

AWM4
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1914-18 War

Formation Headquarters

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Title: General Staff, Headquarters 4th Army

May 1918



AWM4-1/14/7PART1

1st May, 1918.

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SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 1st May, 1918.

1. On the night April 30th/1st May our line south of the ANCRE was advanced 400 yards on a front of 800 yards. New posts were established east of TREUX. The situation was considerably quieter than usual.

2. AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

3rd Australian Division established a forward line of posts north of the ANCRE from the railway at E.19.d.0.2 to the river bank at E.25.b.0.4., ejecting an enemy post at the latter point. The bridge at E.25.a.9.2 was destroyed. South of the ANCRE our line was advanced and partly wired, the new line of posts running from J.6.d.4.2 to J.6.b.3.8.

3. THIRD ARMY.

Situation unchanged.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

Fairly quiet day. GENTELLES, DOMART and the PERENNES - ABBEMONT area were shelled during the day. Counter preparation was carried out on the hostile positions opposite DOMART.

5. AIRCRAFT.

18 hours were flown by 25 pilots. The weather made flying almost impossible throughout the day and night. 5 artillery, 4 contact and 1 offensive patrols were carried out. Other than these we were unable to do any work. Hostile aircraft activity was nil.

6. PRISONERS.

1 O.R. was taken during the day.

7. WEATHER.

Dull: some showers.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

No reliefs or moves of any importance took place during the day.

9. COMPOSITION.

1st May, 1918.

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9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY. *br*

Aust. Corps: 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Aust., 47th*,
2 Bdes.* 8th, 1 Bde. 18th Divisions.

Army Reserve: III Corps: 1 Bde. 8th, 2 Bdes. 18th,
58th Divisions.

XIX Corps.

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	..	52
13-pdr. R.H.A., H.E.	..	68
" " S.	..	86
18-pdr., H.E.	..	4294
" " S.	..	10127
4.5" How., H.E.	..	3435
" " Gas.	..	659
60-pdr., H.E.	..	671
" " S.	..	517
" " Gas.	..	104
6" How., H.E.	..	3603
" " Gas.	..	1022
6" Mk. VII H.E.	..	486
" " S.	..	110
8" How.	..	232
12" How.	..	16

11. GENERAL.

An officer belonging to the 218th "A" Fleiger
Abteilung captured on 30th April, under special examin-
ation, stated that a big attack is impending within the next
fortnight on a broad front from ALBERT northwards. The
attack will be pushed in a north-westerly direction.

1st May, 1918.

153
Operation Messages Received and Issued.

6.28 a.m. From Australian Corps.

Morning report. Situation unchanged. Hostile artillery active at times on southern divisional front. H.V. guns shelled mound O.26 and 27. Some shelling in vicinity of DAOURS and RIBEMONT. One prisoner captured near ALBERT in patrol encounter.

6.35 a.m. To G.H.Q.

Morning report. Some hostile artillery activity on southern division front during night. DAOURS and RIBEMONT shelled. Otherwise quiet. No night operations by R.A.F. owing to weather.

2.33 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Last night left-centre division established forward line of posts north of ANCRE from railway at E.19.d.0.2 to river bank at E.25.b.0.4., ejecting enemy post at latter point. Bridge at E.25.a.9.2 was destroyed. South of ANCRE our line advanced 400 yards on frontage of 800 yards and partly wired: new line of posts running from J.6.d.4.2 to J.6.b.3.8 established. New positions thus established give much better control of entrances and exits from VILLE sur ANCRE.

5.57 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Evening report. Situation very quiet. Captures 3 O.R.

6.40 p.m. To G.H.Q.

Evening report - quiet day. Last night our line advanced 400 yards on frontage of 800 yards south of ANCRE and new line of posts established from J.6.d.4.2 to J.6.b.3.8. Prisoners 3 O.R.

2nd May, 1918.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 2nd May, 1918.

----- 64

1. Our line was slightly advanced during the night 1st/2nd May east of VILLERS BRETONNEUX and further progress made in the vicinity of TREUX. Hostile artillery showed considerable activity during the night south of the SOMME, especially in the vicinity of VILLERS BRETONNEUX. The village was intermittently gas-shelled during the night and early morning. Battery positions near MERICOURT were heavily shelled during the day, which otherwise passed quietly.

2. AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

4th Australian Division slightly advanced the line in P.25.c.

3rd Australian Division continued the operation of pushing forward their front south of the ANCRE during the night. The total ground gained in 48 hours represents an advance of 400 to 600 yards on a total frontage of 1,400 yards. The new line of posts runs from J.12.b.5.0 through J.6.d.6.0 to J.6.b.3.7.

With the exception of heavy shelling of battery positions near MERICOURT and shelling of BOUZINCOURT and the ALBERT - AMIENS main road near the front line, the day passed quietly.

3. THIRD ARMY.

Situation quiet and unchanged.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

Gas shelling along the whole northern sector, especially in the GENTELLES region. The sector held by the American Division was again bombarded.

5. AIRCRAFT.

249 hours were flown by 163 pilots. A reconnaissance was carried out over MORLANCOURT at a height of 600 feet with a view to locating enemy tanks in that village. None were seen.

17 artillery patrols were made and 6 zone calls sent down. 1 hostile battery was successfully neutralised. 47 offensive and 5 contact patrols were also carried out. 20 photographic flights were undertaken and 649 plates exposed.

Hostile aircraft activity was normal. 22 combats in the air took place, in which 5 E.A. were brought down and 1 was driven down out of control. 2 of our machines are missing.

Twenty-eight 25-lb bombs were dropped and 2,450 rounds were fired on favourable targets by Corps Squadrons. No night flying or bombing was carried out.

6. PRISONERS.

2nd May, 1918.

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6. PRISONERS.

3 O.R. were taken during the day.

7. WEATHER.

Good visibility with a few clouds.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

The XIX Corps took over from the VII Corps the supervision of the G.H.Q. line of defence and came under orders of Reserve Army. It was, however, still to be administered by Fourth Army.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

Aust. Corps: 2nd*, 3rd, 4th and 5th Aust., 47th,
2 Bdes.* 8th, 1 Bde. 18th Divisions.

Army Reserve: III Corps: 58th, 2 Bdes. 8th and
18th Divisions.

XIX Corps.

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	..	1667
" S.	..	607
13-pdr. R.H.A., S.	..	65
18-pdr., H.E.	..	5936
" S.	..	12005
4.5" How., H.E.	..	3900
60-pdr., H.E.	..	972
" S.	..	578
" Gas.	..	103
6" How., H.E.	..	4424
" Gas.	..	599
6" Mk. VII H.E.	..	300
" S.	..	132
8" How.	..	658
12" How.	..	3

11. GENERAL.

The exceptional inactivity of the enemy's artillery north of the ANCRE, combined with reports received from prisoners, indicate the imminence of an enemy offensive in the vicinity of ALBERT.

2nd May, 1918.

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Operation Messages Received and Issued.

6.11 a.m. From Australian Corps.

Morning report. Activity above normal on right division front. VILLERS BRETONNEUX shelled with gas 9 to 9.15 p.m. and intermittently since then. Barrage placed on our forward area between 2.30 and 2.50 a.m. Our line slightly advanced in P.25.c. Quiet night on rest of Corps front.

6.45 a.m. To G.H.Q.

Morning report. VILLERS BRETONNEUX gas shelled 9 to 9.15 p.m. and intermittently since. Barrage placed on our forward area 2.40 a.m.

3.2 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Left Centre Division continued last night the operation of pushing forward their front line south of ANCRE. Total ground gained during last two nights represents an advance of 400 to 600 yards on total frontage of 1,400 yards. New line of posts now runs from J.12.b.5.0 through J.6.d.6.0 to J.6.b.3.7.

6.12 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Evening report. Battery positions near MERICOURT heavily shelled. BOUZINCOURT and E.7.a.8.2 shelled during morning. E.A. active over whole Corps front. 2 bombs dropped in O.13 and 6 bombs in O.7.d., also 6 in DAOURS. Slight shelling in J.33.d.5.4. Left brigade, right division, advanced line last night which now runs O.36.b.2.0 - O.36.b.5.5 - P.31.a.1.5 - P.25.c.7.3. Prisoners last 24 hours 1.

