

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

Machine Guns

Item number: 24/10/23

Title: 5th Australian Machine Gun
Company

July 1918



AWM4-24/10/23

CONFIDENTIAL.

ORIGINAL.

~~DUPLICATE.~~

TRIPLICATE.

Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

5th A.M.G. Coy. 2nd A.M.G. Bn

FOR

July

1918

Signature of Officer compiling

W. S. Story Lt

Signature of Officer Commanding

W. S. Story

WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

5th Coy
2nd Aus M.G. Bn.

Army Form C. 2118.

101

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.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	July 1		Weather warm & dry. Enemy roads & tracks were fired on in P 14 d & 27 a, expending 4000 rounds.	
	2		All positions for Machine Gun barrage completed & ammunition in position & camouflaged. Two sections ^(8 guns) one of the 6th Coy & one of the 22nd Coy attached to the 5th Coy for barrage work also ready & all lines of fire laid out. 4000 rounds expended in harassing fire.	
Sheet 62 D SW PSE 1:70000.		3	Weather cool & windy. Major Ordish (Group Commander) moved to advanced Brigade Hd Qrs to conduct operations of the left "Group". LIEUTENANT THOMAS (Coy commander) came up from rear. Hd Qrs took up his position at the Crucifix at 029 010.60. All final preparations were made. Zero hour was given out at 3.10 A.M. 4th July & watches were synchronised.	
0.286.50.70 Ref Sheet		4	Weather bright & warm. Barrage opened at 3.10 A.M. after eight minutes harassing fire, and continued until 3.55 A.M. when the Infantry were reported as having gained & consolidated all objectives. 2000 7000 rounds expended over.	

W.G. 55/104/1/1

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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">O. 28 b 50.20. Ref Sheet b 2 D S W R S. E 1. 20000</p>	<p>July 4</p>	<p>6.30 AM</p>	<p>(Continued) Report by aeroplane that Enemy were assembling in P. 21 b rd A & C Batteries (8 guns) engaged this target. There was no further report Four guns of 2nd Coy cooperating with advancing Infantry reported in positions (new) approx P. 21 c 1.6 v P. 26 b.38 8000 rounds expended 1 officer & 60 R reported wounded through Group H.G. to their rear. Weather fair. Two men evacuated to hospital. During the night harassing fire was used & a protective barrage placed down as a preparation against counter-attack. The S.O.S was ordered by the G.O.C for assembling Enemy, this was immediately put down. Reports by of Enemy prisoners included that most of their casualties were caused by harassing fire by the machine guns. 82000 rounds expended. Weather bright & warm. S.O.S raised because of the line pushing slightly forward, Very active aerial patrols on both sides about 8 to 9 P.M. 4000 rounds expended harassing the Enemy on his road tracks</p>	

W. S. S. / 10/7/4

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D78 & 50.20	July 7th		Weather bright warm. Enemy used a quantity of yellow cross gas at random during the evening. 3500 rounds expended harassing communications. The line again moved slightly forward; patrols taking posts & consolidating them.	
Ref Sheet 62D SW & SE 1:20000	8th		Weather hot. 5000 rounds expended on new approaches shown by aerial photographs. Reconnaissance carried out with a view to putting two guns in the outposts, which was carried out by daylight in the morning. Lt WRIGHT had charge of these two guns.	
D78 & 50.20	9th		Weather warm, enemy attitude very apprehensive, & shelled Villers Bretonneux intermittently through the day & night also our front & support lines used yellow cross gas at random. 1000 evacuated sick. 3000 rounds expended.	
D78 & 50.20	10th		Weather cool warm, a thunderstorm at about 6 P.M. Sgt O'DWYER was killed by an enemy sniper he was buried near D26 C 95.95 (62D SE). 4500 rounds expended on communications.	

