

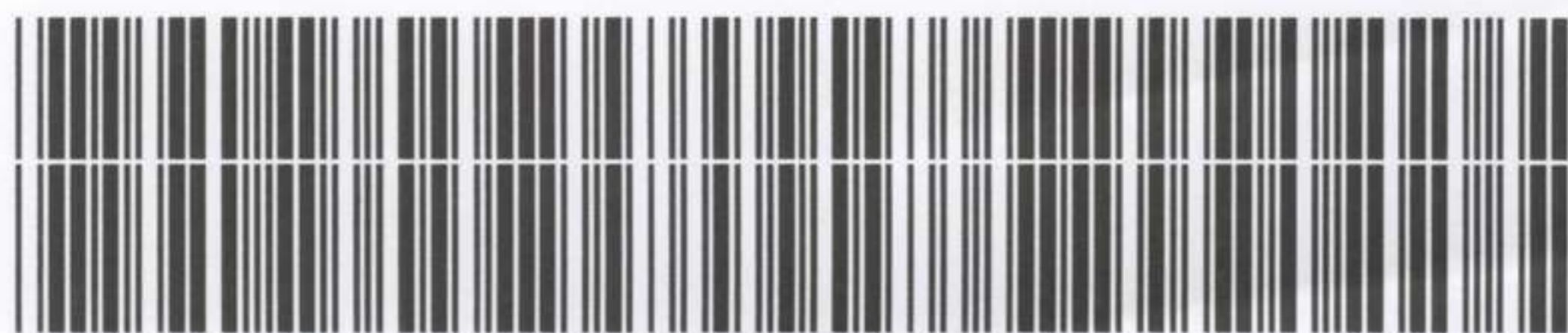
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Formation Headquarters

Item number: 1/14/7 Part 3

Title: General Staff, Headquarters 4th Army

May 1918



AWM4-1/14/7PART3

21st May, 1918.

685

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 21st May, 1918.

1. No infantry actions occurred. North of the ANCRE hostile artillery activity was slightly above normal, but South of the river there was no change. No heavy gas shelling was reported, though 250 gas shells fell near BUIRE during the night. There was a distinct decrease in the fire of H.V. guns. Our artillery carried out the usual harassing fire programme.

2. III CORPS.

The enemy was reported to be working hard on his defences opposite the Right Division during the night. There was intermittent shelling in the vicinity of LAVIEVILLE and HENENCOURT, and also activity on the forward area of the Left Division.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

Hostile artillery was again active on the front of the Left Division. A large number of bombs were dropped near QUERRIEU and ST. GRATIEN.

3. THIRD ARMY.

Situation quiet and unchanged.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

A quiet day.

5. AIRCRAFT.

610 hours were flown by 212 pilots.

Six reconnaissances were made. Seventeen artillery patrols were carried out during which 10 hostile batteries were successfully engaged for destruction, 5 gun pits destroyed, 5 damaged, and 5 explosions and 1 fire were caused.

Two destructive shoots were carried out on bridges, and one on a trench mortar.

Twenty-two zone calls were sent down.

123 offensive, 2 counter-attack and 17 contact patrols were also made.

In the 24 photographic flights carried out, plates were exposed.

Hostile aircraft activity was normal; 17 combats in the air took place in which two E.A. were brought down and one was sent down out of control. One of our machines failed to return.

During the night forty 112-lb., 136 twenty-five lb., and seven 40-lb. bombs were dropped on CHAUL

21st May, 1918.

686².

BRAY, POZIERES - LE SARS Road, MARCELOAVE and other villages and towns. Several direct hits were obtained on the railway at CHAULNES and on roads and dumps.

3,510 rounds were fired by machine guns into lighted villages and on searchlights.

During the day thirteen 112-lb. and 359 twenty-five lb. bombs were dropped by Corps Squadrons, and 9,794 rounds were fired by machine guns of Corps Squadrons. Fifty-five 112-lb. bombs and 266 twenty-five lb. bombs were also dropped on billets in woods and villages. Fifty-two 112-lb. and 88 25-lb. bombs were dropped by Army Squadrons.

6. PRISONERS.

No prisoners were taken.

7. WEATHER.

Fine. Fair visibility.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

The 3rd Australian Division relieved the 4th Australian Division in the right sector of Australian Corps.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th, 47th*, 58th and 3rd Cavalry (Army Reserve) Divisions.

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

XIX Corps (under orders G.H.Q.) 30th and 66th Divisions (training cadres).

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	..	315
" S.	..	259
18-pdr. H.E.	..	6037
" S.	..	11896
" Gas.	..	43
4.5" How. H.E.	..	4643
" Gas.	..	1219
60-pdr. H.E.	..	1065
" Gas.	..	10
" S.	..	935
6" How. H.E.	..	4871
6" Mk. VII H.E.	..	105
" S.	..	286
8" How.	..	632
9.2" How.	..	225

21st May, 1918.

Operation Messages Received and Issued. 687

5.25 a.m. From III Corps.

Morning report. Vicinity of LAVIEVILLE heavily shelled during evening and intermittent shelling of D.10.d. and c. after 6.45 p.m. Enemy artillery intermittently active between 3.5 a.m. and 4.55 a.m. on Left Division front. Right Division reports enemy working and wiring front line. Left Division reports sounds of heavy traffic either motors or tanks heard due East.

6.5 a.m. From Australian Corps.

Morning report. Situation quiet. Hostile artillery active on forward and rear areas of Left Division. E.A. active. Large number of bombs vicinity QUERRIEU and ST. GRATIEN. ALLONVILLE, BOIS L'ABBE, O.7. and O.13. also bombed. Six rounds blue cross fired on P.2.c. South of VAIRE.

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

Situation quiet. Hostile artillery active during night on LAVIEVILLE and forward area vicinity VILLE. Intermittent shelling forward area East of MILLENCOURT 3.5 a.m. to 4.55 a.m. Enemy reported working and wiring opposite right III Corps. Six rounds blue cross South of VAIRE. E.A. dropped many bombs ST. GRATIEN, ALLONVILLE, BOIS L'ABBE, South of FOUILLOY. R.A.F. reports one 230-lb., 23 112-lb., 8 25-lb. bombs dropped CHAULNES amongst other targets

6.8 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Evening report. Hostile artillery active forward areas Left Division especially vicinity North SAILLY-LE-SEC. Area North BOIS L'ABBE and vicinity FOUILLOY lightly shelled. E.A. active Centre Division front during early morning. Prisoners nil.

5.45 p.m. From III Corps.

Evening report. Intermittent hostile shelling of areas E. and S.E. of HENENCOURT and West of LAVIEVILLE. V.21.c. and V.27.a. shelled with 5.9 and V.28. E. of HENENCOURT with blue cross this morning. Few gas shells in No Man's Land E.13.b.9.1 during day. Long range gun fired on back areas about HALLUE VALLEY from 6.55 a.m. to 7.15 a.m. and between 8.30 and 9.30 a.m. Bombs dropped on area round MONTIGNY early this morning.

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

Evening report. Hostile artillery active on forward area between River ANCRE and SOMME especially North of SAILLY-LE-SEC. Intermittent shelling vicinity of HENENCOURT and West of LAVIEVILLE. H.V. gun fired on HALLUE VALLEY this morning. 200 yellow cross shells into BUIRE 2 a.m. to 5 a.m. Slight shelling blue and green cross North of SAILLY-LE-SEC. R.A.F. report one E.A. down out of control. One hundred and seventy one 25-lb., twenty-six 112-lb. bombs dropped on selected targets. Prisoners nil.

10.50 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Centre Division report enemy shelled O.10 (FOUILLOY) with green cross from 6.40 to 6.50 p.m. and O.16 (S. of FOUILLOY) with about 200 rounds 77 mm. yellow cross from 7.5 to 7.15 pm.

22nd May, 1918.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 22nd May, 1918. 688

1. Hostile artillery activity declined on the whole Army front. There were a few minor gas concentrations, notably on BOUZINCOURT, BRESLE, MILLENCOURT and South of FOUILLOY. Heavy harassing fire was maintained on VILLE-sur-ANCRE throughout the night. There was little H.V. gun activity, although a few rounds were fired on CONTAY, GLISY and LAMOTTE. The shelling of AMIENS was negligible.

2. III CORPS.

A quiet day.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

The night passed quietly with the exception of fairly heavy shelling of our front in the vicinity of VILLE. During the day the same vicinity was engaged intermittently. Shelling was also reported South of FOUILLOY and S.W. of AUBIGNY. Thirty H.V. shells fell in GLISY between 12 noon and 1 p.m.

3. THIRD ARMY.

With the exception of minor raids on both sides, no operation took place. The situation generally was quiet.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

Violent bombardment in the vicinity of HAILLES and gas shelling near SENECAAT WOOD during the night, otherwise quiet.

5. AIRCRAFT.

543 hours were flown by 221 pilots.

Seven reconnaissances were carried out. Eleven artillery patrols were made during which 11 hostile batteries were successfully engaged for destruction, 5 neutralised, 3 gun pits destroyed, 10 damaged; 6 explosions and 4 fires were also caused. One destructive shoot was carried out on a bridge. Seventeen zone calls were sent down.

100 offensive, 2 counter-attack, and 5 contact patrols were also made.

In the 6 photographic flights made, 282 plates were exposed.

Hostile aircraft activity was normal; 13 combats in the air took place in which 3 E.A. were brought down and 2 E.A. were sent down out of control.

/ Owing

22nd May, 1918.

689².

Owing to a thick ground haze, observation with kite balloons was practically impossible.

During the night two 230-lb., forty-three 112-lb., nine 40-lb. and 155 twenty-five lb. bombs were dropped on various targets - villages and main roads - and 4,750 rounds were also fired by machine guns.

