

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

Infantry

Item number: 23/26/23

Title: 9th Infantry Battalion

November 1916



AWM4-23/26/23

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118

500

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title Pages will be prepared in manuscript.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

9th Battalion A.I.F.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	VOLUME VIII	Remarks and references to Appendices
POMMIERES CAMP	1 st 11/16		3 rd Brigade acting as Divisional Reserve and has been distributed into various localities. 9 th Bn. proceeded to POMMIERES Camp between MONTAUDIN and MAMETZ. Arrived new camp 14.30 - found the camp a sea of mud.		
	2 nd 11/16		Bn. detailed for Road Repair near MAMETZ. Moved off 0730 and returned 1600. Specialists remained in camp and thoroughly cleaned up. Avenues made with sandbags and loose mud scooped up. Lieut. MAC-TAGGART evacuated sick. Lt. CAMERON acting as Transport Officer.		
	3 rd 11/16		MAJOR YOUNG returned to duty from England. Bn. moved off at 0600 on Road Repair fatigue returning at noon. Specialists continue to clean up camp. Whole place littered with Government Property, Bombs, Blankets, Boots etc. These are being collected and sent to Salvage Dump.		
	4 th 11/16		One of the new "Danko" passed through the mud in rear of camp and had no difficulty although mud was eighteen inches deep. Recommended 2/capt. Armstrong for substantive rank, Lt. Page 2/capt. and 7 Lieut. King, Cameron, Scrivenier, Little, Hilton & Brown to be Lieut. Quartermaster drew sheepskin vests and gloves. Daily issue Rum while in 4 th Army area.		
	5 th 11/16		Major Young who returned from Hospital two days ago finds that his injured foot will not stand the heavy strain and returns to Hospital tomorrow. Lt Adams left to attend Lewis Gun School		

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
POMMIERES CAMP	5 ¹¹ / ₁₆		together with three other Ranks. Recommended Lt. HILTON for Australian Flying Corps.	
D	6 ¹¹ / ₁₆		Officers visiting front line to get in touch with the situation. Major Young returned to England, his foot not yet strong enough for Active Service. Lieut. Boylan placed in command of C. Co. and other adjustments of Officers. Orders received today that Bn. to move to Bernafay wood and relieve 1 st Bn. Tomorrow. Lieut. Poy left for London to secure Band instruments. Band sergeant accompanied him.	
BERNAFAY CAMP	7 ¹¹ / ₁₆		Bn. less the 1 st Line Transport moved into shells at Bernafay wood. Rained all day. 10 men evacuated on account illness. Received orders to take over front line night 9/10 from 2 nd Bn. left Bde. Subject to N.W. of the end court.	
D	8 ¹¹ / ₁₆		Officers sent forward to front line to become acquainted with our position. Hobs and spare baggage will be stored here under a guard composed of Bandman - Rankin. The whole country a quagmire. Bn. moved 7 Coy Companies to Flers. relieving the 2 nd Bn. in the front line about 9.30 p.m. The relief was completed at 10.30. D. Coy occupies front line & C.B.A. are in supports and reserves. Two minor casualties from shell fire.	
FLERS.	9 ¹¹ / ₁₆		Front line in fearful condition, men standing in 12 inches mud. Parties organized for cleaning up trenches. Shortage of Duck Boarding. Fire Lewis some Wickes machine guns in front line. No sector in west looked up a gap of 200 yds. between 9 th Bn and 11 th Bn. and 100 yds on left flank German aeroplane brought down in front of our line this morning.	
M	10 ¹¹ / ₁₆			

