

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

Infantry

Item number: 23/72/28

Title: 55th Infantry Battalion

June 1918



AWM4-23/72/28

CONFIDENTIAL.

ORIGINAL.
~~DUPLICATE.~~
TRIPLICATE.

Volume 28.

263

Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

55th Battalion A.I.F.

FOR

June 1918.

Signature of Officer compiling

W. A. Tomkinson Capt.

Signature of Officer Commanding

P. Woods Lt Col

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.)

263

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
DAOURS. (In billets) CORPS RESERVE near PONT NOYELLES.	1.6.18		<p>It was 3 a.m. before all personnel had completed the move from the Line to the Billets in DAOURS. It was along trip from the Line and, naturally, after the strenuous tour, all men were fagged and weary the next morning, but all Companies were on time at the starting point for the move to the QUERRIEU-PONT NOYELLES area, which was made in accordance with Battalion Order No. 111, second phase (Appendix 7 of volume 27). The distance of the march was about 5 miles and was completed at about 10.30 a.m., The remainder of the day was devoted to "putting the house in order", extra bivouacs being constructed and dilapidated ones re-erected. Battalion Headquarters was established on the banks of the Lagoon in PONT NOYELLES at about H.11.d.4.0. The Battalion was disposed in trenches and bivouacs in Card System Sector Rear and Fran Sector Rear of the LA HOUSOYE System of Army defences as shown on attached sketch (Appendix 1). In all the Battalion occupied an area of about 5 square miles, "D" Company being about 2½ miles from Battalion Headquarters. The Battalion is the advanced Battalion of the Brigade and besides being responsible for for protection we will probably be the first unit to move in the event of enemy action on the Corps Front.</p>	Appendix 1.
	2.6.18		<p>The C.O., Lieut. Colonel P.W.Woods, D.S.O., M.C., visited the men in their bivouacs. Instructions were issued that during the first 3 days in Corps Reserve the men would be rested as much as possible. Bathing sites were selected in the River Hallue and Companies have already started bathing parades in small parties. Arrangements made for all Officers and senior N.C.O's. to acquaint themselves with all the Army Defences and to reconnoitre routes forward. At about 11 p.m. several enemy gas shells burst in QUERRIEU. Some burst quite close to our Transport Lines but none of the personnel or animals were affected.</p>	
	3.6.18		<p>All personnel were put through the hot baths at QUERRIEU. The G.O.C. Brigade (Brig. Gen. J.C. Stewart, D.S.O.) inspected the Battalion 1st. Line Transport during the afternoon and seemed very impressed with their turnout. The Battalion Recreation Committee under the Chairmanship of Major E.W. Stutchbury, M.C., commenced preparation for an Aquatic Sports Programme in the near future and made arrangements for Cricket Matches etc. Major Stutchbury was also appointed to the Brigade Sports Committee.</p>	
	4.6.18		<p>All personnel were again paraded to the QUERRIEU baths, when a change of underclothing was issued. After a period of 3 months, without sending anyone on leave, the Battalion was asked to nominate 5 men for leave to the United Kingdom, permission also being obtained to send 2 Officers daily to ABBEVILLE on leave. Notification received that 2nd Lieut. D.T.W. Neville, D.C.M.</p>	

WAR DIARY

JUNE 1918.

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.)

263

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
CORPS RESERVE near PONT NOYELLES.	4.6.18 (cont.)		<p>had been awarded the Military Cross for his acts of gallantry whilst on patrol in the VILLERS-BRETONNEUX Sector as related in Vol. 27, page 7. This gallant Officer had dinner with the Commanding Officer, who congratulated him in the presence of all Officers.</p> <p>A letter received by the G.O.C. Brigade from Colonel C. Hamilton, Commanding the 137th. Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army, was passed to the Battalion. The Colonel's letter expressed his thanks for the treatment meted out by this Brigade to his Officers during their stay with us last month. He said: "It seems to me that nothing which you could have done to make our stay most interesting and profitable was left undone..... We have all returned with the feeling that the Australians both Officers and men, are the 'best ever'. The enthusiasm among our people over your brains, quality and spirit is very high".</p> <p>Training Memo. No.1 (Appendix 2) and Training Syllabus (Appendix 3) were issued setting out the policy and programme for the training period which commences to-morrow.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>5.6.18 Training was carried out in accordance with Training Syllabus, and the Lewis Gun and Rifle Grenade Schools were assembled in accordance with Training Memo. No.1. It is months since we have had an opportunity like this for good training and consequently our trained Lewis Gunners and Grenadiers have been reduced by casualties etc. The C.O. inspected all Companies on parade. The men are all keen to improve their knowledge, but of course as yet our parade-ground work and field training is in need of "brushing up".</p> <p>-----</p> <p>6.6.18 The training programme set out in the syllabus was departed from to allow all personnel to go through the Brigade testing chamber at the QUERRIEU Chateau. All respirators were tested and new ones issued to replace any unserviceable. During the afternoon Companies carried out aquatic recreational training in preparation for the forthcoming sports.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>7.6.18. Training carried out in accordance with syllabus. The musketry practice by "A" Company shows that the men generally are still efficient with the rifle. The Lewis Gunners and Grenadiers are making good progress at the school and the prospects are that when next we go into the Line we will have ample fully qualified specialists with these weapons.</p> <p>"The Role in Corps Reserve and Action in case of Attack" (Appendix 4) was issued to all Companies and arrangements made for all Officers and N.C.O's to reconnoitre routes to the various Assembly Positions. All men of "C" Coy. whose 12 months inoculation period had expired were inoculated by the M.O. to-day. This afternoon the Battalion carried out a programme of Aquatic</p>	<p>Appendix 2 do. 3</p> <p>Appendix 4</p>

D. D. & L., London, E.C. (A8001) Wt. Wr 71/M2031 750,000 5/17 Sch. 52 Forms/C2. 6/14

2

WAR DIARY

JUNE 1918.

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.)