During the day sixteen 112-lb., and 362 25-lb. bombs were dropped by Corps Squadrons, and forty-six 112-lb. and forty-nine 25-lb. bombs were dropped by Army Squadrons on various ground targets. 11,280 rounds were fired by machine guns of Corps Squadrons along roads and into villages and parties of men. BECOURT WOOD, CARNOY, CAPPY, SUZANNE and CHAULNES were also bombed with good effect. Several hits were obtained on the railway at CHAULNES and the aerodrome near SUZANNE.

6. PRISONERS.

One O.R. passed through Corps cage and two O.R. through C.C.Ss. during the past 24 hours.

7. WEATHER.

Fine with morning haze. Visibility good.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

No important reliefs or moves took place.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th, 47th*, 58th, 3rd Cavalry (Army Reserve) Divisions.
Aust. Corps: 2nd, 3rd, 4th*, and 5th Australian Divs.
XIX Corps (under orders G.H.Q.): 30th and 66th Divisions (Training Cadres).

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A. H.E.	..	487
" " S.	..	418
18-pdr. H.E.	..	5715
" " S.	..	10151

/ cont'd.

22nd May, 1918.

690 3.

4.5" How. H.E.	..	3905
" Smoke.	..	61
" Gas.	..	1784
60-pdr. H.E.	..	1557
" S.	..	824
6" How. H.E.	..	4016
" S.K.	..	300
" Gas.	..	1965
6" Mk. VII. H.E.	..	344
" S.	..	296
8" How.	..	816
9.2" How.	..	380
12" How.	..	8

22nd May, 1918.

Operation Messages Received and Issued. 1591

- 5.30 a.m. From III Corps.
Morning report. Fairly quiet night. Gas shelling reported of V.24 and 30 and near BAIZIEUX.
- 6.13 a.m. From Australian Corps.
Morning report. Except for fairly heavy scattered shelling throughout night on Left Brigade Front, Left Division, situation quiet. One prisoner captured during night.
- 6.40 a.m. To G.H.Q.
Except for some heavy scattered shelling S.W. of DERNANCOURT and slight gas shelling East of MILLENCOURT and near BAIZIEUX, quiet night. Two 230-lb., 212 112-lb., 708 25-lb., nine 40-lb. (phosphorous) dropped on selected targets by R.A.F. Captures one O.R. Three E.A. destroyed, one out of control.
- 5.35 p.m. From III Corps.
Evening report. Situation quiet. Right Division report cross-roads D.20.b.6.2. and valley C.5.central shelled during morning. Left Division report V.30.b. and vicinity of BAIZIEUX shelled early this morning. Reserve Division report at 10.40 p.m. last night E.A. dropped two white lights bursting into golden rain on Eastern outskirts HENENCOURT and shortly after slight mustard gas was noticed but no enemy gas shells observed. Valley in C.3 and C.4 shelled early morning. Back areas bombed during night. Captures nil.
- 5.59 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Evening report. Enemy artillery active forward areas Left Division especially at VILLE-sur-ANCRE and West of MORLANCOURT, also active South of FOUILLOY and S.W. of AUBIGNY. Vicinity MERICOURT and RIBEMONT heavily shelled. 30 H.V. shells fell in GLISY between 12 noon and 1 p.m. 12 rounds mustard gas on BUIRE. Prisoners one O.R.
- 6.20 p.m. To G.H.Q.
Uneventful day on Army front. Corps forward areas intermittently shelled during day. 30 H.V. shells on GLISY between 12 noon and 1 p.m. 600 rounds yellow cross in FOUILLOY last evening and during night. Back area of Northern Corps bombed during night. 46 112-lb., 172 25-lb. bombs dropped by R.A.F. on CARNOY, SUZANNE and CAPPY. Captures one O.R. (already reported).
-

23rd May, 1918.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 23rd May, 1918.

1. Situation unchanged. There was an appreciable increase in hostile artillery fire South of the ANCRE, and gas shelling was particularly in evidence.

During the night 22nd/23rd May 200 rounds of yellow cross fell in MILLENCOURT and 1000 rounds of blue and yellow cross N.W. of SAILLY-le-SEC. Between 1 a.m. and 4 a.m. there was heavy shelling of BUIRE, RIBEMONT and MERICOURT with a mixture of blue, green and yellow cross gas shell, shrapnel and H.E. (about 2000 rounds).

A number of our battery positions were engaged by 15 and 10.5 cm. howitzers.

Apart from a few rounds fired into AMIENS, long range guns were inactive.

2. III CORPS.

Situation quiet. A little gas shelling during the night. Battery positions South of HENENCOURT were heavily shelled with 15 cm. during the day.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

During the night there was considerable gas shelling on the left front of the 5th Australian Division, and also on BUIRE, RIBEMONT, MERICOURT and the vicinity of HEILLY and MERICOURT. DAOURS and BUSSY were bombed. MERICOURT was again gas shelled at 11.35 a.m. A large ammunition dump in DERNANCOURT was blown up in the afternoon by our artillery.

3. THIRD ARMY.

Situation quiet. A few patrol encounters took place. The Guards Division carried out a successful raid East of AYETTE and captured a prisoner and a light machine gun.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

An attempted raid by the enemy on MORGIVAL WOOD was repulsed, one prisoner being captured. COULLEMELLE and GRUNE WOOD were intermittently shelled with gas.

5. AIRCRAFT.

193 hours were flown by 108 pilots.

Four reconnaissances were made. 16 artillery patrols were carried out during which 5 hostile batteries were successfully neutralised and 5 engaged for destruction; 1 gun pit was destroyed, 1 damaged and 6 explosions and 4 fires caused. One destructive shoot was carried out on a bridge. 13 zone calls were sent down.

/ Thirty

23rd May, 1918.

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Thirty offensive, 4 counter-attack and 5 contact patrols were made.

Hostile aircraft activity was below normal. Three combats in the air took place and one E.A. was brought down. One of our machines failed to return.

During the day 74 twenty-five lb. bombs were dropped and 4,880 rounds were fired by Corps Squadrons on various ground targets.

During the night thirty-two 112-lb., fourteen 40-lb. and 134 twenty-five lb. bombs were dropped on BRAY, HAPPY VALLEY, LA NEUVILLE, FROISSY, CHUIGNOLLES and LA FLAQUE. Three direct hits were obtained on sidings and one on a dump, fires being caused. 3,840 rounds were also fired by machine guns along roads and at search-lights.

6. PRISONERS.

One O.R. was received in C.C.S. during the past 24 hours.

7. WEATHER.

Fine, with local thunderstorms and high winds.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

No important reliefs or moves took place.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th, 47th*, 58th, 3rd Cavalry (Army Reserve) Divisions.

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

XIX Corps (under orders G.H.Q.): 30th and 66th Divisions (Training Cadres).

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A. H.E.	..	548
" " S.	..	327
18-pdr. H.E.	..	5597
" " S.	..	11051
4.5" How. H.E.	..	4188
" " Gas.	..	1379
60-pdr. H.E.	..	1294
" " S.	..	1380
6" How. H.E.	..	4474
6" Mk. VII. H.E.	..	345
" " S.	..	570
8" How.	..	607
9.2" How.	..	188
12" How.	..	22

11. GENERAL.

A certain active battery which fires from near CERISY has been definitely established as a British 60-pdr. battery: a blind shell has been picked up with a 101 fuze.

23rd May, 1918.

694

Operation Messages Received and Issued.

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- 5.31 a.m. From III Corps.
Situation quiet and unchanged. Little gas shelling reported during the night. Left Division report E.A. dropped bombs on back areas at 10.45 p.m. and 2 a.m.
- 6.20 a.m. From Australian Corps.
Morning report. Right Division quiet night. Centre Division, Right Battalion, Left Brigade, fairly heavily shelled with gas all night. Left Division report enemy artillery active on back areas. MERICOURT heavily shelled. RIBEMONT and BUIRE shelled with gas. E.A. dropped bombs near DAOURS and BUSSY. Dawn reconnaissance reports Corps front quiet.
- 6.50 a.m. To G.H.Q.
Morning report. Situation generally quiet. Hostile artillery active in ANCRE Valley. MERICOURT heavily shelled. Some gas on RIBEMONT, BUIRE and VAIRE. E.A. dropped bombs on DAOURS and BUSSY. R.A.F. dropped 44 112-lb. bombs, 281 25-lb. and 14 40-lb. phosphorous bombs on BRAY, PERONNE and other targets.
- 5.30 p.m. From III Corps.
Evening report. Situation quiet. D.21.c. and V.24.d. intermittently shelled during day. Battery positions D.3.d.5.0. and D.3.d.8.7. heavily shelled by 5.9 during day. Back areas bombed early this morning.
- 5.52 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Evening report. Enemy artillery active on area North of RIBEMONT. From 12.30 a.m. to 5 a.m. MERICOURT, RIBEMONT, BUIRE and area South of HEILLY and MERICOURT shelled with blue, green and yellow cross gas. At times shelling very intense. MERICOURT again shelled with same gas at 11.35 a.m. Area South of SAILLY-le-SEC shelled with blue cross gas early this morning.
- 6.45 p.m. To G.H.Q.
Evening report. Hostile artillery active North of RIBEMONT and intermittent on high ground N.E. of MILLECOURT. Batteries South of HENENCOURT heavily shelled during day. Dump in DERMANCOURT blown up by our artillery. Gas: 1,500 H.E. yellow and green on BUIRE, RIBEMONT and MERICOURT early morning. Green cross heavy on TREUX during night. E.A. active, bombing back areas Left Corps early morning. Captures one O.R.
-

24th May, 1918.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 24th May, 1918. 695

1. No infantry action occurred. There was a general decrease in artillery fire along the whole front. Very little gas shelling took place and there was no attempt at counter-battery work. MILLENCOURT and LAVIEVILLE were shelled intermittently as usual. Long range gun activity was slight. A few rounds fell in MONTIGNY, FRANVILLERS and the vicinity of BAIZIEUX.

