

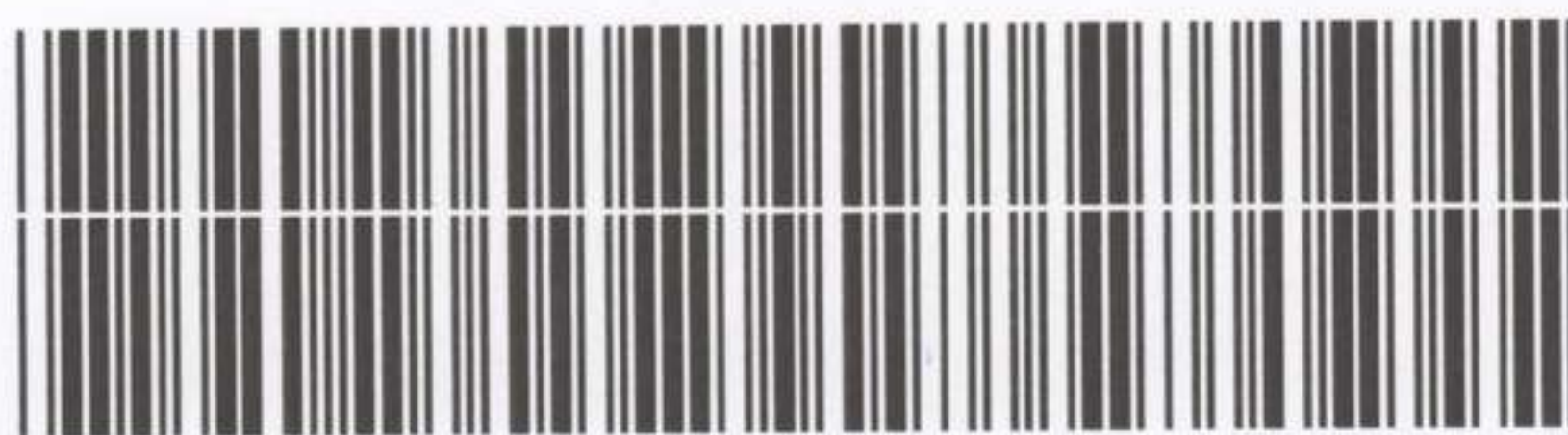
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Engineers

Item number: 14/7/21

Title: Headquarters 1st Australian
Divisional Engineers

September 1917



AWM4-14/7/21

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

H. Q.
1ST AUSTRALIAN
DIVL. ENGINEERS.

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.

No. *1011/17*
Date *September 1917*

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<i>Ypres Begijn</i>	<i>1st</i>		<i>Went up to Dickebusch with E.S.O. II & visited 23rd Div. as we probably take over from them. In afternoon went up to 2nd Army Workshops to see trial of monorail tramway which was a great success and should prove very useful.</i>	<i>all</i>
<i>do</i>	<i>2nd</i>		<i>A busy day in office. Visited 3rd F.Co. in afternoon.</i>	<i>all</i>
<i>do</i>	<i>3rd</i>		<i>Office work. 1 off & 10 men from each Field Co sent to the bridging school at Aire to study the English heavy bridges.</i>	<i>all</i>
<i>do</i>	<i>4th</i>		<i>Office work.</i>	<i>all</i>
<i>do</i>	<i>5th</i>		<i>Went up in car with A.A.S.M.E. to Corps H.Q. and attended conference with C.E. & C.R.E.'s re work to be done in new area. We are to make an artillery road round the Stuy de Bellewaerde.</i>	<i>all</i>
<i>do</i>	<i>6th</i>		<i>Started off at 3 am. in car to Ypres & out along the Menin Road to Binn Cross Roads. Walked up to Hooge and up to Clapham's Ln. which is practically our front line. Returned to Halfway House & inspected dugouts there. Drove back to Scottish Camp & also saw the large Scale Model there. Scale 1/50 horizontal & 1/12 vertical. a very fine model of the country East of Ypres. Then went up to Corps H.Q. & saw C.E. Orders received for 2 F.Co. to go up to new area tomorrow so early 1st & 2nd.</i>	<i>all</i>

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

H. Q.,
1ST AUSTRALIAN
DIVL. ENGINEERS.

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.

No.