6.30 p.m. To G.H.Q.

Situation unchanged. Left brigade, 4th Aust. Division, advanced line last night E. of BRETONNEUX, which now runs O.36.b.2.0 - O.36.b.5.5 - P.31.a.1.5 - P.25.c.7.3. Battery positions near MERICOURT L'ABBE heavily shelled. 250 green cross shells 5.30 to 6 a.m. on O.22., N.W. of BRETONNEUX. E.A. active: 6 bombs dropped at DAOURS, 6 S.W. of AUBIGNY. 6 E.A. crashed, 2 brought down out of control. Prisoners one.

(2)

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SPECIAL EXAMINATION OF PILOT BELONGING TO 218 "A" FLIGHT,
SHOT DOWN NEAR ST. GRATIEN ON 30TH APRIL, 1918.

AERODROME. -

Prisoner admitted that he and his observer agreed to give ETRICOURT as their aerodrome, but it is really at NURLU. Other aerodromes will shortly be appearing at NURLU, as more Squadrons (including a bombing squadron) are expected to arrive any day now.

THE ATTACK. -

Provided the weather keeps fine, a big attack will take place on May 8th. The whole Second Army (he gave the General's name as von HUTIER) is to take part. The objective is, however, AMIENS, not ARRAS, as stated by the observer.

NOTE :- Von HUTIER at present commands the XVIII German Army, while von der MARWITZ commands the II Army. Von HUTIER, however, is regarded as the General most experienced in open warfare. It is possible, therefore, that should a big attack be made only by one Army it would be commanded by von HUTIER.

He first heard of this offensive some days ago, when they were sent for by the Captain who commands the Flight, in order to be given certain instructions. The captain warned them that he was going to impart a secret unknown even to colonels of infantry regiments, and after telling them this, he urged them to get thoroughly acquainted with the lie of the land round ALBERT, and to note the strength of the British troops there, and any future movements of troops in that area.

The German troops will be brought up from various places, including NESLE, HAM and ROYE, and will suddenly be launched at ALBERT.

ALBERT is a good place for an attack, as the British defences are weak there.

He believes that the British suspect nothing, and that this offensive should succeed in separating the British and French Armies.

The troops brought from ROUMANIA and ITALY will take part, and prisoner also mentioned the XVIII German Corps and the 3rd Naval Division as likely to be in line for the attack.

NOTE :- The XVIII German Corps at the beginning of the month commanded that sector of the line between BOYELLES and AYETTE. The 3rd Naval Division is now in line just north of ALBERT. It is just possible, therefore, that the prisoner has unwittingly given the rough limits of the attack.

AERODROMES near MONTDIDIER. -

These are chiefly empty hangars erected to deceive the Allies as to the sector to be attacked.

NEW PLANES.

A large number of new aeroplanes are expected to arrive shortly to take the place of casualties.

3rd May, 1918.

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SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 3rd May, 1918.

1. An operation was carried out during the night 2nd/3rd May in conjunction with the French troops on our right to endeavour to seize the high ground about the MONUMENT. Owing to heavy machine gun fire being opened on both flanks of the attack, the centre only was able to make progress. Although the MONUMENT was captured our troops were unable to maintain themselves there, both flanks being in the air, and a withdrawal to the original line was carried out after a considerable number of the enemy had been killed and prisoners taken.

Hostile artillery was active during the day E. of MILLENCOURT and S. of SENLIS. Otherwise the day passed quietly.

2. AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

In conjunction with the troops of the Moroccan Division on the right, and assisted by tanks, a battalion of 4th Australian Division attacked the orchard and high ground about the MONUMENT at 2 a.m. Assembly positions were reached without difficulty but immediately the troops advanced very heavy machine gun fire was opened on the Moroccan Division and the left of the Australian battalion. The centre of the attack was not seriously opposed and reached its objective, killing a considerable number of the enemy and capturing 24 prisoners. Finding that both flanks had failed to advance in face of the hostile machine guns it was found necessary to withdraw to our original line. It is estimated that our attack was opposed by a force of at least 2 battalions and from prisoners' statements it is known that there were 80 machine guns available with each of those battalions. One of our tanks became stranded in the enemy's lines, the crew being captured.

3. THIRD ARMY.

Hostile artillery active on forward areas. E.A. activity above normal.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

At 6 p.m. on the evening of May 2nd a local operation was carried out in the vicinity of HAILLES, the spur of HILL 82 being captured. The rectangular wood on the river AVRE alongside the HAILLES - CASTEL road, as well as the triangular wood, were also taken. Over 100 prisoners were captured.

5. AIRCRAFT.

546 hours were flown by 194 pilots. 8 reconnaissances were successfully carried out and 28 artillery

patrols

3rd May, 1918.

69 2.

patrols, 13 zone calls being sent down. 5 hostile batteries were neutralised and 2 were engaged for destruction; 1 explosion was caused.

129 offensive and 6 contact patrols were carried out.

1275 plates were exposed in a total of 40 photographic flights.

Hostile aircraft activity was normal. 28 combats in the air took place, in which 2 E.A. were brought down. One of our machines is missing.

Two 230-lb, twelve 112-lb and eight 25-lb bombs were dropped on CHAULNES junction, and three 112-lb and fourteen 25-lb bombs on BAYONVILLERS and CAIX. It was impossible to see the damage done owing to a heavy mist. In a bombing raid on MARCELCAVE several huts caught fire and many houses were demolished. The day bombing by Army and Corps Squadrons continues and much annoyance and many casualties are being caused to the enemy.

6,650 rounds were fired by machine guns on favourable targets.

6. PRISONERS.

3 officers and 22 O.R. were taken during the day.

7. WEATHER.

Fine with some haze: visibility fair.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

The 8th Division commenced entraining for the French Army area (IX Corps).

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

Aust. Corps: 2nd*, 3rd, 4th and 5th Aust., 47th,
1 Bde.* 8th and 18th Divisions.
Army Reserve: III Corps: 2 Bdes. ϕ 8th, 2 Bdes.
18th, 58th Divisions.

* Corps Reserve. ϕ 1 Bde. entraining for French front.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	..	912
" S.	..	313
13-pdr. R.H.A., H.E.	..	32
" S.	..	16
18-pdr., H.E.	..	4374
" S.	..	9984
4.5" How., H.E.	..	3649
" Gas.	..	268
60-pdr., H.E.	..	1283
" S.	..	979
" Gas.	..	36
6" How., H.E.	..	4501
" Gas.	..	172
6" Mk. VII H.E.	..	292
" S.	..	94
8" How.	..	195

3rd May, 1918.

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Operation Messages Received and Issued.

6.10 a.m. From Australian Corps.

Morning report. Light enemy shelling of DAOURS, also forward area of right centre division. E.A. active on left and right centre divisions. Result of operation on right division front - identifications obtained. No information as to improvement of our position.

6.50 a.m. To G.H.Q.

Light hostile shelling of DAOURS and forward area south of SOMME. Australian troops carried out minor operation at MONUMENT during night. Identifications obtained. No information as to improvement of our position. E.A. active. R.A.F. bombed CHAULNES, BAYONVILLERS and CAIX during night.

11.17 a.m. From Australian Corps.

At 2 a.m. this morning 4th Australian Division attacked locality and orchard known as MONUMENT in U.6., in conjunction with the French. Both flanks encountered heavy machine gun fire and were unable to make progress. Centre occupied MONUMENT and orchard and killed considerable numbers of enemy. Owing to enemy pressure on flanks centre party withdrew fighting; estimates that it was engaged by 2 battalions. 2 officers, 19 O.R. captured by us. One of our tanks stranded in NO MAN'S LAND and crew captured.

12.10 p.m. To G.H.Q.

Attack on MONUMENT in conjunction with French held up on both flanks by machine guns. Centre occupied MONUMENT and orchard and killed many enemy, but owing to pressure on flanks withdrew fighting; estimate they were engaged by two battalions. One of our tanks stranded in NO MAN'S LAND: crew captured. We captured 2 officers, 19 O.R.

6.10 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Hostile artillery active right brigade, left division, also vicinity south of SENLIS. E.A. active during day. Prisoners last 24 hours 3 officers, 22 O.R., 1 officer and 1 O.R. being from E.A. brought down. 10 bombs dropped on BOUTILLERIE 4 a.m.