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D. 78 & 80. 20. Ref. Shuk b2 D SW & SE 1:20000	July 11th		Weather cool & fresh wind. Enemy attitude quiet. 1 gun damaged & 1 OR wounded by shell fire; but he was not evacuated. Two more guns were placed behind the outpost line about 26 to 8.5. LT CRANITCH had charge of these two guns which were in position by daylight on 12th. 4500 rounds expended harassing enemy communications.	
D. 78 & 80. 20. Ref. Shuk b2 D SW & SE 1:20000	12th		Light rain. Enemy on our front quiet; but on our right there was drum-fire most of the night. 5000 rounds were expended on harassing fire on communications. Again the line moved slightly forward, our Infantry bombing out posts & occupying them. Enemy aircraft much in the minority.	
D. 78 & 80. 20. Ref. Shuk b2 D SW & SE 1:20000	13th		Weather warm & damp. Two OR. evacuated sick. Enemy attitude very quiet; but nervous. 5500 rounds were expended on harassing fire.	W. G. G. G. G. G. Lt

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<p>Ref Shells 62 D SW + S.F. 1:20000 0.28 b.5.2.</p>	July 14th		<p>Weather warm & sultry. Enemy attitude more defensive. Hostile artillery had a quidge against Villees Bretonneux, & also wasted a few salvos on nothing in particular in P 28a. 10 R evacuated sick. 7500 rounds were expended on communications & reported movement. Two hostile low flying planes crossed our lines & fired two of our kite observation balloons.</p>	
	July 15th		<p>Weather hot & damp. Information received that the 1. R. opposed to us were relieved by troops of better morale. 11000 rounds were expended on harassing fire, roads infiltrated, tracks & communications, shown by aerial photograph. Enemy artillery shelled intermittently on the whole front, using mostly instantaneous fuse 4.2 H.E. in forward area, & in gully about 027 yellow cross gas was very prevalent.</p>	
	July 16th		<p>Weather hot & damp. 4.0 R. evacuated sick. A sub-section under LT WALLACE moved forward to a position just behind the outposts in P 32 a. 5000 rounds were expended on harassing fire. Again the front line was slightly advanced & improved. A hostile low flying plane fired a kite balloon at border.</p>	<p>4950 rounds</p>

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<p>Ref Sheet 67 D. SW r SE. 1:20000 D 78 to S. 7. (Villers Bretonneux)</p>	<p>July 1918 18th</p>		<p>Weather stormy & wet. Preparations were made for an operation by 5th & 7th A.I. Brigades to strengthen & straighten the front line at railway crossing in V 2 & across P 32 central. This operation was carried out at 9.45 P.M. when our 18 Bns opened a light barrage, supported by our M.G. Barrage, expending 43,500 rounds. Objectives were gained & held against a feeble counter attack about 14.20 A.M. on 18th.</p> <p>Weather hot; but showery. The relief of 5th A.M.G. Coy. by 7th A.M.G. Coy. was started at 3.30 P.M. & was not complete until 2 A.M. 19th, during which time the enemy heavily shelled all forward areas, & made a feeble attack which was quickly dispersed by Artillery & M.G. fire. Since the 5th A.M.G. Coy. went into this part of the line (21 days) the line advanced on an average about 2500 yds along our front.</p>	

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Ref Sheet b2D S.W. 1:20000 LA-MOTTE.	July 19th		Weather bright & warm. Reorganisation of Coy in the morning & bathing for everyone in the afternoon. Swimming enjoyed by all ranks in the morning. Gothas bombed around the camp at night, the only damage reported was a few casualties amongst the Artillery horse lines.	
	20th		Weather warm. Coy paraded for two hours in the morning, cleaning guns & equipment. Swimming in the afternoon. Sgt PENFOLD left Coy of D.C.B. England.	
	21st		Weather warm. Coy muster & parade in the morning only. Swimming all the remainder of the day. Gothas again bombed round the camp; but no damage reported in this locality to date.	
	22nd		Weather slightly cooler. Coy strength 11 & 201 O.R. all spare N.C.O's attended two hours map-reading under MAJOR HORE. Coy parade 9.30. P.T. & Bayonet fighting. Swimming & other sports in the afternoon.	wess/on/cr

