

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

Formation Headquarters

Item number: 1/2/7 Part 1

Title: General Staff, General Headquarters,
British Expeditionary Force

July 1916



AWM4-1/2/7PART1

264

General Staff, Operations Section, General Headquarters.

WAR DIARY - 1st to 31st July, 1916.

(For Summary of Reports received and G.S., Operations, action - see Appendix "A").

Adv. G.H.Q. - BEAUQUESNE.

July.

- 1st. French VI Army, British Fourth Army and VII Corps attack launched.
 O.A.836. To First Army. 40th Division to relieve 1st Division. Latter to be in G.H.Q. Reserve.
 C.I.G.S. visited Advanced G.H.Q.
 General Joffre visited Advanced G.H.Q.
- 2nd. O.A.D.35. Letters to First, Second and Third Armies. Necessity for strict economy in ammunition.
 O.A.D.36 & 37. C-in-C's Conference with Fourth Army Commander at QUERRIEU.
- 3rd. O.A.D.40. VIII and X Corps placed under orders of Reserve Army.
- 4th. O.A.D.41. Letter re moves and transfers.
 II Corps to Fourth Army.
 3rd Division transferred from II Corps to Fourth Army, XIII Corps.
 12th Division transferred from Fourth Army, III Corps to Reserve Army, X Corps.
 8th Division (II Corps) to be held in readiness to entrain for First Army, I Corps.
 1st Division (I Corps) to be held in readiness to entrain to Fourth Army, II Corps.
 35th Division, Third Army, to move to Reserve Army, VIII Corps.
 1st and 3rd Cavalry Divisions to move west of the DOLART - HANGEST Administrative boundaries.
 Railheads fixed between Fourth Army and Reserve Army.
 Administrative arrangements to come into force on 6th July.
 O.A.D.42. Letter to Fourth Army and Reserve Army. Intention of C-in-C. for prosecution of attack.
 O.A.D.44. Instructions to Reserve Army. Operation to be subsidiary to that of Fourth Army. Reserve Army to be responsible for OVILLERS and co-operate closely to assist Fourth Army.
- 5th. Orders issued (O.A.157) for the transfer of the infantry of the 37th Division from the Third Army to Fourth Army. Move to be completed as rapidly as possible by bus and lorry. One Brigade to be sent to 21st Division, XV Corps, and two Brigades to 34th Division, III Corps. Two Brigades from 34th Division and one Brigade from 21st Division to be sent to 37th Division to replace.
- 6th. O.A.D.46. Letter to Fourth Army and Reserve Army. Operation order for 7th July. French Sixth Army to take HARDENCOURT. Fourth Army to attack HALTE HORN Farm (inclusive) - BOIS des TROIS - MARETS WOOD - OCCUPATION FROM 1.00 PM TO 1.30 PM.

8th (Contd.) demonstrate on rest of the front.

O.A.D.49. Letter to Fourth and Reserve Armies, pointing out that enemy has only 15 battalions in line between LA BOISSELLE and HARDECOURT both inclusive, and the necessity for following up any successes gained very boldly.

7th. O.A.193. Orders issued for 33rd Division, XI Corps, First Army, to be transferred to the II Corps, Fourth Army; move to commence night 8th/9th.

I Anzac Corps (1st and 2nd Australian Divisions) to be transferred from Second Army to Fourth Army, commencing night 10th/11th and move to be completed noon 13th. 38th Division to be transferred from X Corps, Reserve Army to Second Army.

8th. O.A.D.50. Letter to Reserve Army pointing out the importance of maintenance, day and night, of intermittent artillery barrages on the German positions South of the ANCRE in order to assist Fourth Army operations.

The following moves were completed 8th :-

8th Division from Fourth Army to First Army.

1st Division from First Army to Fourth Army.

O.A.D.51. Letter from C-in-C. to C.I.G.S. giving his views on the situation.

O.A.D.52. C-in-C's views on the present tactical situation.

9th. O.A.D.53. Letter to General Sir Henry Rawlinson to point out that the C-in-C. did not consider the withdrawal from CONTALMAISON on 7th and the failure of the 38th Division to capture MAMETZ WOOD were creditable performances.

O.A.D.54. Letter to Reserve Army ordering them, on zero day, to bring fire to bear on POZIERES and COURCELETTE so as to prevent any hostile movement from these places against Fourth Army.

10th. O.A.D.55. Congratulations of C-in-C. to XIII Corps for the gallant defence of TRONES WOOD, and also an expression of his appreciation of the progress made by the XV Corps in MAMETZ WOOD.

O.A.D.56. Letter to Lieut.-General Sir H. Gough stating that the operations of his Army were being conducted on the lines the C-in-C. wished. The C-in-C. also instructed him to inform the troops under his command of his appreciation.

12th. O.A.D.57. Letter to G.O's.C. First, Second and Third Armies reviewing the situation to date, and the C-in-C's appreciation of the broad view of it taken by Army and Corps Commanders.

O.A.D.58. Situation as regards the successes of the Russians, Italians, French and ourselves to be communicated to the troops, who are enjoined to push home their attacks and to hold on to all objectives gained.

O.A.D.59. Letter to the Sixth French Army expressing the C-in-C's thanks for the promised co-operation of the French Artillery during the operations of the next few days.

O.A.D.60. Notes of the discussion at Fourth Army Headquarters re the attack on LONGUEVAL Plateau and the C-in-C's decisions thereon.

O.A.D.61. Letter to French Sixth Army stating that the C-in-C. agreed to the proposed line of demarcation between the French and British forces as suggested by the French.

O.A.D.62. Orders to Third Army, Reserve Army and R.F.C. for co-operation in the attack on 14th.

O.A.D.63. Notes on the conference at Fourth Army Headquarters at which

July.