2. III CORPS.

During the night gas was successfully projected into the quarry North of DERNANCOURT. With the exception of some shelling N.W. of CONTAY the situation was very quiet.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

A very quiet day.

3. THIRD ARMY.

Situation quiet and unchanged.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

ROUVREL and BOIS SENECAT heavily shelled. A raid attempted by the enemy S.E. of MESNIL ST. GEORGES was stopped by our barrage.

5. AIRCRAFT.

140 hours were flown by 74 pilots.

Four successful reconnaissances were made. Four contact and five artillery patrols were carried out, in which one battery was successfully neutralised and five engaged for destruction, two gun pits being destroyed and three damaged. 23 zone calls were sent down.

Thirty-three offensive patrols and two photographic flights were made: during the latter 53 plates were exposed.

Hostile aircraft activity was below normal. Only one indecisive combat took place.

Twenty-seven 112-lb., twelve 40-lb. and 154 twenty-five lb. bombs were dropped in woods and villages including BOIS DES TAILLES, MAMETZ WOOD and roads in the vicinity, and on FRICOURT. Many direct hits were obtained.

4,980 machine gun rounds were fired at favourable ground targets.

6. PRISONERS.

Two O.R. passed through Corps cages.

/ 7. WEATHER.

24th May, 1918.

2.

7. WEATHER.

Fine, with clouds later.

196

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

No important reliefs or moves took place during 24th May.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th, 47th, 53th, 3rd Cavalry (Army Reserve) Divisions.

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

XIX Corps (under orders G.H.Q.): 30th and 66th Divisions (Training Cadres).

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A. H.E.	...	65
" " S.	...	18
18-pdr. H.E.	...	7382
" " S.	...	11142
4.5" How. H.E.	...	4843
" " Gas.	...	762
60-pdr. H.E.	...	1375
" " S.	...	982
6" How. H.E.	...	3237
" " S.K.	...	391
" " Gas.	...	443
6" Mk. VII H.E.	...	355
" " S.	...	182
9.2 How.	...	122
12" How.	...	8
8" How.	...	392

24th May, 1918.

Operation Messages Received and Issued. 69

5.30 a.m. From III Corps.

Situation unchanged. Right Division report quiet night. Gas drums were successfully projected on to quarry in E.14.c. during night. Left Division reports some shelling of back areas U.21.b., U.21.d.5.4., U.14 Central from 8.35 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

5.58 a.m. From Australian Corps.

Morning report. Slight shelling vicinity AUBIGNY. One prisoner 137th I.R. captured by Right Divn.

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

Situation unchanged. Some shelling of AUBIGNY and N.E. of CONTAY. Gas drums successfully projected into quarry in E.14.c. Eleven 112-lb. and 88 twenty-five lb. bombs dropped on ^{PERONNE} CARNOY, MARICOURT; ten 40-lb. phosphorous and 82 twenty-five lb. on BOIS des TAILLES; five 112-lb. and 38 twenty-five lb. on MAMETZ WOOD. One E.A. destroyed.

5.55 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Evening report. Situation quiet. E.A. inactive. Captures 2 O.R.

5.45 p.m. From III Corps.

Evening report. Quiet day. Practically no shelling. Reserve Division reports while bombing back areas last night enemy planes fired three golden rain lights at intervals.

6.15 p.m. To G.H.Q.

Evening report. Quiet day. 11.0 p.m. to midnight 70 yellow and green cross West of BUIRE. Captures 2 O.R.

25th May, 1918.

1598

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 25th May, 1918.

1. A slight advance in our line was effected east of VILLERS BRETONNEUX, without fighting, during the night May 24th/25th.

Hostile artillery was below normal, although a certain amount of activity was reported in the VILLERS BRETONNEUX sector.

A few rounds of 15 cm H.V. shell fell in the vicinity of BEAUCOURT, VECQUEMONT and DAOURS.

2. III CORPS.

There was a little shelling immediately north of MILLENCOURT, otherwise the day passed quietly.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

The line was advanced east of VILLERS BRETONNEUX by a series of posts at O.36.b.5.2 - P.31.a.6.8 - P.25.c.7.0. During the night there was considerable shelling of VILLERS BRETONNEUX and BOIS D'AQUENNE. During the day the vicinity of VILLERS BRETONNEUX was again shelled.

3. THIRD ARMY.

A slight increase in hostile shelling was reported.

Two successful raids were carried out and resulted in the capture of prisoners.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

A quiet day.

5. AIRCRAFT.

93 hours were flown by 98 pilots.

9 artillery and 4 contact patrols were made.

One hostile battery was successfully engaged for destruction, one gun pit being destroyed.

2 zone calls were sent down.

5 offensive and 2 counter-attack patrols were carried out.

Hostile aircraft activity was below normal. No air combats took place.

Twenty 25-lb bombs were dropped by Corps squadrons on favourable ground targets. 1,050 machine gun rounds were fired from below 1,000 feet at suitable targets.

6. PRISONERS.

599

6. PRISONERS.

2 other ranks passed through C.C.Ss.

7. WEATHER.

Fine: low clouds and bad visibility.

8. RELIEFS and MOVES.

47th Division relieved the 18th Division in right division sector of III Corps front on night 24th/25th May.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th*, 47th, 58th Divisions.
3rd Cav. Div. (Army Reserve).

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

XIX Corps: 30th, 66th Divs. (Training Cadres).
(Under orders G.H.Q.)

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	82
" " S.	46
18-pdr. H.E.	6496
" " S.	11567
4.5" How., H.E.	4795
" " Gas.	1895
60-pdr., H.E.	1373
" " S.	1764
6" How., H.E.	4034
" " S.K.	392
" " Gas.	1002
6" Mk VII, H.E.	162
" " S.	197
8" How.	521
9.2" How.	103.

25th May, 1918.

5100

Operation Messages Received and Issued.

- 5.34 a.m. From III Corps.
Situation quiet and very little gas shelling.
- 6.25 a.m. From Australian Corps.
Morning report. Quiet night on Left and Centre Division fronts. Considerable hostile shelling throughout the night on VILLERS BRETONNEUX and BOIS d'AQUENNE. Gas projected by Right Brigade, Centre Division at midnight. Line advanced during last 24 hours East of VILLERS BRETONNEUX by a series of posts O.36.b.5.2. to P.31.a.6.8. to P.25.c.7.0. Two prisoners captured North of SOMME on Centre Division front.
- 6.40 a.m. To G.H.Q.
Considerable hostile shelling of BRETONNEUX and BOIS d'AQUENNE: otherwise quiet night. Line advanced during last 24 hours East of BRETONNEUX by series of posts O.36.b.5.2., P.31.a.6.8., P.25.c.7.0. Gas projected into BOIS de VAIRE at midnight. Prisoners two O.R.
- 5.40 p.m. From III Corps.
Evening report. Few shells near the MAZE V.24.d. and AUSTRALIA TRENCH W.25. during morning. Otherwise situation quiet. Captures nil.
- 6.9 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Evening report. Enemy artillery more active on Brigade Sector South of VILLERS BRETONNEUX Road. O.28.a. N.E. VILLERS BRETONNEUX fairly heavily shelled during morning also J.15.d. S. of MERICOURT during day. Situation otherwise generally quiet. E.A. inactive. Captures 2 O.R., both wounded.
- 6.25 p.m. To G.H.Q.
Evening report. Hostile artillery more active South of AMIENS - BRETONNEUX Road. Fairly heavy shelling N.W. of BRETONNEUX and S. of MERICOURT l'ABBE. Situation otherwise quiet. 30 rounds yellow cross shell East end BUIRE. Prisoners 2 O.R. both wounded.
- 10.25 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Heavy gas shelling of area North of BOIS l'ABBE O.26. and O.27. commenced 8.10 p.m. U.32, 33, and 34 also shelled. Mustard gas so far identified. Counter-battery being carried out. Shelling slackened considerably at 9.25 p.m.
In continuation of above (11.55 p.m.): Commencing 10 p.m. 40 rounds gas shell fired along the main road N.28.d., N.29.d., 75% yellow cross, remainder phosgene. Large dump blown up in MARCELCAVE. 10.55 p.m. Right Division report situation now quiet.

ENEMY GAS SHELL ACTIVITY FOR WEEK ENDING 9 a.m.
MAY 25th, 1918.

