

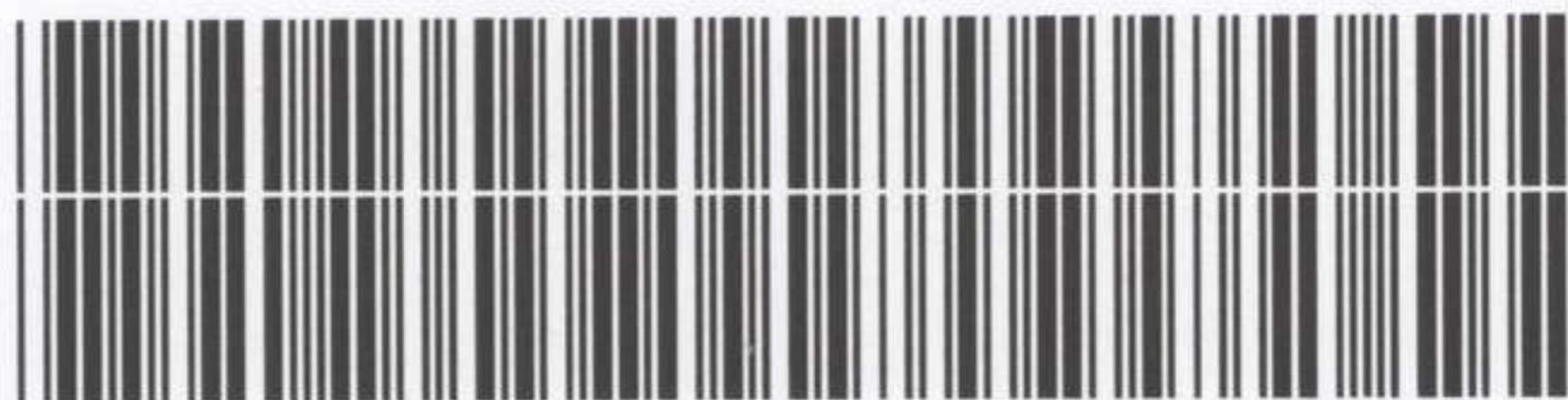
AWM4
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War**

Machine Guns

Item number: 24/11/30

Title: 6th Australian Machine Gun
Company

August 1918



AWM4-24/11/30

2ND
AUSTRALIAN
MACHINE GUN BATTN.
No.....
Date.....

6th
MACHINE GUN COY.,
2nd AUSTRALIAN DIV.
No.....
Date.....

WAR DIARY

or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Army Form C. 2118.

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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
Somme	AUG 1-6		<p>From the 1st until the 6th of August this Coy was in reserve at Lamotte Beberie. During this period gun drill, physical training and swimming parades were held. N. C.O.'s attended classes in map reading, physical culture and use of compass.</p> <p>7 Sixteen gun teams left Lamotte Beberie for the forward area to take part in the forthcoming operations. This Coy was under the orders of G.O.C. 5th Aust Inf Bde. The nucleus of the Coy remained at Lamotte Beberie.</p> <p>8 See attached report on operations from 8th Aug to night of 11th Aug. Casualties 400 killed + 1 officer wounded (S. W. S. (Capt.) 11th Bde.)</p> <p>9 Nucleus left camp + proceeded by march route to 017a 8.5 near Fouilly casualties 500 killed 600 wounded</p> <p>12 At 1.30 pm the nucleus left bivouacs at 017a 8.5 and proceeded by march route to P. 34d 20.40. occupying old enemy trenches.</p>	<p>PAGE 1</p>

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W. G. H. P. Co.

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Somme	1916 24		During the afternoon the 2nd M. G. Batta held a swimming carnival at Raous.	
	25		Church Parade	
	26		Preparations were made prior to going into the line. The nucleus of the Coy under Capt Drummond of HMC moved to Rue d'Isaac, La Neuville. Packs, blankets etc of officers + men were sent to Rue de la Gare, La Neuville where the Battalion pack store was situated. At about 7 PM the remainder of the Coy proceeded by motor bus from O 11 a 5.2 to Q 27 c 3.3 + thence by march route to approximately R 19 a 9.9 where Coy HQ Bns were situated. This move was completed by 11.30 pm.	PAGE 3.
	27		At 1.30 pm, HQ Bns gun teams accompanied by fighting limbers moved forward via T report + occupied bivouacs at R 4 a 8.4. Transport lines + Q M Store were situated at.	Douglas Packer

