

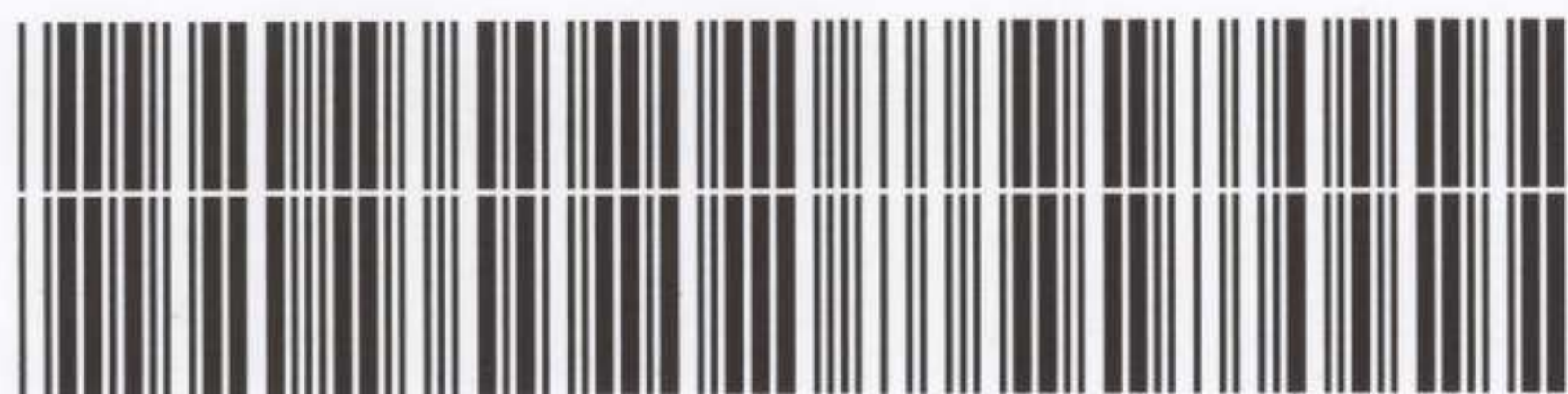
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Infantry

Item number: 23/70/20

Title: 53rd Infantry Battalion

March 1918



AWM4-23/70/20

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Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

53rd BATTALION A.I.F

FOR

MARCH 1918

Signature of Officer compiling

H. S. Leonard
Lt.

Signature of Officer Commanding

W. Cheeseman
Major-General

WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.
(Erase heading not required.)

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
WYTSCHARET Front Line	1918 March 1		<p>A cold and windy day. Snow fell at midday but not in sufficient quantity to cover the ground. Enemy planes were more active than usual and made several attempts to cross our lines. They were driven off each time by A.A. fire and our machine guns. C Coy relieved A Coy in the front line and A Coy moved into Rose Wood. A patrol was sent out to cover the relief, while listening posts were kept in position till the last minute. Enemy machine guns showed greater activity than usual and at 9.45 pm opened up an annihilating fire while his T.M. and Artillery put down a heavy barrage over our outposts, completely isolating SP. 4.0.11. Luckily the relief, with the exception of listening posts and liason, was complete though men were still passing through the saps.</p> <p>A few minutes later an enemy raiding party of 4 officers and 70 men who, under cover of the darkness, had been able to cut our wire, made an attack on SP. 4.0.11.</p>	



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Front Line	1918		which was held by 18 men of N°10 platoon under the charge of Sergeant H.M. Laughlin; simultaneously from the front and left flank. Their intention was evidently to surround the post. The raiders called on the garrison to surrender, they replied with a shower of miles grenades. A splendid example was shown by L/Cpl B Quintal (N°2406), who was in charge of the Lewis gun section. His gun fired a short burst and then jammed. L/Cpl Quintal instantly put the gun aside and commenced throwing bombs with a determination that inspired his men to their fiercest efforts. The attacking force in the front was held up near our wire but those on the left flank came steadily forward while from both parties came a fusillade of stick bombs. In a few minutes when some of the latter party were not more than 13 yards distant, the attack failed and the Germans retired precipitately. During this time Sgt M. Laughlin, seeing	