Date. 9 a.m. - 9 a.m.	Division.	Time of bombardment.	No. of rounds.	Calibre.	Nature of shell.	Map location.
May 18-19th.	18th.	Morning.	Few.		Green cross.	D.17.a. & c. S. of LAVIEVILLE.
	"	9.40 p.m.	15.		-do-	LAVIEVILLE.
	58th.	9.30 - 10.15 pm.	50.		-do-	D.5.d. & 6.c. S. of MILLENCOURT.
	"	3 - 4.15 a.m.	25.		-do-	E.2.a. Between MILLENCOURT & ALBERT.
	2nd Aust.	1.25 a.m.	20.		Blue cross.	J.22.d. N. of SAILLY-le-SEC.
	"	1.45 a.m.	10.		Green cross.	J.23.b. N.E. of SAILLY-le-SEC.
	"	3.30 a.m.	9.		-do-	J.23.c. N. of SAILLY-le-SEC.
	"	12.55 - 1.10 am.	120.		-do-	J.10 & 18. S.E. of MERICOURT.
	"	12 m.n. - 2 a.m.	170.		H.E. & gas (not identified).	D.22.a. & c. S.E. of BRESLE.
	5th Aust.	7.15 p.m.	20		Green cross.	O.17.a. S.E. of FOUILLOY.
19-20th.	2nd Aust.	4.0 a.m.	10		-do-	J.23.d.3.3. N.E. of SAILLY-le-SEC.
	"	Evening.	Light.		Not identified.	J.5.d. & 11.d. S. of TREUX.
	5th Aust.	5.0 a.m.	Few.		Blue cross.	J.28 & 29. SAILLY-le-SEC.
20-21st.	18th.	Night.	Few.		Green cross.	E.13.c. & D.23.N. of BUIRE.
	58th.	3.0 a.m.	12.		Blue cross.	D.6.a. E. of MILLENCOURT.
	"	10 p.m. - 12 m.n.	40.		Yellow cross.	V.23.d. & 24.a. N. of MILLENCOURT.
	"	7.0 - 7.15 p.m.	25.		-do-	V.27.d. HENENCOURT.
	"	11 p.m. - 3 a.m.	200.		Yellow & green.	V.11.d. E. of SENLIS.
	2nd Aust.	2 - 5 a.m.	200.		Yellow cross.	BUIRE.
	"	4.45 - 5.25 p.m.	30.		Not identified.	J.17.a. & d. S.E. of MERICOURT.
	"	6.0 p.m.	10.		Green cross.	J.22.c. N.W. of SAILLY-le-SEC.
	"	10.0 p.m.	15.		Blue cross.	J.22.c. & 23.d. N. of SAILLY-le-SEC.
	"	10.30 - 11.30 pm.	Light.		-do-	J.22.d. & 28.b. -do-
21-22nd.	5th Aust.	5.0 a.m.	11.		H.E. & gas (not identified).	J.18.c. & d. N.W. of SAILLY-le-SEC.
	"	11.40 p.m.	50		-do-	J.23.a. & b. -do-
	5th Aust.	5.0 a.m.	11.		Blue cross.	J.17.c. & d. N. of SAILLY-le-SEC.
	18th.	10.50 p.m.	30.	7.7.	Yellow cross.	P.2.c. S. of VAIRE.
	58th.	10 - 12 p.m.	100.	15.0.	Blue cross.	V.24.d. N.E. of MILLENCOURT.
	"	2.30 p.m.	40.	10.5.	Yellow cross.	V.28.d. & 29.c. Between HENENCOURT and MILLENCOURT.
	"	9.15 p.m.	20.	15.0.	Blue cross.	V.27.d. HENENCOURT.
	"	11.0 p.m.	30.	10.5.	Green cross.	D.5.a. MILLENCOURT.
	"	2.0 a.m.	75.	10.5.	-do-	V.29.b. & 30.a. N.E. of MILLENCOURT.
	"	-do-	50.	7.7.	Yellow cross.	-do- -do-
22-23rd.	2nd Aust.	3 - 4 a.m.	15.		Green cross.	V.30.a. & b. -do-
	"	-	20.		Yellow cross.	-
	"	11.15 - 11.30 pm.	Light.		H.E. & gas (not identified).	J.11.b.5.3. E. of MERICOURT.
	"	11.50 - 12 m.n.	"		-do-	J.29.b. and 22.d. N.E. & N. SAILLY-le-SEC.
	5th Aust.	6 - 8 p.m.	200.	7.7	Yellow cross.	J.11.b. & d. S.E. of MERICOURT.
	"	11 - 11.30 p.m.	30.		Blue and yellow.	O.16. S. of FOUILLOY.
	"	During night.	400.		Yellow cross.	O.6.d. ¹² HAMELET.
	"					O.9,10,15 & 17. / S.W. of FOUILLOY. SE.&
	18th.	2 - 4 a.m.	Bursts.		Blue & yellow.	D.18.c. & d. N. of BUIRE.
	"	During night.	Few.		Blue cross.	and D.23.a. & b. S.E. of MILLENCOURT.
23-24th.	58th.	8.30 - 9.30 pm.	300.		Green & blue.	D.12.d. -do-
	"	9.45 - 10 p.m.	30.		Yellow cross.	D.6.c. -do-
	"	9.40 - 10.20 pm.	Some.		Green cross.	V.24.c. & d. N.E. of MILLENCOURT.
	"	9.30 - 11.30 pm.	100.		Yellow & blue.	W.18.b. S. of BOUZINCOURT.
	"	10.0 p.m.	50.		Yellow & green.	V.30.a., V.29.b. N.E. of MILLENCOURT.
	"	10.30 - 10.50 pm.	30.		Green cross.	V.23.b. N. of MILLENCOURT.
	"	2.30 - 3 a.m.	20.		Blue & yellow.	D.6.b. E. of MILLENCOURT.
	"	1 - 2 a.m.	30.		Blue cross.	V.30.d. -do-
	"	2 - 2.30 a.m.	Some.		Green cross.	V.19.c. E. of WARLOY.
	2nd Aust.	12 m.n. - 6 a.m.	1500.		H.E. yellow & green.	V.28.a. & d. N.E. of HENENCOURT.
24-25th.	"	11.30 p.m.	10.		Yellow & green.	BUIRE, RIBEMONT & MERICOURT.
	"	1.5 a.m.	Heavily shelled.		Green cross.	J.12.a. S. of TREUX.
	"	11.0 p.m.	20.		-do-	J.11.c. & d. S.W. of TREUX.
	"	-do-	10.		-do-	J.22.c. N.W. SAILLY-le-SEC.
	5th Aust.	10.30 - 4 a.m.	Light.		Blue cross.	J.35. S. of SAILLY-le-SEC.
	58th.	11.0 p.m.	12.		Yellow cross.	W.20.d.3.6. S.E. BOUZINCOURT.
	2nd Aust.	11 - 12 m.n.	30.		-do-	D.30. BUIRE.
	"	-do-	40.		Yellow & green.	D.28.d. W. of BUIRE.
	"	-	30.		Yellow cross.	BUIRE (Eastern end).
	"	11.0 a.m.	7.		Green cross.	J.21.c.3.3. N.E. of VAUX.

26th May, 1918.

6102

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 26th May, 1918.

1. A raid attempted by the enemy in the vicinity of SAILLY-le-SEC failed under our fire. Hostile artillery was active North of the ANCRE during the night. The vicinity of VILLERS BRETONNEUX was heavily shelled with mustard gas throughout the night and early morning. Intermittent fire of the same nature continued throughout the day. Elsewhere on the front situation was quiet.

2. III CORPS.

Hostile artillery was active between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m. on the front system of the Right Division: for 45 minutes of this period a heavy bombardment was carried out. The remainder of the day passed quietly.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

The enemy attempted a raid S.E. of SAILLY-le-SEC during the night which was repulsed by our rifle and machine gun fire. From 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. and from 3 a.m. to 5.45 a.m. the enemy heavily shelled the W., N.W. and S.W. outskirts of VILLERS BRETONNEUX and the BOIS d'AQUENNE and its Western outskirts with mustard gas. During the day intermittent mustard gas shelling of the same area was maintained. Although the troops chiefly affected by this shelling were moved to a flank as soon as possible the intensity of the initial bombardment combined with the premature removal of box respirators resulted in considerable number of casualties, i.e. about 600. It is estimated that over 18,000 rounds of mustard gas shell fell in the area in question during the night and early morning. On the remainder of the front there was little activity with the exception of some shelling of MERICOURT and HEILLY.

3. THIRD ARMY.

Enemy artillery rather more active than usual.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

Considerable artillery activity during the night on the whole front and mustard gas shelling on batteries near the BOIS d'AQUENNE.

5. AIRCRAFT.

257 hours were flown by 196 pilots.
Nine artillery and 4 contact patrols were carried out and 44 zone calls sent down.
65 offensive patrols were made.
Hostile aircraft activity was below normal. Ten air combats took place 6 of which were decisive. Four E.A. were brought down and two E.A. out of control.

/ Eighteen

26th May, 1918.

2.

6-103

Eighteen 112-lb, 10 40-lb., and 261 twenty-five lb. bombs were dropped on various targets on the ground including areas in vicinity of MARICOURT, BRAY, ROSIERES, GUILLAUCOURT and FRICOURT. Six direct hits were obtained on the railway line at ROSIERES.

6,425 machine gun rounds were fired at various villages, woods and along roads from an altitude of about 1,000 feet.

6. PRISONERS.

Two O.R. passed through Corps cages.

7. WEATHER.

Fine with clouds and mist.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

No reliefs or moves of any importance took place during 26th May.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th*, 47th, 58th Divisions, 3rd Cavalry Division (Army Reserve).

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

XIX Corps (under orders G.H.Q.): 30th and 66th Divisions (Training Cadres).

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A. H.E.	..	77.
" S.	..	35.
18-pdr. H.E.	..	8354.
" S.	..	14452.
4.5" How. H.E.	..	5363.
" Gas.	..	986.
60-pdr. H.E.	..	1398.
" S.	..	1264.
6" How. H.E.	..	5623.
" Sk.	..	766.
" Gas.	..	983.
6" Mk. VII. H.E.	..	170.
" S.	..	238.
8" How.	..	637.
9.2" How.	..	143.
12" How.	..	16.

26th May, 1918.

6-104

Operation Messages Received and Issued.