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Somme	28		See attached report on operations. Nucleus left La Neuville & proceeded to	
	29		Q. M. Store Transport & Nucleus marched to G 32 a 2. 9.	
	30		Nucleus marched to MEREAUCOURT WOOD where they remained with the Fighting Ambush	
	31 st			

Increment of Troops					
Shut off strength			Taken on strength		
0FP	0Rs		0FP	0Rs	
3	43	Wounded	1	2	from 7th Coy
1	14	Killed	1	50	" Batt HQ
	7	Missing			" Base
	2	Sick			
1	2	Transferred	2	52	
5	66				

Darius J. Rae Cdr

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Operations of the 6th Aust. M. G. Coy from
 Aug 5 to 1915 onwards.

Aug 5th In the operations this company was attached
 to the 5th Aust Inf Bde.

Seven guns & teams left camp at Lamotte
 Brieux at 6 pm and arrived at Ponsy
 Ossa at 9 pm and remained in deposit until
 1 am of 6th when 2 guns moved off and were
 in position at 5 am. Headquarters was
 established at P. 6. 19. The 3 remaining guns
 remained at Ponsy.

Aug 6th Under our exceptionally good barrage, our
 2 guns advanced with the infantry. In spite of
 a very thick mist they were enabled to reach their objectives
 and, in addition, 4 guns in the first
 objective under fire & 2 others in left and
 right of P. 6. 19. in support.

Our Objective P. 6. 19 to P. 6. 19
 was reached by P. 6. 19.

The 5th Aust Division went through us
 and established the cables on the trench line
 Seven guns under fire Hamilton
 with 2 others in position in the 2nd objective

W. J. Foster

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on the left and left, later established on the right. Lt. C. Layton being wounded.
During the action we took 5 prisoners and 11 machine guns.

One hour after zero, the 8 reserve guns moved up to the 1st objective, where they took up their positions.

Casualties 4 are killed

1 officer wounded

5 the wounded

Aug 9th

The men pushed as much as possible and at 4.30 pm. 8 of our guns advanced with the attacking infantry from the old Anzac line, Lt. C. Brown on left and Lt. Sambell on right.

During the advance, our gunners did some good shooting, one gunner accounting for 2 M.G.'s and an anti-tank gun. Many casualties were inflicted on the enemy.

On the objective being reached, we consolidated. Objective ran from X 2604 to R 2604.

The 8 guns in reserve moved up to the Anzac line 2 hours after zero. Lt. Hamilton commanding the 4 guns on left + Lt. Williams

Don't forget the 4

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the 4 guns on the night.

Casualties Killed 5 OK
 Wounded 5 "
 Missing 1 "

Aug 10 The men rested as much as possible, everybody was very tired and the feet were commencing to get sore

Aug 11 At 4 am, 4 guns under Lt Davies on left and 4 under Lt Runcorn on right attacked with the infantry and gained their objective which was from X 4a 20 to R 27 44. On account of casualties, Lt Davies had to leave one gun behind. 8 guns remained in position on the old line. In this advance our gunners had good targets and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy
 Casualties Killed 1 OK
 Wounded 11 "

2 officers (Lt Davies & Lt Runcorn)
 On the night of the 11/12 all our guns were silenced by the 7th Aust Inf Bde + we withdrew to the old British line, remaining in position with the 5th Aust Inf Bde.

J. H. Munro (Capt)
 O.C. 6 MGCoy
 13/8/18

Director of War Effort

Operations of 6th Aust Machine Gun Coy
Map Reference Sheet 62D NW



Appendix

August 28th. Coy was in an old farm house at Nya 93. At 11:30 pm orders were received for 2 sections to be attached to the 18th Batt who were to take over part of the line from the 21st Batt and push forward No 4 & 3 sections under Lt Duncan & Burne moved forward and joined the 18th Batt at about 6:28 a.m. Guns moved forward with the Batt. and at 11:30 am a message was received that 2 guns were in position on NE edge of MEREUCCOURT WOOD and 2 moving forward with the centre Coy which had emerged from the eastern edge of the wood and was pushing forward. A message timed 11:30 am from Lt Duncan that 4 guns were with B Coy along a line running N-S approximately through 6th central and were waiting for our artillery to lift. The other section under Lt Burne (2 guns) moved forward with C Coy which was in support. No casualties had been sustained and no ~~was~~ opposition encountered.

