

AWM4

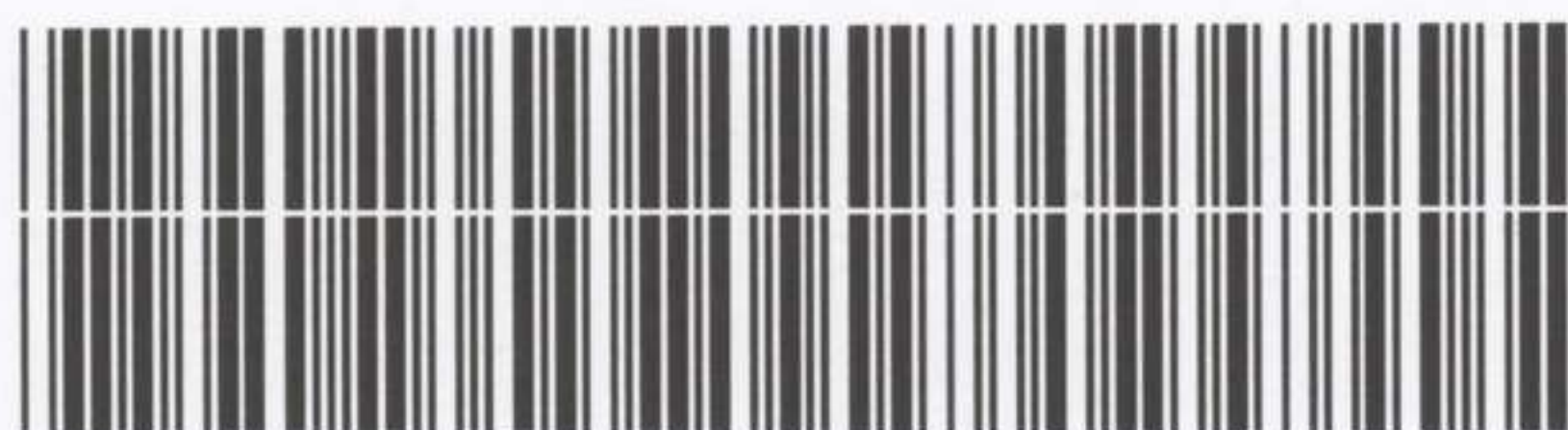
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War**

Machine Guns

Item number: 24/21/5

Title: 21st Australian Machine Gun
Company

May 1917



AWM4-24/21/5

21. M.G. Co

29697

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.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
In the field	4/5/17		Early morning parade. During the day No 3. Section carried out ball firing practice. New guns were tried also the new men. Both guns & men satisfactory. Afternoon demonstration of a machine gun barrage (indirect)	
-do-	2/5/17		Morning route march to site of old trenches in neighbourhood of QUEUDECOURT. Afternoon two football matches played against 3rd Aus. M. G. Company. At 5 P.M. urgent message received from D.H.Q. to place a section in front & to the right of LAGNICOURT. Positions reconnoitred by 9 P.M. Section all in position by 4 A.M. Remainder of Company in readiness to move forward at half hour's notice.	
-do-	3/5/17		Rough ground Drill & Combined Drill. Remainder of day still spent in receiving votes for Australian Commonwealth Federal Elections.	
-do-	4/5/17		Elementary tactical exercises & I. A. 2nd Lieut. MARTIN received advice that he had been awarded the MILITARY CROSS & COBERT E. T. the D.C.M. for work on 15th April. Company all paid.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
In the field	5/17		Morning carried out I.A. & Mechanism. Afternoon short route march. The section & sub section in the line relieved at 3 A.M. Rained	
-do-	6/5/17		Gave men a good spell today. Limbers are all ready packed in anticipation of the Company being called upon to move forward.	
-do-	7/5/17		Further brushing up in mechanism & Immediate actions. Afternoon football match between transport & remainder of Company. At 9 P.M. orders were received to place two guns for anti-aircraft work in neighbourhood of ASC dumps on BAPAUME - CAMBRAI road. Guns in position at 12 midnight.	
do	8/5/17		Morning completed full skeleton of S.A.A. Afternoon O.C & two section officers reconnoitred positions for guns in defence system of NOREUIL & arranged with O.C 8th & 22nd Aus. M.G. Companies to relieve their guns in the line tomorrow.	

