

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

Flying Corps

**Item number:** 8/3/2

**Title:** 15th Wing Headquarters, Royal  
Flying Corps

August 1916



AWM4-8/3/2

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 reference to Appendices
TOUTENCOURT Sheet 1/40000 57 D.U.I.	1 <sup>st</sup> August	15 <sup>th</sup> Wing	Twenty five successful artillery flights. Little interference by hostile aircraft, three combats.  Lieut S. STRETTON (observed) wounded by AA fire. Captain A.C.B. GEDDES posted to No 13 K B Section.	Royal Flying Corps
		2 <sup>nd</sup>	No 32 Squadron came under the orders of O.C. (O.O. no 443 R.F.C.) Copy of Standing Orders for patrols attached.	R.F.C. O.O. 2443 Standing Orders
		3 <sup>rd</sup>	Thirty two successful artillery flights. 412 photographs taken.  Artillery work normal. Large amount of damage done to hostile Batteries. Many photographs taken.	
		4 <sup>th</sup>	Several combats on patrols. Work normal.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
TOUTENCOURT.	August	5 <sup>th</sup>	<p>15<sup>th</sup> Wing R.F.C.</p> <p>Artillery work normal.</p> <p>Seven machines (BE201) escorted by 4 scouts sent to bomb GREVILLERS</p> <p>Nine bombs dropped at 6 p.m. only 4 fell in the village none were observed to hit the station.</p> <p>Considerable activity of H Aircraft: 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt THOMAS shot down on return from bombing.</p>	O.O. No 2 attached
		6 <sup>th</sup>	Artillery work normal. Seven combats.	
		7 <sup>th</sup>	" " " "	
		8 <sup>th</sup>	<p>Considerable activity of hostile aircraft, 5 indecisive combats</p> <p>Lt DK JOHNSTONE wounded by AA fire.</p> <p>Photographic establishment found inadequate + enlarged by 2 more men per section.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	15 <sup>th</sup> Wing R.F.C.	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
TOUTENCOURT	August	8 <sup>th</sup>		Four scouts of No 32 Squadron on patrol near BAPAUME at 7 PM. had three separate encounters with a patrol of 10 machines, Two of which were driven down & the remainder driven off.	
		9 <sup>th</sup>		Captain A.H. Smith awarded the Military Cross.	
		<del>10<sup>th</sup></del>		In artillery flights ten gun pits were destroyed, seventeen others damaged mostly severely & 3 ammunition pits were blown up. Six other battery positions were hit. 13 points were registered.	
		10		Captain WALSER after dropping letters from deserters bombed an M.T park near LE SARRS with 30 phosphorus bombs causing a fire.	M.T.
		11 <sup>th</sup>		Normal artillery work.	
				" " "	

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	August		15 <sup>th</sup> Wing R.F.C.	
TOUTENCOURT	12 <sup>th</sup>		H.M. King inspected parties from No 4 & No 15 Squadron near MARIEUX and conferred the CROIX DE GUERRE on Major T.W.C. CARTHEW D.S.O.  Sgt Dobson No 32 Squadron missing believed shot down in a combat near COURCELETTE	
	13 <sup>th</sup>		Captain S.G. GILMOUR injured when forced to land by AA fire.	
	14 <sup>th</sup>		Lieutenant Gen D. HENDERSON visited No 4 Squadron & inspected the new French CACCOT Balloon at No 13 K.B. section.	
	15 <sup>th</sup>		Proposals for accommodation of new squadrons in autumn & winter submitted to advanced HQ R.F.C.	CAFCE 20229 27/12/16.  AM

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
TOTTENCOURT	August 16 <sup>th</sup>		<p>15<sup>th</sup> Wing R.F.C.</p> <p>Normal artillery activity under unfavourable conditions.</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Lt SCOTT and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt MATTHEW ranged two heavy howitzers on 2 batteries on SE edge of PYS observing for 70 rounds which damaged 3 pits. During the whole of the time they were flying at 3000 ft a considerable distance over the lines.</p> <p>Considerable HA activity behind the lines.</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Lt CAVE and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt DUKE made a detailed reconnaissance of PYS taking 16 photographs in spite of interference by HA + difficult weather conditions. They returned owing to the sump being hit by AA fire.</p> <p>56 plates exposed + a great deal of artillery work done.</p>	