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Frontline	Mar 1		<p>that all necessary steps had been taken to cope with the situation, had set to work to repair the Lewis gun soon after it jammed - though exposed to all the fire directed against the post. After repairing the gun he used it to hasten the enemy's retreat and then pursued them with fire. The raiders suffered several casualties and withdrew leaving one prisoner, a machine gun, several rifles and 4 bags of foodstuffs in our hands. We had no casualties. Arriving party of 1 officer 10 men and the liaison patrol, which kept in touch with the Batt^{le} on our right, were caught in the barrage and sustained casualties. (see appendix 1). The enemy fire ceased about 10.30 pm and the remainder of the night was calm excepting for the usual spasmodic bursts from machine guns and some 8 gas shells that fell near the RAVINE without causing any damage.</p> <p>Nearly an inch of snow fell during the day. A party from B Coy</p>	Appendix I

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Frontline	1918 Mar		Salvaged several Coppers and established baths for the Company in DENYS WOOD capable of giving 40 men a hot bath daily. Brigade General Hobkirk DSO spoke enthusiastically to the C.O. on the splendid stand made by our men during the previous night. A fighting patrol of 1 officer (2nd Lt Davies) and 10 men searched N.M.L. An enemy patrol was heard but decamped quickly before our men were able to get into touch with it. This was the first occasion on which an enemy patrol was either seen or heard in No Mans Land.	
	3.		Instructions were received from Brigade that the Battalion would carry out a "Chinese attack" against The Twins at 011d 9.2. The object of this attack was to draw the attention of the enemy from the south where the 55th Aust Battalion was attacking WHIZ FARM at 017d 78. The ground had previously been thoroughly reconnoitred and a site selected for the dummies at 011d 64 - some 250 yards from The Twins. The orders for this "attack" were as follows:-	



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Front line	1918	Nov 3	<p>(i) As soon as darkness permits on zero night, 15 dummy figures on 5 frames will be placed in position about 011d30.35 and actuating arrangement connected to L.P. in advance of S.P. 1.0.11.</p> <p>(ii) At zero, two batteries of 4th Division Artillery will bombard The Twins and The Giant until zero plus 2 minutes. At zero plus 2 bombardment of Twins is lifted and distributed on The Giant and Bang Farm.</p> <p>(iii) At zero plus 2 the O.C. "Chinese attack" will order the figures to be raised and lowered which movement will continue if possible until cease fire.</p> <p>Zero hour was fixed at 11.45pm.</p> <p>Under protection of a covering party the figures were placed in position by 8pm and a wire laid to 011d36 for the operator (Lt JG Hastings). At 11pm about 75% of the garrisons of the advanced strong posts were withdrawn to cover in the RAVINE.</p> <p>The barrage was put down at zero whereon the enemy immediately opened MG fire on our outposts. At zero plus 3 minutes he</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Front Line	1918 Mar 3		<p>fired white flares from the Turrets on which the figures were raised and considerable T.M. and M.G. fire directed at them, while a barrage was put down on our front. The raising and lowering continued until the barrage slackened, when one of the figures jammed in an upright position. As it continued to remain upright the enemy fired a great number of flares - red, green, white and yellow - the result of which was a concentration of M.G.'s, T.M.'s and Artillery on the figures. The figure was eventually lowered. The bombardment ceased at 12.50 am but owing to a continued M.G. fire in the direction of the dummies, they were not brought in till the next night. No casualties were incurred during the operation.</p> <p>4. a dull and misty day, observation of the Bosch lines being difficult. Parties repaired the slight damage to saps & duckwalks from the previous night's bombardment, while, at night, some repairs were effected to the wire entanglements which had suffered considerably.</p>	