6.50 p.m. To G.H.Q.

Hostile artillery active south of SENLIS and area north of SOMME to north of ANCRE. E.A. active during day. 10 bombs on BOUTILLERIE 4 a.m. R.A.F. dropped sixteen 112-lb and forty-five 25-lb bombs on CHAULNES station and 56 bombs on other targets. 2 E.A. brought down. Captures 3 officers, 22 O.R.

4th May, 1918.

611
SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 4th May, 1918.

1. With the exception of a minor enterprise in the vicinity of VILLE sur ANCRE by our troops no infantry action took place. Hostile artillery activity was generally below normal. There was scattered shelling of VILLERS BRETONNEUX and the vicinity of FOUILLOY during the day. Long range guns intermittently shelled AMIENS, RIVERY and LONGUEAU.

2. AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

3rd Australian Division carried out a raid on a post on the southern outskirts of VILLE sur ANCRE. Two prisoners were captured. Though alone in the post, and both under 19 years of age, the two Germans offered a vigorous resistance, throwing bombs and firing their rifles until our men were within ten yards of them.

3. THIRD ARMY.

No change in the situation. Hostile artillery moderately active.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

A fairly quiet day. GENTELLES WOOD and the vicinity of CACHY gas shelled.

5. AIRCRAFT.

277 hours were flown by 156 pilots. 6 reconnaissances were carried out. 18 artillery patrols were made, in which 8 hostile batteries were neutralised and 2 were engaged for destruction, 2 gun pits being destroyed. 17 zone calls were sent down.

58 offensive and 5 contact patrols were also made.

171 plates were exposed in the course of 7 photographic flights.

Hostile aircraft activity was below normal. 10 combats in the air took place, in which one E.A. was brought down. One of our machines is missing.

In the early evening an Army Squadron dropped sixteen 112-lb bombs on CHAULNES railway junction and two 112-lb bombs on LAMOTTE aerodrome. Later, another Army Squadron dropped two 230-lb, and twelve 112-lb bombs on CHAULNES junction. About thirty-eight 25-lb bombs were dropped on ROSIERES and villages in its vicinity.

2,450 rounds were fired by machine guns into villages and on enemy transport with good effect.

6. PRISONERS.

5 O.R. were taken during the day.

7. WEATHER.

4th May, 1918.

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7. WEATHER.

The weather was cloudy at first but clearer later.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

The 8th Division continued entraining to IX Corps. Otherwise no reliefs of any importance took place. (or moves)

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

Aust. Corps: 2nd*, 3rd, 4th and 5th Aust., 47th, 1 Bde. 18th, 1 Bde.* 8th (moving to IX Corps on 5th).

Army Reserve: III Corps: 58th, 2 Bdes. 18th Divs. XIX Corps, working under Reserve Army.

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	..	548
" " S.	..	175
13-pdr. R.H.A., H.E.	..	49
" " S.	..	44
18-pdr., H.E.	..	6346
" " S.	..	13468
4.5" How., H.E.	..	4470
" " Gas.	..	511
60-pdr., H.E.	..	1188
" " S.	..	894
6" How., H.E.	..	5913
" " Gas.	..	61
6" Mk. VII H.E.	..	374
" " S.	..	233
8" How., H.E.	..	515
9.2" How.	..	32
12" How.	..	47

4th May, 1918.

1513
Operation Messages Received and Issued.

6.15 a.m. From Australian Corps.

Morning report. Situation quiet. Enemy shelled O.34.b from 9 p.m. to 9.15 p.m. last night with yellow cross gas and H.E. Right division patrol report MONUMENT held by enemy. Minor enterprises by left centre division resulted in 2 prisoners being taken. Our artillery active with harassing fire. Hostile artillery quiet.

6.55 a.m. To G.H.Q.

Morning report. Quiet night. Area east of BRETONNEUX slightly shelled with yellow cross and H.E. 2 O.R. captured in patrol encounter. Bomba dropped on CHAULNES, ROSIERES, HARBONNIERES and GUILLEAUCOURT.

6.0 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Evening report. Situation quiet. Scattered shelling of VILLERS BRETONNEUX and south and east of FOUILLOY. Prisoners last 24 hours 2.

6.35 p.m. To G.H.Q.

Quiet day. Some shelling of BRETONNEUX, and south and east of FOUILLOY. 50 yellow cross north of BRETONNEUX 9 p.m.

REPORT ON ENEMY GAS SHELLING FOR WEEK ENDING 9 a.m. 4th MAY, 1918.

Date 9 a.m. - 9 a.m.	Formation.	Time.	No. of Rounds.	Nature of Shell.	Map Location	Remarks.
April 27-28.	3rd Aust. Div.	11.30 p.m.	10	Green Cross (7.7 cm).	D.23.b.	Area North of BUIRE.
	5th "	12 midnight.	25	Yellow Cross.	P.7.c.	S.E. of HAMELET.
	5th "	3.50 a.m.	20	Yellow Cross.	P.13.b.	-do-
" 28-29.	2nd "	10.35 p.m.	50	Green Cross.	D.6.a. & c.	East of MILLENCOURT.
		"	40	Yellow Cross.	D.17.c.	S.E. of LAVIEVILLE.
	3rd "	11.30 - 1 a.m.	100	Green Cross.	V.21.d.	North of HENENCOURT.
		11.0 a.m.	10	Green Cross.	D.27.	RIBEMONT.
		4.0 p.m.	30	Green and Blue.	D.27.	RIBEMONT.
"	10.0 p.m.	few	Not identified.	D.27.	RIBEMONT.	
" 29-30.	2nd "	3.0 p.m.	10	Yellow Cross.	V.23.b.1.3.	North of MILLENCOURT.
		4.0-4.45 p.m.	50	Green Cross.	V.30.	N.E. of MILLENCOURT.
		9.30 p.m.	10	Green Cross.	D.24.a.	North of BUIRE.
		9.30 p.m.	60	Green Cross (I).	D.23.a.	North of BUIRE.
		11.30 pm.-2.30 am.	130	Green Cross.	E.19.a.	West of DERNANCOURT.
	5th "	4.0 a.m.	10	Yellow Cross.	W.19.a.	N.E. of MILLENCOURT.
		5.0 a.m.	4	Yellow Cross.	P.13.c.8.8.	Cross roads S.E. of HAMELET.
April 30-1st /May.	2nd "	7.0 p.m.	12	Lachrymatory.	W.20.d.1.8.	N.W. of ALBERT.
	3rd "	8.30 p.m.	30	Yellow Cross.	D.27.	Ribemont & cross roads N. of village
	4th "	6.15 p.m.	11	Blue Cross.	--	VILLERS BRETONNEUX.
May 1-2nd.	2nd "	--	10	Green Cross.	D.16.c.	Cross roads S.E. of BRESLE.
	4th "	9.45 - 10.0 p.m.	70	Blue, Green, Yellow.	--	VILLERS BRETONNEUX & support line.
	4th "	5.30 - 6.0 a.m.	250	Green Cross.	O.22.	N.W. of VILLERS BRETONNEUX.
May 2-3rd. 3-4th.	4th "	8.30 a.m.	15	Green and Yellow.	U.5.a. & c.	South " "
	4th "	9.30 p.m.	50	Yellow Cross.	O.34.b.	West " "

Casualties for week :- 8 Officers.
363 Other ranks.
Deaths :- 6 " "

614

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4th May, 1918.

LONG RANGE SHELLING WITH YELLOW CROSS OF
AMIENS (RIVERY).

Report by Chemical Adviser, Fourth Army.

Several yellow cross gas shells from a long range gun appear to have been fired into AMIENS (RIVERY) on the evening of May 4th.

One of the shells struck a billet occupied by some men of the 8th Australian Med. T.M. Battery. No one was wounded, the burst of the shell being very slight, but 21 men were gassed (not seriously) before they realised that it was a gas shell.

The premises were still smelling strongly of mustard oil this morning.

Pieces of the shell, which appears to be about 6" calibre, part of the fuze, and some of the plaster debris, all smelling of mustard oil, have been sent in to Central Laboratory, G.H.Q., for examination. It is estimated that about eight of these shells were fired into RIVERY.