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In the field	9/5/17		No 2 section relieved 4 guns of 22nd. Aus. M. G. Co at 4 P.M. Nos. 1 & 4 a detachment of No 3 relieved 8th Aus. M. G. Co by 10 P.M. Shelling very heavy. Also great discomfort caused by gas shells. Casualties One O. R. wounded.	
do	10/6/17		Visited all guns in forward area. One tripod obtained a direct hit from a 4.2 shell & was irretrievably damaged. Indented at once for a new one. As my HQ were advanced of all my guns shifted back to sunken road near NOREUIL. Visited 14th Aus. M. G. Co & 14th Aus. Inf Bde. HQ & obtained dispositions of guns on either flank.	
do	11/2/17		As a gun in a reserve position in NOREUIL-QUEANT valley has been relieved by a detachment from an English Company - re-committed & found a good position guarding our left flank. Gun placed in position there at 11-30 P.M. Heavy enemy shelling. Casualties 3 other ranks wounded.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
L. Heheld	12 5/17		An attack was delivered today by the Division on our left (An Imperial Division) & ourselves. Operation successful, line straightened & greater part of BULLE COURT captured. Very heavy enemy shelling. Casualties in Company N 1	
	13 5/17		Visited all forward guns. Found every thing correct. At dawn very heavy enemy shelling. He counter attacked positions won yesterday but was repulsed. Casualties in Company 2 O.R. wounded.	
	14 5/17		Hot day. Quiet day until 9-30 P.M. when enemy started putting over gas shells in thousands. From information gained from prisoners his attentions ^{intent} was to nullify our batteries & render the roads & the front line untenable.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
In the hills	16/5/17		Gas shells continued to fall in great quantities until 3-45 AM when enemy started a drum fire on our front line reserve positions. at 4-30 he attacked but was repulsed through rifle fire & bombs & fire & our artillery barrage. Casualties in the Company two other ranks wounded.	
- do -	16/5/17		Visited all guns. Found every thing correct. Extremely quiet day until 11 AM then shelling began rather heavily. Rained from 3 PM to dawn. Received 8 reinforcements to replace casualties. During night gas shells fell frequently. A 5" H.V. enemy gun is extremely annoying in this neighbourhood. Our casualties for last twenty four hours 2 O.R. badly wounded	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
In the Field	17 5/17		Quiet day for this part of the line. At 11 P.M. a very large quantity of gas shells were placed all around HQ. Gas appeared very strong. Casualties for the day 1 O.R. wounded.	
do	18 5/17		Shelling during day very heavy. Mostly 8" & 5.9". Village of NOREUIL received particular attention. One gun fired 1200 rounds at an enemy aeroplane. This machine was seen to fall about 1/2 mile behind German front line. Too indefinite though, to claim it as a victim to our fire. Casualties for last 24 hours nil. Arranged with 14th Aus. M.G. Company to relieve tonight. Visited MORCHIES-VAULX line & was shown positions by O.C. 15th AMBCo. to be used in case of necessity. The 2 sections & three guns of No 1 section relieved by day light without casualties. These seven guns are to be used in the MORCHIES-VAULX line in case they are needed.	
do	19 5/17			

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
In the Field	20/5/17		<p>Remaining two guns of No 3 Section & No 1 Section also four guns of Number 4 section all relieved without casualties & are billeted in RIENCOURT - LES-BAPAUME - Rode round position in VAUX-MORCHIES line showing them to section officers of Numbers 1 & 2 sections. In the neighbourhood of LAGNICOURT met General BIRDWOOD accompanied by SIR NEWTON MOORE.</p>	
-do-	21/5/17		<p>all guns relieved today by an English Machine Gun Company. Whole company now assembled at RIENCOURT. Orders received to proceed by march route to BAZENTIN tomorrow. Weather conditions favourable. As green feed is abundant horses and mules are much improved.</p>	
-do-	22/5/17		<p>Morning limbers packed. Camp cleaned up. Buck S.A.A (72,000 rounds) dumped at RIENCOURT and receipt for same obtained from "M" area Commandant. Marched out 2-45 P.M. arriving BAZENTIN 6-30 P.M. As men are extremely soft they feel the march very much. found billets in NIESSEN huts.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
In the field	23 5 1917		Marched out from BAZENTIN at 12-30 P.M. Hot march but on good roads. Arrived DERNANCOURT at 4-30 P.M. Made arrangements that the whole company receive the benefit of a hot bath tomorrow.	
DERNANCOURT	24 5 17		All men bathed at VIVIER MILL hot baths. Afternoon spent in having limbers washed. Corps M.G. Officer visited Company H.Q. at noon.	
-do-	25 5 17		Drew up syllabus of training for coming week. Allowed 3 officers & 4 Sergeants to proceed to AMIENS on leave for one day. Gun Drill, competitive, carried out during morning parade. Afternoon Machine gun signals. Hot weather.	
-do-	26 5 17		1/2 Hour Company Drill. Carried out instructions in care of gun before, during, & after firing. Afternoon half holiday	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
28/5/17 In the field			Work as per syllabus of training submitted to 1 st Aus. Div. & approved of by D.H.Q. Morning Company Drill, practice in packing gear on mules, & brush up in mechanism. Afternoon recreational training, mounting gun competitions, trip of war &c. 2/Lt C. D. RAYMOND evacuated to hospital as result of accident. Understand not seriously injured	
DERMANCOURT	29/5/17		Immediate action, Company Drill, lecture to men on overhead covering fire, direct & indirect. Afternoon practice in coming into action from limbers. Mules proved exceedingly good, fast & sure footed.	
do	30/5/17		Short route march of 5 miles. After return whole company washed limbers then treated them all with oil, preserving wood. Placed straw around hubs of limbers. Asked Divisional Headquarters & received the necessary permission to run a wet canteen.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
DERNANCOURT	31 X L		<p>Early morning parade. Morning parade Immediate action, stripping & assembling, Indirect fire explained. Afternoon belt filling & recreational training.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">W R French Major 21st Aus. M. G. Company</p>	