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Front Line	1918		C Coy was relieved in the front line by D Coy and took over the RAVINE position. The relief was completed without incident.	
	5		The YMCA established a cocoa stall in the RAVINE that supplied working parties, reliefs etc with hot cocoa during the night.	
			A permanent patrol party of 1 officer (Lt L Gale), 1 NCO and 10 men was formed. Besides partly relieving the O.C. front line Coy of the responsibility of patrolling and temporarily weakening his force by the withdrawal of men for patrol duty, it was thought that the knowledge of Norman's land gained from time to time by the patrol leader would enable him to carry out the work more systematically and thoroughly.	
	6		Fine weather continues. Enemy artillery active during the day.	
	7		At 5.40pm the sentry on SP 3.0.16 Rose Wood, observed what appeared to be a white gas cloud moving towards our position from the enemy lines. The cloud was confined to	

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4 Front Line	1918			
	Nov 7		the valley of the ROOZEBEEK and completely enveloped the Rose Wood (A) Company. It had a distinct smell of "pineapples" which confirmed the suspicions that it was a gas cloud. Masks were adjusted and the gas alarm sounded. The cloud passed over in 20 minutes. B Coy relieved D Coy in the front line and D Coy moved into DENY'S WOOD.	
	8		The enemy who were fairly active during the day, suddenly put down a barrage at 9 pm on the RAVINE and forward area of H.E. and gas shells. This lasted for 10 minutes and in that time some 200 shells were fired. Casualties were averted by the prompt adjustment of respirators and gas proof curtains, tho' several men were taken with violent sneezing fits as the result of a momentary exposure to the gas. our patrols continue to cover No Man's Land nightly without opposition or sign of the enemy. It is probable that we will raid either the GIANT or the TWINS next week and our patrols	
	9			

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Front line	1918		are paying particular attention to the approaches, wire and jumping off places. The wiring of SP 2.0.11 was further strengthened during the night.	
	10		Enemy artillery was active and early in the night a number of gas shells fell in Rose Wood. There were several casualties (see Appendix 1). Our patrol, when discovered near The Twins, was hampered by gas shells and forced to take the risk of being gassed as the adjustment of respirators made further patrolling impossible. N: 1753 / Cpl H. C. Willard was responsible for a daring piece of work. At 11pm, while on duty at SP 2.0.11, he heard someone moving in front of our wire. Going alone to investigate he saw 3 of the enemy in a shell hole. One of them came on to the wire and crawled along making an examination of it. When he came opposite Willard the latter fired and wounded the forerunner who screamed and fell. The latter cpl made a rush for him but got caught in the wire and, while	Casualties Appendix 1

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Front line	1918 May 9	10	extricating himself, the other two Boche came up and carried the wounded man off to some trees where 7 or 8 others were waiting.	
	11		In the last few days our Anti Aircraft defence has been organised, under a Brigade scheme, into Echelons. The first Echelon consists of L.G.'s about 500 yards behind the front line in which are 3 of our guns. The 2 nd Echelon is 1000 yards in rear of the first, and 1000 yards still further to the rear is the 3 rd Echelon which affords protection to the Artillery. The 2 forward Echelons are under the supervision of the BATT ^Y L.G. officer who is also responsible for their supplies and Fire orders. Previous to the inauguration of this system of defence Lewis guns were mounted to cover their Corps in the Support and reserve lines. This gave protection to the Unit but lacked the cooperation of the new system which forms 3 continuous lines of fire through which a hostile plane has to pass.	



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Front line	1918 Mar 12		The Brigadier called and discussed with the C.O. details of the raid against the Grass TWINS, chief amongst which were the question of strength, equipment, use of armour and employment of smoke shells. The RAVINE was heavily bombarded for several minutes with gas shells.	
	13		The Staff Captain called a meeting of Adjutants to discuss, and pass on, the decisions agreed on at a meeting of Staff Captains called together by the A.A.Q.M.G. 5 th Division. These arrangements and preparations are necessary in the event of an offensive. (i) The Divisional Pack Train is to be reformed at once and 9 men properly equipped, from this unit ready to join the train at the shortest notice. (ii) Reserves for 2 days rations and water are to be made in all strong posts. (iii) Ammunition and grenade dumps will be widely scattered over the Battalion's area and (iv) An adequate supply always maintained in all strong posts. (v) A reserve of sandbags - for use as ration bags - will be	