August 29th. At 2 am road running N-S through H15 a & c was occupied by A.B. Coy with 4 guns under Lt Duncan. B Coy passed through with 4 guns under Lt Burne at 5:45 am and advanced to the Western bank of the Canal. A.B. Coy with 4 guns followed and joined up on the Canal. C Coy sprung to the right and lost touch on the left. 2 guns also moved with this Coy. The remaining boys and 6 guns crossed the Canal at H17 a & b and moved along the Eastern bank of the Canal from which position it was unable to advance further & positions were taken up for defence. At about 7 pm enemy were seen retiring from bury. These were engaged & seen to scatter. It is not known if casualties were inflicted owing to the long range.

At 5 am on 29th inst. 2 sections under Lt Ormsby Williams moved forward with the 19th Batt and advanced to the Canal; position being taken up at; 4 guns No 2 section at about H23 d & e; 2 guns No 1 sec at H23 b & c and 2 guns under Lt Ormsby at H17 d & e. Movement was reported across the Canal & the guns at H17 d & e and 10 gun engaged targets at H18 c & d Quarry I 13089 I 19011 and a Motor Gun with Train. 3000 rounds were fired by the Vickers and 2000 rounds by the German gun. Estimated casualties inflicted 40-50.

August 30th. The 8 guns attached to 18th Batt were withdrawn to H15 c & d. One section (4 guns) under Lt Duncan were attached to the 17th Batt and one section (4 guns) under Lt Burne were attached to the 20th Batt. The guns moved forward with the Battalions crossing the Somme by bridge at FEVILLIERES. The guns attached to the 19th Batt were to remain and cross with it. At 5 pm guns with 20th Batt were at H6 d & e and at 10 pm moved to H12 b & c. Guns with 17th Batt at 5 pm were in ELEVILLE moving to H12 b & c at 10 pm. On the night of 30/31st 8 guns with the 19th Batt crossed the Somme by bridge at WANNECOURT-LES-CLERY. 4 guns under Lt Williams moved to H7 c in support to join up 18th Batt when it moved forward.

Dregas & Mac Cas

102 ^{100th} 4 guns under Lt Barrett remained with the 19th Bn. At 3.00 guns with the 17, 19, 20th Batts. moved forward. At 10.30pm message was received from Lt Barrett attached to 19th Batt asking for reinforcements and ammunition. Officer in command of guns with 20th Batt was missing and sergeant wounded but guns were taken forward by Corporal and put into position at about I 8d 7 2. Guns attached 17th Batt at I 14b 8 9 and guns with 19th Batt at I 9c 5 3 and 2 at I 15a 9 9. Guns with 18th Batt 2 at about I 15d 4 5 1 at about I 14d 5 5 and 1 at I 15c 1 7. Guns attached to 19th Batt under Lt Barrett in cooperation with the infantry engaged targets when driven out of position by bombs. One party of 20 were wiped out & other small parties also. 2 machine machine guns were engaged & silenced. Another gun crew were killed & the officer taken prisoner. Estimated casualties inflicted 50 2 guns of 401 section under Lt Williams engaged a party of guns about 100 strong in I 16 unit & accounted for about 30. 204 section with the 17th Batt engaged targets crossing road at about I 2a 8 4 and horse transport at about I 10b. These were seen to scatter but no casualties were observed.

September 1st The 6th M G Brigade passed through the 5th M G Bn who then moved to support in BOTT LIEB TRENCH. Machine guns moved with their respective Batts. At 8.30pm moved into reserve with the Batt to PRAGUE & FLORINA TRENCHES.

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Douglas MacLear

On the morning of Aug 29th 201 Section followed the 19th Batt. to a position from Dunker Road at H17d 50 to H24a 43. reaching position at 8 am. At this point the 18th Batt. were found to be held up by strong posts in vicinity of Jaker Copse and H24a 43. After clearing Bannocort Wood of the enemy guns were placed in position in the line held by 19th Batt. At 9.30 am, much movement having been observed in the vicinity of Quarries at I 13c 7.9 and Timberlost Wood it was decided to move 2 Vickers & 1 enemy machine guns forward to Bannocort Wood in order to fire on enemy troops at these positions. 6000 rounds were fired by these guns and severe casualties inflicted.