262

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
CORPS RESERVE near PONT NOYELLES.	7.6.18 (Contd.)		Sports in the PONT-NOYELLES Lagoon. The Lagoon is an ideal spot and all ranks took a keen interest in all events. Entries were numerous and each event was closely contested.	
	8.6.18		Training was carried out in accordance with Syllabus. The G.O.C. Brigade, accompanied by the C.O. saw all Companies in training. The General was particularly interested in the musketry range practices and the live practice demonstrated by the Grenadier School. Inoculation was continued about another 100 men being completed. Captain N.G.M. Brown of the A. and I. Staff joined the Battalion for a 3 months period attachment for experience in the field.	
	9.6.18		Divine Service was conducted by Chaplain MacAuley. The Brigade Aquatic Sports were held during the afternoon and great interest was shown by the men of this Battalion who secured a large number of trophies. Notification received that the following had received honours and awards in the King's Birthday Honours List:- Capt. C.B. Gow, Military Cross 2816, R.S.M. Dunne, J.H., D.C.M. Lieut. Colonel P.W. Woods, D.S.O., M.C. Mentioned in despatches. Captain K.H. Brock (Detached with 14th.) (L.T.M.B.) do. do. Lieut. R.A.B. Peake do. do. The C.O. congratulated the recipients of decorations.	
	10.6.18		Training with accordance with Syllabus. Field exercises carried out by Companies demonstrated that there is a vast improvement brought about by the past few days training. Inoculation was continued. The Lewis Gun and Rifle Grenadiers Schools have now concluded the course with the result that we have 80 men newly trained in each of these weapons.	
	11.6.18		In Aust. Corps Routine Order No. 157, the Corps Commander congratulates Chaplain Rev. D.S. Brumwell on his courage and devotion to duty in attending to casualties during the shelling of AUBIGNY on 23rd/24th. April last. The final day for Company training has marked a wonderful improvement in field training, but we still require another day's refresher training before we attempt a Battalion operation. The inoculation of the Battalion was finished to-day. The inoculation has interfered with training a good deal, in that men are exempt from duty for 48 hours afterwards.	

D. D. & L., London, E.C. (A800) Wt. W1-71/M2031 479,000 6/17 52-52 Fortus/C1.4/4

WAR DIARY

JUNE 1918.

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.)

263

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
CORPS RESERVE near PONT NOYELLES	12.6.18		Training was carried out under Company arrangements, the 4 hours being devoted to Company attack practice. Reconnaissances were made for a Battalion Operation to-morrow. Towards evening the enemy burst anumber of H.E. and Shrapnel in PONT NOYELLES and QUERRIEU but there were no casualties to men in this Battalion.	
	13.6.18		<p>During the morning the Battalion carried out a Battalion Attack Scheme in accordance with the following, which are attached:-</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Attack Scheme (Appendix 5) Battalion Operation Order No. 112 (Appendix 6) Local Sketch (Appendix 7)</p> <p>The attack was not very successful and was certainly not demonstrative of what the Battalion is capable of. The C.O. and the G.O.C. Brigade who witnessed the practice adversely criticised the execution of the operation. The more or less lack of success may be put down to the fact that this is the first opportunity we have had since the beginning of the year for training under Battalion arrangements.</p> <p>The enemy again fired a few shells into the Battalion area during the evening but without doing any damage.</p>	<p>Appendix 5 do. 6 do. 7</p>
	14.6.18		As yesterday's training demonstrated the need for more platoon training to-day has been devoted to the training of Platoon in Assault. The day has produced good results. Additional instructions as to our Role in Corps Reserve were issued to all concerned (Appendix 8)	Appendix 8.
	15.6.18		Word was received that the Division would relieve the 2nd. Division in the Line to-morrow, and that the 14th. Brigade would go into Divisional Reserves. Preparations were made throughout the day for to-morrow's move.	
	16.6.18		The Battalion relieved the 23rd. Battalion A.I.F. in "C" Divisional Reserve area. Details of move are set out in Battalion Operation Order No. 113 (Appendix 9) The move entailed a march of about 2 hours. The Battalion dispositions are in a very compact area in I.18.d. and J.13.c. (Sheet 62D). Battalion Headquarters is established at I.18.d.70.45. The bivouacs are on a series of terraces and are well protected from enemy observation. Working Parties were provided to relieve those found by the outgoing unit which were employed on various deep dugouts and signal test posts etc. Our positions overlook the ANCRE River, and the Villages of HEILY, MERICOURT, RIBEMONT and BUIRE, further East, come within our view. These places are considerably changed since the winter of 1916/1917, when they were often our rest billets.	Appendix 9.

(A800) Wt. W. 71/M2031 750,000 5/17 Sch. 52 Forms (Cz. 1.6/4)

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.)

263

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
DIVISIONAL RESERVE near BONNAY.	17.6.18		The day appears to have been very quiet in the Line. Many of the men not employed on working parties enjoyed the recreation of cricket and swimming. The Officer in charge of the detachment of the 4th. Tank Battalion, located in HEILLY, visited the Battalion and discussed with the C.O. his action should he be required to co-operate with us in a counter-attack.	
	18.6.18		There has been a distinct change in the weather, and to-day is cold and windy. The G.O.C.Bde. visited the Battalion during the morning. HEILLY was subjected to very heavy enemy shelling towards evening.	
	19.6.18		Again cold with light showers. The Battalion is now finding daily an aggregate of 2 Officers and 140 other ranks for work on defences in the Reserve area. In the afternoon the C.O. and Adjutant reconnoitred the routes forward to all units of the 15th. Brigade in the line left. The front was very quiet. HEILLY was again heavily shelled towards evening.	
	20.6.18		The period in Divisional Reserve has been uneventful, but this has been the most uneventful day. There is nothing of interest to enter in the diary.	
	21.6.18		Still cold and windy. Baths have been established near BONNAY by the Div. Baths Officer. All men of the Battalion not employed were put through this morning. The C.O. and Adjutant reconnoitred the 8th. Bde. Sector of the Line this afternoon. In preparation for the forthcoming tour in the Line, and in expectation of having to carry out a minor operation, "B" Coy. under the command of Captain K.R.Wyllie, has been selected to commence training as a raiding party, and are already shaping well.	
	22.6.18		The remainder of the Battalion went through the BONNAY Baths to-day. Word was received that the Brigade Platoon A.R.A. Competition will be held to-morrow. No.1 Platoon, under the command of Lieut. J.S.Bowe, has been training for some time, and the C.O. is very satisfied with their work and feels confident of the result. Word received that the undermentioned had been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal in the King's Birthday Honours List:- No. 4800, Sgt. W.H.Jenkins, Orderly Room Clerk. No. 167, Sgt. W. Petts, Transport Sgt. The C.O. congratulated the recipients. An epidemic of influenza has broken out amongst some of the units of this Bde., but so far, the	

D. D. & L., London, E.C.
(A800) Wt. W. 71/M2031 750,000 5/17 Sch. 52 Forms/C2.0/14

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.)