7/5/18.

Report on above from Central Laboratory, G. H. Q.

The plaster was from a room in RIVERY and the shell fragments from the same place. The plaster contained dichlorethylsulphide and the fragments show that the shell was one of the new pattern 15 cm. shell with false cap which is probably fired from the 1916 pattern 15 cm. gun which is stated to have a range of about 25,000 yards and is described in Ia/48583. The hole through which the liquid is introduced is 2 inches above the upper driving band. As a side filling hole is used it is probable that this shell has a central tube filled with H.E. This idea is supported by the fact that the fragmentation is such as could hardly be caused by the explosive in the gaine of the fuze (Gr.Z.04).

Such a shell would hold about 2 litres of liquid and is interesting as the first sample of a long range shell filled with "gas".

8/5/18.

5th May, 1918.

1/16

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 5th May, 1918.

1. Our line in the vicinity of SAILLY LE SEC was advanced without any casualties being incurred.

The day passed quietly, hostile artillery displaying little activity. HEILLY and GLISY were lightly shelled.

AMIENS was intermittently shelled as usual.

Our artillery was very active throughout the 24 hours under review.

2. AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

3rd Australian Division advanced their line to a depth of 700 yards on a 1,500 yards front during the night May 4/5th. The new line runs: J.30.a.8.5., K.19.c.1.9., K.19.a.2.7., J.18.d.8.2. No casualties were incurred, and six of the enemy were captured.

3. THIRD ARMY.

The New Zealand Division carried out a minor operation and captured nine prisoners in the vicinity of HEBUTERNE. A quiet day on the whole front.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

Fairly quiet day. CACHY and GENTELLES intermittently shelled.

5. AIRCRAFT.

272 hours were flown by 174 pilots. 13 artillery patrols were carried out and 3 hostile batteries successfully neutralised. 13 zone calls were sent down and 1 reconnaissance made.

67 offensive and 3 contact patrols were also undertaken.

82 plates were exposed in the four photographic flights made during the day.

Hostile aircraft activity was below normal.

One of our machines is missing.

Two successful registrations were carried out by kite balloons.

About ten 112-lb bombs were dropped during the night on HARBONNIERES and vicinity. Eighteen 112-lb bombs were also dropped on CHAULNES junction. Several direct hits were obtained on the railway and the station. Much damage was done to roads, houses and the railway in ALBERT in the early evening, when forty-five 112-lb and thirteen 25-lb bombs were dropped.

Twenty-four 25-lb and seventy 20-lb bombs were dropped during the day by Corps and Army Squadrons respectively on favourable targets.

2,250 rounds were fired by machine guns of Corps Squadrons at ground targets.

6. PRISONERS.

5th May, 1918.

2.

6-17

6. PRISONERS.

2 officers and 112 O.R. passed through Corps cages.

7. WEATHER.

Rain, with bright intervals.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

The 18th Division (less Artillery and 1 Brigade Group) moved to the forward area and came under the orders of Australian Corps.

The infantry of 8th Division completed entraining to IX Corps in the evening.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

Aust. Corps: 2nd*, 3rd, 4th and 5th Aust., 47th, 1 Bde. 18th Divisions.

Army Reserve: III Corps: 58th, 2 Bdes. 18th (moving to Aust. Corps).

XIX Corps under Reserve Army.

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	..	94
" " S.	..	44
18-pdr., H.E.	..	6620
" " S.	..	15055
" " Smoke.	..	18
4.5" How., H.E.	..	5231
" " Gas.	..	564
60-pdr., H.E.	..	1018
" " S.	..	835
" " Gas.	..	12
6" How., H.E.	..	4560
" " Gas..	..	1068
6" Mk. VII H.E.	..	465
" " S.	..	270
8" How.	..	213
12" How.	..	31

5th May, 1918.

G 14

Operation Messages Received and Issued.

6.10 a.m. From Australian Corps.

Morning report. Hostile artillery inactive. In minor operation in vicinity of SAILLY le SEC our line slightly advanced without casualties. 4 unwounded and 2 wounded prisoners captured.

6.40 a.m. To G.H.Q.

Morning report. Hostile artillery inactive. In minor operation near SAILLY le SEC our line slightly advanced without casualties. Prisoners 4 unwounded, 2 wounded. 204 twenty-five pound and eighteen 112-lb bombs dropped on CHAULNES junction and CAPPY.

12.10 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Right Brigade, 3rd Australian Division, advanced line last night 700 yards on frontage of 1,500 yards. Posts in new front line have been dug and wired. Line now runs J.30.a.8.5 - K.19.c.1.9 - K.19.a.2.7 - J.18.d.8.2.

6.19 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Evening report. Slight shelling forward area right brigade of left centre division. HEILLY and vicinity just west of GLISY also shelled. Considerable train movement in R.26., 27 and 32 (Sheet 62D), mostly south. Prisoners last 24 hours 7 O.R.

6.20 p.m. To G.H.Q.

Evening report. Right brigade 3rd Australian Division advanced line last night 700 yards on frontage of 1,500 yards. Posts in new front line have been dug and wired. Line now runs J.30.a.8.5 - K.19.c.1.9 - K.19.a.2.7 - J.18.d.8.2. HEILLY and area west of GLISY shelled today. 25 rounds green cross on SUCRERIE D.27.b. 9 p.m. 4th. Prisoners last 24 hours 7 O.R.

6th May, 1918.

6-19

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 6th May, 1918.

1. Our line was advanced to an average depth of 1,100 yards on a front of 2,500 yards W. and S.W. of MORLANCOURT on the night 5/6th May. The operation was carried out with few casualties and resulted in the occupation of the enemy's second line of defence in this vicinity.
A minor enterprise against a hostile post in the vicinity of the BOIS DE VAIRE was successful.
Hostile artillery was active between the SOMME and ANCRE as a result of our operations.
On the remainder of the front the day passed quietly. Three objects, believed to be enemy tanks, were observed on the ALBERT - LA BOISSELLE Road and engaged by our artillery.
2. III CORPS.
Quiet day.
AUSTRALIAN CORPS.
During the night 5/6th May, 9th Infantry Brigade, 3rd Australian Division, attacked the enemy's line W. and S.W. of MORLANCOURT under cover of a barrage. Except for sharp fighting on the flanks of the attack, the objective - the enemy's second line of defence - was captured and consolidated without difficulty. 165 prisoners (including 2 officers), 15 machine guns and a trench mortar were captured, and 150 of the enemy killed. Our casualties amounted to 79 all ranks, most of whom consisted of slightly wounded cases. The line at the conclusion of operations, ran - original line N.E. to K.19.a.6.7. - K.13.c.9.1. - K.7.c.6.2. - K.7.c.05.80. - J.12.b.4.7.
During the day MARETT WOOD, HEILLY and the area S.E. of MERICOURT were shelled.
3. THIRD ARMY.
Some hostile artillery activity in forward areas during the day.
4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.
Both artilleries fairly active.
5. AIRCRAFT.
172 hours were flown by 139 pilots. Three reconnaissances were carried out; 19 artillery patrols

/ were

6th May, 1918.

2.

were made, and one hostile battery successfully neutralized. 43 offensive and 7 contact patrols were also carried out. 14 zone calls were sent down.

Hostile aircraft activity was below normal. One indecisive combat in the air took place. One of our machines crashed.

Thirty-eight 25-lb. bombs were dropped by Corps Squadrons, and 2,370 rounds fired by machine guns at favourable ground targets.

6. PRISONERS.

Two officers and 163 other ranks were taken during the day.

7. WEATHER.

Cloudy early, clearing later.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

(a) Reliefs.

At 12 noon May 6th the III Corps took over from the Australian Corps, the 18th and 47th Divisions and the portion of the Army front as shown on map attached as an appendix. (See 4th May).

(b) Moves.

The 3rd Cavalry Division and 58th Division (less Artillery and one Brigade) moved from back areas to the forward area and came under orders of III Corps; the 3rd Cavalry Division to be in Army Reserve.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY, at 9 a.m.

Aust. Corps: 2nd*, 3rd, 4th and 5th Aust., 18th, 47th Divisions.

Army Reserve: III Corps (moving to forward area): 58th, 3rd Cavalry Divisions.