- 5.36 a.m. From III Corps.
Morning report. Hostile artillery active; between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m. enemy shelled front system of Right Division; 2 a.m. to 2.45 a.m. heavy bombardment including few gas shells. LAVIEVILLE also shelled. Hostile artillery also active at intervals on Left Division front. Situation now quiet.
- 5.55 a.m. From III Corps.
Left Division report Albatross scout brought down at 8 p.m. N.W. of SENLIS; pilot captured.
- 6.33 a.m. From Australian Corps.
Morning report. Enemy artillery active with gas on Right Division area, shelling BOIS d'AQUENNE from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. and from 3 a.m. onwards with mustard gas. O.22, 21, 28, 29, from 8 p.m. to midnight; O.28.a. and b. from 3.45 a.m. onwards. Over 6,000 gas shells in Southern Brigade Sector. Centre Division report O.17.d. intermittently shelled with gas. Enemy raid S.E. SAILLY-le-SEC driven off by rifle and machine gun fire. We had one casualty: none missing. One prisoner taken as result of patrol encounter. Left Division report enemy gassed BUIRE between 3 and 4 a.m., otherwise hostile artillery quiet. E.A. active bombing Northern Brigade back area.
- 6.55 a.m. To G.H.Q.
Heavy mustard gas shelling BOIS d'AQUENNE and W., N.W. and N. outskirts BRETONNEUX 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. and intermittently since 3 a.m. BUIRE gas shelled between 3 a.m. and 4 a.m. Front system between DERNANCOURT and AMIENS - ALBERT Road shelled between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m. and heavily bombarded 2 a.m. to 2.45 a.m. including few gas shells. Hostile artillery active at intervals Northern Division front. Enemy raid S.E. SAILLY-le-SEC driven off by rifle and machine gun fire and none of our men missing. R.A.F. report night observation bad visibility. Four E.A. crashed, 5 out of control. Among other targets three 112-lb. and twenty-four 25-lb. bombs on PERONNE.
- 12.25 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Continuation morning report: gas shelling on O.28.a., b. & c. ceased at 5.45 a.m. and on BOIS d'AQUENNE slackened to one round per minute about 6 a.m. still continuing at this rate at 10 a.m.
- 5.45 p.m. From III Corps.
Situation quiet on whole Corps front. Nothing to report.
- 6.10 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Evening report. Enemy artillery active South of MERICOURT and on HEILLY. O.26.d. and 27.a. shelled with 8" gas. Estimated 18,000 rounds of gas Right Division area since 6 p.m. yesterday. Prisoners last 24 hours 1 O.R.
- 6.40 p.m. To G.H.Q.
Enemy artillery active on BOIS l'ABBE, S. of MERICOURT and on HEILLY. Estimated 18,000 rounds gas shell on Right Divisional front since 6 p.m. yesterday. 8 25-lb. dropped by R.A.F. Captures 1 O.R.

27th May, 1918.

6105

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 27th May, 1918.

1. North of the ANCRE hostile artillery was again very active during the night and early morning. There was an increase of hostile fire during the same period between the ANCRE and VILLERS BRETONNEUX. No cases of heavy gas shelling were reported. The shelling of AMIENS revived during the afternoon, both H.E. and shrapnel being employed. Long range guns shelled BOVES, and the high ground between AMIENS and DURY was engaged by a gun of big calibre, probably about 14".

Amongst other successful shoots our artillery engaged a 4-gun battery coming into action in the BOIS d'ACCROCHE. Casualties were caused to both men and horses and the teams eventually bolted.

2. III CORPS.

Hostile artillery was active on the forward system of the Left Division during the night. The day passed quietly.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

There was gas shelling of CORBIE and FOUILLOY and scattered shelling of our forward area during the night. The hostile reply to our counter-preparation at 3.15 a.m. was fairly heavy on our front line and N.W. and W. of VILLERS BRETONNEUX. By day there was scattered shelling in the vicinity of VILLERS BRETONNEUX and mustard gas shells fell in the neighbourhood of FOUILLOY, between 12.35 and 2 p.m.

3. THIRD ARMY.

Situation generally quiet.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

The enemy carried out a raid on the 1st U.S. Divn. They were ejected from the only position into which they had penetrated and followed back into their own lines by the Americans, who had to be ordered to withdraw.

5. AIRCRAFT.

209 hours were flown by 178 pilots.

Three contact and 16 artillery patrols were carried out. One hostile battery was successfully neutralised and 14 zone calls sent down.

One reconnaissance and 36 offensive patrols were made.

During one photographic flight 36 plates were exposed.

/ Hostile

27th May, 1918.

6106 2.

Hostile aircraft activity was below normal. Five combats in the air took place one of which was decisive resulting in one E.A. being brought down. Fourteen 25-lb. bombs were dropped on CHAULNES Railway Junction and thirty-six 25-lb. bombs were dropped on various ground targets. 5,350 machine gun rounds were fired into villages and along roads from a low altitude.

6. PRISONERS.

Two O.R. passed through Corps cages.

7. WEATHER.

Fine but cloudy with bad visibility.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

No important reliefs or moves took place.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th*, 47th, 58th and 3rd Cavalry (Army Reserve) Divisions.
Aust. Corps: 2nd, 3rd, 4th*, and 5th Australian Divns.
XIX Corps (under orders G.H.Q.): 30th and 66th Divisions (Training Cadres).

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A. H.E.	..	936.
" " S.	..	625.
18-pdr. H.E.	..	7645.
" " S.	..	11928.
" " Smoke.	..	40.
4.5" How. H.E.	..	4252.
" " Gas.	..	315.
60-pdr. H.E.	..	1201.
" " S.	..	1012.
6" How. H.E.	..	5616.
" " Gas.	..	134.
6" Mk. VII. H.E.	..	295.
" " S.	..	263.
8" How.	..	995.
9.2" How.	..	121.
12" How.	..	8.

11. GENERAL.

A hostile attack launched on a 50-kilometre front between LEUILLY and the BOIS DE BRIMONT made considerable progress.

27th May, 1918.

Operation Messages Received and Issued. 65107

- 5.30 a.m. From III Corps.
Morning report. Left Division report occasional bursts 10 cm. shells on front and support lines Left Battalion, Right Sub-sector. Bombs were dropped last night in rear of left group battery positions. No gas shelling. Captures nil.
- 6.10 a.m. From Australian Corps.
Morning report. Enemy shelled vicinity of CORBIE and FOUILLOY with gas shells during the night. Light scattered shelling of our forward area. Enemy replied to our artillery at 3.15 a.m. fairly heavy on front line also on area just West and N.W. of VILLERS BRETONNEUX with H.E. and gas. One prisoner captured during night.
- 6.25 a.m. To G.H.Q.
Some gas shelling of CORBIE and FOUILLOY. Enemy replied to our artillery at 3.15 a.m. fairly heavy on forward areas and vicinity of BRETONNEUX. Some bombs dropped near Left Group Battery positions of our Left Corps. Forty 25-lb. bombs dropped by R.A.F. Captures 1 O.R.
- 2.50 p.m. From Australian Corps.
British plane belonging 35th Squadron crashed D.22.central. Pilot and observer alive. Enemy two-seater crashed in flames J.4.a.
- 5.45 p.m. From III Corps.
Situation quiet and unchanged. Right Division reports some artillery activity during morning. E.A. active during day. A few gas shells, nature unknown, fired into D.17 this morning.
- 6.18 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Evening report. Occasional scattered shelling H.E. and gas N.W. of VILLERS BRETONNEUX and North of railway in O.25. O.17., North of VILLERS BRETONNEUX shelled continuously with mustard gas from 12.35 p.m. to 2 p.m. FOUILLOY and vicinity shelled at intervals. Hostile artillery otherwise normally active. E.A. over VILLERS BRETONNEUX Sector intermittently during day, also over DAOURS at 11 a.m. and CORBIE at 2.30 p.m. E.A. crashed in flames at RIBEMONT at 12 noon. Prisoners one O.R.
- 6.45 p.m. To G.H.Q.
Situation generally quiet. Some hostile artillery activity on high ground North of BUIRE. FOUILLOY shelled at intervals. Gas: green cross heavy on VILLERS BRETONNEUX, CORBIE, FOUILLOY and S. of SENLIS early morning; yellow continuous on BRETONNEUX, 12.35 to 2 p.m.; light on other areas. E.A. active, one crashed in our lines. Captures 1 O.R.
-

28th May, 1918.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 28th May, 1918. 6-108

1. There was a slight increase in hostile artillery activity North of the ANCRE. Between the ANCRE and VILLERS BRETONNEUX there was no great increase in the volume of fire but H.V. guns were active against back areas. Counter-battery work was more noticeable. AMIENS received about 225 rounds in the period under review.

2. III CORPS.

There was light shelling of the vicinity of AMIENS in the morning, and the MAZE was shelled intermittently during the afternoon. Otherwise the day passed quietly. No gas shelling took place.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

MARETT WOOD and vicinity was heavily shelled with gas, of which a large proportion was mustard, during the night. In the early morning there was light shelling of DAOURS and VILLERS BRETONNEUX. During the day there was an increase of hostile artillery fire on the Centre Division front, and some activity on the forward area of the Left Division.

3. THIRD ARMY.

Situation quiet and unchanged.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

At 6.45 a.m. the 1st U.S. Division carried out an attack on CANTIGNY on a frontage of two kilometres and to a depth of one kilometre. The operation was completely successful, all objectives being taken. 173 prisoners were captured by the Americans, whose total casualties amounted to 130. A quiet day on the rest of the front.

5. AIRCRAFT.

776 hours were flown by 229 pilots.

Eight successful reconnaissances were carried out.

Three contact and 14 artillery patrols were made, in which 9 hostile batteries were neutralised and 12 successfully engaged for destruction. Two successful destructive shoots on bridges were carried out and 26 zone calls sent down.

134 offensive patrols were carried out.

Ten photographic flights were made and 373 plates exposed.

Hostile aircraft activity was normal. 74 air combats took place of which 15 were decisive, resulting in 3 E.A. crashed and 12 E.A. brought down out of control. One

/ of our

28th May, 1918.

6109 2.

of our machines is missing.

Seventy-four 112-lb., twenty 40-lb. and 1198 twenty-five lb. bombs were dropped on BRAY, ALBERT and GAPPY aerodromes. The vicinities of MAMETZ WOOD, FRICOURT, POZIERES, MERICOURT-sur-SOMME and ROSIERES also received considerable attention. A few phosphorous bombs were dropped in the woods mentioned and burst with considerable effect.