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Fleury	11/11/16		Weather: fine. Some shelling of front line, 1 cpl. killed & 2 O.R. wounded, two other privates evacuated with self-inflicted wounds. Lt. Col. J.L. Robertson left unit for CO's conference. Capt. M. Wilder-Buljan assumed command. Two German gave themselves up at advanced sap. A special patrol sent out before dawn to verify our position, much valuable information secured. Work of clearing up trenches & building new communication trenches continued.	
"	12/11/16		Front line now clear of mud. Communication trenches completed. Now possible to relieve front line under cover. A. while sent to Pozieres to locate German Battery captured by Bn. in 1st Poyner's Battle. Sickness increasing. 17 sent to hospital today. 11th Bn. on our right relieved by 57th Bn. killed observed by enemy. result heavy shelling of their line some our line. died later. Labels	
BARNAFAY	13/11/16		5th Army attacked enemy on our left 0545 St Pierre Division & Beaumont Hamel captured also about 3000 prisoners. Our Army (5th) assisted by a special and very heavy artillery bombardment of our front. Retaliation not very heavy. Special precautions taken by us to reduce risk. front line reduced to a very small garrison - no casualties. weather very misty. Bn. was relieved by 50th Bn. - one casualty, very slight wound killed commenced at 2000 completed 22.20. Repositioned to old camp at BARNAFAY . Trenches & communication improved so much it was possible to make provision for front line men to sit down under cover. No mud now. New support Coy line completed & put into use bringing one reserve company 1300 nearer front line. Bn. returned to old camp at BARNAFAY. Camp in filthy condition. marched out at 1000 to new camp at FORT COURT. Used camp. Everyone accommodated in huts. Capt. Ross - 14th Bn. rejoined	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Barua	14/1/16		unit Gen. L. White returned after successful, localizing gun. Lt. Adams returned from school. Camp surrounding very muddy. Still attached to 1 st Inf. Bde. weather fine.	
Jacou	15/1/16		Two Companies on road mending - one company building huts. Remained in Bn clearing camp & building camp roads. Very cold but fine. Hunt & going rejoined Bn. posted to D. Coy. Road mending fatigue & hot erecting parties continued. Weather cold very fine.	
"	17/1/16		The same working parties employed. 38 Reinf. joined the unit. Still fine but very cold.	
"	18/1/16		work discontinued noon. Bn. marched out for Buir at 1500. Lt. Col. Robertson met Bn. & bid farewell on his being posted to 12 Brigade as Brigadier. Arrive Buir 1900. weather fine cold.	
Buir	19/1/16		Transport moved out 0800 for Cardou with Bn. less transport left Buir 1100 by motor bus for Cardou. Arrived about 1530. insufficient accommodation. Bunks in a filthy condition. Fine weather.	
Cardou	20/1/16		Commenced training. Specialists brought up to full strength. 5 th Coy. containing all N.C. details & specialists. posted to command. Capt. Ross posted to B. Coy.	
"	21/1/16		training continued. N.C.O.'s class commenced.	
"	22/1/16		training continued. Syllabus attached huts weather milder.	
"	23/1/16		Considerable improvement noticed as result of training. Capt. Collins left for England on leave. Lt. Page returned from leave. Bombing ground used by Bn. Bombers with live bombs. Lt. Young left for school at Glenisart.	
"	24/1/16		Capt. Dunlop rejoined from 1 st Inf. Bde. weather dull & damp Bn. carried out attack on trenches in bombing ground. Copy of operation order attached - very wet weather.	
"	25/1/16			

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Cardan	26/11/16		Heavy rain in morning - Bn resting	
"	27/11/16		Bn. carried out musketry - weather fine - live bombing practice carried out by bombers	
"	28/11/16		Carried on with Training at Rifle Range. Lt. Bluet returned from hospital.	
"	29/11/16		Training at Rifle Range continued. Orders to move received.	
"	30-11-16.		Moved to FRANVILLIERS. Moved off at 0720. Cold. Arrived FRANVILLIERS at 1230. Orders to move received.	
Staff	1-11-16		Moved to DERNANCOURT. Cold. Lieut. Donaldson reported for duty.	

Walter Uchida
 Major
 Commanding 9th Bn.
 A.I.F.

NINTH BATTALION.SYLLABUS OF TRAINING. 21-11-16 to 27-11-16.DAILY ROUTINE.

Breakfast..... 0700.
 Sick Parade 0730X.
 N.C.O's parade..... 0800.
 Battalion Parade 0900.
 Dinner 1215.
 Battalion Parade..... 1330.
 Officers' Servants and Cooks
 Parade1430.
 Tea 1600.
 Water Parade 1630.
 Lights Out 2000.