263

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
DIVISIONAL RESERVE near BONNAY.	22.6.18 (Contd.)		55th. Battalion forward has not been affected. There are some cases, however, amongst the Transport personnel at LA HOUSOYE.	
	23.6.18		To-day records another victory for the 55th. Battalion. No.1 Platoon was successful in winning the Competition. The Platoon is now to represent the Brigade in the Divisional Competitions which will be held about 28th. Inst. The enemy again shelled HEILLY and the gun positions in the vicinity.	
	24.6.18		The weather has warmed up again. The "Dog's disease" is having a more serious effect on our Transport personnel, and is spreading in other units. Every precaution is being taken by the R.M.O., and so far there have been no cases forward. It is understood that the disease is spreading amongst the units of the 8th. Bde., and, in anticipation of relieving one of their Battalions, in the next few days, we have asked the A.D.M.S. to issue instructions for the dugouts and trenches to be fumigated.	
	25.6.18		Orders received that the Battalion would relieve the 32nd. Battalion in Line Right, Right Brigade Sector on the night 26th/27th. Reconnaissances were made forward to-day by all Officers.	
LINE RIGHT N. of SAILLY-LE-SEC.	26.6.18		Preparations were made during the day for the move forward. The relief was carried out in accordance with Battalion Operation Order No.114(Appendix 10), and was completed with only one slight casualty at about 2.35 a.m., 27th. It was only recently that the 2nd. Division advanced their line in this sector, and the sector is not yet thoroughly organised for defence. The front line is a series of small posts, the Battalion extending over a frontage of 2,400 yards. The position held by the Brigade came under enemy observation from the high ground held by him South of the SOMME. The VILLERS-BRETONNEUX Plateau and VAIRE Wood which have played an important part in our recent history, can be clearly observed from any part of our line. The enemy opposite is very active with his machine guns, with which he sweeps the whole of our front throughout the night. This, added to awkward road and trench communication promise to make the supply of material and rations to the front line very difficult. The Battalion dispositions are as shown on attached sketch (Appendix 11).	Appendix 10. Appendix 11.
	27.6.18		During the early morning the C.O. inspected all Front Line positions, and prepared plans for making the defences more secure. This will entail a good deal of work on Posts and C.T's. The day has been marked for pronounced aerial activity, and several engagements took place.	Appendix 11.

D. D. & L., London, E.C. (A800.) Wt. W. 71/M2031 750,000 5/17 Sch. 52 Forms/C2.10/14

9

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.)

263

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
LINE RIGHT N. of SAILLY- LE-SEC.	27.6.18 (Contd.)		One machine was seen to fall in enemy's lines, but could not be identified. Snipers have been active on both sides, but there has been very little shelling. -----	
	28.6.18		The Support Line and COOTAMUNDRA C.T. were heavily shelled by enemy during the morning, but otherwise shelling has been normal. Enemy sniping has been reduced considerably by our fire. The proximity of our Front Line to the Hun renders our patrolling difficult. Two patrols were sent out, but returned without incident. The Divisional A.R.A. Competition was held to-day, but our No.1 Platoon only succeeded in getting second place. The honours went to the 15th. Bde. -----	
	29.6.18		At 2 a.m. 180 gas projectors were successfully discharged on the ravines in K.25.d. We have again accounted for a few of the Boche Snipers, and we can claim to have established our superiority. Enemy artillery has not been over active during the day, but at night he increased with periodical barrages over the whole Bde. front. The shells included a lot of gas. -----	
	30.6.18		A quiet and uneventful day. A little aerial activity. The C.O. received advice from the G.O.C. Bde. that he would probably be required to carry out a minor operation in the next few days. ----- -----o0o-----	

WAR DIARY

OF

55th. BATTALION

FOR

1918.

J U N E

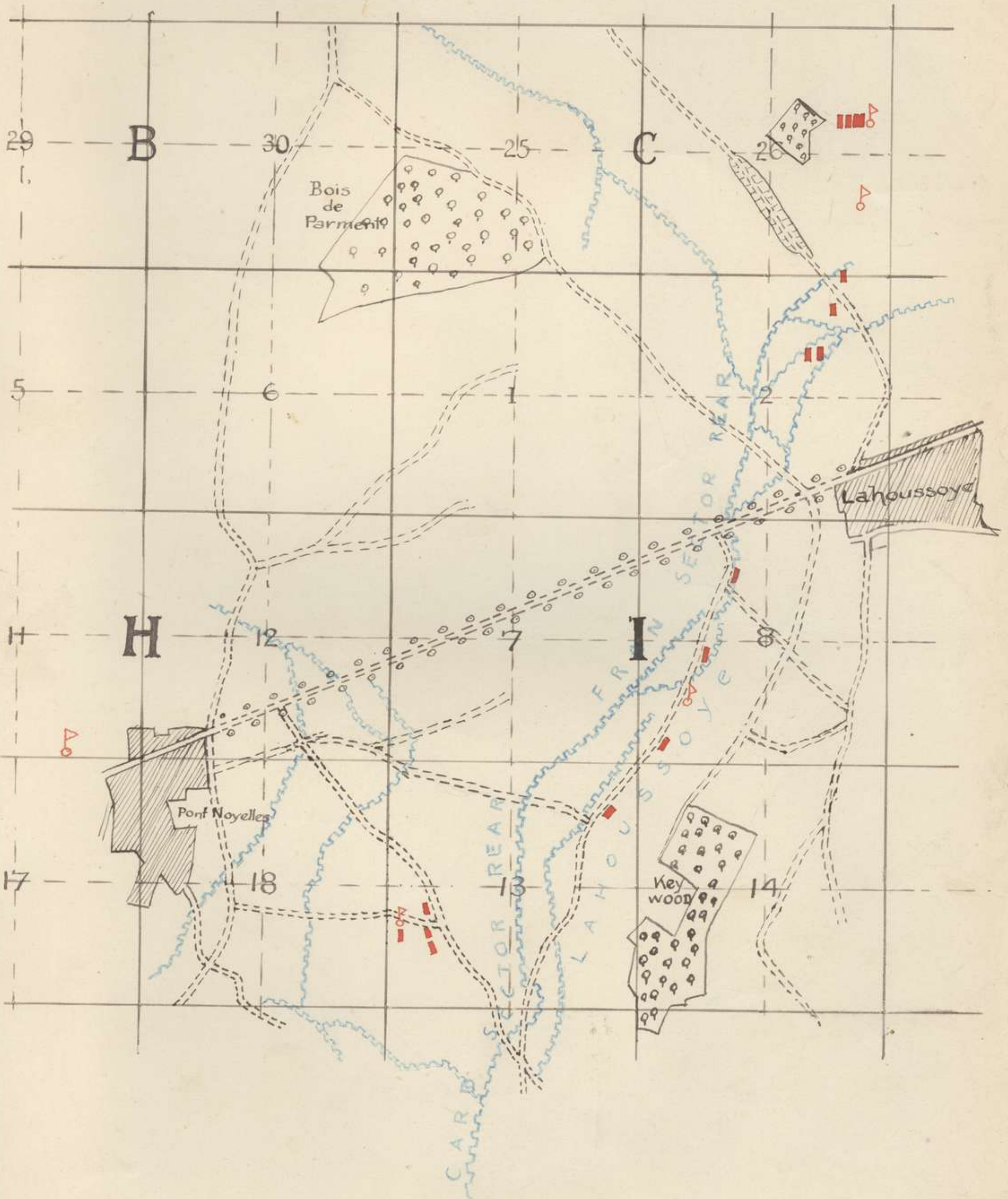
LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
1.	Sketch Map
2.	Training Memorandum No 1
3.	Syllabus of Training
4.	Role in Corps Reserve
5.	Battalion Attack Scheme
6.	Operation Order No. 112
7.	Sketch Map
8.	Further to "Role in Corps Reserve"
9.	Operation Order No. 113
10.	Operation Order No. 114
11.	Disposition Map
12.	Quartermaster's Report
13.	Transport Officer's Report
14.	Daily Strength, Casualties etc.
15	RMO's REPORT