20,170 machine gun rounds were fired into woods, villages, along roads and at searchlights with good effect.

6. PRISONERS.

No captures were made during the day.

7. WEATHER.

Fine with good visibility.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

XIX Corps H.Q. moved to PONT REMY.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th*, 47th and 58th Divisions, 3rd Cavalry Division (Army Reserve).
Aust. Corps: 2nd, 3rd, 4th* and 5th Australian Divns.
XIX Corps (under orders G.H.Q.): 30th and 66th Divisions (Training Cadres).

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A. H.E.	..	1034
" S.	..	339
18-pdr. H.E.	..	6023
" S.	..	10101
4.5" How. H.E.	..	3593
" Gas.	..	1022
60-pdr. H.E.	..	1462
" S.	..	1009
6" How.	..	5799
6" Mk. VII. H.E.	..	175
" S.	..	155
8" How.	..	1040
9.2" How.	..	570
12" How.	..	6

28th May, 1918.

Operation Messages Received and Issued.

- 5.15 a.m. From III Corps.
Situation quiet and unchanged. Gas shelling nil. E.A. active during night. Bombs dropped on back areas.
- 5.55 a.m. From Australian Corps.
Morning report. MARETT WOOD J.16.b. and J.17 heavily shelled with gas during night mostly yellow cross. DAOURS and VILLERS BRETONNEUX were lightly shelled. Dawn reconnaissance reports no movement Corps front.
- 6.40 a.m. To G.H.Q.
Morning report. DAOURS and VILLERS BRETONNEUX lightly shelled. MARETT WOOD and high ground S.E. of MERICOURT heavily shelled with gas mostly yellow cross. E.A. active in Left Corps area. Otherwise a quiet night. R.A.F. dropped 856 twenty-five lb., sixty 112-lb. bombs and twenty 40-lb. phosphorous bombs on various targets. Four E.A. out of control.
- 10.15 a.m. From Australian Corps.
10 p.m. 27th plane 35th Squadron crashed LA HOUSOYE. Pilot and observer alive. Plane salvaged by 35th Squadron.
- 5.45 p.m. From III Corps.
Evening report. Quiet day. Vicinity of MAZE V.24.d. shelled intermittently with 5.9s. during afternoon. BAZIEUX, V.25.c. and D.1.c. lightly shelled in morning. 12 bombs on BAZIEUX 2 a.m. this morning. Gas shelling nil. Captures nil.
- 6.5 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Evening report. Increased enemy artillery activity Centre Division front. FOUILLOY and vicinity heavily shelled. Light shelling forward area Left Division also East of VAUX-sur-SOMME and West of VILLERS BRETONNEUX. Considerable movement of transport on roads in K.29. Captures nil.
- 6.45 p.m. To G.H.Q.
Areas N.E. of MILLENCOURT and BAZIEUX, E. of VAUX and W. of BRETONNEUX shelled during day. FOUILLOY and vicinity heavily shelled. Gas shelling 27th: 200 yellow cross S.E. of FOUILLOY noon; 2 - 5 p.m. 260 green cross E. and N.E. of HENENCOURT; 250 yellow cross E. of MERICOURT 5.30 p.m; 500 mixed between TREUX and MERICOURT. Considerable movement transport W. of CHIPILLY. Captures nil. Three E.A. crashed, 5 down out of control. Thirty-eight 112-lb. bombs on CAPPY and CHAULNES, 548 twenty-five lb. on FRICOURT and area E. of ALBERT.
- 10.50 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Back area shelling: area East of DAOURS and VECQUEMONT intermittently shelled with H.V., approximately 200 rounds.
-

29th May, 1918.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 29th May, 1918. 6111

1. There was a decrease in hostile artillery activity, and no cases of intense gas shelling were reported. H.V. guns were active on BAIZIEUX, FRANVILLERS, CONTAY and HENENCOURT, and the increased shelling of AMIENS was maintained, about 275 rounds falling into the city in the 24 hours under review.
A special concentration of fire was directed by our artillery on enemy artillery headquarters, the location of which had been obtained from a captured German map.
2. III CORPS.
A quiet day.
AUSTRALIAN CORPS.
During the night HEILLY and the vicinity of AUBIGNY and VECQUEMONT were shelled. A few gas shells were reported S.W. of MORLANCOURT and some mustard gas shells were fired on to the vicinity of DACOURS. From 10 a.m. to 10.35 a.m. there was heavy shelling of the area 1000 yards S.W. of AUBIGNY.
3. THIRD ARMY.
Situation quiet and unchanged.
4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.
Counter-attacks delivered by the enemy against CANTIGNY were repulsed. The remainder of the day passed quietly.
5. AIRCRAFT.
249 hours were flown by 153 pilots.
Two successful reconnaissances were made. Four contact and 10 artillery patrols were carried out during which 5 hostile batteries were successfully engaged for destruction, one hostile battery neutralised and 14 zone calls sent down.
56 offensive patrols were made, also two photographic flights. During the latter, 62 plates were exposed.
Hostile aircraft activity was below normal. Only three indecisive combats took place.
Two 112-lb., ten 40-lb. and 185 twenty-five lb. bombs were dropped on ETINEHEM, BRAY, MARICOURT, CARNOY, SUZANNE, CURLU and various ground targets. Bombing was very successful.
4850 machine gun rounds were fired at troops and transport along roads.

/ Four

29th May, 1918.

2.

6-112

Four registration and 3 neutralisation shoots were carried out with kite balloon observation.

6. PRISONERS.

Two O.R. passed through Corps cages.

7. WEATHER.

Fine but cloudy with poor visibility.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

No important reliefs or moves took place during the 29th May.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th*, 47th and 58th Divisions, 3rd Cavalry Division (Army Reserve).
Aust. Corps: 2nd, 3rd, 4th* and 5th Australian Divns.
XIX Corps (under orders G.H.Q.): 30th and 66th Divisions (Training Cadres).

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A., H.E.	..	675
" " S.	..	276
18-pdr. H.E.	..	6445
" " S.	..	11249
4.5" How. H.E.	..	3682
" " Gas.	..	680
60-pdr. H.E.	..	1378
" " S.	..	1023
6" How. H.E.	..	5113
" " S.K.	..	34
" " Gas.	..	372
6" Mk. VII. H.E.	..	232
" " S.	..	154
8" How.	..	661
9.2" How.	..	540

29th May, 1918.

6-113

Operation Messages Received and Issued.

- 5.17 a.m. From III Corps.
Morning report. Situation quiet. No gas shelling. Eight bombs dropped by E.A. off CONTAY - HERISART Road about U.19.central at 12.15 a.m.
- 6.22 a.m. From Australian Corps.
Morning report. Situation quiet. Enemy artillery shelled HEILLY and area S. of AUBIGNY and E. of VECQUEMONT. 60 gas shells J.17.b., J.18.c. and few yellow cross gas shells vicinity DAOURS. AMIENS - VILLERS BRETONNEUX Road shelled at intervals.
- 6.35 a.m. To G.H.Q.
Situation quiet. Some shelling HEILLY, S. of AUBIGNY and E. of VECQUEMONT. 60 gas shells high ground S. of TREUX. 8 bombs dropped by E.A. on CONTAY - HERISART Road. Four 112-lb. and sixteen 25-lb. bombs on CAMBRAI. Eight 40-lb. phosphorous and 48 twenty-five lb. on ETINEHEM. 134 twenty-five lb. on various targets by night, and 33 twenty-five lb. by day.
- 5.30 p.m. From III Corps.
Evening report. Quiet day. Hostile artillery and aircraft activity below normal. No gas shelling. Captures nil.
- 6.15 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Evening report. Situation quiet. Normal intermittent shelling throughout day. 0.13. S.W. AUBIGNY heavily shelled between 10 and 10.35 a.m. FRANVILLERS and FRANVILLERS system lightly shelled during day. 12 noon to 3 p.m. continuous traffic along BRAY - MARICOURT Road in F.29.c. mainly in direction BRAY. 2 p.m. two trains in F.26.b. and F.27.b. Continuous movement vicinity trenches E.28. E.A. inactive. Captures 2 O.R.
- 6.25 p.m. To G.H.Q.
Evening report. Quiet day. Some shelling S.W. AUBIGNY and vicinity FRANVILLERS. Area S.E. of MERICOURT shelled with yellow, green, blue cross gas, 1 a.m. to 4 a.m., also 150 green cross shells East of BUIRE 1 a.m. to 2 a.m. Captures 2 O.R.
-

30th May, 1918.

15114

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, May 30th, 1918.

1. The night passed quietly. North of the ANCRE there was little shelling during the day, but on the Southern Corps front there was some activity.

2. III CORPS.

With the exception of some shelling of LAVIEVILLE and HENENCOURT there was nothing to report.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

With the exception of some shelling of CORBIE and the area S.W. of AUBIGNY, the night passed quietly. By day about 3000 rounds of H.E. and green and yellow cross gas shell fell in CORBIE. The vicinity of AUBIGNY, MERICOURT, MARETT WOOD and VILLERS BRETONNEUX were also shelled.

3. THIRD ARMY.

A quiet day.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

A quiet day. A raid North of the BOIS DES ARRACHES produced two prisoners.

5. AIRCRAFT.

686 hours were flown by 236 pilots. Three successful reconnaissances were made. Three contact and 14 artillery patrols were carried out. 13 hostile batteries were successfully engaged for destruction resulting in 5 gun pits being damaged and 7 destroyed. Four hostile batteries were successfully neutralised and 26 zone calls sent down. Six destructive shoots on bridges were carried out.

126 offensive and 2 counter-attack patrols were carried out.

Eleven photographic flights were made and 736 plates exposed.

