

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

Infantry

Item number: 23/34/31

Title: 17th Infantry Battalion

February 1918



AWM4-23/34/31

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Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

17th Battalion A.I.F.

FOR

February **1918**

Signature of Officer compiling

J. H. Barrett Capt.

Signature of Officer Commanding

G. Martin Lieut

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.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Aoulaby	1.2.18		Day spent in improving billets, re-allocating to Coy etc to make more room Capt H J Mann MC proceeded to 5th Training Battalion Lt Col Martin CMC DSO to 5th Brigade temporarily in Command. Major F G Russell temporarily in Command of the Battalion	B
D°	2.2.18		Battalion muster parade on which men were informed of the training etc that would be carried out during stay in back area. Lt RW Pettit rejoined from Army School, Wisques	B
D°	3.2.18		Battalion church parade at 11 am.	B
D°	4.2.18		Lt M Davis & 2/Lt R Willards proceeded on leave to England. Training of the Battalion commenced under the syllabus. Battalion completes 1000 days service	B
D°	5.2.18		21 ORs arrived on draft from Le Havre. Syllabus of training continued.	B
	6.2.18		6 Coy moved from the rest camp forests to billets vacated by A Coy 19th Battalion in Svinghem Training continued. Every effort being made to prepare a complete rifle range	B
	7.2.18		Lieut H J Smith & 13 ORs arrived on draft from Le Havre weather very wet. training ^{impossible}	B
	8.2.18		Major R M McMaster ^{DSO} returned from leave England. weather still very wet. Musketry instruction being carried on in billets. Outside training still held up.	B

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WAR DIARY

86
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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Boultonby	9.2.18		Day taken up with a route march & bathing. Afternoon a half holiday Lt G.R. McShue & Lt J.R. Read rejoined Battalion from base. A dinner was held in Hotel des Chemins de fer for all officers who left Australia with the Battalion on 12 th May 1915 having completed 1000 days service on 4 th Inst.	
D ^o	10.2.18		Church parade at 10 am. Lt S.M. Blackshaw rejoined from the Base. Lt J.G. Davison & Lt E.W. Dark proceeded on leave to Paris	
D ^o	11.2.18		Training commenced on new week syllabus Football match 17 th V. 5 th Mc Glog won by 17 ^{to} 10 ^{to} 8	108 apt
D ^o	12.2.18		Training continued as usual (per syllabus)	109
	13.2.18		Training as per syllabus during morning. Afternoon half holiday Lt S.J. Ham rejoined Bn from Base	109
	14.2.18		Training as per syllabus Capt F. G. Barnett returned from leave England	109
	15.2.18		Training as per syllabus 2/Lt G. Mc KENZIE & E.D. Taylor returned from leave England	109
	16.2.18		Training as per syllabus. Capt J.L. Wright M.C. returned from leave England	113
	17.2.18		Church Parade. Bn won football match against 5 th Field Amb.	113
	18.2.18		Training in accordance with new syllabus	113 app 2

(3)

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
COULOMB BY.	18.2.18		Lieuts L. Robins + A.J. Gilbert proceeded on leave to U.K. Lieut ER RAINE + FG RAE rejoined Bn from Schools.	B
	19.2.18		Training as per syllabus. G.O.Bs inspection. Very good parade - transport especially so. G.O.B complimented transport official Capt H.A BUSBY.	
			Capt K.W. MCKENZIE M.C. rejoined Bn from Seconded List.	
	20.2.18		Training as per syllabus. RM + Hon Lieut A.J.R. DAVISON + Lieut E.W. DARK rejoined Bn from Paris leave	B
	21.2.18		do. Our football team beaten by 19 th Bn score 3 pts to nil.	B
	22.2.18		Platoons put through eliminating tests for A.R.A competition. Lt M. DAVIS + H.J. SMITH sick	appx 3. B
	23.2.18		Training as per syllabus. Lt MASTERSON + T.R. READ proceeded to 10 th Corps School.	B
	24.2.18		Church parade. Our football team beat 20 th Bn score 16 pts to 3.	B
	25.2.18		Training as per new syllabus,	appx 4 B
	26.2.18		Training as per syllabus. Staff ride for Officers. Bn football team defeated SALTMBY 3 pts to nil	appx 5 B
	27.2.18		Battalion Sports meeting. Lieut G.R. MCPHEE to S.O.S. School MONT des CATS.	B
	28.2.18		Battln took part in Brigade Field Operations..	appx 6. B

