. 13th to 19th Jany. | - | <p>On Jany. 16th the 29th Division completed the relief of the 17th Division. ,, 18th ,, 5th Aust. ,, ,, 2nd Aust. ,, ,, 18th ,, 4th ,, ,, 18th French Division, the XV Corps thus extending their right as far South as C.26.b.0.5.</p> <p><u>GENERAL.</u> On the 18th Jany. Fourth Army 305/2 (G) was issued, amending the offensive and defensive schemes of Corps in consequence of the changes in the Corps fronts.</p> | |

Richard D. Bl
 General.
 Commanding Fourth Army.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

FOURTH ARMY (General Staff).

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| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | 360 | Remarks and references to Appendices |
|------------------------|--------------------|------|--|-------|--------------------------------------|
| <u>QUERRIEU. 1917.</u> | 20th to 26th Jany. | - | <p><u>SITUATION.</u> The situation during the week remained unchanged.</p> <p><u>OPERATIONS.</u> At about 5.45 a.m. on January 25th a hostile patrol entered a detached post of the 33rd Division at C.26.b.O.6, about 1,200 yards S. of BOUCHAVESNES, the garrison of which consisted of 1 N.C.O. and 6 men. The N.C.O. and 3 men are missing, the remaining three men are wounded.</p> <p><u>WORK.</u> - Work has been carried on in accordance with Corps Defence Schemes. Work on repair of roads and railway construction is proceeding.</p> <p><u>ARTILLERY ACTION.</u></p> <p>Hostile artillery activity has been, generally speaking, normal, except for a slight increase on the 24th and 25th. Towards the latter part of the week there has also been a slight increase in the shelling of our back areas with long-range naval guns from the direction of IRLES and FREMICOURT. The villages in the forward area have received their usual daily attention. Some of our battery positions round FREGICOURT have been intermittently shelled and on one or two occasions hostile batteries have been ranged by aeroplanes. Only a few gas shells have been fired. A large percentage of "blinds" was noticed on one occasion. Our artillery has carried out nightly harassing fire on tracks and communications, special attention being paid to suspected enemy reliefs. Daily bombardments on strong points and trench junctions have been carried out, apparently with considerable success, much debris and several bodies being thrown up into the air. Several working parties have been seen and dispersed, and on one or two occasions casualties have been seen to have been inflicted. Germans have been observed running away from our trenches during our daily bombardments; machine guns have co-operated in dealing effectively with these. Three hostile batteries have been successfully engaged with aeroplane observation. Observation has, on the whole, been bad owing to the thick ground mist.</p> <p><u>AERIAL.</u> For the first three days of the week very little flying took place, the weather</p> | Bk 17 | Paul |

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(FOURTH ARMY, (General Staff).)

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| Place | Date | Hour | Summary of Events and Information | Remarks and references to Appendices |
|-----------|-------|------|---|--------------------------------------|
| QUERRIEU. | 1917. | | <p>making flying almost impossible. On the last four days there was great activity. A large number of air combats took place. On the Fourth Army front, seven enemy machines were brought down in our lines, 5 by airmen, one by A.A. fire and one by machine gun fire from the ground, and at least two others in the enemy's lines. Many other indecisive combats were reported. A large number of successful photographs have been taken, from which it has been able to locate the enemy's tracks and approaches. Successful counter-battery work has also been carried out, many hostile batteries having been engaged and silenced, and numerous active batteries located. The enemy's aircraft has also been active but was not above normal considering the weather.</p> <p><u>RELIEFS.</u> The following relief has taken place during this period.-</p> <p>On Jany. 22nd the 33rd Division completed the relief of the IX French Corps, thus extending the right of the XV Corps as far South as the SOMME.</p> <p><u>GENERAL.</u>^(a) On the 21st Jany. Fourth Army No. G.G.209/23 was issued, showing the dividing lines between counter-battery zones of the XV and the XVIII French Corps; these zones to remain in force until the III Corps took over from the French South of the SOMME.</p> <p>(b) On the 24th Jany., Fourth Army No. 305/2 (G) was issued ordering the move of the III Corps to its new area South of the SOMME.</p> | 361 |

[Signature]
General,
Commanding Fourth Army.

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~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

FOURTH ARMY (General Staff).

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Summary of Events and Information

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Remarks and references to Appendices

| Place | Date | Hour |
|-----------|--------------------|------|
| QUERRIEU. | 1917. | |
| | 27th to 31st Jany. | - |

SITUATION. The situation remained unchanged during the week except for an advance of our line North-east of LES BOEUFs, the line being established as follows :-
 N.36.d.2 $\frac{1}{2}$.2 - N.36.d.1.5 - N.35.d.5.2 - thence South-east along LANDWEHR TRENCH to former front line.