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Ref Sheet b2 D. S.W. 1:20000 LA-MOTTÉ	23rd		Weather cool, with heavy showers. During the night 22 nd /23 rd approx a division of Americans marched East through La Motte. Coy paraded for cleaning of gun equipment in the morning for 1 hour.	
	24 th		Weather cool & showery. Coy training in the morning & physical training in the afternoon. 3rd Infantry Bn. I.O.R. evacuated sick. I.O.R. joined Coy from	
	24 th		Weather cool & showery. 2 off went to ABBEVILLE to purchase cricketing material for the Coy. Cleaning of gun equipment & guns in the morning & physical training in the afternoon. Heavy gas casualties reported from the front line from Yellow Cross Gas.	
	25 th		Weather Wet, but warm, fine up in the afternoon. Cleaning of gun gear in the morning & compass work & physical training & games in the afternoon.	WJSS/09/25

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<p>Shank b2D 1:2000 07865 Ref</p> <p>LA MOTTE July 26th</p>			<p>Weather cool & showery. Barrage drill in the morning. Physical training & cricket match in the afternoon. LIEUT COLEMAN reported back from England & wounded. 3 O.R. reported from Divisional rest camp.</p>	
	27th		<p>Weather cool & showery. Reconnaissance carried out re the projected relief of 6th A.M.G. Coy by the 5th Coy, by 4 Section Officers. Men fired stoppage practice in the morning.</p>	
	28th		<p>Relief of 6th A.M.G. Coy by 5th A.M.G. Coy carried out. This commenced at 3 PM & was not reported complete until 2 A.M. on the 29th inst. Weather warm. Enemy shelling intermittently on the whole front, putting a light barrage across P 31 central. There was a little gas in this. Casualties nil. Ammunition expended on enemy communications 12500 rounds.</p>	
	29th		<p>Weather warm. Ammunition expended harassing enemy communications 18000 rounds. Enemy artillery again active & a little gas used. Enemy aircraft below normal.</p>	<p>WSS/omy dk.</p>

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Ref Sheet br D. S. W. r. S. E. 1:20000 O. 28 b s. r.	July 30 th		Weather bright & warm. Casualties two, 1 Cpl & 1 Pte wounded by shell fire. Ammunition expended on harassing enemy roads & communications 17000 rounds. Enemy Artillery active throughout the 24 hours. Special attention being given to Q 31 square where one gun position was blown in; but no damage done. Aerial activity enemy much below normal.	
	July 31 st		Weather bright & warm. CAPT. R. C. WEBB took over the command of the 5th A.M. G. Coy. He was formerly Group Commander & was relieved by Capt DRUMMOND. CAPT THOMAS had went to hear H. Q. 5 boy prior to attending a long M. G. course at Camiers. Ammunition expended on enemy communications suspected H. Q. & trenches 15000 rounds. Casualties Nil. Enemy shelled intermittently on the whole front using a little gas about 4 A.M. on the 1st.	w/SS/ory Lt

WAR DIARY

101

OF

5th Coy 2nd A.M. G. B. Co

FOR

July

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LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.

Subject.

- | | | | |
|---|--------|----------------------------|--------------|
| 3 | Copies | Operation Orders | 24th July |
| 3 | Copies | Operation Orders
relief | 28/29th July |

Reference 10 Operations 2nd A.M.G. Bn Order 35 H.Q. Left Group 3/7/18.

Left Group orders No 1

1. At a time & date to be notified later an operation will be carried out by the 4th Aust. Division, on our left, 6th & 7th A.I. Bdes co-operating.
2. The Left Group Machine Guns have been allotted barrages tasks Targets in accordance with 2nd A.M.G. Bn Order 35, Pts II, III + IV have been issued separately to all concerned & numbered 1, 2, & 3 respectively
3. Times & Rates of Fire for Left Group
Rates of fire small cases, except S.O.S., will be 50 R.P.M. except in special cases, ordered by the Group Commander

ZERO TIME	GUNS	TARGET	REMARKS
Z to Z+10 minutes	ALL GUNS	Nº1	
Z+10 minutes to Z+16 minutes	A BTY B BTY C BTY Z GUNS 'X' GUNS	Nº2 Nº1	
Z+16 to Z+45 minutes	A, B, & C BTYS & Z Guns 'X' Guns	Nº3 Nº2	
On Z day 9.50 pm to 10.20 pm and	A & B, BTYS, 'X' and 'Z' guns	Nº2	PROTECTIVE BARRAGE
On Z+1 day 2.30 am to 3.30 am	C, B, T, Y.	Nº3	
S.O.S.	A, B, & C, BTYS + Z guns 'X' guns	Nº2 Nº1	Rate of fire 250 R.P.M. for 10 minutes 50 R.P.M. for 10 minutes

'C' Bty will produce harassing fire on Nº3 target during night Z/2+1. Other batteries as may be ordered by Group Commander. All Guns will be prepared to switch to within 3000' of their positions if required.