DRESS. For Route Marches - Full Marching Order, plus Waterproof Sheet. All other parades - Full Marching Order less Pack. Waterproof sheet to be carried under flap of haversack.

PLACE OF PARADES. The vacant ground at the junction of the CARDONNETTE - ALLONVILLE ROADS. Map Reference AMIENS 17, 1/100,000.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Subject.</u>
21-11-16.	0800-0900	N.C.O's. - Company Drill.
	0900-1200.	1½ hour Company drill. ½ hour Physical Drill, 1 hour Company drill.
	1330-1530	1 hour Company drill. Kit inspection.
	1630-1730.	1 hours drill for N.C.O's and men who were improperly dressed or unshaven etc. on previous parades.
22-11-16.	0800-0900	N.C.O's. ½ hour Company drill, ½ hour Physical drill.
	0900-1200.	1 hour Battalion drill, 2 hours Route March (without packs).
	1330-1530.	1 hour Company drill, ½ hour Physical drill, ½ hour extended order drill Specialists under their Specialist Officers as follows:- (a) Lewis Gunners - Co. and Hqrs. (b) Signallers - " " (c) Bombers - " " (d) Scouts - " "
	1630-1730.	As for 21/11/1916.
23/11/16.	0800-0900.	N.C.O's. ½ hour Guards. ½ hour Bayonet Fighting.
	0900-1200.	Battalion drill, 1 hour. Guards, Bayonet Fighting.
	1330-1530.	Company drill. Musketry to include aiming, triggerpressing, and recognition of targets.
	1630-1730.	As for 21-11-16.
24/11/16.	0800-0900	N.C.O's- Skirmishing. Extended Order work. Artillery formations.
	0900-1200.	½ hour Physical. 2½ hours Route March. (packs to be worn).
	1330-1530	Skirmishing. Extended Order work. Artill-

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Subject.</u>
24/11/16. (Contd.)	1330-1530.	Skirmishing. Extended Order work. Artillery Formations.
	1630-1730.	As for 21-11-16.
25-11-16.	0800-0900	N.C.O's. - Company drill. Physical Training.
	0900-1200.	1 hour Battalion Drill. Drill and handling of arms. Bayonet fighting. Fitting and inspection of Gas helmets and respirators.
	1330-1530.	Company in attack. A scheme will be issued later.
	1630-1730.	As for 21/11/16.
26-11-16.	0900	Compulsory Church Parade.
	1330,,	Sports and games.
27-11-16.	0800-0900.	N.C.O's skirmishing. Extended Order work. Artillery formations.
	0900-1200.	1/2 hour Physical. 2 1/2 hours Route March (packs to be worn).
	1330-1530.	Skirmishing. Extended Order work. Artillery Formations etc.
	1630-1730.	As for 21-11-16.

LECTURETTES will be given by Company Officers during "Smoke Oh" on the following subjects:-

- (1) History and traditions of the Battalion and Brigade.
- (2) Esprit de Corps.
- (3) Care of the feet on the March and in the trenches.
- (4) Sanitation in billets, camps etc.
- (5) Care of arms..
- (6) Care of clothing and all Government issues in view of National need for economy.
- (7) Discipline and the reasons why strict discipline is necessary.

Co. Commanders will in succession lecture to all Officers on the following subjects:-

- (a) Interior Economy - O.C. Hqrs. Co. - 21-11-16.
- (b) Prevention of Crime - O.C. "A" Co. - 22-11-16.
- (c) The investigation of charges by O.C. Cos. "B" Co. 23-11-16.
- (d) Diet and method of variation - "C" Co. 24-11-16.
- (e) Duties of Junior Officers - O.C. "D" Co. - 25-11-16.

Time and place to be fixed by the Lecturer.

The Battalion Commander will lecture on the following subjects-

- (a) Battalion in attack.
- (b) Battalion on the Defensive.
- (c) Artillery co-operation.

Time and place to be notified later..

A MOCK COURT MARTIAL will be held on Sunday 26-11-16, in which all Officers will take part. A crime will be dealt with from its inception until final sentence by F.G.C.M. is passed. It is hoped that Officers will take advantage of the lessons then learned in their future dealings with offenses.