* Corps Reserve.

∅ Moving to forward area.

XIX Corps under Reserve Army.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	..	489
" S.	..	163
13-pdr. R.H.A., H.E.	..	83
" S.	..	103
18-pdr. H.E.	..	6303
" S.	..	12922
4.5" How. H.E.	..	4124
" Gas.	..	258
60-pdr. H.E.	..	1049
" S.	..	1024
6" How. H.E.	..	4420
6" Mk. VII, H.E.	..	144
" S.	..	269
8" How.	..	267
9.2" How.	..	20
12" How.	..	17

/ GENERAL.

6th May, 1918.

3.

621

11. GENERAL.

The following figures show the wastage and reinforcements of Fourth and Fifth Armies for the period 21st March to 30th April, 1918 (inclusive) :-

<u>Battle Casualties.</u>	<u>O.</u>	<u>O.R.</u>
Killed	585	5237
Wounded	2305	31049
Missing	1495	43705
Total battle casualties.	4385	79991
Evacuated sick*.	285	7080
GRAND TOTAL.	4650	87051
Reinforcements for same period.	1388	41668

* No figures available for period March 21st - April 4th (inclusive).

6th May, 1918.

Operation Messages Received and Issued. 622

6.30 a.m. From Australian Corps.

Morning report. During the night our Centre Left Division carried out a minor operation and captured whole of enemy second line in K.19.a., K.13.a. and c. and K.7.c. Strong opposition was met and heavy casualties were inflicted on enemy. Our casualties light. Over 150 prisoners, 2 machine guns, and 1 minenwerfer captured as result of this operation. For the remainder of the Corps front there is nothing to report.

7.7 a.m. To G.H.Q.

During night 3rd Australian Division advanced line to depth of 500 yards on 2000 yards front W. and S.W. MORLANCOURT. Strong opposition met and heavy casualties inflicted on enemy. Over 150 prisoners, 2 machine guns and 1 minenwerfer captured. Our casualties slight. Quiet night rest of front. No operations by R.A.F. owing to weather.

11.55 a.m. From Australian Corps.

Continuation morning report. Captures now reported to exceed 200 prisoners, including 2 officers, also 1 trench mortar, 5 machine guns and other machine guns not yet counted. Estimated 150 killed in trench system alone. Operations of last two nights on this front represent advance of average depth of 350 yards on 2500 yards frontage. Last night, patrol of Right Brigade, Right Centre Division, attacked enemy post at P.14.c.4.2. Garrison of 5 showed fight and were killed. At 7 a.m. British plane brought down in flames by hostile triplanes at J.11.d.

3.25 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Left Division reports new line runs J.12.b.4.7. - K.7.c.05.80. - K.7.c.6.2. - thence along Bosche second line to K.13.c.95.10. - K.19.a.65.70. - thence S.W. to original line in J.30.a.

6.15 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Evening report. Hostile artillery activity above normal on Left Division front. Following places shelled - MARETT WOOD, HEILLY, J.10., 11., and 12. Slight shelling VILLERS BRETONNEUX and O.19. Enemy aircraft active over area captured during the night. Considerable movement towards MORLANCOURT from South. Prisoners last 24 hours estimated at 200, including wounded; war material, 1 trench mortar, 5 machine guns so far definitely known.

6.0 p.m. From III Corps.

Evening report. Hostile artillery quiet. Some slight shelling of W.19.c. with 77 mm. During the morning two 10.5 cm. shells fell in V.30.b., E.2.d., E.7.b. and E.1.d. Three enemy tanks on ALBERT - LA BOISSELLE Road engaged by 60-pdrs. and 4.5 Howitzers. Aircraft normal. No gas shelling.

6.30 p.m. To G.H.Q.

6th May, 1918.

1623

Operation Messages Received and Issued. (Cont'd).

6.30 p.m. To G.H.Q.

As result of minor operation this morning our captures now exceed 200, including 2 officers; also 1 trench mortar and 5 machine guns. Estimated 150 enemy killed in trench system alone. Hostile post East of BOIS DE VAIRE (South-west of HAMEL) occupied early this morning and garrison accounted for. Hostile artillery active in area South-east of MERICOURT L'ABBE, BRETONNEUX, North of BOIS L'ABBE, MILLENCOURT and area South-west of ALBERT. Three enemy tanks on ALBERT - BOISELLE Road engaged by our 60-pdrs. and Field Howitzers. Enemy aircraft active on Southern Corps front.

7th May, 1918.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 7th May, 1918.

1. A further slight advance was effected by the Australian Corps North of the SOMME on the night 6/7th May. Hostile artillery was active between the SOMME and ANCRE on forward areas: elsewhere the situation was quiet. The enemy retaliated feebly for our counter-preparation fire which was carried out during the night and early morning. No shelling of AMIENS was reported.
2. III CORPS.
- Hostile artillery and enemy aircraft inactive throughout the 24 hours under review.
- AUSTRALIAN CORPS.
- The 5th Australian Division advanced their line to J.30.a.7.0. - J.30.b.7.9. Vicinity of HEILLY, and forward area West of MORLANCOURT heavily shelled during the day. The enemy shelled VILLE-sur-ANCRE in error.
3. THIRD ARMY.
- Situation quiet and unchanged.
4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.
- Enemy's artillery extremely active North of the River LUCE and to the South as far as the BOIS DE SENECAAT. The front line from the MONUMENT to HANGARD, batteries in the vicinity, and the BOIS de l'ABBE were all bombarded during the morning.
5. AIRCRAFT.
- 226 hours were flown by 153 pilots. Two reconnaissances were made; 47 offensive and two contact patrols were also carried out. Ten artillery patrols were made and two zone calls sent down.
- Hostile aircraft activity was below normal. Five indecisive combats took place.
- An attempt was made to bomb CHAULNES JUNCTION during the night, but owing to the bad weather it was not possible to do so, and one of our machines failed to return. Thirty-four 25-lb. bombs were dropped during the day, and 1,397 rounds were fired by machine guns on ground targets.
6. PRISONERS.
- One officer and 5 O.R. were passed through Corps cages during the day.

/ 7. WEATHER.

7th May, 1918.

2.

625

7. WEATHER.

Unsettled at first, clearing later. Visibility poor.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

The 8th Division completed entraining to the French area (IX Corps).

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th, 47th, 2 Bdes. 58th*, 3rd Cavalry Divisions.
Aust. Corps: 2nd*, 3rd, 4th and 5th Australian Divs.
Army Reserve: 1 Bde. 58th Div. (moving to III Corps), XIX Corps H.Q. (under Reserve Army).

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	..	119
" S.	..	32
18-pdr. H.E.	..	8804
" S.	..	19687
4.5" How. H.E.	..	4950
" Gas.	..	1384
60-pdr. H.E.	..	1749
" S.	..	1120
6" How. H.E.	..	7286
" Gas.	..	1645
6" Mk. VII, H.E.	..	352
" S.	..	181
8" How.	..	1114
9.2" How.	..	162

7th May, 1918.

626
Operation Messages Received and Issued.

6.50 a.m. From Australian Corps.

Morning report. 20 rounds of blue cross gas in MARRET WOOD. Intermittent shelling of HAMELET. Centre Division advanced line to J.30.a.7.0., J.3.b.75.95. Left Division report line now runs J.30.b.7.9., K.19.central, North along grid line to BRAY - CORBIE Road. Otherwise unchanged. One prisoner taken by Right Division.

6.55 a.m. From III Corps.

Morning report. Situation normal. Hostile shelling generally quiet. Our front system intermittently shelled by 10.5 cm. Harassing fire maintained by us during the night. Gas shelling nil. Captures nil.

6.58 a.m. To G.H.Q.

Situation quiet. HAMELET intermittently shelled. 20 rounds blue cross MARRET WOOD (East of MERICOURT l'ABBE). Captures 1 o.r. 39 offensive patrols sent out. Twelve 112-lb., 231 twenty-five lb. bombs dropped by us yesterday.

6.5 p.m. From III Corps.

Evening report. Situation quiet. Hostile artillery and aircraft inactive all day. No gas shelling. Captures nil.

6.30 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Evening report. Hostile artillery active in Left Division Sector and on extreme left of Centre Division Sector. J.7., J.12. heavily shelled. Enemy shelled VILLE-sur-ANCRE in error. Prisoners last 24 hours 1 o.R.

