

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

Machine Guns

Item number: 24/11/20

Title: 6th Australian Machine Gun
Company

October 1917



AWM4-24/11/20

WAR DIARY

No instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence
Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., art II.
Date... and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages
will be prepared in manuscript.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BELGIUM	1917 Oct		Light rain fell during morning	
NEAR	3		Casualties: - 2 ORs Wounded	
YPRES	4	6 AM	was Zero hour. The 12 mobile guns were on T.O.T. 2 hours before zero. At zero all guns went forward close under our own barrage 4 Guns (under Lt R Dodgshun) were established in first objective (RED LINE) 2 " " Lt F J Wright } following close to infantry were established 2 " " Lt F J Blankarn } in the final objective (BLUE LINE) Lt Blankarn had 2 good targets just after crossing the ridge in the form of small parties of the enemy standing up & firing at our troops who were advancing on our right 4 Guns under Lt A P Hitchcock were established on Broosende Ridge 2 ab D 23 C 15 15 } to take advantage of any targets. Owing to heavy 2 " D 29 A 2 9 } shell fire these guns had to be withdrawn below the ridge. Lt Hitchcock & half of his men being casualties The whole operation was a success - the only casualties suffered were those of Lt Hitchcock's - on the ridge	

F. M. Duncan

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BELGIUM NEAR VPRES	1917 4		After being established in defensive positions the guns were not called on to take any active part. Casualties: - Killed. 1 OR. Wounded 2 Officers (Lt A.P. Hitchcock) Lt J. Blewharv 13 ORs	
	5	EVEN	Four gun teams from H.Ars relieved 4 guns in front line who returned to camp. Four gun teams in Red line were relieved by teams from camp & returned there to Four guns from below Broesevande Ridge returned to camp. Casualties: - Wounded - 1 Officer (Lt Newcomer) 4 ORs	
	6		Preparations for further attack. Barrage scheme, ammunition supplies etc. Casualties: - 1 OR Wounded.	
	7		Two Guns relieved 2 guns of 7th Aust Bty to in front line. Left Sector from Two Guns " 2 " " " " " support " " " " Camp.	
	8	EVEN	2 Guns from RED LINE & 2 from BLUE LINE withdrawn Work of preparation continued Casualties: - 1 OR killed 1 OR Wounded 1 OR evacuated sick	

F. W. Duncan
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WAR DIARY

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	1917			
	Oct	am		
NEAR YPRES	9	5.22	was ZERO HOUR.	
			Disposition of Guns prior to attack	
			A 6 Guns. Battery for Creeping Barrage at D22D93	
			B 2 " under Lt R Dodgshun at D22D87 to go forward with 21 st & 23 rd Batts	
			C 2 " " Sgt Cook at D22D97	24 th
			D 2 " " Lieut J R Campbell at D23C83	
			E 2 " in reserve at de Kroot Farm	
			F 2 " " Hannebake Wood	
			For operations see attached report.	
			Casualties 1 off and 15 ORs killed	
			7 " " 10 " Wad + Officer carried on duty	
	10		Company was relieved by 13 th Aust Machine Gun Co. Relief	
			being completed at 11 P.M. After relief gun teams returned	
			to camp at H23B82.	
	11		cleaning guns & preparing for move to Steenwoorde area	

F. J. Dawson

MACHINE GUN COY.,
2nd AUSTRALIAN DIV.

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	1917			
	OCT			
	12		The whole Company left camp at 8 AM + proceeded to Uperu where they entrained for Abule. Transport proceeded by road to Stenwood.	
			The rest of the Co th detrained at Abule and marched to Stenwood. Arrived at 1 PM + whole Company billeted at K25A.00.	
	13		Overhauling guns & gear - shortages taken	
	14		Training as per syllabus	
	15	do		
	16	do		
	17	do		
	18	do	Lecture by Div Gas Officer in afternoon	
	19	do		
	20	do		
	21	do		
	22	do		
	23	do		

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F. M. Duncan. Lt.

WAR DIARY

or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

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and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages
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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	Oct 24		Training as per syllabus. Lecture by Div Gas Officer during the afternoon.	
	25		Packing up + making preparations for move.	
NEAR YPRES	26		The whole company marched by road to Belgian Chateau. The move was complete by 1.30 pm.	
	27		Nothing to report.	
	28		Guns + gear overhauled. Work of preparation preparatory to going on the line	
	29		" " " "	
	30		" " " "	
	31		" " " "	

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- 6 Dress. - Fighting order with 48 hours rations + 2 sandbags per man.
- 7 Success Signals. - No success signals will be fired, but one smoke round per gun will be fired when Artillery Barrage reaches each of the Protective Lines.
- 8 Watches will be synchronised 8 and 2 hours before zero.
- 9 Zero time will be notified later.
- 10 S.O.S. Signal same as at present.
- 11 Troops attacking 1st + 2nd Objectives will have RED + BLUE Diamonds painted on back of their steel helmets.
- 12 Company H Qs will be in Pill Box at HANE BEEKE WOOD J 2 A 74.
- 13 Advanced Brigade H Qs will be at SANS SOUICI.
- 14 Advanced Brigade Dump will be established at
- 15 A Machine Gun Dump will be established at Compy H Qs + all rations etc will be dumped there and carried forward - one section feeding the other so as to save long carries + the men from the front positions having to go right to the rear.
- 16 Communication will be by phones + runners. Reports can be sent through Battalions to save unnecessary running.
- 17 ACKNOWLEDGE.