The Battalion Transport complete will parade on the afternoon parade of the 22nd and 25th instant.

A SPECIAL SYLLABUS FROM EACH SPECIALIST UNIT is attached hereto.

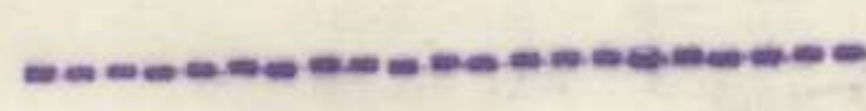
(Signed) M. WILDER-NELIGAN Major,
Commanding 9th Battalion.

20-11-16.

SYLLABUS OF TRAINING

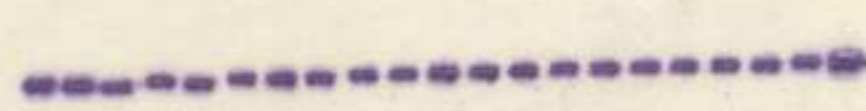
SIGNALLING SECTION - NINTH BATTALION.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Subject</u>
21/11/16	1330-1530	Flag Drill and Semaphore. Practice Sound reading.
22/11/16	" "	Message writing and carrying verbal messages. Station work (flag)
23/11/16	" "	Line erecting and repairs Buzzer Practice; test reading and sending.
24/11/16	" "	Test reading and sending (flag) Code writing and deciphering.
25/11/16	" "	Flag drill and message writing Buzzer practice
26/11/16	" "	Battalion Church Parade Compulsory Sports
27/11/16	" "	Verbal messages and test reading Buzzer practice



SCOUT PLATOON - NINTH BATTALION

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Subject</u>
21/11/16	1330-1530	Compass and its uses Taking of bearings
22/11/16	1330-1530	Map reading and map location Checking of actual and reverse bearings.
23/11/16	" "	Observation march
24/11/16	" "	Sketching and marching on compass bearings.
25/11/16	" "	Map setting
26/11/16	" "	Church Parade Compulsory Sports.
27/11/16	" "	Writing of Intelligence Reports Billeting.



LEWIS GUNNERS - NINTH BATTALION

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Subject</u>
21/11/16	1330-1530	Description and stripping
22/11/16	" "	Stripping and mechanism
23/11/16	" "	Mechanism and steppages
24/11/16	" "	Steppages and immediate actions

SYLLABUS OF TRAININGLewis Gunners (continued)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Subject</u>
25/11/16	1330-1530	Points before, during, and after action.
26/11/16	" "	Battalion Church Parade Compulsory XXXXXXXXXX Sports
27/11/16	" "	Elementary drill. Care and cleaning.

BOMBERS : NINTH BATTALION

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Subject</u>
21/11/16	1330-1530	Bayonet fighting: Team Drill: Lecture on precautions in handling live grenades.
22/11/16	" "	Trench tactics: Throwing live grenades.
23/11/16	" "	Throwing dummies: Firing Rifle Grenades
24/11/16	" "	Lecture on Trench tactics; Most common British Grenades.
25/11/16	" "	Competitions in throwing dummies
26/11/16	" "	Battalion Church Parade Compulsory Sports
27/11/16	" "	Trench tactics: Throwing Live Grenades and firing Rifle Grenades.

BATTALION ORDER NO. 39

By

MAJOR M. WILDER-NELIGAN D.S.O.
Commanding 9th Battalion.

Map Reference

Sheet 17 AMIENS 1/100,000.
1 mile South of A in CARDONNETTE.In the Field
28th Nov. 1916.