6.45 p.m. To G.H.Q.

Hostile artillery active on areas North of SOMME to North of ANCRE and South of HEILLY. Quiet day on left Corps front. Gas nil. Captures 1 o.R.

8th May, 1918.

627

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 8th May, 1918.

1. A further advance in our line between the SOMME and ANCRE was successfully carried out. The enemy's artillery activity slightly increased, presumably in connection with our operations.

2. III CORPS.

There was slight shelling of the Right Division front during the night 7/8th May. In the afternoon, two light barrages, each of one minute's duration, were put down on the forward system of the Left Division.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

5th Australian Division advanced their line 500 yards on a 600 yards front during the night, occupying points in the enemy's second line in J.30.a. and K.25.a., and killing or capturing 23 of the enemy.

3rd Australian Division advanced their line 300 yards on a front of 500 yards and established posts in K.7.a. Another operation in the early morning carried the line further forward in K.19.c. Eleven prisoners were captured. In reply to this advance the enemy opened heavy machine gun fire and put down a shrapnel barrage of 20 minutes duration on the front line.

During the night 7/8th May MARETT WOOD was heavily shelled with yellow cross gas shells. By day the valley South of BRESLE and the country between TREUX and SAILLY-le-SEC were lightly shelled with green cross gas shells. Heavy fire was directed on our trenches West of DERNANCOURT.

3. THIRD ARMY.

With the exception of a minor operation in the vicinity of BUCQUOY, which was partially successful, there was nothing to report.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

Enemy's artillery was very active from BOIS de SENECAT to BOIS de GRUNE during the day.

5. AIRCRAFT.

251 hours were flown by 170 pilots. Two reconnaissances were carried out. Nine artillery patrols were made and three zone calls were sent down. One hostile battery was successfully neutralised. 41 offensive and 13 counter-attack patrols were also made. 306 plates were

/ exposed

8th May, 1918.

1628 2.

exposed in the 8 photographic flights made.

Hostile aircraft activity was below normal: 13 combats took place in which two enemy aeroplanes were brought down.

Twenty-four 25-lb. bombs were dropped by Corps Squadrons on various ground targets, and 1,630 rounds were fired by machine guns. In a bombing raid on MEAULTE, twenty-six 112-lb. bombs were dropped. Many huts were blown up and several roads damaged. All our machines returned safely.

6. PRISONERS.

18 O.R. were taken during the day.

7. WEATHER.

Fine, with clouds. Heavy mist early, clearing later.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

No reliefs or moves of any importance took place during the day.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th, 47th, 58th*, 3rd Cavalry[†] Divisions.

Aust. Corps: 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Australian Divns.

† Army Reserve.

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	..	539.
" " S.	..	182.
18-pdr. H.E.	..	6471.
" " S.	..	11695.
4.5" How. H.E.	..	2963.
" " Gas.	..	1706.
60-pdr. H.E.	..	1767.
" " S.	..	1287.
6" How. H.E.	..	5293.
" " Gas.	..	1040.
6" Mk. VII, H.E.	..	11.
8" How. H.E.	..	312.
9.2" How.	..	198.
12" How.	..	28.

11. GENERAL.

It was reported that on May 4th several rounds of yellow cross gas shells were fired into RIVERY by a long range gun. (See Appendix 4 to 4th May).

8th May, 1918.

Operation Messages Received and Issued.

629

- 5.30 a.m. From III Corps.
Morning report. Slight enemy artillery activity during night on 8th Division front. Quiet night.
- 7.6 a.m. From Australian Corps.
Morning report. Right Division: light shelling of area at intervals throughout night. Centre Division advanced their line 500 yards on frontage of 600 yards during night, consolidating in enemy second position J.30.a. and K.25.a. At least 20 enemy killed. Three prisoners captured as result of this operation. Left Division advanced their line 300 yards on front of 500 yards, establishing posts in K.7.a. At 3 a.m. our line in K.19.c. was slightly advanced. Enemy replied with heavy machine gun fire, also shrapnel barrage for 20 minutes on front line. Result of this operation - 11 prisoners captured. MARETT WOOD heavily shelled with yellow cross gas.
- 7.6 a.m. To G.H.Q.
As result of three minor operations, Australian troops advanced their line 500 yards on 600 yards front East of SAILLY-le-SEC; 300 yards on front of 500 yards West of MORLANCOURT; slightly North-east of SAILLY-le-SEC where enemy replied with heavy machine gun fire and shrapnel barrage. Hostile artillery slight on rest of front. R.A.F. dropped ³⁴bombs on MEAULTE. One E.A. crashed, one out of control. 14 prisoners captured.
- 5.45 p.m. From III Corps.
Evening report. Situation unchanged. Gas shelling nil. Left Division reports enemy put light barrages in valley W.13.d., also in W.26.a. and c. during afternoon, each of one minute's duration. Intermittent shelling by 10.5 cm. in afternoon on W.20. Captures nil.
- 6.15 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Evening report. Intermittent shelling front and support systems West of VAIRE WOOD. E.19.d. West of DERNANCOURT heavily shelled for one hour this morning from S.E. Situation otherwise quiet. Captures 17 other ranks.
- 6.25 p.m. To G.H.Q.
Evening report. Situation quiet. Front line near railway West of DERNANCOURT shelled for one hour this morning. Intermittent shelling of our forward system West of BOIS de VAIRE. MARETT WOOD (South of TREUX) shelled with yellow cross, with some green and blue, between 11 p.m. 7th and 5 a.m. 8th. Captures 17 O.R.
-

9th May, 1918.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 9th May, 1918.

1. In the early morning, the enemy, after a short bombardment, attacked with a small force to the South of BOUZINCOURT. He obtained a footing in our front line on a front of 150 yards, and though two immediate counter-attacks failed to restore the situation, a subsequent operation in the evening resulted in the enemy being completely ejected.

In connection with the advancement of our line between the SOMME and ANCRE, a small operation was carried out which resulted in the capture of prisoners.

Hostile artillery showed a marked increase between ALBERT and the SOMME. Elsewhere the situation on the front was quiet.

2. III CORPS.

At about 3.30 a.m. the enemy put down a heavy barrage on the extreme left of the line held by 47th Division and followed this by an attack with a force estimated at from 80 - 100. He succeeded in establishing himself in the HAIRPIN in W.21.b. Two counter-attacks were launched without success, and it was not until the evening that an attack carried out by three platoons and supported by artillery restored the situation. One officer and one O.R. were captured.

Millencourt and neighbourhood were shelled during the morning, and the valley in D.18 (South of the AMIENS - ALBERT Road) was heavily shelled with mustard gas from 9 p.m. onwards.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

In continuation of previous advances the 5th and 3rd Australian Divisions established touch at K.19.c.5.0. In some fighting at this point 8 prisoners were captured. A gas projection into the BOIS de VAIRE was successfully carried out. Situation generally quiet.

3. THIRD ARMY.

A hostile attack in the vicinity of BOUZINCOURT was repulsed by rifle and Lewis gun fire. During this operation the enemy advanced shouting loudly "RETIRE".

Our troops were forced to retire to their original line in the vicinity of BUCQUOY from the elements of trenches they had captured. Elsewhere the situation on the front was quiet.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

The whole of the PARC du GRIVESNES was captured by us, 4 officers and 254 O.R. being taken prisoner. Hostile counter-attacks were repulsed.

Lt. Fonck brought down 6 E.A. on the evening of the

9th May, 1918.

131 2.

8th May. Three of these fell between 4 and 4.5 p.m., three between 6.30 p.m. and 7 p.m.

5. AIRCRAFT.

578 hours were flown by 206 pilots. Eight reconnaissances were made; 13 artillery patrols were carried out and three hostile batteries successfully neutralized; 13 counter-attack and 4 contact patrols were also made; 7 zone calls were sent down. 971 planes were exposed in the 26 photographic flights made. 93 offensive patrols were made.

Hostile aircraft activity was below normal. 38 combats in the air took place, in which two E.A. were brought down. One of our machines was brought down and another is missing.

Considerably more bombing was done during the day and night than has been possible on previous occasions.

Day Bombing.