4. Communications. All batteries will be connected by wire to Group Battle H.Q. Bty Commanders will ensure that their runners are fully acquainted with position of Group H.Q.
5. R.A.P.'s at P19c 75.20 & P25a 7085
6. A.A.A. Emergen or reserve situated at Section H.Q. "Crucifix"
7. Bty Commanders will be responsible
 - (a) for having sufficient oil, water, cleaning material necessary
 - (b) All necessary precautions are ~~are~~ taken to prevent casualties to our own troops in vicinity of batteries
 - (c) full precautions against casualties by gas.
8. Reports to Group ^{Battle} H.Q. at 0240.12 (Bde H.Q.)
9. Rations & water 24 hours to be carried by all personnel
10. Synchronisation of watches to be notified later
11. Zero hour to be notified later

H. Ordish
Cmdr Left Group

Copies
"OC" Right Group War Diary
"OC" Left Group File
Lt Clayton
" Lane
" Pritchard
" Hickman
" Wallace
" Cranitch
2nd A.M.G. Bn
6th A.I. Bde
O.C. 5th A.M.G. Co.

REP. M. 17. 15.
SHEET. 620.

5th Coy. 2nd Aust. Bn

Order No. 15.

Copy 1402
27-7-18
Copy No 6

Ref. 2nd Aust. Bn Order No 41.

- (1) The 5th Aust. Bn Coy. will relieve the 6th Aust. Bn Coy. in the line on night 28th July 1918, and will take over control of all American guns in the Right Bde Sector.
- (2) No 2 Section (Lieut Coleman). Will relieve the following guns R26, R27, R11 & R2. This Section will leave Rear HQ at 6.30 PM, and will pick up guides at O27 c 10.40 at 9.30 PM.

No 4 Section (Lieut Wright). Will relieve guns R8, R20, R11 & R12. They will leave Rear HQ at 6 PM, and pick up guides at O27 c 10.40 at 9.40 PM.

No 3 Section (Lieut Carmichael) less one (1) gun will take over the following guns R6, R3, & R4 and also take over control of R5A. This Section will leave Rear HQ at 1.30 PM and will pick up guides at O27 c 10.40 at 3 PM.

No 1 Section (Lieut Dickinson). less one (1) gun will take over R10, R13 and R7. guns and will take over control of R10A and R13A. This Section will leave Rear HQ at 1.40 PM and will pick up guides at O27 c 10.40 at 3.15 PM.

One gun of No 3 Section and one gun of No 1 Section with Lieut Cranitch in charge will take over the following guns R5 & R9 and will take over control of R5A and R9A. This Section will leave Rear HQ at 1 PM and pick up guides at O27 c 10.40 at 3 PM.

- (3) Existing Ration arrangements will be taken over & carried out. Rations will reach Section Rumps at about 4 PM each Day
- (4) Tripods, all Bells and Bell Boxes in positions, all Ground Stores, Emergency Rations and S.A.F. will be taken over. Telephones and Telephone equipment in position will also be taken over.
- (5) Completion of Relief and taking over Receipts will be sent to Adv. Coy H.Q. as soon as possible after Relief is complete.
- (6) Location of Adv. Coy H.Q. Adv. Coy H.Q. will be situated at O 286 95. 25.
Section H.Q. will also be taken over
- (7) Gun Teams. Gun Teams will consist of T.N.C.O. and 3 men.

(Signed) H. H. Thomas Capt
for Cpl Stanley R. [unclear]

Distribution
Copy No 1 }
2 } Section
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5 Transport Office
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9 File.