1. O.C. Scouts will the night of the 28th November (1345 29-11:16) carry out a thorough reconnaissance of the ground between our present front line and the German trenches directly to our front.
2. At Zero Hour the Battalion, less C and D ~~xxxx~~ and Hqrs. Cos. will attack. A Company on the left, B Company on the right.
3. A Company will attack from 20 yards to the left of No. 1 German Bomb Step to and excluding No. 2 German Bomb Step. "E" Co. will attack from and including No. 2 German Bomb step to 20 yards to the right of No. 3 German Bomb step.
4. Artillery Co-operation. The Artillery will at Zero hour commence a "creeping barrage" from 150 yards in front of 1st objective. This barrage will advance at the rate of 25 yards per minute until first (dual) objective is reached. It will remain on this objective for two minutes and will then creep forward at 25 yds. per minute until 2nd objective is reached. All Infantry must be impressed with the importance of keeping as close as possible to the barrage (not more than 30 to 40 yds. behind the barrage). Tape line will indicate 30 yds. behind barrage. Barrage will remain on 2nd objective for three minutes, and will then creep forward until it reaches a point 150 yds. in front of second objective. It will there remain.
5. Composition of Companies. Companies will advance in three waves. First wave for "A" Company to consist of 1 Bombing team of eight to attack and capture No. 1 Bombing step to be followed at eight distance by the remainder of the wave at approximately fifty inches interval. This wave will capture 1st part of 1st dual objective and from this part will bomb second part of dual objective.
The second wave will consist of Infantry only plus ^{one} Lewis Gun Detachment; this wave will pass over trenches occupied by first wave and capture second part of 1st dual objective. 15 yds. distance will be maintained between waves. The main objective of this Lewis Machine Gun and detachment will be the Strong Point on the left flank of the second objective. The third wave will consist of Infantry plus the remaining Lewis M.G. detachment. Infantry will carry 50% Entrenching tools and 50% Bombs or S.A.A.
The third wave on reaching first part of dual objective will occupy this trench thus releasing 1st wave which will proceed over trench occupied by second wave, to be immediately reinforced by second wave for the attack on the second objective.
6. The second objective will be gained with the exception of the Strong Point on the left. This Strong Point will, be attacked by that portion of the waves attacking the second objective which are opposite the Strong Point when in the 1st objective; of these 70% will become casualties, the remainder will attain the 1st objective. On capturing the 2nd Objective a barrier will immediately be erected between Strong Point and captured part of 2nd objective.
7. 2% of 1st and 2nd waves will carry entrenching tools in order to link up broken second objective.
8. The bomb carriers of 3rd wave will follow 1st. and 2nd wave into the ~~1st~~ objective.
9. The entrenching tool carriers of the 3rd ^{2nd} wave will promptly commence to dig back to jumping off trench. Men to be detailed to "flag line" between jumping off trench and first part of dual objective.
10. "E" Co's wave will be composed in the same manner as "A" Cos. excepting "B" Cos. Machine Guns (2) will be on the right flank of the second wave and on reaching second part of 1st dual objective will play on right flank Strong Point of second Objective. This Company will detail a Bombing party of 16, in addition to

these detailed to attack Nos. 2 and 3 German Bomb stops, to precede the attack on the right flank Strong Point. This Strong Point will be captured.

11. To ensure cohesion in moving out of the "jumping off" trench farther ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ successive waves of each Company, an Officer from both A and B Companies will be posted in the centre of this trench whose duty it will be to signal the time to their respective Companies simultaneously.

12. "C" Company will act as 1st Line Supports. This Co. will advance between ploughed field and trench area in order to capture left flank S.P. For this purpose ploughed field will be considered as dead ground.

13. Modus operandi. Four Vickers Machine Guns will play over left Strong Point from zero 20 to Zero 30 from emplacements on the ridge behind jumping off trench. Two Stokes Mortars with detachments will be sent up to the small Strong Point at the centre of left flank of the 2nd part of the first dual objective at zero 20. These mortars will attack extreme left Strong Point of 2nd objective from zero 25 to zero 30.

14. C Company will send forward a bombing party of eight, plus six Hqrs. Bombers, who will be attached to this Company, to approach left flank Strong Point across dead ground on the left at Zero. 30. This party will be followed at 10 yds. distance by one-fifth of C Coys. Infantry men less Specialists who will rush Strong Point to be followed at 15 yds. distance by second wave consisting of $\frac{1}{4}$ C Coys. strength of infantrymen plus both Co. Lewis Gun detachments. The Strong Point will be captured, and Machine Guns emplaced, patrols sent out, and consolidation commenced.