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Front Line	1918		established in case of an offensive. 2 days rations & water will at once be sent to all strong points and all men moving forward will carry a like amount.	
			Our patrol was caught in an enemy barrage and sustained slight casualties, while the wire entanglements were in places razed to the ground. With the active Artillery fire of the last week it has been impossible to maintain the whole of the wire in a fit state to form a serious obstacle.	
	14		Rain fell during the morning. A party of 50 carried gas projectors to a line approx. 150 yards east of the RAVINE, where a Coy. of RE's are making preparations for a surprise gas attack.	
			HW Bwan & L Gals and 30 opants have been selected for the raid.	
			All of this party will go over the ground on patrol work during the next few nights and then be withdrawn for training behind the line.	
			C Coy moved into the front line and A Coy took over the RAVINE.	



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Front Line	1918 Mar 15		The work of digging and revetting 110 yards of drain in the RAVINE is complete. Hitherto this place was far from sanitary and, with the increasing warmth, a menace to the health of the men. It is worthy of notice that although this is our 23 rd day in the line the sick parade, during the last few days, averages 3 per day.	
	16		The Divisional General with the Brigadier called during the morning. The General made special mention of this Battalion's responsibility - being left BATT ⁿ of the Division - and the necessity of a perfect liaison with the Unit on our left, with a view of mutual support in the event of an attack; besides the maintenance of a thick belt of wire in conjunction with them. Arrangements for the raid are progressing smoothly. Most of the men were taken out of the line today and sent back to LINDENHOEK camp, at N 33284, for training under Lt W. Bivian. The remainder will go out on patrol tonight and then join the former party.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Front line	1918 Mar 17		The RAVINE and DENYS WOOD Companies were heavily bombarded with gas shells. This continued passing of our area has had little ill effect excepting for the gradual "wearing down" of the men who are nightly subjected to gas alarms and the consequent loss of rest. Several of the gas cases - evacuated from the line during the last two weeks - have already rejoined the unit.	
	18		Enemy artillery was very active during the day. Apparently the numbers of both light and heavy guns on his sector have been increased lately. In consequence of the heavy shelling of CLARKE DUMP, the ration train is stopped at ONRAET WOOD, where the rations are transferred to "push" trucks, instead of proceeding to CLARKE DUMP which is 600 yards closer to the line.	
	19		Heavy rain fell during the day. As a precautionary measure C Coy was withdrawn from the forward area by 10.30 pm at which time the gas projector attack was launched. The enemy did not retaliate with a violent artillery bombardment as was	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Front line	1918 Mar 19		expected. C Coy moved back to DENYS Wood and D Coy reoccupied the Picquet line without incident at 11pm when the "danger" pass signal was given.	
	20		Our patrol reports No Man's Land to be muddy while the ground in front of The Twins is under water. It has been decided, therefore, to postpone tonight's raid till the weather is more propitious. An operation order for the raid was issued on the 19th inst (see Appendix IV) In the meantime the men will be kept fit with physical training & games, besides receiving instruction in raiding, and will be made familiar with the intervening ground by means of aeroplane photographs.	Appendix IV
	21		At 6 am the enemy barraged both Picquet and support lines, a few casualties were sustained by us. The 56th Batt. moved in at dusk (see Appendix V) and relieved the Batt ⁿ who reoccupied the same positions in the support area as in February. The relief was completed by 9.30pm and the last Coy in position at 10.15pm. The enemy remained inactive	Appendix V



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WYTSCHAETE 1919 Support Line			Every available man was put on Engineers' working parties. Pay was distributed. Brigadier General C. J. Hobkirk DSO who had commanded the 14 th Brigade since July 1916 left the Brigade to take over a similar command in a Scottish Division. He was succeeded by Lt Col J. Stewart DSO of the 57 th Batt. The loss of our Brigadier was much regretted by both officers and men.	
	23		The C.O. Lt Col W. R. Chuseman MC returned from leave and resumed command. Word has been received that the Battalion will be relieved tomorrow night. This probably means that the Division is going south to help stem the German advance and everyone is in a fever of excitement at the prospect. The C.O. called Coy Commanders together and gave orders respecting the inspection of Arms, equipment, clothing, technical stores etc so that as much ^{as possible} will be done tomorrow to get the Batt ⁿ ready for a quick move. Leave is stopped and several schools already cancelled. Xmas parcels from the 53 rd Batt. Comforts Fund were distributed to all ranks.	



