

**AWM4**

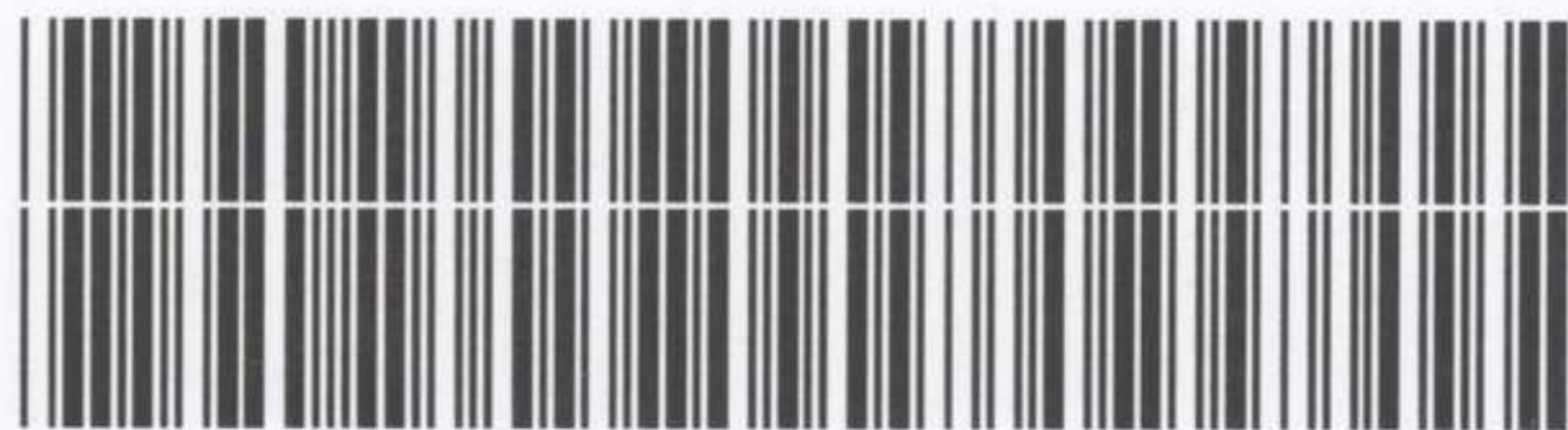
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,  
1914-18 War**

Machine Guns

**Item number:** 24/21/9

**Title:** 21st Australian Machine Gun  
Company

September 1917



AWM4-24/21/9



327

21<sup>st</sup> Mch

# WAR DIARY

or

## INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Army Form C. 2118.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Verux Boquim	1/9/17		<p><u>Parades</u> 9.0 am. Route March with Transport Drill Orders.</p> <p>2.0 pm. Washing and oiling Limbers</p> <p>One Officer transferred to 2<sup>nd</sup> A.M.G. Co</p> <p>One O.R. and 1 Mule rejoined from Transport Course.</p>	
	2/9/17		<p><u>Parades</u> 9.30 am. N.C.O.'s parade</p> <p>3.45 pm. Company parade Instruction on Barrage Line by Capt Nicholls</p> <p>1 off &amp; 32 O.R.'s of 1<sup>st</sup> Aust. Inf. Batt. (attached) rejoined unit.</p> <p>1 O.R. to hospital - off strength.</p>	
	3/9/17		<p><u>Parades</u> 9.0 am. Section Drill. 10.30 am. Packing packs - mules.</p> <p>2.0 pm. Instruction on Barrage Line by Section Officers</p> <p>1 O.R. to hospital.</p>	
	4/9/17		<p><u>Parades</u> 9.0 am. Gas helmet inspection. 10.15 am. Cleaning gun gear and repacking limbers. 2.0 pm. Instruction on Barrage Line by Sec. Offr.</p> <p>1 O.R. transferred to hospital</p> <p>1 O.R. proceeded to England on leave.</p>	