15. A third wave of one-fifth of C Coys. Strength will follow second wave at 25 yds. distance, 50% carrying entrenching tools, and 50% Bombs and S.A.A. The remainder of this Company will move along jumping off trench and reinforce A and B Companies using Bombs stops as communication trenches. These men will all carry either Bombs or S.A.A.

16. At Zero plus 6 "D" Co. will move into jumping off trench and assist in pushing forward communications. Hqrs. Co. Details not called upon in above schedule will remain in support trenches at disposition of Battalion Commander.

17. Marking of area. Shell holes between jumping off trench and first objective will be marked by red patches. The area thus marked is to be considered impassable.

18. Shell holes in front of Second Objective. Areas with green patches to be considered as shell holes that can be occupied by patrols. Adjacent red marked areas to be considered as shell holes occupied by enemy which are to be captured by bombing.

Mopping up parties to be detailed by each Company concerned with exception of "D" Company. These men will be indicated by a yellow band round their right arm. Men thus marked will carry six bombs.

19. Our own Artillery barrage will be indicated by a white tape line which will be carried forward at the stated times by Signallers to be detailed by O.C. Headquarters Company.

20. Enemy barrages will be indicated by tape lines stretched across poles under arrangements to be made by O.C. Hqrs. Co. at spots indicated by the Battalion Commander.

21. REALISM. In order that the attack may be carried out in as realistic a manner as possible, the Q.M. will make arrangements for an adequate number of sand bags partially filled with stones to be available for bomb carriers. The O.C. Hqrs. Co. will see that all Hqrs. Bombers are provided with one bag. Under arrangements to be made by the Transport Officer in conjunction with the Q.M. and R.S.M. all available Pack Horses will be utilised to bring up to the original first line support trenches empty boxes or other devices to be considered as S.A.A. and Bombs.

22. The Signalling Officer will make arrangements for Signallers to run out telephones after the advance of the 3rd wave connecting

600

jumping off trench and 1st part of 1st dual objective. If possible these telephones will be run to second objective.

23. Messengers. All Coys. concerned will detail special runners between the attacking Infantry, their Co. Commanders and the Bn. Commander. Each of these messengers on returning to their Coys. will be provided with a bag of bombs or S.A.A. Messages to be duplicated in accordance with recent order. Whenever possible written messages in preference to verbal messages will be sent.

24. Contact aeroplanes will fly over trenches forty minutes after Zero time. Signalling Officer will make arrangements to send the required signals to these planes.

25. At Zero 40 a Gas alarm will be given, it being considered that the enemy are shelling new position and supports with Gas shells. Box respirators only will be used.

26. Casualties will be detailed by the Adjutant under separate instructions which have been issued by the Battalion Commander. All men so detailed will turn about and immediately lie down.

27. Stretcher Bearers. The Stretcher Bearers of all Companies will move behind respective third waves, and bring in wounded men. Saps to be used as much as possible.

28. Zero time will be 1515.

29. Practice attack will be carried out at 1415. Coys. will move off independently to Trench area at that hour.

30. Date - 29th November 1916.

31. Co. Commanders will be held personally responsible that these operations are carefully explained to all members of their Units.

32. The edges of ploughed fields will be considered as communication trenches - and will be used by all reserve and support ~~troops~~ troops.

33. All watches will be synchronised at 1200 by means of a watch with correct time which will be sent round all Companies from Bn. Headquarters.

34. Interval between men in successive waves:-

- Bombers - forty inches.
- First wave - approximately fifty inches.
- Second wave - Three yards.
- Third wave - Three yards.
- Reinforcing wave - Five yards.

35. In carrying out the practice attack exactly the same procedure as in actual attack will be followed out in so far as carrying maps, documents, and information of value to the enemy is concerned.

36. Rough plan of Trenches is attached hereto.

Inverlag
Lieut.
Adjutant 9th Battalion.

- Copies To :-
1. Third Infantry Brigade.
 2. Commanding Officer.
 3. File.
 4. A Company.
 5. B Company.
 6. C Company.
 7. D Company.
 8. Hqs. "
 9. Adjutant.
 10. Spare.