Aug 30th. Still in same position

31st. Gun teams moved forward with 19th Batt. via Canal Bridge at H17a 8.9 and Bannocort through Bannocort and along, passing assembly point then attacking with 19th Batt. at 5.10 am. towards Mt St Quentin. Positions were occupied at I 15a 9.9 to I 15d 8.7. and consolidated. At 9.30 am a counter attack was launched by the enemy on the right flank of 19th Batt. The work of gun teams was very difficult at this point owing to the broken ground in front. Enemy advanced in spite of a position about 10 yds from gun and endeavoured to force our line back by bombing. Combined bombing rifle & machine gun fire however drove the enemy back with severe casualties. Section sustained casualties chiefly through snipers hidden in buildings.

Sept 1st. An attack was launched against Mt St Quentin by 6th A.I. Brigade. Assistance was secured from 6th Bde to destroy strong posts. In one case one gun team completely annihilated a whole post consisting of enemy machine gun & 25 men. As the Brigade advanced, fire was opened on the reverse slope of Mt St Quentin to harass the retreat of the enemy. 6000 rounds were used in this task.

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A. Brown

Douglas & Reel

Aug 29th. No 2 Section joined a Coy 19th Batt. at G 28 b 9 5 at 5 pm. moved forward with this Coy in the attack. Enemy machine guns held up the advance at Taker kopai but guns were speedily silenced by our infantry snipers. Machine guns at H 240 7 9 strongly supported by snipers again checked the advance. Infantry having no grenades it being impossible to engage enemy gunners and snipers with our guns owing to the shortness of the range & the consequent effectiveness of their fire the Coy commander ordered gun teams to fall back with infantry and consolidate a line at H 23 d 7 9 to H 240 50.

Aug 30th. Line consolidated on 29th met. still held.

Aug 31st. Moved forward at 2.20 am with 19th Batt. & crossed river over log at H 17 a and occupied reserve positions along trench running NNW through I 7 a.

Sept 1st. At 12.30 pm moved with 18th Batt; 2 guns going to Right flank at Mber Wiles trench at I 15 d 4 5 and 2 guns taking up positions at I 15 a 2 0.

Sept 2nd. At 6 am a party of about 100 enemy were engaged by night ~~guns~~ gun and about 30 casualties inflicted. At 3 pm again moved with 18th Batt. to reserve position at I 14 b 20 2 5 night guns and I 14 b 1 7 left guns. At 7.30 pm positions were occupied at Radegonde Trench with 18th Batt.



Douglas W. Rees

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6th
THE HINDS SUN CO.,
2nd AUSTRALIAN DIV.
No.
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Appendix
Sep 29 62 NW

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No 4 Section

On the afternoon of the 28th inst the Section moved out from the vicinity of Chuguelles with instructions to pick up the 18th Batt in the vicinity of the Quarry at G 24 b.

At dusk in the evening the Section moved off with the fighting tanks as far as G 24 C 60.50 and from there unloaded and advanced in artillery formation with B Coy 18th Batt taking the road running along the north edge of Moreaucourt Wood which was still occupied by the enemy as we passed. No opposition was encountered and just as we emerged from the edge of the wood the enemy blew up the bridge at Feuilles which immediately took fire.

We continued to advance until we were opposite the western edge of Feuilles and then established a strong line in posts running north and south through H 14 Central which we reached by 10.30 p.m. About midnight the company on our right flank connected with us.

About 2 AM on the 29th we advanced a further 600 yds establishing a strong line along the road running north + south through H 15 A and C

At 5.30 AM the two support companies of the 18th Batt (C + D) passed through us accompanied by No 3 Section. No 4 Section together with 'A + B' Coy of the 18th Batt followed in support. About 600 yds ahead two prisoners were captured, one being badly wounded.

Ronald MacCall

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After passing Chapter Wood we advanced down the slope and swung round to the canal running NW and SE through H 17.

Due to the low light and our rapid movement the advance was not noticed.

On arrival at the canal the three Companies took cover on the S.W. side whilst the bridges were investigated.

The bridge at H 17 was completely destroyed. The main bridge at H 17 a had been well mined the center being destroyed + 3 mines were attached to the end which had failed to explode. These were removed later on.

Further investigation revealed a floating bridge about 100 yds further down the footbridge was intact. A B + C boys of the 18th Battalion and P 3 + 4 M. G. Sections crossed safely + took cover below the high embankment on the NE side of the canal.

No movement was made during the day. Considerable enemy movement was observed across the river. The infantry + M. G.'s were sniping but the results could not be observed. We availed ourselves of the opportunity of studying the St Quentin + its surroundings.

During the day a salvo from our enemy 5.9 + 77mm battery were fired on the bank.