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			15 <sup>th</sup> Wing R.F.C.	
TOUTENCOURT	August 18 <sup>th</sup>		Low clouds + showers but artillery work normal + photographs urgently required for control of bombardment taken from in some cases 2,000 ft. By a contact patrols No 7 Squadron late on the evening of the 17 <sup>th</sup> + in early morning of 18 <sup>th</sup> cleared up a situation in the Anzac Crags area which had been very obscure.	
	19 <sup>th</sup>		Rain + low clouds but 4 successful contact patrols carried out + some artillery work.	
	20 <sup>th</sup>		Cloudy with a strong wind. Arty work normal; 97 plates exposed. No 1 kite balloon broke loose but was brought down by our AA fire in enemy's line. Captain B.H. RADFORD killed owing to failure of his parachute to open. Considerable activity of enemy aircraft.	208

FORM W. 1011-72 (REV. 1918) G.P.O. 1918

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
TOTTENHART	Aug. 21 <sup>st</sup>		<p>15<sup>th</sup> Wing R.F.C.</p> <p>Fine but cloudy at intervals. Work normal. Considerable activity of enemy aircraft.</p>	
	22 <sup>nd</sup>		<p>Repeated interference by enemy aircraft, 27 hostile machines being encountered by artillery machines. Attacks not persisted in. 18 indecisive combats. Several enemy machines heard to be working with wireless. Normal artillery work, 4 successful contact patrols.</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut W.R.E. HARRISON (pilot) wounded by A.A. fire. Two W.T. operators seriously wounded.</p>	
	23 <sup>rd</sup>		<p>Thick haze all day. Reconnaissance of PYS &amp; IRLES with 36 photographs. 98 photographs in all. 20 combats in 2 of which machines are claimed: reports attached.</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut G.S. WOOD (observer) wounded by A.A. fire.</p>	<p>circled 1918</p>



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
TONTENCOMBAT	August	24 <sup>th</sup>	Artillery work normal. Successful contact patrol for II Corps. Less activity of enemy aircraft. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut C.D. KERSHAW (pilot) wounded by AA fire.	
		25 <sup>th</sup>	42 barges dealt with & 90 active batteries reported to counterbattery groups. 103 photographs taken. Much less activity of enemy aircraft. Capt J.T.P. WHITTAKER (pl commander) not injured & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt G.R. BOLITHO (observer) not wounded.	
		26 <sup>th</sup>	Artillery work normal. Certain amount of enemy activity during fair intervals. <del>Captain J.T.P. WHITTAKER (pilot) wounded</del> : 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut L.D. RUSSELL (pilot) severely injured. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut D. CLARK (obs) killed.	
		27 <sup>th</sup>	Clasp to Military Cross awarded to Captain L. JENKINS. Rain & low clouds.	

THE PRINTING HOUSES OF THE GOVERNMENT

WAR DIARY

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices	
JUNTENCOURT	August 27 <sup>th</sup> (cont)		<p>15<sup>th</sup> Wing R.F.C.</p> <p>The 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade formed: Lt Col (temp Brigadier General) CAH LONGCROFT                      Captain H.V. WALKER Welsh Regt                      Captain JAM LANG Sherwood Foresters</p>	<p>Commanding.                      Brigade Major.                      Staff Captain.</p>	<p>OR/702 D                      21/7/16</p>
	28 <sup>th</sup>		<p>Low cloud &amp; showers.                      2<sup>nd</sup> E BAINBRIDGE no 32 Squadron forced a hostile machine to land at 57° 40' from H 28 545.                      Area call introduced - scheme attached *</p>	<p>C<sup>m</sup></p>	<p>Area Call</p>
	29 <sup>th</sup>		<p>Cloudy with heavy showers.                      Lieut. R. BURLEIGH (pilot) + 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut R.C. HARRY (observer) no 15 Squadron shot down by hostile machine: the enemy machine was attacked by 2 or more hostile machines one of which was brought down by a machine of no 24 Squadron.</p>		<p>2050</p>

JKM

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2148

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OR  
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	15 <sup>th</sup> Wing R.F.C.	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
TOTTENHAM	August	30 <sup>th</sup>	Rain all day		
		31 <sup>st</sup>		<p>Artillery work normal. A good deal of activity of enemy aircraft behind German lines, hostile patrols broken up on several occasions by patrols of No 32 Squadron but without any decisive results being obtained.</p> <p>No 7 Squadron developed 530 negatives during the month from which 10,000 prints were made. 1169 negatives were developed in the Wing.</p>	2044 MS

214A

SECRET.

