

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

Infantry

**Item number:** 23/34/9

**Title:** 17th Infantry Battalion

April 1916



AWM4-23/34/9

Date.	Place and Time.	17 <sup>th</sup> Battalion A.I.F	Remarks or References to Appendices, &c., attached.
17. 3. 16.	Moanar	19 off + 701 men balance of Bn left Moanar for Alexandria	
17. 3. 16	Alexandria	Embarked on H.M.T. Arcadian with 24 OR. + 57 horses on H.M.T. Crispin. - sailed at 1700.	
23. 3. 16	Marrakhus	Arrived at Marrakhus + disembarked at 1130. entrained at 1400 + departed at 1620.	
26. 3. 16	Themis 0930	Arrived at Themis + detrained went into billets. Transport Section with horses arrived.	
5. 4. 16	" 0800	1 N.C.O + 5 men sent to Marrakhus as Kit Bag guard.	

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Date.	Place and Time.		Remarks or References to Appendices, &c., attached.
7. 4. 16.	Theimer 8.15am	Departed. Operation Order No. 3	
"	4pm	Arrived at Ootloosken	
8. 4. 16	Ootloosken 10am	Departed.	
"	Erquinghem 4.30pm.	Billed in Erquinghem.	
10. 4. 16	..	Ordered to move into trenches near Bois Ennui Operation Order No. 4	
15. 4. 16	Bois Ennui 10pm	Relieved by 19 <sup>th</sup> Oper. Ord. No. 5	
19. 4. 16	.. 10pm	Relieved 19 <sup>th</sup> Operation Ord No. 7	
23. 4. 16	.. 10PM	" by 19 <sup>th</sup> " " " " 8	
19. 4. 16		Frank. Barnett + Shaw. seconded to Div. Trench Mortar Batt. + 5 <sup>th</sup> Bde Trench Mortar Battery respectively.	
19. 4. 16		2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. Millar J. evacuated injured.	

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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.

or  
**INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.**

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BOIS GRENIER.	27/4/16.	9.55 pm.	Relieved 19th Bn. Oper Order No.9.	
"	30/4/16.		"B" Btn. handed over Trench 52 to "P" Btn. and took over Trench 57 from 7th Aust Inf. Bde. Operation Order No.10.	
(Original of above written on same sheet as entries for beginning of subsequent month & filed with volume for that month).				

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17th Battalion Operation Order No 3.

THIENNES 6th April 1916.

Reference Sheet 5A, 1/100,000.  
Sheet 36A, 1/40,000.

- 1...The Brigade has been ordered to take over the trenches at present held by the 103rd Brigade of the 34th Division.
- 2...The Battalion will march to OUTERSTEENE on the 7th inst via HAZEBROUCK, BORRE and STRAZELLE and to ERQUINGHEM on the 8th inst via LE VERRIER, STEENWERCK and L'HALLOBAU
- 3...The Battalion will pass at starting point on the 7th inst at the road junction North of STEENBECQUE, Square 15, b 05, vide sheet 36 A., at 9.33 a.m.  
The Battalion will be prepared to move off at 8 a.m.  
Companies will close towards the Canal.
- 4...Reveille will be at 6 a.m. Breakfast at 6.30.  
All blankets are to be rolled lengthwise in water proof sheets, with the owner's names marked plainly thereon, and placed at the side of the road outside the Billets by 6.30 a.m.  
O.C.s Companies will detail sufficient men from each billet for the purpose of loading wagons, to which great attention must be paid.  
Company Officers' Baggage will be loaded on the same wagons as detailed for Coy blankets.
- 5...Water bottles are to be filled and the midday meal to be carried.
- 6...O.C.s Companies will detail 1 N.C.O and 1 man per Coy to report to Battalion Headquarters at 6 a.m. as Billeting party.  
The Interpreter will accompany this party.  
Lieut Sims will be in charge.  
Two days rations will be carried.
- 7...Water Carts and Travelling Kitchens will have an escort of 2 men, all other vehicles one man, in addition to the Driver.  
These escorts will be supplied by the Company for Duty, with the exception of Travelling Kitchens and G.S. Wagons containing blankets, which will be supplied by each Company concerned.  
Escorts for Maltese Cart and Officers' Mess cart will be supplied by Headquarters and A.M.C., respectively.  
One N.C.O. will be detailed from the Company for Duty to take charge of the whole escort.