Forty-eight 25-lb. bombs were dropped on VAUVILLERS aerodrome and 23 on hutments and buildings in GAIX. Many direct hits were obtained and fires caused.

Twenty 25-lb. bombs were also dropped with good effect on MERICOURT, and 15 on CAPPY aerodrome and village.

Twenty 112-lb. bombs were dropped on CHAULNES junction.

In a raid on PERONNE Station, fourteen 112-lb. bombs were dropped and direct hits obtained. Two ammunition trains were destroyed.

Enemy billets and parties of infantry were also bombed at different times during the day, especially in the CHIPILLY VALLEY.

Night Bombing.

Thirteen 112-lb. bombs were dropped on BRAY and MEZIERES. Several fires were caused.

Eighteen 112-lb. bombs were also dropped with good effect on HARBONNIERES.

6,097 rounds were fired by machine guns of Corps Squadrons, and 1,800 by Army Squadrons on ground targets.

6. PRISONERS.

One officer and 9 O.R. passed through Corps cages during the day.

7. WEATHER.

Fine. Visibility poor but improved later.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

The 47th Divisional Artillery arrived from Third Army and went to the Artillery Collecting Area.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th, 47th, 58th, 3rd Cavalry Divisions.
Aust. Corps: 2nd*, 3rd, 4th and 5th Australian Divns.
XIX Corps with Reserve Army.

∅ Army Reserve.
* Corps Reserve.

9th May, 1918.

3.

632

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	..	306
" S.	..	157
18-pdr. H.E.	..	6622
" S.	..	12342
4.5" How. H.E.	..	2497
" Gas.	..	1867
60-pdr. H.E.	..	2195
" S.	..	2102
6" How. H.E.	..	7363
" Gas.	..	2698
6" Mk. VII H.E.	..	483
" S.	..	256
8" How.	..	263
9.2" How.	..	316
12" How.	..	30

9th May, 1918.

Operation Messages Received and Issued.

5.50 a.m. From III Corps.

Situation quiet during night till 3.55 a.m. when S.O.S. received from Left Brigade of Left Division and hostile barrage reported on our left. No infantry attack developed and all quiet by 4.15 a.m. Situation quiet in Right Division front. Some shelling of SENLIS Valley and V.20 with proportion of gas, type not stated. Some gas shell on Left Division battery positions 4.10 a.m., type not stated. MILLENCOURT shelled 4.50 a.m.

6.20 a.m. From Australian Corps.

Morning report. In continuation previous advances Centre and Left Divisions established touch at K.19.c.5.0. Some fighting in K.19.c. where Left Division captured 8 prisoners. Gas successfully discharged into BOIS de VAIRE. Quiet night generally.

6.55 a.m. To G.H.Q.

Morning report. In continuation of previous advances touch established at K.19.c.5.0. Some fighting in K.19.c. and 11 prisoners taken. Gas successfully projected into BOIS de VAIRE. Heavy barrage on extreme North of Army front 3.55 a.m. No infantry action. Quiet 4.15 a.m. Some shelling SENLIS VALLEY and MILLENCOURT. Seventy one 112-lb. and 118 25 lb. bombs on BRAY - HARBONNIERES and other targets.

2.40 p.m. From III Corps.

In continuation of morning report. At 3.20 a.m. enemy attacked and effected lodgment in HAIRPIN W.21.b. after suffering casualties from Lewis gun fire. Enemy still holding line W.21.b.5.4. - W.21.b.6.6. in strength with at least one machine gun position. Immediate counter-attack and second local counter-attack at 8.30 a.m. were unsuccessful. Arrangements being made to eject enemy.

3.35 p.m. To G.H.Q.

Enemy attacked our line West of ALBERT at 3.20 a.m. and after suffering heavy casualties from rifle and Lewis gun fire effected lodgment in line in W.21.b. Enemy appears still to hold from W.21.b.5.4 to W.21.b.6.6. Arrangements being made to eject him.

5.35 p.m. From III Corps.

Evening report. Right Division front: enemy artillery active. Left Divisional front: situation quiet and no change from that reported in previous wire (above). MILLENCOURT and neighbourhood shelled from 5 to 5.50 a.m. and 8.50 to 9.10 a.m. with 4.2 and green cross. Captures nil.

6.30 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Evening report. Situation quiet. Enemy aircraft active. Continuous movement E.26.d. and K.5.b. engaged by artillery. Prisoners 11; war material 1 minnenwerfer.

6.30 p.m. To G.H.Q.

Evening report. Situation unchanged. 6.20 a.m. to 8 a.m. 280 blue and green cross North of BRETONNEUX. Scattered shelling blue cross North of MILLENCOURT. Continual movement North of MORLANCOURT engaged by our artillery.

/ One

9th May, 1918.

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One minnenwerfer taken last night. 14 112-lb. bombs
dropped on PERONNE Station; 201 25-lb. in CHIPILLY
VALLEY. Three E.A. crashed and three down out of con-
trol. Prisoners last 24 hours 11 O.R.

11 p.m. To G.H.Q.

R.A.F. bombed PERONNE Station today and report
two ammunition trains believed blown up, but not yet con-
firmed by aerial photos.

8
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47th (LONDON) DIVISION.

Report on Minor Operation by Enemy on Hairpin Trench,
W.21.b., (Left Section), on Morning of 9th May, 1918.

At 3.30 a.m. 9th May 1918, the enemy put down a heavy barrage on the front line system, at the same time heavily shelling the entire Brigade (142nd Infantry Brigade) area back to the battery position.

Following the barrage, 70 men of a Storm Truppen rushed the salient formed by the HAIRPIN TRENCH from the right and left flanks, and succeeded, after sustaining casualties which are estimated by garrison of the posts on the left flank of the HAIRPIN at not less than 50%, in establishing himself in the trench forming the angle of the HAIRPIN from W.21.b.40.40 to W.21.b.50.60., capturing a Lewis gun and a few wounded.

During this operation the enemy was subjected to a heavy and accurate observed fire from Lewis gun post at W.21.b.40.80., and there is no doubt that his losses were heavy.

The enemy barrage on our front line ceased at 3.45 a.m. in response to one green rocket fired from the trench which he had occupied.

An immediate counter-attack by Nos. 14 and 15 platoons of 23rd London Regiment delivered down the trench running South from W.21.b.40.80. was unsuccessful, as the trench is shallow in places, and exposed the bombers to heavy machine gun fire from the occupied trench and from the enemy's lines. 2/Lieut. Atkins organised this attack.

Reinforcements from the front line on the right of the company front were pushed up in an endeavour to take the trench from along the South leg of the HAIRPIN, but were unable to make progress for the same reason as the counter-attack from the left. One party of bombers, therefore, held on as close as possible to the enemy and made a double block at W.21.b.35.38. in the South leg, while two platoons of "A" Company, under Lieut. Webster, worked up the left leg intending to co-operate with Nos. 14 and 15 platoons in a further attempt to dislodge the enemy. It was, however, impossible to proceed, owing to the trench being exposed to enfilade fire, and being very shallow. Lieut. G.M. Reid did most gallant work here, covering 2/Lieut. Atkins, who was engaged in making a block at W.21.b.35.50. When shot through the right arm he changed his revolver to the left and continued to fire until shot through the head by a machine gun. Finding further progress impossible by daylight, Capt. Harman, who had been sent up by Major Tolerton, Commanding 23rd London Regiment, decided to hold on and contain the enemy in the pocket he was established in, until darkness. Shell holes between the legs of the HAIRPIN were occupied by mixed posts of "A", "C" and "D" Companies, and throughout the day heavy bombing, rifle, Lewis gun and rifle grenade fire was kept up on the enemy's position.

/ A counter-attack

1636 2.

A counter-attack by three platoons of the Reserve Company, commanded by 2/Lieut. Wheeler, was now organized by Captain Harman, who had been sent up from Battalion Headquarters and placed in charge of the operations by Major Tolerton. Captain Harman's ^{Adj.} Headquarters were at W.21.a.90.20. 11 p.m. was decided on as zero hour, and support by artillery and Stokes mortars arranged by Brigade Headquarters. Two Stokes mortars were taken by day from W.19.b.30.70 into 115th Brigade area and down their support trench to W.21.a.80.30. and 100 rounds of T.M. ammunition carried up.