-----000-----

263
Vol 26 - app 1.

263
- Part of Sheet 62^D S.W. 1/20,000 -



1. During the 6 days training period in this area, it is intended to utilise the time available in the progressive training of the Platoon on the lines laid down hereunder. If training space is available for Company training the programme for the last 2 days may be extended to include 3 or 4 hours Company work.
2. The training period will extend from 5th. June (inclusive) and each training day will be of 4 hours (8.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.) It is intended that afternoons should be devoted to sports, recreational ~~xxxxxx~~ training, competitions etc.
3. Subjects of training will comprise a progressive program as follows:-
 - First 2 days. Section and Platoon close order work.
Elementary Musketry.
P. Training and Bayonet Fighting.
 - 2nd. 2 days. Section and Platoon Training and Field Exercises, Musketry Range Practices and Elementary Musketry.
Platoon and Company Route Marches.
 - 3rd. 2 days. Platoon and Company Training and Field Exercises.
Musketry Range Practices.
Platoon and Company Route Marches.

A training Syllabus will be issued on the lines indicated above.

4. It has been decided that the best results will be obtained if Lewis Gun and Bombing instruction is given under Battalion arrangements. The whole period is to be devoted to training Rifle Grenadiers in the use of the No.36 Grenade. This opportunity will be taken to put as many of those men who have not had Lewis Gun instruction through a few days course. The following table shows the arrangements for the 2 courses:-

LEWIS GUN COURSE. Chief Instructor- Lieut.W.E.Campbell, L.G.O.

Duration	Instructors.	No. of Candidates	Remarks
5 days	Cpl. T.McMahon, B.Coy. " F.West, M.M. D." T/Cpl.H.Archer C.Coy " W.Shirley D." L/Cpl.A.H.Turner, M.M. A.Coy " L.Smith A.Coy " E.A.Farrell B.Coy " H.J.Gould B. " " H.Mortlock C. " Pte. J.C.Sheills A. " " A.J. Winner C. " " W.H.McNeich D. "	20 per Coy.	To be men who have had little or no previous instruction.

Lieut. C.R.Mahoney and 2/Lieut. W.Dillow will also attend for instruction.

RIFLE GRENADIERS COURSE. Chief Instructor-Lieut A.W.Panton, B.O.

4 days	Sgt.H.McKenzie A.Coy " W.R.Harpley B. " " A.Bates C. " Cpl.C.W.S.Taylor D.Coy.	20 per Coy.	To be men who have had previous instruction in Rifle Bombing.
--------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------

Both Courses will assemble at 6 p.m. on the 4th Inst. as one school with Lieut. A.W.Panton as Commandant. The School will be accommodated in bivouacs to be constructed in the vicinity of B.Coy's position. A, C, & D. Coys. will arrange to deliver to Lieut. Panton at B.Coy's Hqrs. by 10 a.m. to-morrow sufficient shelters to accommodate all men from each Coy. A working party of 1 N.C.O. & 15 men will be supplied by B.Coy at same time and place for constructing shelters. Sufficient cooking utensils will accompany personnel attending school, which will be rationed as a separate unit on and after 5th. Inst.

5. Instructions will be issued daily as to the training of Signallers and Intelligence Personnel.
5. Fifteen minutes anti-gas training per day will also be included in the Syllabus. Special attention is directed to S.S.534, "Defence against Gas" and S.S.212 "Yellow Cross Shells and the Measures to be taken to counter-act their effects".

55th. Battalion Syllabus of Training, 5th. to 11th. June, 1918.

5th. June.	Section and Platoon Close Order Drill	2 hours
	P.T. & B.F.	$\frac{1}{2}$ "
	Preliminary Musketry Instruction	1 "
	Anti-gas Training	$\frac{1}{4}$ "
6th. June	P.T. & B.F.	$\frac{1}{2}$ "
	Section and Platoon Close Order Drill	2 "
	Preliminary Musketry Instruction. ("A" Coy. to pay particular attention to preparation for Range Practices)	1 "
	Anti-gas training	$\frac{1}{4}$ "
7th. June	"A" Coy. Musketry Range Practices and Elementary Musketry Instruction	4 "
	"B" Coy. Platoon Route Marches combined with Platoon Field Exercises.	$3\frac{1}{2}$ "
	"C" Coy. Company Route March combined with Platoon Field Exercises.	$3\frac{1}{2}$ "
	"D" Coy. Preliminary Musketry Instruction in preparation for Range Practice	1 "
	Coy. Route March	$2\frac{1}{2}$ "
	All Coys. anti-gas training	$\frac{1}{4}$ "
8th. June	"D" Coy. as for "A" Coy 7th.	
	"A" Coy as for "B" Coy 7th.	
	"C" Coy. as for "D" Coy 7th.	
	"B" Coy. as for "C" Coy 7th.	
	All Coys. 15 minutes anti-gas training.	
9th. June	Divine Services.	
10th. June	"C" Coy. as for "A" Coy 7th.	
	"B" Coy preliminary instruction in preparation for Range Practice	1 "
	Company Training and Field Exercises	$2\frac{1}{2}$ "
	"D" Coy. Concentration March to conclude with Coy. Field Exercise	$3\frac{1}{2}$ "
	"A" Coy. as for "D" Coy.	
	All Coys. 15 minutes anti-gas training.	
11th. June	"B" Coy as for "A" Coy 7th.	
	"C" Coy as for "D" Coy. 10th.	
	"A" Coy. as for "B" Coy 7th.	
	"D" Coy. as for "C" Coy 7th.	

NOTES.

- Afternoons will be devoted to organised games, aquatic sports, and recreational training.
- Lewis Gunners and Grenadiers will be trained as laid down in Battalion Training Memo No. 1.
- The detachment of Lewis Gunners having depleted Coys strengths considerably, Platoons should be amalgamated to bring them up to strengths sufficient for purposes of training.
- Training for Signallers and Intelligence Personnel will be notified daily.

4.6.18

Signed N. Pinkstone, Captain,
Adj. 5th. Battalion A.I.F.

263

SECRET

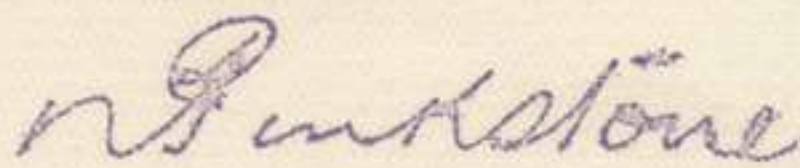
Vol 28 - app 4.

APPENDIX. 412

Copy No. 10.....