OPERATION ORDERS

No.2.

Copy No. 6.

by  
LIEUT. COLONEL J.G. HEARSON, D.S.O.,  
Commanding 15th Wing, Royal Flying Corps.

\*\*\*\*\*

OBJECTIVE 1. A bombing raid will be carried out at a date and time to be telephoned later, on the station at GREVILLERS, a sketch plan of which is attached.

ORGANISATION 2. The following machines will take part:-

- 3 Machines from No. 4 Squadron,
- 3 " " No. 7 "
- 3 " " No. 15 "
- 4 " " No. 32 "

LEADER. 3. O.C., No. 4 Squadron will detail a leader who will carry streamers on his outer struts.

RENDEZVOUS 4. The formation will rendezvous over the aerodrome at BAIZIEUX, at a time to be notified later, at the height of 6,000 feet for B.E's and 8,000 feet for De Havilland Scouts.

FORMATION 5. Pilots of each squadron will get into close formation over their own aerodrome and fly together to the rendezvous, and maintain close formation afterwards in rear of the leader.

BOMB SIGHTS 6. Pilots will take their own bomb sight time before reaching the rendezvous.

SIGNAL TO START 7. When the machines are at the rendezvous a ground signal K will be put out upon which the leader will fire a red light to notify that he is proceeding in the raid.

ABANDONMENT 8. If the ground signal N is put out the leader will fire white lights and all machines will return to their aerodromes.

GROUND SIGNALS 9. O.C., No. 4 Squadron will be responsible for the ground signals.

BOMBS 10. Each bombing machine will carry 2 112 lb. bombs. Bombs will be dropped from a height of 6,000 feet.

STAND BY 11. Machines will stand by for the raid at

2156

RETURN 12. After dropping the bombs the whole raid will keep well together on the return journey.

REPORTS 13. Short reports will be sent in by squadron commanders to Wing Headquarters, as soon as possible, on return.

Lieut. Colonel,  
Commanding 15th Wing,  
Royal Flying Corps.

5th August, 1916.

Copy No. 1 to No. 4 Squadron  
" No. 2 to No. 7 "  
" No. 3 to No. 15 "  
" No. 4 to No. 32 "  
Copies Nos. 5, 6 & 7 Retained.

STANDING ORDERS  
for  
OFFENSIVE PATROLS.

4/16/16

--3--

Will last 8 hours.

Will be carried out by 4 machines flying in formation  
as detailed in orders issued by O.C., No. 52 Squadron on  
24-16.

The area patrolled will be bounded by

BOUCHON — ACHET — LE — PETIT —  
HAPAUVE — LE BARQUE — MARTINPUICH.

The interior of this area should be patrolled as  
well as its boundaries.

The number of patrols and their times will be  
communicated every evening for the following day.

In addition to these patrols, a patrol of three  
machines will always be ready to leave the ground at short  
notice.

When a "line patrol" is ordered, machines will patrol  
over the line COMBECOURT — FUISIEN — GRABECOURT —  
COURCELLETTE — MARTINPUICH.

J. Pearson

2nd August 1916.

Lieut. Colonel,  
Commanding 15th Wing,  
Royal Flying Corps.

Cii  
COMBATS IN THE AIR.

2175

Squadron. No. 4. Date. 23rd August 1916.  
 Type and No. of Aeroplane. B.E.2.c.2514. Time. 9-50 a.m. - 10-45 a.m.  
 Armament. 2 Lewis Guns. Duty. Artillery Patrol.  
 Pilot. 2/Lieut. R.H. Jarvis. Height. 4,500 feet.  
 Observer. 2/Lieut. F. de B. Collette.  
 Locality. MARTINPUICH - POMIERES - COURCELETTE.

Remarks on Hostile Machine :- Type, armament, speed, etc.