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WYTTCHAETE				
Support line	24		We were relieved by the 56 th Batt and marched to RIDGEWOOD Camp at NSAGR, a distance of 3 miles, arriving there at 9 pm. (Operation order in appendix VI)	
(Sheet 28)				
RIDGEWOOD	25		Here we were joined by all men previously detached on working parties, traffic duty, the raiding party and details. To lessen the difficulty of transport and make travelling as light as possible the men's second blanket, sheepskin vests, cardigans, woollen gloves etc and all officers surplus gear were collected and stored.	
RENINGHELS			At 10 am the Batt ⁿ entrained - by light railway - for RENINGHELS and occupied billets at (SHEET 28) G28 central. All shortages and stores were completed during the day.	(appendix VII)
	26		At 10 am we moved by march route to the WIPPENHOEK area - a distance of 5 1/2 miles and occupied camps in the vicinity of HOPOUTRE Station (SHEET 27) - L17d. The men had a good afternoon's rest.	appendix VIII
WIPPENHOEK				
	27		B Coy entrained at 11.45 am for MONDICOURT (France Sheet 570) to act as Brigade detrainning party, and the remainder of the Batt ⁿ - including transport.	appendix IX



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
WIPPENHOEK 1918 TO LOUVENCOURT Sheet 57	1918		entrained for the same place at 2.45pm. The journey occupied 12 hours. Breakfast was issued on arrival and a start then made for LOUVENCOURT at 13465.0 a distance of 7½ miles where we were billeted. The men were very tired after the march. "C" Coy (> platoons) at once took up an outpost position 200 yards east of the village and proceeded to dig in. Heavy rain fell in the afternoon which made outpost work most uncomfortable. "A" Coy relieved "C" Coy at dusk and continued the work of constructing the strong point. Reliable information was received that the 3 rd and 4 th Aust. Divisions were heavily engaged at ALBERT and DERNANCOURT and that the enemy line was approx. 7 miles from LOUVENCOURT.	Appendix I do
	29		The rain ceased late in the morning. Major J. Murray M.C., Major P.T. Roberts D.S.O., Capt. W. Wilson, Lieut. H.R. Rixon, R.A.S., 74 Griffin, J.H. Denton and 44 G. P. left for VAUCHELLES (127 C. 41) to form the BATT ⁿ nucleus. "B" Coy arrived at 6.30 am from MONDECOURT. The C.O. called all officers together.	

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LOUVENCOURT	1918		and discussed the present situation ^{communications} ^{armor tactics} , obstacles, etc. The Battalion is under orders to move at an hour's notice. Coy Commanders and other officers reconnoitred approaches to the line during the day. The spirit of the men is excellent - a number are suffering from bad colds and a large number still exhibit signs of the recent gas attacks. A few days good rest is badly required.	
	30		At 8.30 am the head of the column left LEALVILLERS for HARPONVILLE (at U4d and U5a, sheet 570) a distance of 4 miles over hilly and heavy roads - due to the recent rain. D Coy on arrival took up an outpost position for the protection of the village and dug in while the remainder of the Battalion occupied billets in the village and were fairly comfortable. Rain fell at 2pm and continued throughout the day. An operation order was issued in case of an attack on the village. (Appendix IX)	APPENDIX XI
HARPONVILLE	31		The following NCOs received DCMs for their excellent work on the 1st inst (see page II) and congratulations from	Appendix XII