At dusk a patrol went out + crossed the bridge at Clergy + went forward through the village, returning over the bridge they reported the village clear and the bridge head intact.

Douglas & Keeley

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About 3 am 'C' Coy of the 18th Batta
+ ordered to hold the bridge in view that
the brigade would be able to cross over.
On reaching the bridge it was discovered
that about 50 yds of it had been destroyed
rendering the bridge unserviceable.

The whole Brigade then withdrew
to the vicinity of Fenilines where a hot
meal was prepared and reorganised in
the morning.

The plan now was to cross the
Fenilines Bridge and advance towards
the village of Somme.

At 11.30 am the sections moved
out with the 17th Batta to which they had
been transferred. The fighting units
took the guns and ammunition to the
embankment at the east end of Clerf.
where they were broken off + covered by
the sections.

During the afternoon the 20th
Batta were engaged in fighting a passage
round the north side of Clerf whilst the
17th Batta followed up in support.

About dusk we gained the
trench system and gully at H 12 to 50.90 and
consolidated for the night.

During the afternoon the village
and the vicinity of the trenches we were
holding were subject to frequent shelling by
a s. g. battery.

On gaining the gully two guns
Douglas MacKenzie



which were with A and D boys were mounted commanding the roads in H 12. B whilst the remaining two which came through with 'B+C' boys remained in reserve.

At 4 am on the 31st the battalion moved off up the road running S.S.E. through H 12. B + D. and reached the top of the hill at H 12. B 70.20. at which point, which was really before the enemy front line, the battalion worked until our barrage ^{opened}, which commenced at 5.19 AM, then crept forward.

At 5 am we moved off along the edge of the swamps and proceeded through Fretter's Wood thence across the border over Ford.

So far the gun teams had kept with the infantry but at this point owing to the rapid pace of the advance and the necessity of frequent spells occasioned by the heavy loads the men were carrying the teams now began to lag back with the infantry.

The advised objections were as; 20th Batt. to establish a line from Foucaumont to the N.W. edge of Mont St. Quentin to be supported by the 18th Batt. The 17th Batt. was to hold from the N.W. edge of the village along to the S.E. end at J 16 Central & to be supported by the 19th Batt.

It was intended for 2 guns to go with 'B+C' Coy of the 17th Batt. to the N.W. edge of Mont St. Quentin and 2 guns to accompany A+D Companies to the S.E. edge of the Mount.

To accomplish this 2 guns were to

Draughts & Rec. Coy

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proceed up Mornally Trench under the command of Sgt Reed and 2 guns went to proceed via "Gott mit Uns" trench to the S.E. edge under the command of Sgt Durcan

On reaching the Canal however, the enemy was observed hurriedly retreating along "Gott mit Uns" trench. Seeing that our infantry were proceeding up Mornally Trench it was decided that gun teams should accompany infantry and endeavour to work along in front of the village.

At this juncture the canal & all approaches to the trenches leading up to Mornally Trench were being subjected to heavy enemy shelling.

The 2 gun teams under Sgt Durcan were taken to a point about 300 yds outside the village. At this point the teams halted whilst the officers went forward to reconnoitre the positions in front. During the performance of this duty F1 Section with 4 guns in action were encountered and Sgt Durcan advised to form a strong support line in rear as the left flank was quite open and unprotected.

The arrival of Sgt Reed with the two gun teams of his command and also of Cpl Fulkerson with 4 guns of F3 Section (the latter section had been attached to the 20th BATTN) placed 8 guns at the disposal of Sgt Durcan with which to form the support line.

Comdant R. C. Carr

Four guns were placed on the left flank to replace the railway, 2 guns were placed in a trench leading into the gully on the right of Trenchmont.

The latter guns, together with a rifle and bombing sections, were placed under the command of an infantry sergeant. One gun mounted for action was held in reserve. The positions were frequently shelled during the day by 5.9" High and "pineapple" bombs.

The following targets were engaged. Small parties were fired on with good results at approximately H 12.6.50.40, H 12.6.20.30, I 30.20.30, I 2.6.40.65. A party endeavouring to pull out a limber at I 10.6. were engaged. This party dispersed hurriedly.

Sept 8th The 5th A. I. Bde moved back to the reserve area in the vicinity of Hillesand the sections accompanied them.

During these operations the gun teams had consisted of 5 men and had carried ^{all} guns, 1500 lbs, rations + water.

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D. J. P. B. C.