L. V. G.  
 Back and front guns.  
 Speed about 85 to 90 m.p.h.

----- NARRATIVE. -----

When over HIGH WOOD at 10-9 a.m. at about 4,500 feet, engaged on Artillery Patrol, we were attacked by an hostile machine which came out of a cloud just below us. A few rounds only were fired, when the hostile machine retreated. About 10-30 a.m. seven hostile aircraft were observed in about the same locality, five of these being about 9,000 feet and two about 4,500 feet. One of the latter was engaged in the vicinity of COURCELETTE, the B.E. following it and diving to close quarters ~~and~~ 2 drums being fired, apparently with good effect, from close range. The hostile machine appeared to fall, but two flying wires of the B.E.2.c. having been shot away and other damage done, it was obliged to discontinue work and return to the aerodrome. Reports received from the Artillery and from the Australian Infantry, shortly afterwards, indicate that the hostile machine fell out of control just within the enemy's lines in the vicinity <sup>to North</sup> of HIGH WOOD. Further enquiries are being made.

*R.H. Jarvis* 2/Lieut.  
 Pilot, No. 4. Squadron, R. F. C.

*F. de B. Collette* 2/Lieut.  
 Observer, No. 4. Squadron, R. F. C.

*T. Lartheis* Major,  
 Officer Commanding, No. 4. Squadron, R. F. C.

SECRET.

O.B./702.

Reserve Army.

The 5th Brigade, R.F.C., will be formed in the Reserve Army area on the 27th instant.

The 5th Brigade is allotted to the Reserve Army.

(Sd.) J. BURNETT-STUART, B.C.,

General Headquarters,  
21st August, 1916.

for Lieutenant-General,  
C. G. S.

Reserve Army.

S. G. 1/0/2.

II Corps.  
V Corps.  
XIII Corps.  
I A. & N.Z. Corps.  
18th Wing, R.F.C.  
D.A. & Q.M.G., Reserve Army.  
"I" Reserve Army.

Forwarded for your information.

Headquarters,  
Reserve Army.  
22nd Aug. 1916.

*J. Burnett-Stuart*  
for Major-General, C.S.



Artillery 2nd Corps.  
 " 5th Corps.  
 " 13th Corps.  
 " 1st Army.  
 15th Wing R.F.C.

1. In order to increase the volume of neutralizing fire on active hostile batteries located from the air and to bring Field Artillery fire onto concealed infantry targets, a considerable number of Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters will be provided with Wireless Ground Stations by R.F.C.
2. These stations will be utilized in the manner detailed in attached explanations.
3. The following points are extremely important in connection with this work, and in order to ensure its success must be thoroughly impressed on all concerned:-
  - (A) Rapidity in opening fire both to catch personnel in an active battery or to utilize a fleeting G.F. target and also in order to ensure a maximum of aeroplane observation.
  - (B) Wireless operators kept informed of the area calls which they must take in - This is essential and must be continually borne in mind by the Brigade Commander.
  - (C) Ceasing fire or not opening fire on any target which an aeroplane has prefixed by "A" meaning that a battery is going to be ranged <sup>on</sup> to that target.
  - (D) These stations are primarily for E.F. and G.F. targets sent by area calls and are not for registration purposes though they can be used for such when it is very necessary.

25th August 1918.

*C. J. Wood*  
 Major,  
 S.O. to H.C.R.A.  
 Reserve Army.

2000

From the 28th August inclusive, all Artillery targets seen by aeroplanes will be sent down by the area call system. Counter Battery Group calls will no longer be used.

Should an aeroplane wish to range any individual heavy howitzer or 60 pr. battery, it will first of all send the target down by the area call system prefacing the target by "A" and will then call up the selected battery and range it as usual with the Squadron or battery call.

e.g.

M A N F F.32 (N F target for 60 prs. and 18 prs.)

R D N F K.3 (N F Target for 60 prs. and 18 prs.)

M C A N F F.20 (60 prs. and 18 prs. I am going to range a battery on F.20. If you are firing on it - stop).

F I A N F F.20 (13th S.B. I am going to range you on F.20)

R D K.3 M A.6 (Fire on K.3 mostly at A.6).

F I G

F I Z 2

M A Inf. M.7.b (G.F. target for 60 prs. and 18 prs.)

F I G

F I Y 4

M A N F F.10 (N.F. target for 60 prs. and 18 prs.)

F I G

F I O K

M A F.10 M D.3 (Fire on F.10 mostly at B.3).

F I G

F I O K

L L M C Inf. massed M.19.c.2.2 (An L L target for batteries which can answer M C call).