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			<p>Training was carried out daily in Musketry Bayonet fighting Bombing etc. special attention being paid to the musketry on 25 yds & 200 yds ranges at COULOMBY and at the 4th Army School Range where 9 practices were carried out by each man.</p> <p>A noticeable improvement was observed in the shooting of the Battalion.</p> <p>Amstolovy was attached to the Battalion, 40 men getting leave to ST. OMER daily.</p> <p>A Brigade football competition was played out, the Battalion being runners up. A successful Sports Meeting was also held.</p> <p>The health & spirits of the men has been good, and the discipline consequently of a correspondingly high standard, absence without leave being reduced to a minimum.</p>	
			<p><i>J. J. Maw</i> Capt</p>	
			<p><i>J. J. Maw</i> Cwdg 17th AIF</p>	<p><i>L. Mol</i></p>

WAR DIARY

OF

17th Battalion

FOR

February 1918.

LIST OF APPENDICES.

- | No. | Subject. |
|-----|--|
| 1. | Syllabus of Training for week ending 16. 2. 18 |
| 2. | Syllabus of Training for week ending 23. 2. 18 |
| 3. | Instructions for A.R.A. Competitions |
| 4. | Syllabus of Training for week ending 2. 3. 18 |
| 5. | Instructions for Staff Ride. |
| 6. | Operations Order No. 001 (Trainings). |

17TH BATTALION, A. I. F.

APPENDIX /

SYLLABUS OF TRAINING FOR WEEK ENDING 16/2/18.

Date	9-9.30	9.30-10.30	10.30-11	11-11.30	1.30-2.30	2.30-3.30	3.30 - 4
11/2/18:	:Elementary	:Pltn. Drill	:PT & BF	:Elementary	:Elasticity	:Rif. Excs.	
:	:Musketry &	:Art. Formn	:Org. Games	:Musketry &	:of Platoon	:Guards &	
:	:Grp. Practce	:Rpd. Extnm	:&Football	:Grp. Pretce	(S. S. 143)	:Sentries	
12/2/18:	:Musketry.	: Company	: PT. & BF	: Musketry:		:Bombing.	
:	: Range	: Drill.	:Football	:FireOrder:	Do.	:Rif. Gren.	
:	:Practice.		:Org. Games:	: Control.		:(dummies)	
13/2/18:	: R o u t e M a r c h .			: H a l f H o l i d a y .			
14/2/18:	:Musk. Bolt	:Rpd. Wirng;	PT & BF	:Musk. J. D:	Ptn. Attck:	Guards &	
:	:Drill. Rpd.	:Bomb. Rile;	Org. Games:	Ind. Trgts:	PrctcaTch:	Sentries.	
:	:Ldg. Applcn:	Grenades.	:&Football:	Applictn.	:toTrench	:Ceremonial	
:	: Practice.				: open warf	:Marching.	
15/2/18:	:Musk. Bolt	:Rpd. Wirng:	PT & BF	:Musk. Rpd.	:Coy. Formn:	Bn. Parade	
:	:Dl. Rpd. Ldg:	Live Gren	Org. Games:	Fire. Fire:	Tch to Tch:	Ceremonial	
:	:and firing:	Fg. Live B:	&Football:	: Control.	:openwarf.	: Drill.	
16/2/18:	: R o u t e M a r c h .			: H a l f H o l i d a y .			

Inspection & Ceremonial Drill on Company Parade Grounds.

Date	Place of Parade.	Remarks.
11/2/18:	C O U L O M B Y.	
12/2/18:	do.	
13/2/18:	COULOMBY - HARIETTES - BAYENGHEM - COULOMBY.	:Route Mch. & Half Hol.
14/2/18:	C O U L O M B Y.	
15/2/18:	do.	
16/2/18:	COULOMBY to junction of WATTERDAL & BIEQUIN	: do.
	:Roads to BAYENGHEM. Then to BOULOGNE Road,	
	:then by first road to COULOMBY.	

Lewis Gun Instruction under Lewis Gun Officer.
 Instruction for Signallers and Runners, and Intelligence Section,
 under their respective Officers.
 Class for Junior N.C.O's. Class for Stretcher Bearers.

J. B. Lawet
 Captain.
 Adjutant 17th Battalion A.I.F.

SYLLABUS OF TRAINING FOR WEEK ENDING 23/2/18.

Date	9-9.30	9.30-10.30	10.30-11	11-11.30	1.30-2.30	2.30-3.30	3.30 - 4	
18/2/18:	Ptn.Trng. : under Pn. Cm: Use of ptn: weapons. Drill Rifle Ex. Saluting:	Bayonet : Fighting : & practice : for A.R.A. : competit-	posns. &c. : as p er : ion. : instructn:	Musketry : Bolt Drill : on Range : written : instructn:	Musketry : on Range : Practice : for A.R.A. : Competit-	Company : Drill : and : Practice : for A.R.A. : Competitn:	Battalion : Parade. Artillery : Formations : Competitn:	
19/2/18:		Do.	Do.	Do.		Inspection of Battalion by G. O. C.		
20/2/18:		Do.	Do.	Do.	Half Holiday.			
21/2/18:								
22/2/18:								
23/2/18:					Half Holiday.			