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HARPOUVILLE	1918 Mar 31		<p>The C.O. - No 3380 Sgt H.M. Lanchline and No 2406 L/cpl B. Quinval B. Coy relieved D. Coy on the outpost line. The Battalion is under orders to move on 1 hour's notice and, as the 3rd Division is heavily engaged at ALBERT, we expect to go forward any minute. Lt A.C. Elliot M.C. Adjutant, was wounded to Hospital with French fever.</p>																																				
			<p>Strength: 1 March 31 March</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>With the Unit</td> <td>29</td> <td>690</td> <td>29</td> <td>611</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In Hospital</td> <td>1</td> <td>33</td> <td>1</td> <td>28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Schools</td> <td>5</td> <td>30</td> <td>3</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bugades & other detachments</td> <td>1</td> <td>77</td> <td>1</td> <td>79</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leave</td> <td>6</td> <td>74</td> <td>3</td> <td>71</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nucleus Camp</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>7</td> <td>49</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>42</td> <td>941</td> <td>44</td> <td>854</td> </tr> </table>	With the Unit	29	690	29	611	In Hospital	1	33	1	28	Schools	5	30	3	16	Bugades & other detachments	1	77	1	79	Leave	6	74	3	71	Nucleus Camp			7	49		42	941	44	854	
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	42	941	44	854																																			

WAR DIARY

APPENDIX

OF

53rd Battalion AIF

FOR

March 1918

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
1.	Casualties
2.	Works report 1-8 th March
3.	do & Salvage 9-16
4.	Operation order for <i>gräja</i> against "TUNIS" front line to support.
5.	do
6.	do Support to RIDGE WOOD.
7.	do RIDGE WOOD Camp to RENINGHELST
8.	do RENINGHELST to WIPPENHOEK
9.	do WIPPENHOEK to LOUVENCOURT.
10.	do Protection of LOUVENCOURT.
11.	do LOUVENCOURT to HARPOENVILLE
12.	do Protection of HARPOENVILLE
13.	Patrols from 1 st to 19 th March
14.	Quartermasters report
15.	Transport officers report.

Note: A map which may
cover some of the 53rd Bn's
activities in March 1918
appears to have been misplaced
by Aust War Records Sect..

It appears as p55 in
the appendices to the diary
for Oct 1918 in France.

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(Erase heading not required.)

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Par. II, and the Staff Manual respectively. Title pages will be prepared in manuscript.

A6945 Wt. W11422/M1160 350,000 12/16 D. D. & L. Forms/C. 2118/14.

53RD. BATTALION A.I.F.

APPENDIX 2

WORKS REPORT FOR PERIOD 1ST.- 8TH. MARCH 1918.

OLIVE SAP. 40 yards of this Sap have been revetted, and the Sap has been repaired. 750 sandbags were filled and laid, and the parapet built up with earth. 30 duckboards were relaid, and 100 yards wired. 36 men were employed for this task.

RAVINE. A considerable amount of work has been done in this ravine. 60 yards of drain has been cleaned and revetted. 11 men were employed daily for this work.

R.A.P.
RAVINE. One (1) gas proof door has been erected in this aid post, and the sand-bagging of the roof completed. For the above work 8 men were employed.

Y.M.C.A.
RAVINE. A coffee stall was erected for the Y.M.C.A. 5 men were employed for this task.

DENYS WOOD. A number of improvements have been made by the Company here, and baths have been erected from materials salvaged by the Company. Two coppers and 1 tub have been installed. The cookhouse has been repaired, and two pill-boxes have been pumped dry. 20 men were employed daily for this work.

STRONG POINTS. A considerable amount of work has been done to the Strong Point. 10 yards of sap have been cleaned and drained, and 62 yards of revetting have been completed. 2 cupola shelters have been erected, and the parapet strengthened. The whole Strong Point has been camouflaged. 16 men were employed for this task.

STRONG POINT. 136 yards of digging have been completed at this Strong Point. 30 yards of revetting has also been completed, and 18 yards of duck-boards have been laid. 21 men were employed for this task.

STRONG POINT. This Strong Point was damaged by shell fire. The damage has been repaired. 3 yards of parapet have been revetted and strengthened. 5 men were employed for this task.

STRONG POINT. This Strong Point was also damaged by shell fire. 25 yards of sandbag revettment have been completed, and the parapet strengthened considerably. For this work 16 men were employed.

STRONG POINT. Improvement to this Strong Point was carried out daily. 106 yards of trench have been deepened, also 70 yards revetted. six (6) man shelters were erected, also 40 yards of double apron wire, with two rows of French wire. 20 men were employed for this task.