22/11/14

SCHEME FOR CO-OPERATION BETWEEN AEROPLANES  
AND THE ARTILLERY DURING AN ADVANCE  
-----

During the preliminary stages of an advance when the operations are of a deliberate character, it may be possible to keep the Royal Flying Corps in close touch with the movements, new positions, area of fire, etc., of the batteries with whom they work.

If the advance continues beyond this stage, the maintenance of such close inter-communication between the two arms may become impossible, thus necessitating a change in the present methods of co-operation between the Artillery and the Royal Flying Corps.

The Scheme which it is proposed to introduce is one depending upon area calls.

By dividing the big lettered squares of the map into four parts as shown by the double lines in the attached diagram and lettering them as shown thereon, the whole country is automatically divided into zones (3,000 x 3,000 yards, or in some cases 3,000 x 2,000 yards), each having a two letter call consisting of the map square letter followed by the zone letter, e.g. WB, is the call for the right hand top zone of the square W.

APPLICATION OF THE SYSTEM.

Whatever the position or direction of front of the Corps and Divisions with whom the Squadrons normally work, the Flying Corps will arrange for a suitable number of artillery machines to watch the zones in the immediate front of the Army. Counter Battery areas, corresponding with their Corps front whenever these are known, will be allotted to Corps Squadrons for work with Artillery. These areas will be subdivided into Flight Counter Battery areas consisting probably of two or three lettered zones.

CALLS AND MESSAGES FROM THE AIR.

The aeroplane observer will then send down information regarding any hostile troops or batteries which he may see in the zones allotted to him under the call of the particular zone in which the target is seen.

Messages will therefore be sent in the following form:-

WA NF W9052 N 1  
WD 2,000 Inf. in column moving W. Head of Colm. at  
W 29a24.

If the Observer wishes to suggest that a Heavy Gun or Howitzer should be used to engage any particular target he will add a number to his zone call as below:-

W B = call for 18 pdrs.  
W B 1 = call for 60 pdrs, or 4.7 gun  
W B 2 = call for Howitzer.

Having sent his call and objective the observer will normally watch the target for fire effect.

22

CALLS AND MESSAGES FROM THE AIR (CONTD).

Where the target is engaged by a number of batteries he will send down general observations and corrections, whenever they may be of use. When the target is engaged by only one battery he will range it in the ordinary way, etc.

W A 1                    A.  
W A 1                    G.  
W A 1                    G 2, etc

The usual target calls, N 1 N 2 etc., may be used if there is any chance of confusion between targets.

ARRANGEMENTS ON THE GROUND.

Wireless Stations will be allotted as follows:-

- Siege Artillery - A cart and three sets with each Corps for distribution to batteries as they come into action.
- Heavy Artillery - One set with each 60 pdr. and 4.7 battery.
- Field Artillery - One cart and from four to five sets per Division. This includes the Receiving Set with Divisional HQ.

Officers Commanding Groups, Brigades or Batteries to which Wireless Receiving sets are attached must keep the wireless operator informed as to which zone calls he is to take.

The actual arrangements to be made for answering these calls from the air are left for the Artillery Commanders to decide.

The following examples are merely intended to indicate the general procedure.

X Group with wireless station attached consists of a number of 18 pdrs. 4.5 Howitzers, and two 60 pdrs. batteries. The zones covered by the guns of the group are K.D. and L.C.

(i) Message received.

K.D. 2,000 Inf. in mass K. 23 b 33.

O.C. X Corps directs shrapnel fire to be opened on the target by two 18 pdr. batteries and one 60 pdr. battery. The aeroplane Observer may send general results, or, if he recognises the 60 pdr. shrapnel bursts, could range them under call K.D. 1.

(ii) L.C. 1 N F L 32a78.

O.C. X Group may turn both 60 pdr batteries on to this, one using shrapnel, the other H.E. or if 60 pdrs. are not available may use any other type of gun.

Speed and efficiency will however be gained if he can detail one of his 60 pdr. batteries to answer the call L.C. 1 whenever it is sent, so that the aeroplane can range them in the usual way.

The Group Commander can therefore either keep the whole control in his hands, or he can delegate one heavy battery, and perhaps one field howitzer battery to answer first calls for those types in each zone.

Whenever possible a call for an howitzer or heavy gun should be answered by one battery only to enable the observer to range them accurately.

The Divisional Commander can if he pleases instruct his wireless operator to take messages from whatever portion of the line information is required.

Diagram  
A

B

223a  
AB

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36

C

D

20

2046 1/2 n