Hostile aircraft activity was normal. 28 combats in the air took place, 5 of which were decisive. Four E.A. were brought down and one E.A. out of control. Three of our machines failed to return.

Twelve night flights were carried out. Twenty-one 112-lb., twenty 40-lb. and 224 twenty-five lb. bombs were dropped on PERONNE, BECORDEL Valley, BRAY, SUZANNE and MORLANCOURT.

During bomb raids against BOIS de TAILLES, CATEAUX WOOD, ALBERT, CERISY and MARCELCAVE 679 twenty-five lb. bombs were dropped. During one of these raids a direct hit was obtained on an A.A. Battery and a

/ hostile

30th May, 1918.

16115 2.

hostile balloon was attacked and forced down.

Fifty-two 112-lb. bombs were dropped on various ground targets and 15,845 machine gun rounds were fired at suitable ground targets.

Eleven successful shoots were carried out with balloon observation. Two fires and two large explosions were caused.

6. PRISONERS.

One O.R. passed through the Corps cage.

7. WEATHER.

Fine with fair visibility.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

No moves or reliefs of any importance took place.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th*, 47th, 58th Divisions, 3rd Cavalry Division (Army Reserve).

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

XIX Corps (under orders G.H.Q.): 30th and 66th Divisions (Training Cadres).

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A. H.E.	..	978
" S.	..	495
18-pdr. H.E.	..	6450
" S.	..	11254
4.5" How. H.E.	..	4071
" Gds.	..	733
60-pdr. H.E.	..	991
" S.	..	1102
6" How.	..	6143
6" Mk. VII. H.E.	..	331
" S.	..	137
8" How.	..	1348
9.2" How.	..	758
12" How.	..	2

30th May, 1918.

Operation Messages Received and Issued.

- 5.26 a.m. From III Corps.
Situation unchanged. Our artillery active.
Otherwise a quiet night.
- 6.20 a.m. From Australian Corps.
Morning report. Situation quiet. Some
shelling of squares O.7 and O.13 during night. CORBIE
shelled with H.E. and some gas. Enemy artillery active
on Right Division forward area during night.
- 6.35 a.m. To G. H. Q.
Hostile artillery active on forward area
near BRETONNEUX. Some shelling S.W. AUBIGNY. CORBIE
shelled with H.E. and some gas, otherwise quiet night.
R.A.F. report 360 twenty-five lb., thirty-six 112-lb. bombs
dropped by day on BOIS DES TAILLES, BRAY, MORLANCOURT.
One E.A. down out of control. 304 twenty-five lb.,
twenty 40-lb. phosphorous, thirty-nine 112-lb. bombs by
night on BUSIGNY, CAMBRAI, PERONNE, BECORDEL Valley,
and other targets.
- 5.34 p.m. From III Corps.
Evening report. Situation quiet. LAVIE-
VILLE and HENENCOURT shelled during morning. Some
shelling of WARLOY last night. Captures nil.
- 6.15 p.m. From Australian Corps.
Evening report. CORBIE shelled with H.E.
green and yellow cross gas - about 3,000 shells.
Following areas also shelled:- N.W. AUBIGNY, S. of
MERICOURT and MARRITT WOOD, VILLERS BRETONNEUX, and
AMIENS - VILLERS BRETONNEUX Road, and N. of BOIS L'ABBE.
Three H.V. shells in FRECHENCOURT. E.A. single-
seater brought down in J.5.c. Prisoners last 24 hours
2 O.R. (1 sergt. major from enemy machine).
- 6.15 p.m. To G.H.Q.
CORBIE shelled with H.E. yellow and green cross
gas - about 3,000 shells. Following areas also shelled:-
N.W. AUBIGNY, S. of MERICOURT and MARRITT WOOD, BRETONNEUX
and N. of BOIS L'ABBE. Northern Corps reports LAVIEVILL
and HENENCOURT shelled during morning. 235 twenty-five
lb. bombs on CATEAUX WOOD, fifty-six 25-lb. on various
targets, fourteen 112-lb. CHAULNES, fourteen 112-lb.
ROSIERES by R.A.F. Three E.A. crashed, one in flames.
Captures 2 O.R.
- 10 p.m. From III Corps.
In continuation of evening report. Reserve
Division report E.A. flying very low over D.19. at 12.20
p.m. was fired on by three A.A. Lewis guns. Engine
stopped and plane landed near FRANVILLERS.
-

31st May, 1918.

6117

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, 31st May, 1918.

1. There was a slight increase in hostile artillery fire on the Army front, with a corresponding prevalence of gas shelling. Long range guns were more active and shelled ALLONVILLE, CAMON, POULAINVILLE and MOLLIENS-au-BOIS. 360 shells of large and medium calibre fell in AMIENS, being distributed all over the town.

2. III CORPS.

During the night MILLENCOURT, LAVIEVILLE and BRESLE were shelled intermittently with gas, chiefly green cross. The vicinity of SENLIS received 300 and battery areas West of HENENCOURT 200 rounds of green cross and H.E. mixed. During the day 15 cm. hows. shelled our forward system West of ALBERT.

AUSTRALIAN CORPS.

In the course of the night VILLERS BRETONNEUX and the valley to the North-west were shelled lightly with yellow cross, and at midnight there was a heavy burst of 15 cm. fire against the Eastern edge of the BOIS l'ABBE. Battery positions in the ANCRE Valley were intermittently shelled throughout the day, as were also VILLERS BRETONNEUX and the forward areas of the Left Division.

3. THIRD ARMY.

Situation quiet and unchanged.

4. FIRST FRENCH ARMY.

A quiet day.

5. AIRCRAFT.

629 hours were flown by 225 pilots.
Four successful reconnaissances were made.
Two contact and 12 artillery patrols were carried out. Seven hostile batteries were successfully engaged for destruction, 12 gun pits being destroyed and 9 damaged.
A successful range shoot on CAPPY Aerodromes, and destructive shoots on a bridge and ammunition dump were carried out. 22 zone calls were sent down and 7 hostile batteries neutralised.
118 offensive patrols were carried out.
15 photographic flights were made and 470 plates exposed.

/ Hostile

31st May, 1918.

2.

6118

Hostile aircraft activity was normal. 37 air combats took place, 4 of which were decisive - 3 E.A. brought down and 1 E.A. out of control.

During 24 night flights fifteen 112-lb., six 40-lb. and 276 twenty-five lb. bombs were dropped on BECORDEL and lights and activity in the area of MONTAUBAN - PROYART - BRAY.

During the day seventy-six 112-lb. and 366 twenty-five lb. bombs were dropped on ETINEHEM, MARICOURT, CHAULNES, LA FLAQUE and HARBONNIERES with good effect.

12,575 machine gun rounds were fired on lighted villages and transport on roads.

21 successful shoots were carried out on hostile batteries with kite balloon observation.

6. PRISONERS.

One O.R. passed through Corps cages.

7. WEATHER.

Fine. Visibility poor early but improved later.

8. RELIEFS AND MOVES.

No reliefs or moves of any importance took place.

9. COMPOSITION OF FOURTH ARMY.

III Corps: 18th*, 47th, 58th Divisions, 3rd Cavalry Division (Army Reserve).

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

XIX Corps (under orders G.H.Q.): 30th and 66th Divisions (Training Cadres).

* Corps Reserve.

10. AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE.

13-pdr. A.A. H.E.	..	543
" " S.	..	221
18-pdr. H.E.	..	6205
" " S.	..	8962
" " Smoke.	..	29
4.5" How. H.E.	..	3127
" " Smoke.	..	1006
" " Gas.	..	630
60-pdr. H.E.	..	1379
" " S.	..	1122
" " P.S.	..	180
6" How. H.E.	..	4986
" " S.K.	..	333
" " Gas.	..	1135

/ 6" Mk. VII.

31st May, 1918.

3.

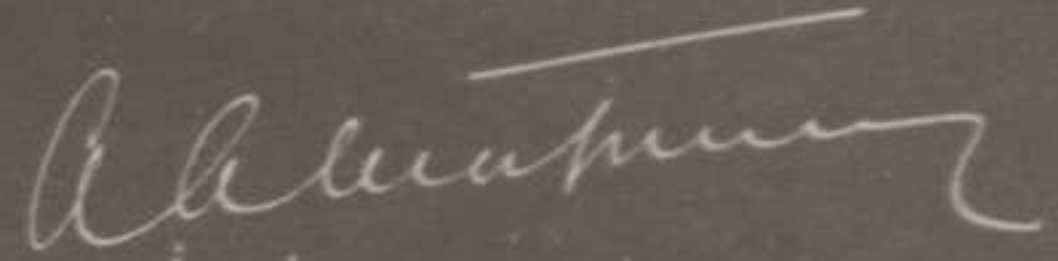
15119

6" Mk. VII. H.E.	..	296
" " S.	..	167
8" How.	..	1008
9.2" How.	..	358
12" How.	..	4

11. GENERAL.

At 11 a.m. the command of the Australian Corps passed from General Sir W.R. Birdwood, K.C.B., K.C.S.I., K.C.M.G., C.I.E., D.S.O., A.D.C. to Lieut.-General Sir J. Monash, K.C.B.

During the night many camp fires and lights were seen in the villages and roads opposite the Army front. When bombs were dropped in their vicinity no attempt appeared to be made to extinguish them.



H.Q., Fourth Army,
4th June, 1918.

Major-General,
General Staff, Fourth Army.

31st May, 1918.

Operation Messages Received and Issued.

3.2 a.m. From No. 83 Squadron, R.A.F.