These men will march in rear of the wagons on the off side, and are forbidden to ride on the wagons or to place their Arms or Equipment thereon

MARCH DISCIPLINE.

All Officers will ensure that strict attention is paid to March Discipline. Troops are at all times to march well on the right side of the road, and at least half the width of the Roadway must always be left for passing traffic.  
Vehicles which break down will not resume their proper places by passing the column; but will rejoin the column at the rear of any Unit, and will only resume their proper places during halts, or by order of Brigade Staff.

Companies will maintain their distance of 10 yards throughout the march.  
2nds in Command are personally responsible that the Coys march well on the right side of the road.

TRANSPORTS.

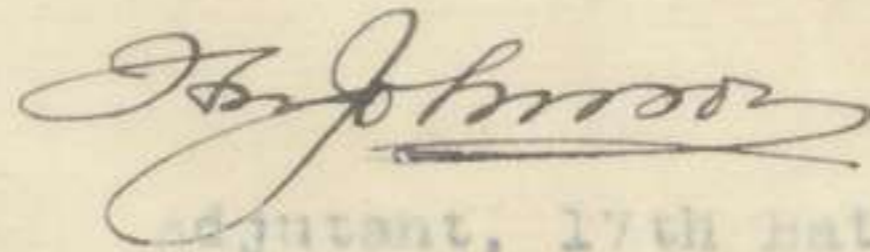
Transport will park on North side of Railway in time to move off at 7.45 a.m. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX starting point at  
XXXXXXXXXX. Transport Officer will report to Lieut O'Conner  
15th A.A.S.C. at 5th Brigade Hd Qrs at 9.30 a.m.

17th Battalion, Operation Order No 3. (Continued)HALTS.

During halts, M.C.Os and men will fall out on the right side of the road; Officers may fall out on the left side provided the roadway is not thereby blocked. Riding Horses will face the centre of the road and be kept as much on the right side as possible. Transport Vehicles will be drawn up on the Right side of the Road with the off wheels as close to the gutter as possible.

REAR  
GUARD.

"B" Company will supply a Rear Guard of one platoon for the Brigade. Lieut. L. K. Chambers will be in Command.



Capt.

Adjutant, 17th Battalion, A.I.F.

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APPENDIX

5

17th. Battalion. A.I.F.

OPERATION ORDER NO. 4.

ERQUINGHEM, 9/4/16.

Reference Sheet. 36.N.W. 1/20,000.

ORDER OF MARCH.

"C" Co'y, Headquarters, "A", "B" and "D" Coy's.  
Head of "C" Co'y, to be at Junction of Roads at H.5.D.2.9.  
at 7.20.p.m.  
Companies will move by Platoons at 2 minutes interval.  
Guides will meet Coy's at Railway Crossing H.5.D.4.5.

RATIONS.

1 day's rations will be carried by all ranks.

BAGGAGE.

Blankets will not accompany units into trenches, but will be stored by Quartermaster at or in vicinity of reserve billets. 1 man per Company will be detailed as guard over them.  
Men without greatcoats should be detailed for this.

DETAILS.

Major Travers will take over Hd.Qrs Stores in trenches at 3 p.m.  
R.S.M. and 2 men from "C" Co'y will report at Battalion Hd. Qrs, at 12.30.p.m. (Major Travers).

DIXIES.

Each Company will take all their dixies into the trenches.

TRANSPORT.

Transport will not cross the Railway before 10.15;p.m. on the 10th.inst, moving via Rue du Biez and returning via Rue des Acquets.

TAKING OVER.

As soon as Companies have taken over their Section of the Line, they will report to Battalion Headquarters.

STAND TO ARMS.

All Companies will Stand to Arms at 3.45.a.m. and 6.45.p.m. on the 11th.inst, and until further orders.

INTELLIGENCE REPORT.

All Company Commanders will send in a report at 6.45.a.m. daily.

NOISE. SMOKING & LIGHTS.