2.

APPENDIX 2

WIRE.

A considerable amount of wire has been erected in "No Man's Land" during the past week. 140 yards of double pouch enclosed with low apron and trip wires being completed. Strong Point 2.0.11. has been almost completely wired in. Wiring parties have been considerably hampered by enemy M.G. fire, on two occasions having to be withdrawn altogether.

SALVAGE. The following material has been salvaged by this Battalion:-

40 "A" Frames, Long.	38 "A" Frames, Medium.
60 Sandbags.	2 Blankets.
2 Coppers.	1 Tub.
50 Duckboards.	

MATERIAL
CARRIED
FORWARD.

An idea of the work done by this Battalion may be formed from the following list of material carried forward by our parties:-

120 Screw Picquets, Long...	120 Screw Picquets Short.
28 Coils Barbed Wire.	10 Bundles French Wire.
24 Cupolas "B" Type.	10 Steel joists.
5 Rills Malthoid.	30 X.P.M. Panels.
1 Maul.	3 Rolls Camouflage.
11 Bags Bolts and Spanners.	27 Duckboards.
11 Bundles Angle Iron Pickets. 6'	
3 Bundles Angle Iron Pickets. 3'	
1 Small "A" Frame.	7 Sheets Corr. Iron.
1 Pit Prop.	310 T.M. Bombs.
1 Coil Plain Wire.	30 Dummy Men
12 Pieces Timber 12' x 4" X 2".	
1 T.M. Bedplate.	

Volume 95 Appendix II

53RD. BATTALION A.I.F.

APPENDIX 3

WORKS REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING 16th. MARCH 1918.

FRONT SYSTEM.
OLIVE SAP.

This important sap is being constantly shelled and repeatedly blown in by the enemy, calling for a constant repair party. During the week 103' sap has been cleaned and repaired, 760 sandbags filled and laid, 27 duckboards relaid, 210' duckboards wired, using 210' wirenetting, 9 6' angle iron pickets, 19 X.P.M. revetting panels, and 8 large "A" frames. 161 men were employed on this Sap alone.

S.P. 1.0.11. A start has been made to draw and build up the Communication Trench between S.P. 1.0.11 Left and Right. 25' Sap has been drained. 13 men were employed on this task.

S.P. 2.0.11. 40' of double fence and 50' of low apron have been erected. 5 coils of French, 33 coils of barb, and 15 long and medium screw pickets used. This work has been carried out at great risk to the parties. On several occasions the party has had to retire and leave the work on account of enemy M.G. and shell fire. 4 Officers and 79 O/Ranks in different parties have been engaged on this work. On one occasion the party suffered 4 men killed and 3 wounded and 2 shell shock casualties out of a total of 10 in the party.

ADVANCED
COMPANY H.Q.

Six O/Ranks have carried 12 cases of emergency rations to this post to replace damaged rations.

S.P. 4.0.11. A listening post has been erected at this S.P. 3 O/Ranks using 50 sandbags for that purpose.

SUPPORT LINE.
RAVINE.

A considerable amount of work has been done in "THE RAVINE. 100' of drain dug and 73' revetted, using 123 X.P.M. revetting panels, 107 medium "A" Frames (salvaged). 82 men were engaged on this work.

WELL.

This most important work has been started and is well in hand. Four regular shifts of 5 men are engaged sinking this well for the water supply of the Forward Area. The well is being lined with planking measuring 6' X 3' and has been sunk to date about 8'. It is intended to sink as deep as 16'. When this work is complete it will be invaluable to troops in the Forward Area, as at the present time a fatigue party is engaged carrying water forward from DENYS WOOD to the RAVINE and FRONT LINE.

SALVAGE.

Every opportunity is being taken to carry out Salvage operations, and the following has been placed on the Battalion Salvage Dumps or put into use:-

Volume 75 - Appendix III

2.

APPENDIX 3.

SALVAGE.
(Contd.)