Night observations: Considerable number of lights in neighbourhood of BRAY between 2 a.m. and 3 a.m. Numerous lights in MARCOING 1 a.m. One train approaching BAPAUME from East at 1.15 a.m. Transport entering BRAY at 1.20 a.m. One train going S.W. from ROISEL 1.20 a.m. Transport entering COMBLES and VAUX 1.30 a.m. One train approaching EPEHY from ROISEL 2 a.m. Column of troops half mile long roughly 2 miles E. of ALBERT moving towards BAPAUME 12.15 a.m. 12.50 a.m. two trains in BUSIGNY Station.

5.18 a.m. From No. 101 Squadron, R.A.F.

Night reconnaissance of area MONTAUBAN, PROYART, BRAY reports great activity. Numbers of lights in all villages and woods in area. Transport was observed about 1.10 a.m. on BRAY - PROYART and AMIENS - ST. QUENTIN Road. All woods and villages in area East of ALBERT - BRAY were brilliantly lighted: towards dawn activity died down. 18 Michelin flares were dropped.

5.26 a.m. From III Corps.

Situation report. Front fairly quiet. Gas shelling between 2.30 a.m. and 3.30 a.m. of HENENCOURT, MILLENCOURT and LAVIEVILLE, chiefly phosgene. Some bombs dropped on back areas by hostile aeroplanes. One prisoner captured.

6.28 a.m. From Australian Corps.

Morning report. Situation quiet. Slight scattered gas shelling on Right Division front and on BUIRE. Between 11.30 p.m. and midnight 0.30 a.m. heavily shelled with 5.9s but very little damage done. Some activity on front line Centre Division and light shelling over areas O.27., J.17 and around AUBIGNY; and DAOURS intermittently shelled. Special harassing fire carried out by our artillery as counter preparation measure.

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

Situation quiet. Gas shelling between 11.30 p.m. and 3.30 a.m. on HENENCOURT, MILLENCOURT, LAVIEVILLE, BUIRE and around VILLERS BRETONNEUX. Eastern edge of BOIS L'ABBE heavily shelled with 5.9s. AUBIGNY and DAOURS shelled intermittently. Twenty-two 112-lb., 56 twenty-five lb. bombs dropped on ETINEHEM, twelve 112-lb. on CHAULNES, twelve 112-lb. on ROSIERES, 98 twenty-five lb. on other targets by day, and forty 112-lb., 374 twenty-five lb., six 40-lb. by night E. of ALBERT and BRAY. One E.A. crashed. Air reconnaissance during night report large amount of movement on roads E. of ALBERT. Captures 1 O.R.

4.5 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Hostile plane brought down in T.14.a.3.1. 11 am. Two occupants killed. French General took charge of all documents.

5.40 p.m. From III Corps.

Evening report. Some shelling by 5.9s. of E.2.c. and D.18.d. Long range gun shelled vicinity of

/BRAUCOURT

31st May, 1918.

6121

BEAUCOURT. Otherwise quiet day. Early this morning about 50 gas shells (phosgene 77 mm.) mixed with H.E. fell in HENENCOURT WOOD and V.19.d. About same time enemy shelled MOLLIENS-au-BOIS and E.A. bombed BAIZIEUX. Captures nil.

6.5 p.m. From Australian Corps.

Evening report. Quiet day. Slight shelling forward areas Left Division and on VILLERS BRETONNEUX throughout day. Enemy planes active over Right Division, flying high. About 30 H.V. shells fell in ALLONVILLE between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m. this morning causing casualties. Eight H.V. shells fell between PONT NOYELLES and QUERRIEU about 7 a.m. No damage. Prisoners nil.

6.7 p.m. To G.H.Q.

Quiet day. Hostile artillery activity slight. Gas slight. E.A. active on right: one out of control. R.A.F. dropped 64 twenty-five lb. and thirty 112-lb. bombs on various targets. Captures nil.

10 p.m. From III Corps.

In continuation of evening report: 21 yellow cross gas shells fell U.20.c. between 7.15 and 7.50 p.m. One burst in CONTAY chateau which has been evacuated.

10 p.m. From III Corps.

Left Division report following gas shelling took place between 6.30 p.m. 30th inst. and 9.30 a.m. today:- 6 to 6.30 p.m. 30 blue cross 15 cm. W.19.a. and b. 7.15 to 9.30 p.m. 60 blue 10.5 cm. and 17 cm. V.24.a. and b. 2 to 2.30 a.m. 500 blue, green and yellow on HENENCOURT and MILLENCOURT areas 77 mm. and 105 mm. 2 to 3 a.m. 150 blue and green 77 mm. and 105 mm. V.22.d. and V.23.c. 2.15 to 3.50 a.m. 200 blue and green 77 mm. and 105 mm and 15 cm. on V.20 and V.26. 2.45 a.m. 60 blue 15 cm. on W.19 and 20. So far 2 casualties.

SECRET

(27)

6/12/18

169 (0).
31/5/18.

Lieut.-General Sir H.E. WATTS, K.C.B., C.M.G.,
Commanding XIX Corps.

Lieut.-General Sir R.H.K. BUTLER, K.C.M.G., C.B.,
Commanding III Corps.

Lieut.-General Sir J. MONASH, K.C.B.,
Commanding Australian Corps.

Brig.-General L.E.O. CHARLTON, C.M.G., D.S.O.,
Commanding 5th Brigade Royal Air Force.

Brig.-General A. COURAGE, D.S.O., M.C.,
Commanding 5th Brigade Tank Corps.

1. In the first verbal reports received from the RHEIMS - SOISSONS front certain salient features stand out. These require immediate and careful consideration with a view to ensuring that our present dispositions are those best suited to meet possible similar attacks on the Fourth Army front, and if necessary, modifying the disposition of our artillery, infantry, machine guns and tanks.

2. The reports, speaking generally, confirm the lessons learnt from our experiences on the 21st March. On the 27th May the British and French Divisions on the RHEIMS - SOISSONS front were holding very extended fronts of 10 - 14,000 yards and thus had very few troops available in reserve. The enemy selected certain portions of the front on which to concentrate their artillery, trench mortars, and infantry with a view to penetration while neutralizing the remainder of the front. The salient features of the hostile methods appear to be almost identical in both cases.

3. The destructive bombardment on the part of the front which the enemy intended to penetrate, though of short duration (from 1 a.m. to 4 a.m.), was most intense and obliterated most of the wire and defences, and destroyed or neutralized the garrisons within 1,500 - 2,000 yards of the front line. On the remainder of the front the fire was not severe and attacks were not pressed home to commence with.

4. The reply to this is:-

(a) To hold the trenches within 1,500 - 2,000 yards of the front line lightly with no more men than are necessary to hold the line against raids or attacks unaccompanied by intense bombardments.

(b) To hold strong reserves in depth in rear of this shell swept zone ready to re-occupy our front line by immediate counter attack as soon as the bombardment ceases and the enemy's infantry advance commences. The best possible cover should be provided for these troops but they should not be too concentrated. These reserves will include infantry, tanks, and machine guns.

(c) To limit the machine guns placed in the shell swept zone to the lowest number required to deal adequately

/with the

6123 2.

with the hostile infantry advance; the remainder of the Divisional Machine Gun Battalion being located behind this zone in depth; or in mobile reserve ready to move up at the shortest notice when the bombardment ceases.

The tendency to place too many Machine Guns far forward must be carefully guarded against.

(d) To construct as many dug-outs as possible for the machine guns located within the shell swept zone, so that the greater part of the Machine Guns in this zone may escape destruction from the bombardment and be available to hold up the enemy's advance, form rallying points, and support counter attacks.

5. The neutralization bombardment against our artillery, chiefly gas shell, was very violent and extended in some places to 12 kilometres behind the line.

6. The reply to this is:-

(a) Every battery must be prepared to occupy an alternative position, even if these positions are not such as would be considered suitable for prolonged occupation.

(b) Every endeavour must be made to obtain and preserve concealment.

In connection with this it may often be advisable to utilise only a portion of a battery for normal fire purposes, the other portion remaining silent. Generally speaking intervals between guns should be wide and irregular.

(c) Constant gas drill and the rigid enforcement of gas disciplinary measures on all occasions.

(d) As large a mobile reserve as possible of field artillery ready to move up at short notice and deal with enemy's infantry, which in all cases has presented, and will present, most vulnerable and easily distinguishable targets. Positions in the open for these mobile batteries will be far more immune from hostile fire and gas than those previously prepared, and hence probably located by the enemy.

(e) Strict adherence to the policy laid down in para 6 of Appendix "B" (Artillery Policy) issued with Fourth Army No. 108 (G) of 28/4/18. Unnecessary use of counter preparation and S.O.S. renders our artillery action less effective when really required.

7. The Army Commander wishes Corps Commanders to review their Defence Schemes on the above lines and ensure that any necessary alteration or modification in the dispositions on their front shall be made at once. He wishes the work on dug-outs for machine guns in the shell swept zone pushed on by every possible means. Where dug-outs are not feasible the best possible shelter for the guns and detachments should be provided. Some form of protection from shell fire is essential.

8. It is important to remember that the situation on the Fourth Army Front as regards length of front held by Divisions and available reserves in guns, infantry, tanks, and machine guns is in every way more favourable than it was on the Fifth Army Front
/on 21st March

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on 21st March and on the RHEIMS - SOISSONS front on the 27th May. We can therefore make dispositions which were impossible in these cases.

9. Our object has been, and is, to fight for the front line and give no ground, as laid down in Fourth Army Policy No. 108 (G) of 28/4/18, but at the same time we must make every endeavour to ensure that our dispositions are so arranged that our losses in men and material during the initial stages of the German attack shall be as light as possible, compatible with maintaining our present positions intact.

10. More detailed information as regards lessons to be learnt from the RHEIMS - SOISSONS attack will be forwarded as soon as received.

H.Q., Fourth Army.
31st May, 1918.

(Sd) A. A. MONTGOMERY,
Major-General,
General Staff, Fourth Army.

Copy to:-

R. A.

C. E.