All ranks are cautioned against unnecessary noise, talking. Smoking and striking of matches is prohibited and words of command are to be given in a low tone of voice and on arrival in trenches, perfect silence is to be strictly enforced.

OFFICER'S DRESS.

On moving out from ERQUINGHEM, web equipment will be worn by all Officers and also while in the trenches.

EMERGENCY RATIONS.

Company Commanders will be held personally responsible that these are not used by the men without the order of a Senior Officer.

Signed. H.W.Hohnsen, Captain.

Adjutant, 17th. Battalion. A.I.F.

17th. Battalion. A.I.F.

OPERATION ORDER NO. 5.

14th. April. 1916.

Reference Map 36. N.W. 1/20000.

1. The Battalion, excepting "C" Company, will be relieved by the 19th Battalion on the evening of the 15/16 th. April, and when relieved will move to Billets in "D" Area.
2. "C" Company will be relieved by the Reserve Company of the 19th. Battalion in the BOIS GRENIER LINE, commencing at 6. a.m. on the 15th. April, and will move by the Emergency Road "B" and GRIS POT. The movement will be carried out by sections at 30 minutes interval. During and after relief, Companies will come under the O.C. Battalion Area in which they are situated.
3. The Lewis Gun Detachment and Signallers will be relieved by noon on the 15th. April, but will wait and go out with the Battalion at night.
4. Bombers and Snipers will be relieved after noon and before 4. p.m. on the 15th. April, and will wait and go with the Battalion at night.
5. Except as detailed in Para. 2., Units moving from "B" Battalion Area, will move by Shaftesbury Avenue, Emergency Road "B", and GRIS POT.
6. Except as detailed in Para 2., Units will move by Platoons at 2 minuted interval.
7. Guides at the rate of 1 N.C.O. per Platoon will report from both the ingoing and outgoing Battalions at the Shaftesbury Cottage junction of Shaftesbury Avenue and BOIS GRENIER Road at 8.30. p.m. on the 15th. April/
8. No movement of troops on April 15th. will take place South of the Railway before 8. p.m. except as stated in Paras 2 and 3.
9. No Transport will cross "Bac St. Maur" - Armentieres Railway before 9. p.m. on the night of the relief. The Transport of the 19th. Battalion will, on its return from the Trenches, convey articles of the 17th. Battalion to "B" Battalion Area. Coy's 2nd. in Command and 1 Officer per Company of relieving Battalion will proceed to the Trenches on the morning of the relief to take over in daylight all Trench Stores, S.A.A., Grenades, etc., Receipts will be given for all articles not included in Trench Log Book. These also will be signed for, together with all articles included in them. All Periscopes and Steel Helmets to be handed over.
10. Defence Schemes, Photographs, Plans, Trench Maps, Log Books, etc., will be taken over by the relieving unit and receipts given.
11. The 18th. Battalion will provide the Working Parties for the carrying of Engineers' Stores for the night of the 15/16th. April.
12. The order of the Relief will be:-
 

Left.....	"A"	Co'y.	by	"C"	Co'y.	19th.	Battalion.
Centre.....	"B"	"	"	"B"	"	"	"
Right.....	"D"	"	"	"A"	"	"	"
13. As each Platoon is relieved it will move to the BOIS GRENIER end of Shaftesbury Avenue where a Guide of the Incoming Battalion will be found to guide it to its Billet.
14. Company Commanders of the 17th. Battalion will report by wire to Battalion Hd. Qrs., the moment the whole of their Company has been relieved, and that they have handed over Command of their Section to the O.C. Incoming Battalion.
15. The R.M.O. will make his own arrangements to hand over to the Incoming R.M.O. all Equipment; etc., at the Dressing Station that form part of the Trench Equipment.

P.T.O.



APPENDIX

(Continued.)

16. All moves are to be completed by 11.30.p.m. on the 15th.April.

Signed. H.W.Johnsen. Captain.

Adjutant, 17th.Battalion. A.I.F.