At zero minus 5 minutes, Nos. 6 and 8 platoons under 2/Lieut. Morton, who accompanied the leading wave, and No. 7 platoon in support under 2/Lieut. Wright, were in assembly position along left leg of HAIRPIN up to the block.

At zero minus 2 minutes the Stokes mortars opened intense fire on the enemy position, securing direct hits in the trench with the first shots, and at zero lifted 100 yards.

At zero, 282nd and 169th Brigades R.F.A. opened on a line from W.21.b.85.40 - W.15.d.80.25. and W.21.b.85.40 - W.21.b.40.00., and howitzers on SUNKEN ROAD in W.22.a.

Leading waves advanced close to the objective, followed at 30 yards distance by the supporting platoon, and assaulted with the bayonet, killing 6 and capturing 1 officer, 1 sergeant-major and 1 private in the trench, and opening rapid fire on the enemy, who retired, running right into the fire of our artillery and the covering fire of Lewis guns and rifles firing across our front from right to left.

The trench was re-occupied and consolidated by 11.20 p.m.

Twenty enemy dead were counted in the trench, and 2 machine guns, 08/15 Pattern, captured, and our own Lewis gun and one wounded man of 23rd London Regiment recaptured.

It is considered that very few of the 106 Germans reported by the prisoner to have been engaged were unaccounted for by artillery, bombs, rifle and Lewis gun fire.

(Sgd.) R. McDouall,

Brigadier-General,
Commanding 142nd Infantry Brigade.

11/5/18.

10th May, 1918.

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SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 10th May, 1918.

1. As previously stated, the HAIRPIN was recaptured by a counter-attack during the night 9/10th May. There was considerable gas shelling of areas North of the ANCRE. Gas shells also fell in SAILLY-le-SEC and BUIRE. Bombs were dropped in the vicinity of BEAUCOURT, BAVLINCOURT and LA HOUSOYE.

2. III CORPS.

A counter-attack carried out by 47th Division completely restored the situation at the HAIRPIN. In addition to 2 prisoners, 2 machine guns were also captured and a Lewis gun recovered. The valley North of BUIRE was heavily shelled with mustard gas after dark. 50 mustard shells also fell 1,000 yards South-west of MILLENCOURT.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

Situation quiet on whole Corps front.

3. THIRD ARMY.

An operation carried out in AVELUY WOOD was unsuccessful in maintaining its objectives.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

The PARC de GRIVESNES and village were heavily bombarded; otherwise the day passed fairly quietly.

5. AIRCRAFT.

488 hours were flown by 206 pilots. Six reconnaissances were undertaken; 11 artillery patrols were carried out and 14 zone calls sent down; six hostile batteries were neutralized and three hostile batteries engaged for destruction. Three successful registrations were carried out on bridges. Eleven photographic flights were made and 419 plates exposed. Seven contact and 110 offensive patrols were also made.

Hostile aircraft activity was normal. Many combats in the air took place which resulted in four E.A. being brought down, and one E.A. went down out of control. Nine successful shoots were carried out with balloon observation.

During the night 9/10th May, seventeen 112-lb. bombs were dropped on CHAULNES Railway Junction, ROSIERES, MARICOURT and ALBERT - BAPAUME Road. Sixteen 25-lb. bombs were dropped on BRIE and ALBERT - BAPAUME Road.

During the day, 254 twenty-five lb. bombs and twenty-seven 112-lb. bombs were dropped by Corps Squadrons, and 119 twenty-five lb. bombs and forty-six 112-lb. bombs

/ were

10th May, 1918.

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were dropped by Army Squadrons on MORLANCOURT, BAYON-VILLERS, CAPPY, GERISY VALLEY, CHAULNES JUNCTION and ROSIERES. Several large explosions and fires were caused, and direct hits made on railway junctions.

6,752 rounds were fired by Army and Corps Squadrons at favourable ground targets.

6. PRISONERS.

One officer and 2 O.R. were taken during the day.

7. WEATHER.

Fine but cloudy. Visibility fair.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

No reliefs or moves of any importance took place during the day.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th, 47th, 58th*, 3rd Cavalry Divisions.
Aust. Corps: 2nd*, 3rd, 4th and 5th Australian Divns.

ø Army Reserve.
* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	..	42
" " S.	..	60
18-pdr. H.E.	..	7027
" " S.	..	13701
4.5" How. H.E.	..	3725
" " Gas.	..	818
60-pdr. H.E.	..	1121
" " S.	..	985
" " Gas.	..	207
6" How. H.E.	..	5217
" " S.	..	985
" " Gas.	..	1369
6" Mk. VII H.E.	..	199
" " S.	..	64
8" How.	..	287
9.2" How.	..	131
12" How.	..	30

10th May, 1918.

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Operation Messages Received and Issued.

- 6.37 a.m. From Australian Corps.
Morning report. Quiet night. Intermittent hostile shelling of forward area North of the SOMME. Some gas shelling of SAILLY-le-SEC and BUIRE. E.A. dropped bombs vicinity LA HOUSOYE 4.30 a.m. No casualties. Air patrol 5.45 a.m. reports no movement.
- 6.45 a.m. From III Corps.
Situation quiet. Counter-attack by Left Division successful. All positions lost yesterday regained. Casualties slight. One officer and one O.R. 418th I.R., 183rd Division, captured. Last night enemy shelled D.18.b., c. and d. heavily with mustard gas shell. 50 yellow cross shells also fell at D.4.b.5.5. and 6 chlorine gas shells into MILLENCOURT last night about 11 p.m. Some hostile bombing near BEAUCOURT and BAVLINCOURT.
- 6.50 a.m. To G.H.Q.
Morning report. Situation quiet. Enemy shelled valley North of BUIRE heavily with mustard gas. SAILLY-le-SEC and BUIRE also gas shelled. Some hostile bombs on LA HOUSOYE and near BEAUCOURT and BAVLINCOURT. Forty-two 112-lb., 236 twenty-five lb. bombs dropped yesterday on CAPPE MORLANCOURT and other targets. Seventeen 112-lb., sixteen 25-lb. bombs also dropped last night on CHAULNES railway, MARICOURT, ROSIERES. Two E.A. crashed, two down out of control.
- 7.25 a.m. In continuation of above: The small portion of trench North of ALBERT lost yesterday has been regained by counter-attack. One officer and one O.R. captured.
- 4.30 p.m. From III Corps.
18th Division report enemy aeroplane dropped bomb 4.30 a.m. today C.7.c.5.3. sheet 62.D. Two horses slightly wounded. Later report: one bomb fell C.13.c.7.3. and one C.13.d.5.7. Seven mules wounded. Two seater plane: width of crater 18 feet; depth 4 feet 6 inches. 58th Division report one enemy aeroplane dropped two bombs 4.15 a.m. at sheet 62.D. C.11.c.7.7. Three horses wounded.
- 6.17 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Evening report. Occasional shelling battery areas Left Division. Some blue cross gas also used. Several E.A. crossed our line: one low-flying driven off by machine gun fire. Captures nil.
- 6.20 p.m. From III Corps.
Evening report. All quiet on Right Division front except for some shelling of D.17.c. On Left Division front hostile artillery normal and aircraft inactive. Our artillery fired in conjunction with operations of Division on our left. 9.15 a.m. enemy barraged from W.21.c.2.8. to W.14.b.8.6. with 4.2s. 10.15 a.m. barrage extended to W.26.central possibly in reply to our fire. We carried out counter-preparation harassing fire between 11.15 a.m. and 11.45 a.m. No gas shelling. Few shells fell in C.4.a. and U.28.c. S.E. of CONTAY
- 6.35 p.m. To G.H.Q.
Situation unchanged on Right Corps front. Hostile artillery active N. of BUIRE. 9.15 a.m. enemy put down barrage W.21.c.2.8. W.14.b.8.6. (N.W. of ALBERT) extending it

/ to

10th May, 1918.

1640 2.

W.26.central 10.15 a.m., possibly in reply to our artillery which fired in conjunction with operations of Army on left. Some gas shelling of SAILLY-le-SEC. 24 112-lb. 90 25-lb. bombs on CHAULNES, ROSIERES and other targets. Captures nil.