13

WAR DIARY

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Vaux-Berquin	5/9/17		<p><u>Parades</u> 9.0 am Instruction on Barrage Fire by Section Officers.            2.0 pm Immediate Action. Put helmets            3.0 pm. Instruction on Barrage Fire by Section Officers.            2. O.R.'s returned from Paris leave.</p>	
	6/9/17		<p><u>Parades.</u> 9.0 am Instruction on Barrage Fire by Section Officers.            2.0 pm. Company Inspection Full Marching Order. Instruction re            yellow packs.            1 O.R. to hospital. 1 O.R. promoted Substantive Corporal.</p>	
	7/9/17		<p><u>Parades</u> 10.0 am. Day parade. 1.0 pm Delousing parade.            1 O.R. rejoined from hospital.            1 off + 4 O.R.'s rejoined from Rest Camp Boulogne.            3 O.R.'s to Machine Gun School Grantham.</p>	
	8/9/17		<p>3 O.R.'s returned from hospital (6/9/17).  <u>Parades.</u> 9.0 am Route march with Transport Drill Order.            2.0 pm. Oiling Limbers + Drivers delousing parade.            5 O.R.'s promoted L/Cpls.</p>	2



132

WAR DIARY

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Vieux Berguin	8/9/17		4 O.R's appointed 1/Sgt as from 1/8, 4/8, 19/8 + 7/9 respectively.	
			1 O.R's " 1/Cpls 3 from 1/9 and 1 each from 1/8, 3/8, 19/8 + 26/8	
	9/9/17		Parades NIL	
	10/9/17		Parades. 9.0 am Barrage Drill 2.0 pm Bathing Parade	
			2 O.R's evacuated to Hospital	
	11/9/17		8 am the whole Company moved out from Vieux Berguin, and went by Motor Lorry to Chateau Segard - Dickelbusch 1 O.R to Cookery School - Hazelbrank	
	12/9/17		3 am Company went into line carrying ammunition and returned in Motor Lorries. 0 Casualties.	
			1 Off + 2 O.R's attached from 1 <sup>st</sup> A.M.G. Coy.	
	13/9/17		3 am Company went into line carrying ammunition, and returned in Motor Lorries. 1 O.R. Wounded.	
			2 O.R's transferred to Hospital	

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Chateau Segre	14/9/17		At 1.0 am the Company went into line to mark out positions	
Dickelbruch			At 5.0 pm the Company went into line making gun positions and carrying ammunition	
			1 O.R. to Veterinary School - Calais. 1 O.R. reappointed Driver from	
	28/8/17		1 O.R. returned from Cookery School. Hazebruck. 1 off and	
			2 O.R's of 1st A.M.G.C (attached) rejoined Unit	
	15/9/17		Prepared all guns and gun gear for action. 1 O.R. wounded A.A.	
			1 O.R. to hospital. 1st Gotha machines reconnoitred area.	
	16/9/17		12 Enemy machines including 2 Gothas over. High velocity	
			gun shelling vicinity. 2 O.R's to hospital.	
	17/9/17		1 O.R. rejoined from hospital. 1 off + 2 O.R's to hospital	
	18/9/17		1 Officer + 1 O.R. rejoined from Machine Gun School, Camiers.	
	19/9/17		At 6 pm the Company moved into line to take up S.O.S.	
			Group positions. Positions already prepared at J.B.B. 2 O.R's	
			Wounded. 1 O.R. rejoined from hospital. 25 O.R's to Reinforcement Camp	
			Caestre Attached :- 8 O.R's from 5th Batt. 7 O.R's from 6th Batt. 8 O.R's from 7th Batt. and 8 O.R's from 8th Batt.	