266

- 12th. (Contd.) which the C.G.S. gave the views of the C-in-C. about the attack on 14th.
33rd Division transferred from II Corps to XV Corps from midnight 11th/12th.
- 13th. Detrainment of 1st and 2nd Australian Divisions completed.
Detrainment of 36th Division in Second Army area completed.
- O.A.D.64. Letter forwarding appreciation of the C-in-C. for the gallant efforts made by the 46th and 56th Divisions in the attack at GOMMECOURT on 1st and 2nd July.
- O.A.233. 5th Division transferred from Third Army to G.H.Q. Reserve.
37th Division transferred from Third Army to IV Corps, First Army.
- O.A.D.65. Letter re transfer of heavy artillery to the Third Army in event of certain operations.
- 14th. O.A.D.66. Operation order for offensive operation by First and Second Armies.
O.A.D.68. Letter to Third Army re disposition and employment of additional artillery, which will be transferred from Fourth Army to Third Army, to be worked out.
5th Division concentrated in area about BERNAVILLE.
- 15th. O.A.D.69. C-in-C's appreciation of good work of Fourth Army.
O.A.D.70. Line of demarcation between Fourth Army and Sixth French Army.
- 16th. O.A.D.71. Orders to Reserve Army about artillery co-operation in Fourth Army attack.
O.A.D.72. Letter to Third Army re dumping of ammunition.
O.A.D.73. Letter from C-in-C. to General Joffre re cordial relations existing between our troops and the French troops on our right.
O.A.D.74. Letter to First Army giving C-in-C's views that the attack, provided the Army Commander was satisfied that the resources at his disposal were adequate, should be carried out as soon as possible.
Memorandum on visit of D.C.G.S. to the First Army to discuss the proposed operation to be carried out on that Army front.
- 17th. O.A.273. 2nd Division to be transferred from First Army (IV Corps) to Fourth Army (XIII Corps); entrainment to commence 19th/20th.
O.A.274. I Anzac Corps transferred from G.H.Q. Reserve to Reserve Army from midnight 17th/18th July.
- 18th. O.A.D.75. Letter to Reserve Army expressing the C-in-C's appreciation of the complete success of the operations in and round OVILLERS.
O.A.D.76. Operation Order to Fourth and Reserve Armies re the attack on POZIERES and the new line of demarcation between the Fourth and Reserve Armies.
- 19th. O.A.D.77. Confirmation of verbal instructions issued by the C-in-C. to the Fourth Army at Fourth Army H.Q. re the necessity for relieving the sharp salient at LONGUEVAL.
O.A.285. 51st Division transferred from the Reserve Army to Fourth Army (XV Corps).

O.A. 288.

July.

267

19th (Contd.)

- O.A.288. 21st Division transferred from Fourth Army (XV Corps) to Third Army (VI Corps). Move to be carried out by rail commencing 10 a.m. 21st.
- O.A.299. 55th Division transferred from Third Army (VI Corps) to Reserve Army in G.H.Q. Reserve. Concentration in Reserve Army area to be completed 22nd July.
- O.A.302. 4th Division to be transferred by rail commencing 22nd July from Reserve Army (VIII Corps) to Second Army (XIV Corps). Artillery to move by march route.

20th. O.A.D.66/1. First Army to hand over the front recently taken over from the Second Army with all the resources, troops and guns lent temporarily for the operations.

O.A.304. 18th Division to be transferred by rail from Fourth Army (XIII Corps) to Second Army (V Corps) commencing 22nd/23rd July.

O.A.312. 24th Division to be transferred by rail from Second Army (V Corps) to Fourth Army in G.H.Q. Reserve commencing 22nd July.

O.A.D.78. C-in-C's appreciation of the gallant efforts made by troops of the First Army in the minor offensive at FAUQUISSART on 19th July.

21st. O.A.317. 20th Division (less artillery) to be transferred from Second Army (XIV Corps) to Reserve Army (VIII Corps). Entrainment to commence 24th July.

- 22nd. O.A.329. (1) 29th Division (less artillery) to be transferred from Reserve Army (VIII Corps) to Second Army (XIV Corps). Entrainment to commence 27th July.
- (2) 24th Division to IX Corps and to remain in G.H.Q. Reserve.
- (3) 9th Division to be transferred from Fourth Army (XIII Corps) to First Army (IV Corps). Entrainment to commence 25th July.

O.A.330. XIV Corps to be transferred to Reserve Army and VIII Corps to Second Army.

Reserve Army will then consist of I Australian, II, X and XIV Corps.

As soon as possible the X Corps Headquarters is to be replaced in front line by II Corps Headquarters.

23rd. O.A.D.80. Congratulatory telegram from C-in-C. to Reserve Army on the fine work of the Australians and 48th Divisions.

O.A.D.81. Congratulatory telegram from C-in-C. to the War Office for communication to the Australian Government re the 1st Australian Division attack on POZIERES.

Concentration of 5th Australian Division completed.

24th. O.A.D.82. Summary of the instructions given personally by the C-in-C. to the Fourth Army Commander at QUERRIEU on 24th July.

26th. O.A.D.84. Dividing line for operations between the Fourth and Reserve Armies.

27th. O.A.D.85. Summary of an interview between the C-in-C. and Generals Foché and Fayolles, at which the plans for future operations were discussed.

29th. O.A.D.86. Letter to General Officer Commanding Second Army re question of the withdrawal of the Canadian Corps.

30th July.

268

July.

30th. O.A.D.88. Boundary between Fourth and Reserve Armies between
BAILIFF WOOD and MUNSTER ALLEY.

31st. O.A.D.89. Letter to Second Army and R.F.C. re series of air
attacks on enemy establishments in Belgium beyond the
Second Army reconnaissance area.