The following is a list of moves to be completed by 11.30 p.m. on the 15th April:

1. The 1st Coy. will move to the 1st Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
2. The 2nd Coy. will move to the 2nd Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
3. The 3rd Coy. will move to the 3rd Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
4. The 4th Coy. will move to the 4th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
5. The 5th Coy. will move to the 5th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
6. The 6th Coy. will move to the 6th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
7. The 7th Coy. will move to the 7th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
8. The 8th Coy. will move to the 8th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
9. The 9th Coy. will move to the 9th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
10. The 10th Coy. will move to the 10th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
11. The 11th Coy. will move to the 11th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
12. The 12th Coy. will move to the 12th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
13. The 13th Coy. will move to the 13th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
14. The 14th Coy. will move to the 14th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
15. The 15th Coy. will move to the 15th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
16. The 16th Coy. will move to the 16th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
17. The 17th Coy. will move to the 17th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
18. The 18th Coy. will move to the 18th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
19. The 19th Coy. will move to the 19th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
20. The 20th Coy. will move to the 20th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.

The following is a list of moves to be completed by 11.30 p.m. on the 15th April:

1. The 1st Coy. will move to the 1st Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
2. The 2nd Coy. will move to the 2nd Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
3. The 3rd Coy. will move to the 3rd Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
4. The 4th Coy. will move to the 4th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
5. The 5th Coy. will move to the 5th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
6. The 6th Coy. will move to the 6th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
7. The 7th Coy. will move to the 7th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
8. The 8th Coy. will move to the 8th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
9. The 9th Coy. will move to the 9th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
10. The 10th Coy. will move to the 10th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
11. The 11th Coy. will move to the 11th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
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14. The 14th Coy. will move to the 14th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
15. The 15th Coy. will move to the 15th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
16. The 16th Coy. will move to the 16th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
17. The 17th Coy. will move to the 17th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
18. The 18th Coy. will move to the 18th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
19. The 19th Coy. will move to the 19th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.
20. The 20th Coy. will move to the 20th Coy. quarters at 11.00 p.m.

17th. Battalion. A.I.F.

OPERATION ORDER. NO. 7.

LARODANDERIE FARM.

Reference Sheet. 36. N.W.

18th. April. 1916.

1. The Battalion will relieve the 19th. Battalion in "B" Area, the relieved Unit returning to "D" Area, on the evening of the 19/20th. April.
2. "A" Company will relieve the Reserve Company, in the BOIS GRENIER Line, commencing at 6. a. m. on the 19th. April, and moving by GRIS POT and thence through BOIS GRENIER. The movement will be carried out by sections at 30 minuted interval. During and after relief, Companies will come under the orders of the O?C. Battalion Area in which they are situated.
3. Lewis Detachments and Signallers will be relieved by 2.30. p. m. on the 19th. April. They will rendezvous at "B" Company's Hd. Qrs, (Streaky Bacon Farm), and will be under Lieut. Millar.
4. Snipers and a proportion of Bombers will be relieved by 2.30. p. m. on 19th. April. Battalion Bombers and Snipers will rendezvous at "B" Coy's Headquarters, Camp 3. Lieut. Spier will take charge of this party.
5. Except as detailed in Para. 2. Units moving to and from "B" Battalion Area will move by GRIS POT - Emergency Road, "B" - SHAFTESBURY AVENUE, and will move by Platoons at 2 minutes interval.
6. All Billet Stores will be handed over to Billeting parties of 19th. Battalion and duplicate receipts taken.
7. No movement of troops on April 19th will take place South of the Railway before 7.30. p. m. except as stated in Para 2, 3 and 4.
8. No Transport will move South of the Railway before 9. p. m. The Transport of this Battalion will; on its return from the Trenches, convey articles of the 19th. Battalion to "D" Battalion Area.
9. Guides. No guides will be supplied as it is considered by now, all Companies should have a sufficient knowledge of the trenches to enable them to move direct to their positions without delay. Should any Company Commander not feel quite sure that his Platoons know where to go, he will personally arrange with the Company he is relieving for necessary guides.
10. The completion of all reliefs will be reported to Battalion HdQrs. Messages to be signed with Company Commander's surname, in addition to Company.
11. The 2nd. - in Command, the R.S.M. One Officer per Company, and the Company Sgt-Majors, will proceed to the trenches to take over the work in hand and trench stores, in daylight.
12. O.C. "D" Company will detail One Officer, the necessary N.C.O's, and 140 men to carry rations from the Battalion Dump at SHAFTESBURY COTTAGE, to the respective Company Dumps.
13. The order of the relief will be:-  
Reserve. "A" Company.....Left "C" Co'y...Centre. "B" Coy.  
and Right "D" " .....
14. Companies will arrange to carry their dixies with them into the trenches.
15. Transport Officer will arrange for the return to Transport Lines of all Saddle Horses and Field Kitchens.