55th. BATTALION, A.I.F.Role in Corps Reserve and Action in case of Attack.

1. (a). Role of Division in Corps Reserve- While in Corps Reserve the division will normally be employed offensively for the maintenance of the present positions of the forward divisions.
 (b). The division is disposed in Brigade Groups as follows:-
 (i) 15th. Inf. Bde. Group. ALLONVILLE-CARDONETTE, with battalion at FRECHENCOURT.
 (ii) 8th. Inf. Bde. Group. RIVERY CAMON with battalion at LA MOTTE.
 (iii) 14th. Inf. Bde. Group. QUERRIEU-DAOURS with battalion about LA HOUSOYE.
 14th. Inf. Bde.
 14th. L.T.M. Battery.
 15th. Field Coy. A.E.
 14th. Field Amb.
 15th. M.G. Coy.
 (c). Disposed as above the role of the Division will be either the retention of the LA HOUSOYE Plateau or the covering of AMIENS.
2. The normal role of the 14th Bde. Group is the defence of the LA HOUSOYE system in which the forward Battalion (55th. Bn.) is disposed as the nucleus garrison.
3. The Division may also be employed to meet the following eventualities:-
 (a). An attack south of the SOMME.
 (b). A threat on the left flank of the Corps.
 (c). Loss of ground to the north of the Corps necessitating a defensive flank.
4. In the event of 3 (a) and the temporary loss of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX the 14th. Inf. Bde. may be called upon (i) to attack in a South Easterly direction from assembly positions in O.16 and O.17 or O.21 and O.27. (ii) to attack in an Easterly direction from the general line of the FOUILLOY-CACHY Road.
5. In the event of 3 (b) it may be necessary-(i) for the Brigade to operate offensively in conjunction with other Brigades of the Division or (ii) to occupy defensively the whole or portion of the BRESLE Switch.
6. In the event of 3 (c) the normal action will be the occupation of the spur south of FRECHENCOURT and the St. GRATIEN spur forming a defensive flank facing North.
7. All officers and senior N.C.O.'s. will acquaint themselves with all the battalion dispositions, and all men will be instructed as to the normal role of the Battalion. Reconnaissances will also be made of routes forward to (a) the assembly positions in O.16, O.17, O.21 and O.27, (b) the BRESLE switch and (c) the spur South of FRECHENCOURT and the St. GRATIEN spur.
8. One troop A.L.E. and one platoon of Cyclists have also been detailed to operate with the Division.



Captain,
Adjutant 55th. Battalion, A.I.F.



Vol 28 - app 5

55th. Battalion, A.I.F.

Battalion Attack Scheme. 13.6.18

Ref. Map. - 62D.N.W., 1/20,000. and Special Sketch.

GENERAL IDEA.

A BROWN FORCE is entrenched on the approximate line H.8.c.0.2., H.1.d.0.0., H.1.c.0.2., G.6.d.0.0. The advanced posts of a GREEN FORCE run approximately along the line from S.E. corner of LITTLE MAI WOOD, hedge at H.7.a.9.4. to G.12.b.0.5. In order to straighten out the line and strengthen the defences before ALLONVILLE, a Brigade of BROWN is allotted the task of capturing LITTLE MAI and the high ground to the N.W., consolidating on the BLUE LINE. Artillery will cooperate with a creeping barrage moving at the rate of 100 yards in 3 minutes.

SPECIAL IDEA.

A Battalion of BROWN will capture the area bounded on the N.W. by the line H.1.c.6.2., E.7.a.0.C. and on the S.E. by the hedge running through E.7.a. and c. up to the point H.7.c.25.70.

Note: The enemy will be represented by flags:-

- M.C's. - Blue flags.
- 2 white flags close together - 12 infantry.
- Barrage - Line of fatigue men with flags.

-----000-----

SECRET.

Copy No. 12

55th. AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION ORDER No. 112.
-----o-----Ref. Map: France 62D
Special Sketch.13.6.18.

1. (a). The 14th. A.I.Bde., on the 13th. June 1918, will capture LITTLE MAI WOOD and the high ground to the N.W., and will consolidate on the BLUE LINE,
(b). The 55th. Battalion will capture the area bounded on the N.W. by the line H.1.c.6.2., H.7.a.0.0., and on the S.E. by the hedge running through H.7.a. and c. The 54th. and 56th. Battalions will be operating on our right and left flanks respectively.
2. (a). "A" Coy. (Right) and "C" Coy. (Left) will capture the area up to MAI DALZELL Trench, which runs approximately H.7.a.1.3. - H.7.a.8.2., and will consolidate on that line, After a halt of 15 minutes "B" Coy. (RIGHT) and 2 platoons of "D" Coy. (Left) will "leap-frog" through the first objective and will capture all the area up to , and will consolidate on, the BLUE LINE. Two platoons of "D" Coy. will be held in reserve in our present front line. The inter-company boundary will be the line H.1.c.9.1.- H.7.c.15.80.
(b). The Companies will be in position in hopping-off line 15 minutes before zero. The advance will commence at zero plus 3 minutes. All Coys. will move off together, keeping in close mass formation until clear of enemy's barrage. As the advance continues, Coys. will gradually shake out into the normal attack formations. "B" and "D" Coys. will keep in close support until the first objective is reached.
(c). Dress: Fighting Order. Each man will carry the following :-
 - 120 rounds S.A.A.
 - 2 sandbags
 - 2 rifle grenades
 - 2 ground flares
 - 48 hours rations (waterbottles to be filled).
 Certain men will also be in possession of :-
 - Wire-cutters
 - Hedging gloves
 - Smoke bombs
 - very pistols and flares
 - S.O.S. rockets.
3. The artillery barrage will open on the present S.O.S. line at zero, and will remain stationery for 3 minutes, when it will advance at the rate of 100 yards in 3 minutes. On reaching the line 150 yards beyond the first objective the barrage will halt for 15 minutes. The final halt will be made on the line 200 yards beyond the BLUE LINE.
4. The whole area of attack will be covered. All enemy strong points and M.G. positions will be consolidated, a small garrison being left in each.
5. Zero hour will be notified later.
6. The R.M.C. will establish R.A.P. near Bn.H.Qrs.

/7.

2.

- 7. Reports to En. H.Crs. which will be established near hedge at H.l.c.8.l. The Sig. Officer will make all arrangements for communications, and will notify all concerned as to location of signal stations etc. Watches will be synchronised 1 hour before zero.
- 8. ACKNOWLEDGE.

R. Stone
 Captain,
 Adjutant 55th. Battalion, A.I.F.

Issued at 11 p.m. to :-

C.O. 55th. Bn.	Copy No. 1
O.C. A.Coy.	2
" B. "	3
" C. "	4
" D. "	5
Sig. Officer	6
Int. "	7
R.M.O.	8
War Diary	9 to 11
File	12

Copies to :-

- H.Q. 14th. A.I.Bde.
- C.O. 54th. Bn.
- C.O. 56th. Bn.