Inspection & Ceremonial Drill on Company Parade Grounds.

Date	Place of Parade.	Remarks.
18/2/18:) 19/2/18:) 20/2/18:) 23/2/18:)	C O U L O M B Y.	
21/2/18:) 22/2/18:)	L U M B R E S R A N G E.	

Lewis Gun Instruction under Lewis Gun Officer.
 Instruction for Signallers and Runners, and Intelligence Section, under their respective Officers.
 Class for Junior N.C.O's. Class for Stretcher Bearers.

J. Barrett
 Adjutant 17th Battalion A. I. F. Cap tain.

17TH BATTALION. A.I.F.

22/2/18.

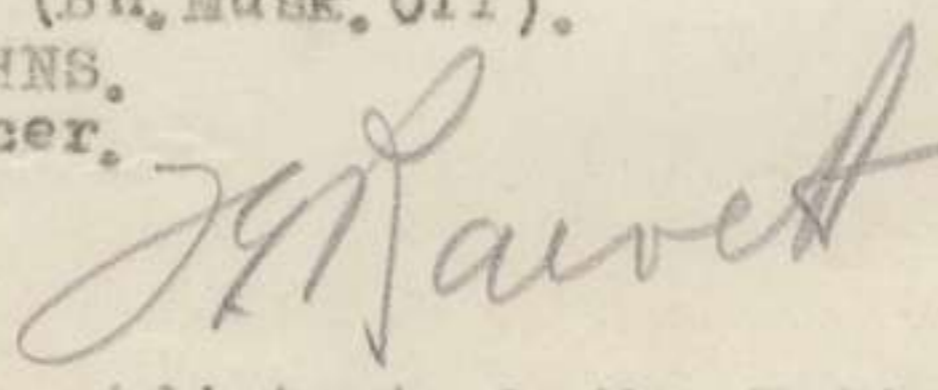
A. R. A. PLATOON COMPETITION.

1. (a) The platoons of this Battalion will be going through elimination test for A.R.A. Competition on the Brigade Range at D.2.d.5.5 to-morrow the 23rd instant.
 (b) Companies will move off in the following order:-

"D" Company	-	7 a. m.
"C" Company	-	7.30 a.m.
"B" Company	-	8 a. m.
"A" Company	-	8.30 a. m.
2. Lieutenants LOCKWOOD and JOHNS will be responsible that the material required, viz:- Screen Targets and a supply of White Paper Discs is taken to the Range.
3. Platoons will be of strength as laid down in circular No. CB/1618/D issued to Companies. Total 29 all ranks.
 Companies should eliminate bad rifle shots, to reduce their platoons to that number, as the object is to get the best platoon in each Company. Platoons must not be packed from men of other platoons.
 All platoons are to be particularly clean and smart.
4. Companies will go through the test in the following order:-
 "D", "C", "B", "A".
5. Each Company will furnish a Nominal Roll of their platoons to Battalion Orderly Room by 8 p. m. to-day for signature of the Commanding Officer.
6. DRESS - Fighting Order. Steel Helmets will be worn.
7. "A", "B", and "C" Companies will carry their mid-day meal. The Q. M. will arrange to send sufficient tea and fuel to give the men a hot drink. "D" Company will return to billets for that meal.

DISTRIBUTION.

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. File. | 8. "D" Company. |
| 2/4. War Diary. | 9. Quarter Master. |
| 5. "A" Company. | 10. Lieut. LOCKWOOD (Bn. Musk. Off). |
| 6. "B" Company. | 11. 2nd Lieut. JOHNS. |
| 7. "C" Company. | 12. Transport Officer. |


 Captain
 Adjutant 17th Battalion A.I.F.

17TH BATTALION A.I.F.

4 APPENDIX 4

AMENDED SYLLABUS OF TRAINING FOR WEEK ENDING 2/3/18.