Signed. H.W. Johnson. Captain.

Adjutant, 17th. Battalion. A.I.F.

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17th. Battalion. A.I.F.

OPERATION ORDER NO. 8.

22nd. April. 1916.

Reference Map. 36. N.W. 1/20000.

1. The Battalion, excepting "A" Co'y, will be relieved by the 19th. Battalion on the evening of the 23/24th. April, and when relieved will move to Billets in "D" Area.
2. "A" Company will be relieved by the Reserve Company of the 19th. Battalion in the BOIS GRENIER LINE, commencing at 6 a.m. on the 23rd. April, and will move by the Bois Grenier Road and GRIS POT. This movement is to be completed by 12 midday. During and after relief, Companies will come under the O.C. Batt'n Area in which they are situated.
3. The Lewis Gun Detachment and Signallers will be relieved by 2.30. pm on the 23rd. April, but will wait and go out with the Battalion at night.
4. Bombers and Snipers will be relieved by 2.30. p.m. on the 23rd. April. but will also wait and go out with the Battalion at night.
5. Except as detailed in Para 2. Units moving from "B" Battalion Area, will move by Shaftesbury Avenue, Emergency Road "B", and GRIS POT.
6. Except as detailed in Para 2. Units will move by Platoons at two minuted interval.
7. No movement of troops on April the 23rd will take place South of the Railway before 8 p.m., except as stated in Paras 2,3 and 4.
8. No Transport will cross Bac St. Maur - Armentieres Railway, before 9. p.m. on the night of the relief. The Transport of the 19th. Battalion will, on its return from the trenches, convey articles of the 17th. Battalion to "D" Battalion Area. Coy's 2nd. -in-Command and 1 Officer per Company of relieving Battalion will proceed to the trenches on the morning of the relief to take over in daylight all Trench Stores, S.A.A., Grenades; etc., Receipts will be given for all articles not included in Trench Log Book. These also will be signed for, together with all articles included in them. All Periscopes and Steel Helmets to be handed over.
9. Defence Schemes, Photographs, Plans, Trench Maps, Log Books, etc., will be taken over by the Relieving Unit and receipts given.
10. The 19th. Battalion will provide the Working Parties for the carriage of Engineers' Stores for the night of the 23/24th. inst.,
11. The order of the Relief will be:-  
 Left..... "C" Company.  
 Centre..... "B" "  
 Right..... "D" "
12. As each Platoon is relieved it will move to the BOIS GRENIER end of Shaftesbury Avenue and proceed to same Billets as previously occupied during period 16th. to 19th. April.
13. Company Commanders of the 17th. Battalion will report by wire to Battalion Hd Qrs, the moment the whole of their Company has been relieved, and that they have handed over command of their Section to the O.C. Incoming Company.
14. The R.M.O. will make his own arrangements to hand over to the Incoming R.M.O. all Equipment, etc., at the Dressing Station, that form part of the Trench Equipment.
15. All movements are to be completed by 11.30. p.m. on the 23rd. April.

Signed. H.W. Johnson, Captain.

Adjutant, 17th? Battalion. A.I.F.



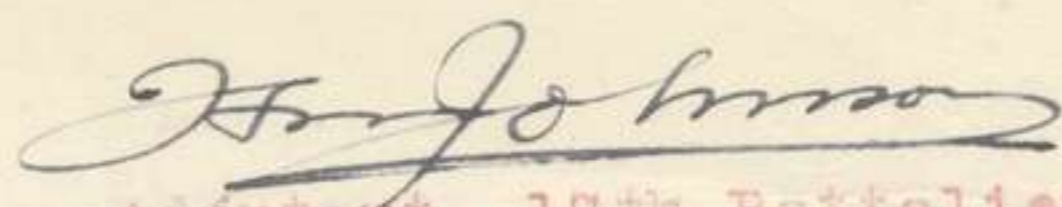
Ref Map 36. N.W.