Instructions to accompany 55th. Bn. O.O. No. 112. 13.8.18.

The Battalion will assemble near the small hedge in H.I.C.,
S. of BOIS de MAI, before 10 a.m. Companies will move to the
training ground independently and by the shortest route.

Dress: Battle order with felt hats.

Each rifle grenade section will carry 4 dummy rifle grenades.
A few smoke bombs will also be carried.

The Intelligence officer will have all flags placed in position
before 10 a.m. Fatigue men will be found from Bn. H.Qrs.
personnel.

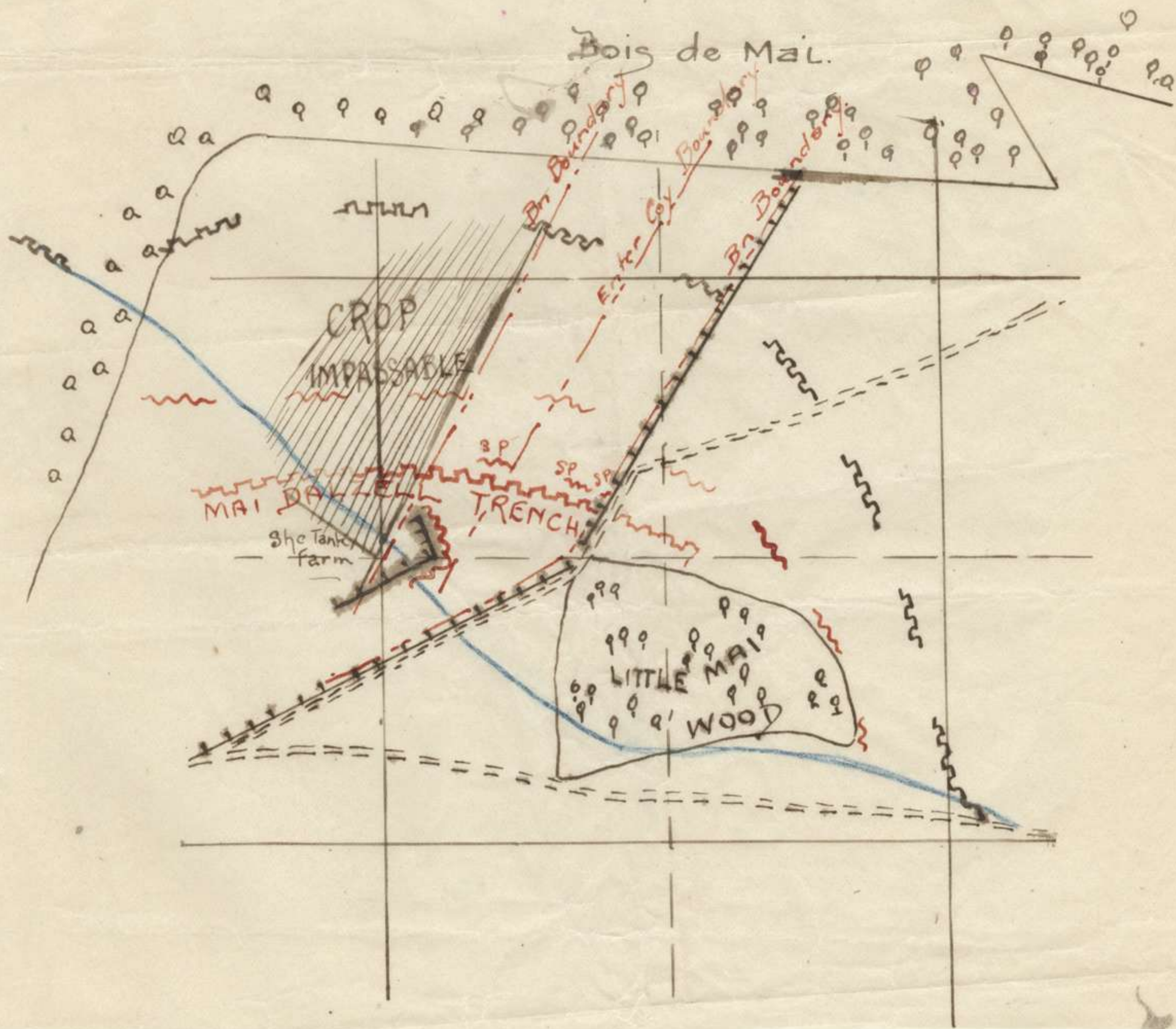
-----OOO-----

Telrs app 6

263

Part of Squares G & H. Sheet 62^D
N.W. 1/20000 Edition 2A. 4o.
accompany 55th Bn Operation Order
NO 112.

Vol 28 - app 7



263

Vol 28 - app 8

APPENDIX. 9. 18

SECRET.

Copy No.....

55th. BATTALION, A.I.F.

Role in Corps Reserve and Action in case of attack.

Further to the "Role in Corps Reserve" issued 5.6.18.

1. Owing to the alterations in the dispositions of the 31st. French Corps and the consequent alteration in the role of the Division in Australian Corps Reserve, the following additional instructions are issued:-

2. To deal with an enemy attack South of the SOMME the task of the Division is to secure the point of junction between the Australian and the 31st. French Corps.

3. (a). The main line of resistance of the 31st. French Corps is the CACHY SWITCH running through U.3.c. - U.9.a. - U.8.b. and c. - U.7.d. - U.13.a. and c. - U.19.a. - T.24.d. (East of CACHY and GENTELLES).

(b). A counter attack regiment (approximately equal to one of our Brigades) is held in readiness in the vicinity of the NICHOLAS SUPPORT (T.3.c. and d. and T.9.a.) which has as its task the retaking of the CACHY GENTELLES PLATEAU and the main line, in the case of its loss.

4. (a). In the event of 3 (b) the 8th. Inf. Bde. will replace the French counter attack regiment in the NICHOLAS SUPPORT.

(b). If the counter attack fails it is possible that 8th. and 14th. Inf. Bdes. will be called upon to counter attack, the 8th. from the West and the 14th. from the North or North West.

(c). The position of readiness for the 14th. Bde. will be in O.7.d. and O.13.b.

5. Reconnaissances will be made forthwith of the areas of the position of readiness and approaches thence to the CACHY GENTELLES PLATEAU.

14.6.18

R. Maston
Adjutant 55th. Battalion, A.I.F.

55th. AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION ORDER No. 113.

Ref. Map: 62D.

15.6.1918.