OPERATIONS.
 An operation was carried out by the 29th Division on January 27th at 5.30 a.m. The object of this operation was to gain the higher ground and observation in N.35.d. and N.36.c. and d.
 The objectives for the attack were the German first and second line trenches between N.36.d.4.2 and N.35.d.8.0 and ERSATZ POINT.
 The attack was carried out by the 1st Bn. Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers on the right and the 1st Bn. Border Regiment on the left, both of the 87th Infantry Brigade. All objectives were captured, and 7 officers and 370 o.r. prisoners were taken. At 9.30 p.m. a hostile counter-attack on ERSATZ POINT was driven off. (See Appx. 1).

A raid, with the object of capturing prisoners and destroying the enemy's works in the BUTTE de WARLENCOURT and QUARRY, was carried out at 1.45 a.m. on the 30th by two companies of the 8/10th Gordon Highlanders, 44th Infantry Brigade, 15th Division. A number of dug-outs were destroyed and useful information about the enemy's defences was obtained. As a result of the operations 17 prisoners were taken.

WORK. Work has been carried on in accordance with Corps Defence Schemes. Work on repair of roads and railway construction is proceeding.

ARTILLERY ACTION.
 On the whole, with the exception of the shelling of roads and railways, the hostile artillery activity has been below normal. In the northern sector, the German artillery has shown, as in the preceding weeks, more energy than on the remainder of

....the

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1. Report on opn. by 29th Divn.

Ray

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|-----------|-------|------|---|--------------------------------------|
| QUERRIEU. | 1917. | | <p>the front. The villages in the forward area have received their usual daily attention. ALBERT was shelled on three occasions by a H.V. gun, presumably 24 or 28 c.w., from the neighbourhood of either VELU or FREMICOURT. Generally, however, shelling by H.V. guns has decreased during the past week. Gas shells were reported on three occasions only. This shows a considerably decrease. Some lachrymatory shells were fired one evening with the thermometer below freezing point. The reports received show that the effect was considerably less than usual. The hostile barrage in answer to the attack of the 29th Division on the 27th was slow in opening and at no time heavy. Full advantage has been taken of the information obtained from the marks in the snow. Guns located and tracks in use have been dealt with.</p> <p><u>AERIAL.</u> During this period there has been considerable aerial activity on our part. Hostile machines have been successfully engaged on numerous occasions. Weather conditions have been good, with the exception of three days on which mist or high wind somewhat hindered aerial reconnaissance. Three hostile aircraft were brought down in one day in our lines in aerial combat, and a fourth by anti-aircraft fire. Three hostile machines were also brought down in the enemy's lines; two of these are believed to have crashed. Two of our aeroplanes were forced to land inside our own lines. A large number of successful air photographs were taken.</p> <p><u>RELIEFS.</u> The following reliefs have taken place during this period :-</p> <p>On Jany. 28th the 17th Division completed the relief of the 20th Division. ,, 28th ,, 1st Aust. ,, ,, 50th ,, The G.O.C. I Anzac Corps assumed command of the III Corps front at 12 noon on Jany. 28th.</p> <p><u>GENERAL.</u> On the 28th Jany. O.A.D. 286, dated 26/1/17, was received from G.H.Q. re the general scheme of operations to be undertaken in 1917, and the redistribution of troops consequent upon the same.</p> | |

Robert Balfour
 General,
 Commanding Fourth Army.

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Appendix 1.

Report of an operation carried out by the
29th Division, on 27th Jany., 1917.

The object was to gain better observation of LE
TRANSLOY, with a view to further operations.

The attack was carried out by the 1st Royal Innis-
killing Fusiliers on the right and the 1st Border Regiment on
the left, both of the 87th Infantry Brigade.

At zero hour, (5.30 a.m.), the barrage fell, and the
attacking troops left the assembly trench.

The front and support line trenches between N.36.d.4.2
and N.35.d.8.0 and ERSATZ Point were captured with ease, with
the exception of the strong point on the left (T.5.d.) which
had not previously been destroyed by the heavy artillery, where
the defenders resisted for a quarter of an hour. A barrage
of rifle grenades was established on this point and Lewis gunners
worked round the flank, but only one gun came into action before
the garrison surrendered. The capture of ERSATZ Point pre-
sented little difficulty as the Bavarian garrison almost immed-
iately surrendered.

As soon as the objectives were gained a patrol was
pushed out and advanced to within 400 yards of LE TRANSLOY.

At 9.30 p.m. a weak counter-attack with a small force
was made on ERSATZ POINT but was not pushed home.

The total numbers of prisoners taken amounted to
17 officers and 361 o.r., and 3 machine guns were also captured.

Our casualties, up to noon on the 28th, amounted to
4 officers and 42 o.r. killed and 7 officers and 246 o.r.
wounded.