1. On the night of the 30th April-1st May the 5th Brigade will hand over Trench No 47 as far North as 1.31.c;5.31/2. to the 2nd Australian Infantry Brigade and will take over from the 7th Australian Infantry Brigade Trench No 57 as far North as 1.20.d.4-1/2.1-1/2.  
The frontage held by the 5th Australian Infantry Brigade will then comprise trenches 48 to 57 inclusive. This frontage will be sub-divided as under:-  
"A" Battalion frontage from trench 48 to 52 both inclusive.  
"B" Battalion frontage from trench 53 to 57 both inclusive.
2. (a) "A" Battalion will hand trench 47 to 2nd Australian Infantry Brigade and take over trench 52 from "B" Battalion on the night of the 30th April-1st May.  
(b) "B" Battalion will hand over trench 52 to "A" Battalion and take over Trench 57 from 7th Australian Infantry Brigade on the night of the 30th April-1st May.
3. Seconds in Command of "A" and "B" Battalions will arrange between themselves re relief of trench 52.
4. "B" Coy. now in Reserve in the BOIS GRENIER LINE will take over trench 57, and that portion of 56 now held by the 7th Brigade, starting to move at 8 o'clock via Shaftesbury Avenue-Haymarket and Support Line, thence along Communication Trench leading from Support Line to Firing Line on the left of "A" Company.  
  
"D" Company when relieved by the 18th Battalion will move into Reserve in the BOIS GRENIER Line.  
  
The Relieving Coy will move by Platoons at 5 minutes interval.
5. Snipers and Bombers of "B" Company will report at "Stand to" on the morning of the 30th inst to the Officer Commanding Company they are relieving and will remain on duty until their Company takes over the trenches on the night of the 30th April-1st May.
6. The Battalion Signalling Officer will arrange for the necessary Signallers to report to the Officer Commanding Company that is being relieved during the afternoon of the 29th inst, and will remain on duty until their Company takes over the trenches on the night of the 30th April-1st May. He will also take the necessary steps to have Trench 57 placed in direct communication with Battalion Headquarters at once.
7. One Officer per Company and one N.C.O. per Platoon will report to new trenches on afternoon of April 29th to learn all about trenches they are taking over. These N.C.Os. will remain there during night of 29th-30th April. They will act as guides for their platoons on night of 30th April-1st May.
8. An inventory of all trench stores, S.A.A. Grenades, etc, including those enumerated in Company Log Books will be made out in quadruplicate by Company Commanders that are being relieved. Receipts will be obtained and given for all stores taken over or handed over. 1 copy of such inventory will be retained by Os.C. outgoing and incoming Companies. 2 copies will be forwarded to Battalion Headquarters, one of these will be sent to 5th Brigade Headquarters by 12 noon on 1st May.
9. Defence schemes, Log Books, plans, Photographs etc, will be handed over to relieving Company Commanders and receipts obtained. "B" Battalion will similarly take over from 7th Aust. Infantry Brigade, all such documents for trench 57.

10. The Engineer unloading and carrying parties for the night of 30th April-1st May will be found as under:-

For "B" Battalion, by 19th Battalion.  
This party will not commence work until 10 p.m.

11. No Transport will cross the BAC ST MAUR - ARMENTIERES Railway until 9 p.m. 30th April-1st May.
12. Officers Commanding Companies will notify Battalion Headquarters by wire when relief is completed.
13. The ordinary relief of the Brigade will not take place until the nights of May 1st and 2nd for "A" and "C" Battalions and May 2nd and 3rd for "B" and "D" Battalions.
14. Company Commanders will see that trenches are left in a clean state for the incoming troops.
15. Until further notice, all stores will be dumped by the Transport at the feet of Shaftesbury Avenue as usual.
16. Companies will make the usual arrangements for the conveyance of their rations to their different lines.
17. "A" and "B" Companies will draw water from the Cottage leading off PARK ROW AVENUE, known as Burnt Cottage on the Map.



Capt.

Adjutant, 17th Battalion, A.I.F.