- 263
1. (a). The 5th. Aust. Div. (less artillery) will relieve the 2nd. Aust. Div. (less artillery) in "C" Divisional Sector between 14th. and 16th. June, 1918.
(b). The 14th. A.I. Bde. will relieve the 5th. A.I. Bde. in Reserve bde. Area on 16th. Inst.
 2. The 55th. Battalion will relieve the 20th. Battalion in the Reserve dispositions in I.18. and I.24. Relief to be complete before 9.45 a.m., 16th. Inst.
 3. (a). Coys. will move independently to Coy. areas which will be allotted by the advance party, and will report completion of move to Bn. H.Qrs. before 9.30 a.m.
(b). An advance party consisting of Lieut. W.E. Campbell and 1 Officer per Coy. will assemble on AMIENS-ALBERT Road at S.W. entrance to LA HOUSOYE at 5 p.m. and will proceed to new area by march route. These Officers will reconnoitre shortest routes and will check all trench stores, tents, trench shelters, etc. prior to giving receipts for same. Copies of receipts to be forwarded to Bn. H.Qrs. as soon as possible after relief. The advance party will guide parties into position o-morrow morning.
 4. Nucleus personnel will proceed to FERNOIS under instructions issued separately.
 5. (a). All camps and bivouacs will be left in a clean and sanitary condition, and receipts will be obtained for all bivouacs, trench shelters, tents, stores, etc. Copies to be forwarded to Bn. H.Qrs. as soon as possible after relief.
(b). O's.C. will take over in new area Defence Schemes, works policies and responsibility for demolition of bridges and roads, together with all maps and sector information available.
 6. Lewis gun limbers will report to Coys. at 6 a.m. One limber will report to each Coy. to pick up Officers' valises at 5.30 a.m. sharp. These limbers must not be delayed. Cookers and Lewis gun limbers will proceed to new area with Coys.
 7. Bn. H.Qrs. will close at FONT NOVELLES at 6 a.m. and will open at same time in new area.
 8. ACKNOWLEDGE.

R. P. ...
Captain,
Adjutant 55th. Battalion, A.I.F.

Issued to:-

C.O. 55th. Bn.	Copy No. 1
C.O. A. Coy.	2
" B. "	3
" C. "	4
" D. "	5
Sig. Officer	6
R.M.O.	7
R.Q.M.	8
Transport Officer	9
War Diary	10 to 12
File	13

Vol 28 - app 10

263

SECRET.

Copy No.

55th. AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION ORDER No. 114.

Ref. Map: 62D.

26.6.1918.

1. (a). The 14th. Aust. Inf. Bde. will relieve the 8th. Aust. Inf. Bde. in Right Sub-sector of "C" Divisional Area on night 26/27th. June, 1918.
(b). The 55th. Battalion will relieve the 32nd. Battalion in Line Right.

2. (a). The relief will be carried out as follows:-

"B" Coy.	55th. Bn.	will relieve	"D" Coy.	32nd. Bn.	Line Right
"D"	"	"	"B"	"	Line Left.
"A"	"	"	"A"	"	(1 platoon, Support.
					(2 " Front Line.
"C"	"	"	"C"	"	Reserve.

(b). The Battalion will not move from present position until 10 p.m. Upon receipt of orders from Battalion Hqrs. Coys. will move off in following order :-

- B. Coy.
- D. "
- A. "
- C. "
- Headquarters.

During march forward an interval of 50 yards between platoons will be maintained.

3. All trench stores, S.A.A., S.O.S. Signals, Shelters, General Purpose and reserve Rations will be taken over and receipts for same will be forwarded to Bn. Hqrs. as soon as possible after relief.
Lieut. A.W. Panton will be responsible that positions at present occupied by the Bn. are handed over in a clean and sanitary condition to incoming units. Receipts will be obtained for all Trench Stores etc. handed over.
4. Completion of relief will be notified Bn. Hqrs. by the following priority wire: 218/1161.
5. Battalion Hqrs. will close at present location at 10 p.m. and open at same time at J.22.d.2.4.
6. ACKNOWLEDGE.

R. Mackintosh Captain,
Adjutant 55th. Battalion, A.I.F.

Issued at 4 p.m. to:-

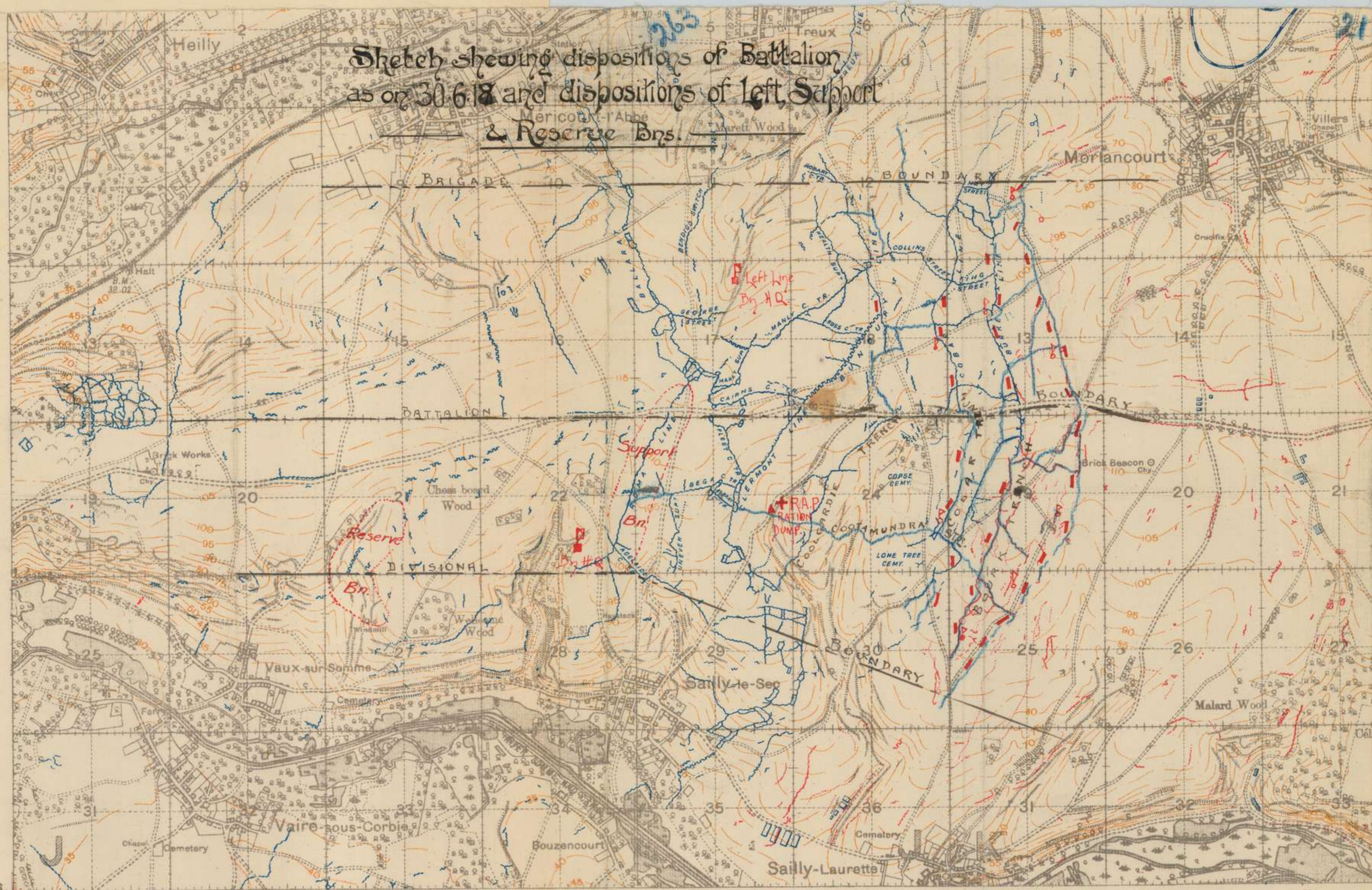
C.O. 55th. Bn.	Copy No. 1.
O.C. A. Coy.	2.
" B. "	3.
" C. "	4.
" E. "	5.
R.M.O.	6.
R.Q.M.	7.
Transport Officer	8.
14th. A.I. Bde.	9.