Date

Sept: 1917.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Vieux Berguin	7 th		Left in car at 3am and went up to Corps H.Q. at Horgaaf when we picked up C.E. & went on up to Birr Cross Rds & then round the lake where the new road is to go. Went up to Corps H.Q. and in afternoon returned to Kruisstraat where our new H.Q. have been established.	
Kruisstraat	8 th		Saw 1 st Pioneer Bn no work. 1 st and 2 nd L. Cos arrived in area. 1 st F. Co. detailed for work with Corps Heavy Artillery.	
	9 th		Went up at 5am. in car to Birr Cross Roads & up on to new Road North of Stuy de Bellende & met Corps Command & C.E. there & returned with them to Horgaaf & saw start of new position road. Returned to Halfway House. Had conference of Field Co. Commanders & arranged their work.	
	10 th		Sir. Command arrived at 6.30am and after inspecting site proposed for D.H.Q. Walked with him along the Warrington Road to near Halfway House and returned via Hellfire Corner and Menin Rd. 2 nd Fld Coy started work early in morning.	
	11 th		Office work all day to square up.	
	12 th		Went out in car at 5.30am. to Birr Cross walked to Horgaaf and inspected work on road. Good progress has been made. Also inspected work on trenches being done by 2 nd F. Co. to provide cover in Chateau Wood. Met C.E. on way back. Also saw work	

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

H. C.,
1ST AUSTRALIAN
DIVL. ENGINEERS.

No. September 1917
Date

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.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Kruinstraat	12 th		(Cont.) 34 trucks which should have come up by Light Railway failed to arrive owing to being taken for armaments thus considerably retarding the construction of the road.	<u>see</u>
	13 th		Busy day in Office.	<u>see</u>
	14 th		Went out in Car at 5 am. to Bin Ans Roads & walked to Horge. Accompanied by Major Mathers O.C. 2 nd Fls. Inspected all work in vicinity of Horge, roads etc.	<u>see</u>
	15 th		Went up to D.H.Q. in Car at 9.30 am. and decided on plans for work of Sappers & Pioneers in forthcoming operations. 100 Inf. being allotted to each Field Coy for carrying purposes, which is a step in the right direction.	<u>see</u>
	16 th		Meeting of O.C.'s Companies to discuss details for work in forthcoming operations.	<u>see</u> Appen I
	17 th		Office work getting out details for operation etc.	<u>see</u>
	18 th		Went up at 10 am. to D.H.Q. at Dickelbush Farm. Did not do much all day as I had to get huts erected for my own accommodation. Have only taken draftsman with me.	<u>see</u>
Dickelbush (watercamp)	19 th		A busy day preparing for the operation tomorrow morning. All instructions issued to Field Coys & Pioneers. 1 st & 2 nd & 3 rd Fls. are with respective Brigades to construct Strong Points. Pioneers to construct tracks & 4 th Fls. in reserve.	<u>see</u>

WAR DIARY

H. Q.
1ST AUSTRALIAN
DIVL. ENGINEERS.

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.)

Date

September 1917.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Walker Camp	20 th		Attack took place at 5.40 am. this morning. Had a busy day as messages came in regularly all day and much good information was given. All Strong Points were reached and construction well in hand soon after line was captured. 2 nd F.Co had infantry party attached but 3 rd F.Co had none and no material reached them. 1 st F.Co relieved 2 nd & 3 rd by 2 am. men very much worn out as they worked continuously for 16 hours. Lt. Darbyshire 2 nd F.Co killed.	
	21 st		Another busy day. 1 st F.Co on strong points all day.	
	22 nd		2 nd F.Co relieved 1 st F.Co at 2 am. 5 th Aust Div relieving 1 st so 2 nd F.Co withdrawn at 10 pm.	
	23 rd		Handed over to C.R.G. 5 th Aust Div at 9 am. and rode across to Kruisstaal & re-established myself there. 1 st & 3 rd F.Co remain for Corps work also Pioniers. 2 nd F.Co going back with Div to Steenwerde.	
	24 th		Went up at 6 am. to Horge with Major Savage along Monorail tramway through Chateau Woods and across to Menin Road & inspected work being done on Road & Tramway by Pioniers. Programme of work changed owing to change of Corps Boundaries.	

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.

WAR DIARY

OR

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

1ST AUSTRALIAN
DIVL ENGINEERS.

Army Form C. 2118.