DISTRIBUTION.

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1 | 6th A.I. Bde |
| 2 | C.O. Batt |
| 3 | 21st Batt |
| 4 | 22nd .. |
| 5 | 23rd .. |
| 6 | 24th .. |

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First Objective RED LINE on attached map.

- 1 The 2nd Batt will capture & consolidate this objective & N^o 1 section under Lt Nixon will cover and assist them by placing their guns in defensive positions in and around the RED LINE.
- 2 The Mobile guns on the right are the 2nd Aus M.G.C. and on the left are the 7th Aus M.G.C.
- 3 These guns will follow in rear of the Batt^y & are to arrive in sufficient time to assist in the consolidation.

Appendix A2.Second Objective BLUE LINE on attached map.

- 1 The 21st Batt^y on left & 24th Batt^y on right will capture & consolidate 2nd Objective & N^o 2 section will assist in consolidation.
2 guns under Lt Wright will be with the 21st Batt^y & 2 guns under Lt Burkham will be with the 24th Batt^y. These guns will be placed in defensive positions in & around the BLUE LINE.
- 2 The Mobile guns on Right are the 2nd Company & on the left are the 7th Company.
- 3 The guns will follow in rear of their respective Batt^ys & are to arrive in sufficient time to assist in the consolidation.

Appendix A3.

N^o 3 Section under Lieut Newcomer will move forward in rear at zero hour from present position & occupy the defensive positions in the present front line & engage all low flying enemy aircraft

N° 4 Section under St Hutchcock will
move forward in rear of 21st + 24th Batts.
+ take up positions on the ridge to:-

- (1) Engage any targets in the valley East of it.
 - (2) To prevent field guns in the valley firing
or being withdrawn.
 - (3) To engage any low flying enemy air-craft.
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6th Aust Machine Gun Coy.

Report on operation on 4th October 1917

Disposition of guns prior to attack.

- A. 6 Guns. Battery for "creeping Barrage" at D22D9.3.
- B. 2 Guns under Lt R. Dodgshun at D22D87 to go forward with 21st and 23rd Batts.
- C. 2 Guns under Sgt Cook at D22D9.7 to go forward with 24th Batt.
- D. 2 Guns under Lt J. N. Campbell at D23C8.3.
- E. 2 Guns in reserve at de Knot Farm.
- F. 2 " " " " Hannebeeke Wood

At zero B+D guns went forward with the attack.

B. A few minutes after ZERO these guns were following in rear of the infantry. They noticed that the infantry did not enter DAIRY WOOD but went on either side of it and when they got near it were fired on by machine guns from it. Lt Dodgshun was wounded and all of his men except 2 were killed or wounded. Of the 2 men with him, one was an ammunition carrier and the other had a tripod.

It was impossible to move about owing to the heavy machine gun fire and sniping. They had to remain in shell holes until dark and as the guns could not be found - withdrew and reported to H.Q.s.

D. In the first forward rush both of D guns were put out of action. Lt Campbell killed and 6 men casualties by M.G. fire.

The remainder of the teams remained in shell holes close to the remnants of the 22nd Batt. and returned to H.Q.s when the 22nd Batt were relieved at night.

C. These guns remained in the front line covering the attack of the infantry on Dairy Wood. The attack seemed to fail at first and Sgt Cook decided he could assist

Roughly Rec'd by Lt. Col. 6th Batt.

J. Williamson. Lt.

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the infantry move from the front line then by moving forward to them close to Daisy Wood as snipers and M.G. fire were very heavy.

At ZERO + 2 hours 5 of the teams personnel were killed but the guns were not hit. Relief was sent in and guns were moved slightly to the right where they remained until relieved by the 13th M.G. Coy.

At 4 pm 2 reserve guns were sent forward to D 23 A 3-4 to try and assist the 23rd Batt by direct fire. These guns were relieved by the 13th M.G. Co. on the night of 10th.

A. The Battery fired its "Crawling Barrage" at reduced rate owing to shortage of ammunition. During the course of the day 2 of these guns were totally destroyed and 2 more put out of action. 5 men were killed and 6 wounded.

REMARKS. Not one of the Mobele guns B C + D fired a shot and their casualties were heavy. The Vickers gun is a very conspicuous target in an advance and once spotted by the enemy all fire is concentrated on it. If there is any resistance at all Vickers gun has very little chance of getting forward with the infantry.

I consider the guns should not go over with the attacking waves but should wait until the objective has been captured and then move forward, provided enemy sniping and M.G. fire is not heavy. In the case of the latter I consider the guns should wait until dusk before going forward to assist in consolidation.

Casualties on 9/10/17
1 Officer killed
1 " Wounded
14 ORs killed
10 ORs Wounded

4th Battalion

Don't lose place at
or 6th M.G. Coy