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Chateau Segond	19/9/17		Left Chateau Segond area by Sections at 15 minutes interval starting at 1730. Owing to congestion of traffic on road, the Company did not arrive at their positions until 2200. Work greatly hindered by wet and extreme darkness. Telephone cables were laid on to gun positions, but on account of shelling could not be maintained. All of the gun positions were found to be in a damaged condition. After some difficulty sections were in positions at 0800.	
Dickelbusch	20/9/17		Zero hour 5.40 am. Our guns were badly shelled during the night 19/20. Artillery barrage opened punctually at Zero. From reports received first objectives taken, and our troops were on their way to second objectives. Unofficial at 1100. Second objective gained. Unable to get in touch with Brigade until 11.30 am. Weather finer. Received official report at 11.30 am that counter-attack was expected. Received unofficial report at 12.30 pm that enemy was massing.	

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Chateau Segard Dickelbusch	20/9/19		<p>Intercepted message through phone that enemy were counter-attacking from J.10. C. Central + J.16. A.5.6 Guns ordered to open fire at 12.50 pm. S.O.S. Group opened fire at 1310. Received order at 1316 that front line had advanced over intended position. Message received at 11.55 that our front line showed at the following locations (from flares fired) at J.16. A.0.2 to J.16. A.1.5. J.9. D.6.0 to J.9. D.4.1. J.9. D.3.2 to J.9. D.2.4. and also J.9. D.1.6, J.9. B.1.1, J.9. B.4.4 + J.9. B.4.6. Received information that S.O.S. had gone up and machine guns were firing at about 1845. S.O.S. lines altered at 1650 owing to J Battery reduced to strength of 4 guns. Gave instructions for J Battery to alter its positions. Shelling still fairly heavy in the vicinity of Battery positions. About 2000 received orders to carry on with old S.O.S. line as our own troops were on original green line. Rations received O.K. 4 Vickers guns out of action,</p>	

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Chateau Segré Dickelmech	20/9/17		also 2 Tripods, mark IV. Casualties - Killed 5 O.R's, Id of Wds 1 O.R., Wounded 17 O.R's. 2 O.R's (attached) Wounded. 1 O.R. promoted T/Cpl	
	21/9/17		S.O.S shown on extreme right of front at 0445. Barrage machine Guns opened fire. Morning report to D.M.G.O as follows - Casualties and S.A.A expenditure morning quiet. D.M.G.O visited us about 1445. About 1500 enemy shelled area of right 3 Battery positions with heavy calibre. S.O.S shown on our front at 1906, and group opened fire. Guns reported firing as fast as possible at 1955. Ordered to cease fire at 2020 as the attack was apparently repulsed. 1 Off + 1 O.R Wounded. Total Casualties to 12 noon. Killed 5 O.R's, Wounded 19 O.R's. Missing 1 O.R. <sup>Rations</sup> <del>Casualties</del> received. O.K. Ammunition expended 60,000 rounds. One Officer evacuated wounded (shell shock)	
	22/9/17		At 3.30 am gas alarm was raised. Shell gas lasting about 15 minutes. In the evening pack mules arrived with S.A.A	



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Chateau Sigeur	22/9/14		for guns. Deposited at gun positions. Casualties - 1 O.R. Wounded.	
Duckbusch	23/9/14		<p>All the gun gear was in the tunnel by 0600. D.M.G.O called at 0700 and gave further information regarding operations. No definite orders are yet available. At 0800 all officers went over to recognize new positions for Creeping Barrage guns in keeping with orders received last night. Found suitable position J.H.A. extending as far to the right to edge of Glencourse Wood. Position further to left impossible owing to low-lying, water-logged ground. Situation normal. Orders given to all officers regarding construction of positions and S.A.A. Gun gear to be left in tunnel under ground, and all preparations re positions S.A.A. etc are to be completed by 0600 on 24<sup>th</sup>. Casualties 1 O.R. Wounded + 1 O.R. D.O.W.<sup>do</sup>.  2 O.R.<sup>o</sup> to Hospital  1 O.R. (attached) to Hospital  1 O.R. promoted to Corporal - substantive.</p>	