No. *September* 1917
Date.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Kruisstraat	25 th		Went up towards Hooze with Map Savage but got caught between two enemy barages and one ^{practice} over a barage and so there was another practice barage at 8.30am. we returned. Had to turn out 1 st F.L. about 10pm to repair Zouave Track.	<i>sum</i>
	26 th		Attack by 4 th & 5 th Divs. this morning. Engaged only on maintenance work.	<i>sum</i>
	27 th		Went out with Map Savage at 6am. to Bin Cross Roads & walked up to Bellevue Ridge and on to Westhoek where the 3 rd F.L. are working on hamway. Located line forward & went right onto Angas Ridge & inspected Road etc.	<i>sum</i>
	28 th		A busy day in the office squaring up reports & arranged with Lt. Col. Tunnally Coy to put one Section (140 men) on duty on Westhoek Ridge. 1 st F.L. released from Corps work.	<i>sum</i>
	29 th		Went out at 6am to Westhoek Ridge. Called in at Bde. H.Q. & saw G.O.C. Bde & Bde Map then also.	<i>sum</i>
	30 th		G.S.O.I came in re various works & Had conference at 2pm. of Preece & Field Coy Commanders to discuss forthcoming operations and made out the draft for Engineer Instructions.	<i>sum</i>

Summary of Events
C.R. P. Aust Div.

H.Q., Divisional Engineers,
1st. Australian Division,
September 16th. 1917.

Engineer Instructions.

With reference to Instructions No. 6 and Divisional Order No. 31 the following instructions are issued re Engineer work during the forthcoming operations:-

Engineers. 2nd. Field Company will work in the Right Bde. Sector and will construct strong points at:-

- | | | |
|---|------------------|---|
| 1. Lone House. | To be designated | A |
| 2. Black Watch Corner | do | B |
| 3. J.15.b.0.9. | do | C |
| 4. Bank from J.14.b.8.6. to J.14.b.8.9. | do | D |

3rd. Field Company will work in the Left Bde. Sector and will construct strong points at:-

- | | | |
|----------------|------------------|---|
| 1. J.9.c.85.20 | To be designated | E |
| 2. J.9.cent. | do | F |
| 3. J.9.a.5.3. | do | G |
| 4. J.9.c.1.5. | do | H |

The object of lettering the posts is to facilitate the sending of messages and it will be only necessary to mention e.g. Post A meaning Strong Point at Lone House.

1st. Field Company will be held in reserve under the C.R.E. and must be prepared to move forward at any time they may be required to reinforce, but as far as possible they will be kept back till the Reserve Bde. moves forward.

From the 19th. instant the Field Companies will be stationed at ZILLEBEKE BUND and will move forward when ordered by D.H.Q.

The 2nd. and 3rd. Field Companies when they move forward, will send an officer to Bde. H.Q. in the HOOGE Crater to obtain the latest information. The 2nd. Field Company will move via CLAPHAM Junction and the 3rd. Field Company via HOOGE and CHATEAU Wood.

Until the arrival of the Field Companies at the strong points the construction of these points will be carried out under Brigade arrangements.

Pioneers.

The 1st. Pioneer Battalion will be responsible for the maintenance of all communications, including Tramways, Mule and Duckwalk tracks and communication Trenches.

Two main routes will be established.

(i) From Chateau Wood at J.13.a.5.9. forward through GLENCORSE Wood to strong point at J.9.a.5.3. with branches to remaining strong points.

This track will be known as GLENCORSE Wood Track

(ii) From CLAPHAM Junction north of FITZCLARENCE Farm to strong point at J.15.b.0.9.

This will be known as LONE House Track.

/The Decauville

The Decauville Tramway running South of the MENIN Road will cross at J.13.b.0.3. and be extended by the best possible route through GLENCORSE Wood.

The Mono-rail Tramway will run from HOOGE through CHATEAU Wood parallel to road to about J.7.d.7.2. thence by best possible route through GLENCORSE Wood.

STRONG POINTS. The type of Strong Point will conform to the ground and the officer in charge of construction will use his own discretion.

Points A,B, & C must be specially sited with a view to counter attacks from the direction of CARLISLE Farm.

All points must be as strongly wired as possible and wiring should be carried out at the same time as other work.

An endeavour should be made to link up the strong points with one another even if it is only a marked patch and communication should also be started back to meet the main tracks.

If time permits, any banks, old dugouts, etc. which will give cover should be improved.

REPORTS. Reports should be sent in as usual and as often as possible and all reports on Engineer work whether done by Sappers or Pioneers should be sent to C.R.E. at Divisional H.Q.

Telegraphics reports should be sent in through Brigades at HOOGE CRATER and the despatch service from there or elsewhere should be freely used.