Date	Morning	Afternoon	Place
25/2/18	"C" Coy. Musketry on Val-de-LUMBRES Range, 11am to 2pm: Tactical exercises for platoons under coy. arrangements: Tactical exercises for Coys. Special practices in forming defensive flanks.		LUMBRES COULOMBY
26/2/18	Tactical exercises for Officers, 50% officers morning & 50% officers in afternoon under Brigade arrangements. Live Bombing, Bayonet Fighting, Rapid Fire practices on range, Gas drill and box respirator inspection, Rapid wiring.		COULOMBY.
27/2/18	Battalion Sports Meeting Brigade A. R. A. Competition for 1 platoon.		COULOMBY.
28/2/18	Field Day under Brigade Arrangements.		
1/3/18	Preparation instruction in organised bombing, Rapid fire practice by platoons, Live Bombing, Box Respr. Drill	Organised bombing by Companies at 18th Bn. trench	COULOMBY SPRINGHEM.
2/3/18	Brigade Sports Meeting.		
Lewis Gun Instruction for backward men, under Lewis Gun Officer. Instruction for Signallers and Runners, and Intelligence Section, under their respective officers. Class for Junior N.C.O's. Class for Stretcher Bearers.			

J.S. Lane Captain,
Adjutant 17th Battalion A.I.F.

17TH BATTALION. A.I.F.

APPENDIX 5
25/2/18.

S T A F F R I D E.

Reference Brigade Training Memo. 15/469.

1. "A" and "B" Company Commanders, and 50% Officers of all Companies, will attend in the morning of 26th instant. Mounted Officers will meet the Commanding Officer at Headquarters Mess at 9.15 a.m. Dismounted Officers will assemble at "C" Company Headquarters at 8.30 a.m., and move independently via 20th Battalion Headquarters, cross BOULOGNE ROAD, and turn North along road through BOIS de BAVENGHEN to cross-roads in V.27.d, arriving there by 10 a.m.
2. "C" and "D" Company Commanders and other mounted officers will meet Major FUSSELL, MC., at Battalion Headquarters Mess at 12.45 pm. Dismounted Officers will assemble at "C" Company Headquarters at 12 noon, and move independently as per instructions above.
3. Note Books, hard pencils, and Brigade Sketch Maps will be taken.
4. Attention is particularly directed to General Instructions from Field Service Regulations Part I, affecting the preparation of messages; also found in Army Book 153.

J. G. Barrett

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

SECRET

17TH BATTALION, A.I.F.

Copy No 14

OPERATION ORDER NO. 001.

Battalion Headquarters,
20th February 1918.

Reference sheet 27a, S.S.
3rd, S.S.
Area sheet 1/10,000.

1. In conjunction with "A" Brigade on the north, and "A" Australian Infantry Brigade on the south, the 17th A. I. Brigade will attack the enemy on "A" day.

2. At zero hour, "B" Battalion will attack on the right, "A" Battalion on the left (boundaries as per map). They will capture and consolidate the line V.27.c.7.3 to V.28.d.3.3.

"C" and "D" Battalions will be in reserve at V.28.c.6.3. At zero plus 30 minutes, they will move forward into old front line and enemy trenches in V.27.a and b - "C" on the right, "D" on the left.

3. The enemy are occupying concrete pill boxes at V.27.b.10.30 - V.27.b.10.40 - V.27.b.8.7 - V.27.d.4.7, with machine guns; also two lines of trenches at V.27.a.6.7 to V.27.b.6.8, and V.27.d.4.8 to V.27.b.6.8. A machine gun at V.27.b.8.8, and another at V.27.b.6.8.

4. The artillery will not co-operate.

5. The 17th A. I. Battery will put up a smoke barrage round V.27.b from zero to zero plus 1 1/2 minutes (20 rounds will be fired).