263

263

21

Sketch showing dispositions of Battalion as on 30.6.18 and dispositions of Left Support & Reserve Bns.



52760 m. S. 132000 m. W. G.S.G.S. 2742 Scale 1:20,000

Yds. 1000 500 0 1000 2000 4000
Metres 1000 500 0 1000 2000 4000

21

283

Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to fading and bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.

Feb 28 - App 11

A horizontal wavy line drawn in blue ink.

263



WAR DIARY → VOLUME 28.

Appendix 12

Quartermaster's Report for June, 1918.

Rations.

Rations as drawn from the A.S.C. continue to maintain a high standard, the percentage of bread and fresh meat being good.

Food.

The Cooks continue to do their work most thoroughly in preparing food of a high standard and good variety. During the time the Battalion has been in the front line, we have been able to send forward nightly: stew or curry, hash, puddings, boiled meat and bacon. In addition to this the men were able to prepare, with the aid of trench cookers, tea and cocoa supplied by the A.I.F. Comforts Fund.

Baths.

Hot baths and an issue of clean clothing were arranged whilst the Battalion was in Reserves.

Boots.

52 new pairs of boots were issued during the month and 176 pairs repaired by the Battalion Bootmakers.

Clothing.

During the month 60 suits of new clothing were issued, and when last inspected, the clothing throughout the Battalion was found in good repair.

Salvage.

The amounts of fat and paper returned during the month were:-

Fat	3050 lbs.
Paper	3987 lbs.
Cardboard	663 lbs.

Comforts Received.

The following Comforts were received from the A.I.F. Comforts Fund:-

Cocoa and Milk	27 cases
Sox	1 bale
Tommy Cookers	2 cases
Biscuits	5 "
Tobacco	4 "
Cigarettes	5 "
Milk	8 "
Fruit	8 "
Shirts	10 cases
Reading Matter	1 Case
Oatmeal	8 bags
Sugar	3 "

Signed C.B.GOW , Captain,
Quartermaster 55th. Battalion, A.I.F.

WAR DIARY - VOLUME 28 - APPENDIX 13TRANSPORT OFFICER'S REPORT FOR JUNE, 1918.ANIMALS.

The animals are all in good, hard condition. Their lines are in a splendidly sheltered position in the large wood near FRECHENCOURT. At present we are 1 mule and 1 charger short of establishment.

HARNESS.

All harness and saddlery is in a good state of repair.

FEED.

Up to the usual standard. There has been no grazing owing to the distance from lines of suitable ground. A small amount of clover has been cut and brought back from the forward areas.

WAGONS.

Seven wagons have now been thoroughly repaired and repainted. The water cart indented for last month has been drawn and our second one condemned. One G.S.limbered wagon body has been drawn. Of the remainder of the wagons 2 are in a very bad state of repair and are awaiting inspection. All accessories are complete and the limber covers have been made waterproof with a coat of paint.

WORK.

The work during the month has been a little lighter. A fair amount of Engineer material was carried towards the end of month.

PERSONNEL.

All Transport personnel were very fit until the Influenza, which is so very prevalent at present, attacked them during the last week. 28 are now off duty.

/Inspections.

263

2.

INSPECTIONS.

Brigadier General J.C. Stewart, D.S.O. inspected the 1st. Line Transport on the 3rd. and complimented the C.O. on the turnout, and asked me to convey his appreciation to the men. He said that the turnout was the best he had seen that day. The A.D.V.S. was satisfied with the condition of the Lines.

Signed. R.A.B. PEAKE, Lieut.
Transport Officer, 55th. Battalion

Summary for June 1918 showing
Strength, Casualties etc. day by day.

Date 1918	Strength		Reinforcements Joined		Killed	Wounded	Missing	Hospital
	Off	On	Off	On				
June 1	50	751				1		
" 2	50	750						
" 3	50	755		5				
" 4	50	755					1	
" 5	50	765		12			4	
" 6	50	762				3	5	
" 7	51	765	1	6		3	1	
" 8	50	763		1		1		
" 9	52	768	2	6			1	
" 10	52	768					1	
" 11	52	760				1		
" 12	52	755					1	
" 13	52	759		7			1	
" 14	52	760		1				
" 15	52	761		1			1	
" 16	52	775		15			2	
" 17	52	775						
" 18	52	772					2	
" 19	52	773		1			1	
" 20	52	773					1	
" 21	53	777	1	7			1	
" 22	53	777					1	
" 23	53	778		1				
" 24	53	778					2	
" 25	53	778					3	
" 26	53	778		2		1		
" 27	53	776				1		
" 28	52	774						
" 29	52	782		14		2	1	
" 30	53	776	1			4	2	
	53	776	5	79		17	22	



WAR DIARY.

55th Battn.

For the month of June 1918.

This Unit is now located in centre Battalion Section, Right Brigade.
The R.A.P. is located at I.22.d.4.8. Sheet 62 D.

- 1. WORK OF BEARERS. To render first aid to wounded and convey them to R.A.P.

LENGTH OF CARRY. About 1500 yds.

- DIFFICULTIES.
- 1. Narrowness of sap.
 - 2. Impossibility to evacuate wounded during day light.
 - 3. Frequent bursts of enemy machine gun fire all night.

DISTRIBUTION OF SUBBEARERS. 2 per platoon

- 2. PREVAILING SICKNESS AND GENERAL HEALTH. Influenza is very prevalent with high temperature and severe course. This affects general health to some considerable extent.
- 3. CONDITIONS OF LIFE OF MEN. In reserve positions sufficient dugout accommodation is available. In support trenches and advanced out posts the trenches afford partial shelter and during this tour of duty were dry underfoot.

SANITATION. The Sanitary conditions are very good. Interchangeable latrine buckets and Urinal absorption pits are in general use. Cook houses are kept clean and all refuse is buried.

(Signed) Capt. Mackay R.M.O.