13

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Chateau Segard Dickelbruch	24/9/17		<p>Men moved out by sections at 0530 and moved to Dressing Station where Motor Lorries conveyed them to Chateau Segard. Guns + gun gear all left behind in Kunnell under guard. Signallers remained behind to lay cables to new positions. 2 O.R's to Hospital. 1 O.R. (attached) to Hospital. 1 Lt Cpl promoted. 1 Cpl. 2 O.R's returned from Hospital. 1 O.R. returned from leave.</p>	
	25/9/17		<p>At 1730 Company moved into line, and took up Barrage line in le. of Group composed of 21st and 1st A.M.G. COYS - 12 guns from each Company. <sup>AT J. 11th A.</sup> Casualties - 1 O.R. Wounded. 1 Off + 1 O.R. rejoined from Hospital. 3 O.R's to Hospital. 1 O.R. returned from Veterinary School. Calais.</p>	
	26/9/17		<p>25% of Company returned from 1st Angac Reinforcement Camp. 18 reinforcements O.R's joined up. 2 reinforcement Officers joined up. 1 Off. rejoined from Hospital. 1 O.R. (attached) Killed. 3 O.R. Wounded. 1 O.R. to Cadet School. Bisley. 1 O.R. to Hospital.</p>	

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6



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Chateau Sogard	26/9/14		<p>At 0100 all guns were in position. Positions had been previously prepared. Heavily shelled from 0200 to 0630. Zero was at 0550. Guns opened fire at 5.57 and ceased at 7.16. S.A.A expended 43,500 rounds. At 10.6 word was received that O.T. had reached red line, and were attacking blue line. At 10.17 all guns fired on "h" for 10 minutes. At 1500 Groups received orders to fire on J.22 B.6.5. - J.16 D.o.g. and J.17 A.1500 - J.17 A.1580. These were fired on from 1308 to 1321 when word was received that Division on right had not taken blue line, and also had to arrange S.O.S line from J.16 D.H.9 - J.11. C.o.o that counter attack was expected. At 1725 received orders from D.M.G.O - 5<sup>th</sup> Division to fire for 10 minutes on this line. At 1855 received word that Corps on L had advanced. At 1900 raised guns to 1900*. Guns answered S.O.S. at 1900. Revert orders to revert to S.O.S line. Guns again answered S.O.S. 2030. At 2100 much quieter.</p>	

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Chateau Segond	26/9/17		During last S.O.S. had to carry up S.A.A to all guns.	
	27/9/17		Morning quiet till 1200 when enemy shelled positions heavily with gas shells and large calibre H.E. S.O.S. was altered as follows. Batteries were switched 2° left and elevated 100° except 200° to ensure safety of our own troops. On orders from D.M.G.O. 5th Div. we opened on S.O.S. at 1535 for 10 minutes. All guns opened on S.O.S. at 1841 for 25 minutes. Rate of fire: 300 rounds per minute for 10 minutes, and 50 rounds per minute for 15 minutes. Batteries were again shelled with gas shells and H.E. Received word the M.G. fire at 1535 had very materially assisted in the breaking up of 2 Regiments of Infantry who were assembling for counter attack.	
			1 O.R. to hospital. 1 O.R. transferred from 1st A.M.G. Coy.	
			1 O.R. to Base. 1 O.R. off strength	
			1 O.R. from hospital	



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Chateau Segard	28/9/17		<p>S.O.S. on night at 0345 - guns fired for 5 minutes. At 0950 Coy. ordered to withdraw to rest area - Chateau Segard Area.</p> <p>This was completed by 1500. Total S.A.A. expended during these operations from 25/9/17 to 28/9/17 - 162,000 rounds.</p> <p>Made out all wills of men who had not already made one. Lt. Col. Shore conferred with D.M.G.O's 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Divs. re next operations. All men bathed. The majority were shaken and a few suffering from effects of gas.</p> <p>2 O.R's to Hospital.</p>	
	29/9/17		3 O.R's to Hospital.	
	30/9/17		2 O.R's to Hospital. 1 O.R. to Machine Gun School - Camieres.	
			1 Officer to Hospital.	