Reports should also contain any information about our own or enemy troops in the vicinity or anything else of interest.

It must not be forgotten that negative information is often of great value.

Field Companies must endeavour to keep in touch with the Infantry and in addition to the Strong Points assist them in any way possible.

Lieut.Colonel.,
C.R.E., 1st.Aust.Division.

Distribution:-

Copy	1	to	C.R.E.
	2		1st.Field Company.
	3		2nd. " "
	4		3rd. " "
	5		1st.Aust.Division.
	6		1st.Pioneer Battalion.

SECRET.

1ST AUSTRALIAN M.C., Divisional Engineers, DIVL. ENGINEERS. 1st. Australian Division, 27th. September 1917.	
No.	ES 241
Date	27/9/17

1st. Australian Division,

I have to report that I carried out a personal reconnaissance this morning.

ROADS.

(a) From BIRR Cross Roads to BELLEWARDE Bend the road is a single plank road at present in fairly good condition and fit for traffic.

(b) The Circuit from BELLEWARDE Bend round to HOOGE through CHATEAU Wood is almost complete.

(c) SECAUSPION Road from BELLEWARDE Bend to WESTHOEK is fair and is being rapidly planked. Near WESTHOEK it runs as shown by red line.

(d) From WESTHOEK Cross Roads SMITH Road is in fair condition as far as the point where it crosses HONEBEEK. It has been a good road and has not been much damaged and is passable now for light traffic. It has a hard metal bottom. Where it crosses the HONEBEEK it is rather soft and spongy but is passable and a little work will put it in good order.

(e) From the HONEBEEK to the two Pill boxes at J.2.d.8.6. the road is rather soft but can easily be prepared.

(f) I know little or nothing yet about the road beyond but believe it is rather cut up.

TRAMWAYS.

A 9lb push track runs as shown in blue from about BELLEWARDE Bend. The rails are laid to about J.7.a.5.5. and work is being done on it now by 3rd. Field Coy. and good progress is being made. approximately

~~xxxx~~ The proposed route is ~~approximately~~ as shown in blue up to J.2.d.7.7. and the going is good.

The track beyond J.2.d.7.7. has not yet been reconnoitred but it will probably have to run approximately as shown by dotted blue line.

DUMPS.

(a) A good site for a Divisional Dump exists in vicinity of red triangle in J.7.b.

(b) A fair site for an advanced dump exists in J.2.d.8.6. where there are two pill boxes.

ACCOMODATION.

(a) I had little opportunity to examine accomodation in detail. There are a large number of pill boxes. I visited that occupied by 13th. Infantry Bde. at J.1.d.7.2. It is a collection of pill boxes giving very fair cover. The entrance faces south east.

(b) The Right Bde. is in Pill box at J.7.d.10.9. but I am informed that the place is no good and is rather wet.

(c) Immediately south of WESTHOEK there is a good hill in which I am of opinion good tunnelled dugouts could be put as well as surface cupolas. I have wired to O.C., 1st. Tunnelling Coy. to see me re this. As good accomodation by road and tramway exists to WESTHOEK a good supply of material can be easily got up.

(d) There are two Pill Boxes at J.2.d.8.6. apparently in fair condition.

(e) Along the road from WESTHOEK northwards there are several fair trenches giving fairly good cover.

/ (f)

ACCOMODATION. (Contd.)

(f) I am having a detailed reconnaissance made at once of the whole area.

BRIGADE TRACKS.

LEFT BRIGADE. From I.9.d.5.5. there is an earth track full road width fit for traffic in dry weather which joins the 2. Sleeper Road about I.11.c.8.2. This could be used or the MENIN Road to BIRR Cross Roads thence by Plank Road to tramway crossing in J.7.b. thence via tramway to J.2.d.7.7. Beyond this point I have no information but they could join SMITH Road at J.3.a.3.2. and use it forward if it is in fit condition, or if a duckboard or mule track is made along it.

RIGHT BRIGADE.

Via Duckboard Track from HOOGE to WESTHOEK, thence by SMITH Road to about J.3.a.3.2. thence via tramline through J.3. and J.4.

WATER SUPPLY.

I am asking C.E. to supply me with sketch shewing present position of water mains and points.

I know there is a stand-pipe about I.12.c.5.5. alongside the road on the North side of it.

Water tanks could be put in if required at sites recommended for Divisional Dumps.

Lieut.Colonel,
C.R.E., 1st. Australian Division.