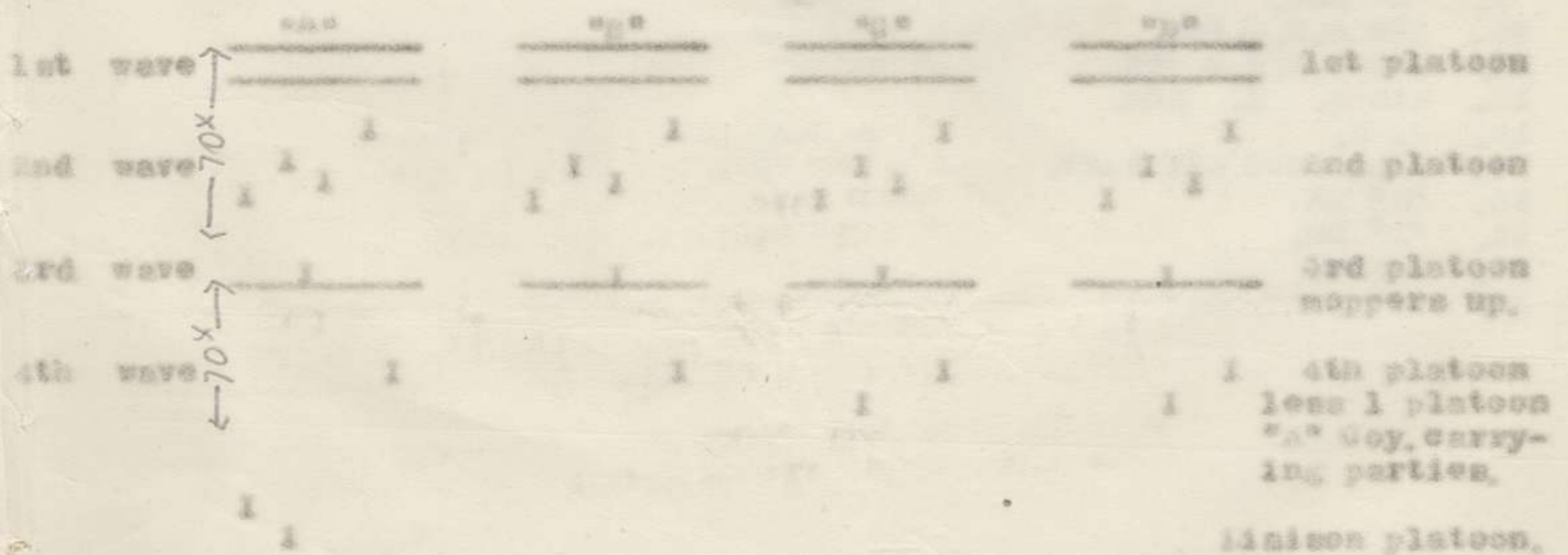
6. The 17th Australian S.S. Company will detail one section to each attacking Battalion. The section with "A" Battalion will move and take up positions as under:-

1 Gun	No. 1 Coy.	in rear of 2nd platoon	Vicinity V.27.a.8.8.	Cover right flank
1 Gun	No. 2 Coy.	"	V.27.a.8.1.	Fire along northern edge, side, Bayengham
1 Gun	No. 3 Coy.	"	V.27.a.8.1.	"
1 Gun	No. 4 Coy.	"	V.27.d.8.0.	Cover left flank.

7. "A" Battalion move to point of assembly at V.28.c.7.3 along road south edge of Bois de BAYENHAY, through V.27.d and V.28.c, and turning north at V.28.c.9.4 - be in position at zero minus 30 minutes.

8. Jumping-off tapes will be on approximate line V.28.c.6.8 - V.28.c.8.3 forward tapes will also be laid.

"A" Battalion will attack in the following order:-



"A" Company will detail one platoon to maintain contact with "A" A. I. Brigade. They will meet a party from "A" A. I. Brigade at V.28.c.1.8.

"B" Company will detail 1/2 platoon to "A" Company as carrying party.

Brigade Headquarters at V.28.a.7.3.

ress - Battle order.

100 rounds S.S.A.
2 rifle grenades.

(2).

- 10. Dress (continued).
 - 4 sand bags,
 - 1 iron ration,
 - 1 emergency ration,
 - Balance day's rations.
 - 2 S.O.S. rifle grenades per platoon.
- 11. Synchronisation of watches at times to be stated later.
- 12. Zero day and hour to be notified later.
- 13. R.A.F. at
- 14. All prisoners of war to be sent under escort to Brigade Headquarters.
- 15. Advanced Brigade Support Centre at
- 16. Carrying platoons will carry the following:-
 - 10 boxes No. 20 Mills.
 - 2 " S.A.A.
 - 20 tins water.
- 17. Transport officer will reconnoitre routes.
- 18. Contact patrol work will be carried out by No. 69 Squadron R.F.A. The front line infantry will use red ground flares when aeroplane sounds its alarm horn or fires a very light.
- 19. Battalion advanced Headquarters in support line.
- 20. A C E N O R I S D O R.

J.P. Barrett
 Captain,
 Adjutant 17th Battalion A. I. F.

COPIES FOR:-

- 1. War Diary.
- 2. File.
- 3. C.O.
- 4. "A" Coy.
- 5. "B" "
- 6. "C" "
- 7. "D" "
- 8. "E" Bn.
- 9. "A" Bde.
- 10. 5th A.M.C. Coy.
- 11. 5th A.I.L.S. Bty.
- 12. 5th A. I. Bde.
- 13. C. S.
- 14. Transport officer.
- 15. "C" Bn.
- 16. "D" Bn.
- 17. Spare.
- 18. "

17th Battalion A.I.F.
 17th Battalion A.I.F.
 17th Battalion A.I.F.