- 16 18lb. Shell Cases.
- 26 Pick Heads.
- 27 Spades.
- 2 Cases L.T.M. Shells.
- 4 Rifles.
- 3 pairs wire cutters.
- Spare parts equipment.
- 13 L.G. Drums.
- 1 Sandbag old S.A.A.
- 1/2 " Clips.
- 3 Sandbags empty S.A.A. cases
- 7 Boxes S.A.A.
- 1 Rifle in use for S.O.S.
- 8 large "A" frames.
- 107 medium "A" Frames.
- 130 Sandbags 9 6' Angle Iron Pickets.

Volume 25 Appendix III

28. S.W.2.

OPERATION ORDER NO. 4.

1. A minor operation will be carried out by the Battalion supported by HOLLEBEKE Group Artillery, M.G. Group and 14th. A.L.T.M.B., against the enemy Strong Point THE TWINS at 0.11.d.95.25.

The object of the raid is

- (i) To secure prisoners.
- (ii) To obtain identification.
- (iii) To kill as many as possible and to destroy material and work.

3. (i). The raiding party will be led by Lieut. W.V. BEVAN, (53rd. Battalion) and will consist of about 30 other ranks including one German speaker and two searchers.

(ii). The party will be led by the O.C. to a lie out position in the vicinity of 0.11.d.4.3. and as close to enemy wire as possible, by Zero. At Zero hour they will move forward as close as possible under the bombardment and at Zero plus 2 will rush the objective.

(iii). The return route will be selected by the O.C., and he will lead his party, if the enemy barrage permits to FORRET FARM collecting there reports of all prisoners and material captured etc. If FORRET FARM is under heavy fire he may select a different route and avoid it altogether.

4. The O.C. No. 3 Section, 5th. Signal Company has arranged special communication from FORRET FARM to Brigade Headquarters. The Battalion I.O. (Lieut. A.H. PETTIFER) will be at FORRET FARM to transmit report to Brigade Headquarters; he will have a German speaker attached.

5. The supporting artillery action will be as follows:-

At Zero a bombardment will be opened on the enemy wire about 80 yards east of the TWINS, extending from about 0.11.d.72.40 to 0.11.d.70.10 and on the TWINS and pill-boxes and machine gun emplacements in the vicinity. From Zero plus 1 to Zero plus 2 the barrage on the wire will move forward over the TWINS about 150 yards, the other portions of the bombardment remaining the same. At Zero plus 2 minutes a box barrage will be placed round the TWINS to remain until cease fire.

The bombardment of the wire in Phase 1 will be carried out by two 18 pdr. batteries firing at 5 rounds P.O., P.M.

Two batteries 1st. Div. Artillery are co-operating with a bombardment of the GIANT and vicinity, and Heavy Artillery will carry on a bombardment of BANG, BOMB, SPUD and PUMP FARMS and counter battery work.

6. The M.G. Group will carry out neutralizing fire against all known enemy M.G. positions, and against THE GIANTS. Fire will be at the rate of 100 rounds per gun per minute from ZERO till ZERO plus 20 minutes or CEASE FIRE if the latter is prior to this time.

7. 14th. L.T.M.B. will bombard Pill-Box at 0.12.c.24.56 from ZERO till ZERO plus $\frac{10}{10}$ minutes.

8. O.C. FRONT LINE Company will arrange to thin out Front Line garrison in case of enemy bombardment.

9. Date and hour of ZERO will be notified later.

10. Battalion Headquarters will move to Advanced Headquarters RAVINE at one hour before ZERO and remain there till completion of Operation.

11. ACKNOWLEDGE.

Copy No 1 File
2 Lieut. W.V. Bevan
3 C.O.
4 A. Coy
5 B. Coy
6 C. Coy
7 D. Coy
8 ocml. Group
9 05.14. L.T.M.B.
10 Adv. Br. HQ
11-13. War Diary

R. C. Elliot
Lieut.,
Adjutant 53rd. Battalion A.I.F.

Volume 95. Appendix IV

Ref. Map
WYTSCHAETE
28 S.W.2
1/10,000.

53RD. BATTALION A.I.F.

1. The Battalion will be relieved by the 56th. Battalion in the Left Sector 14th. Brigade Front tomorrow night 21st./22nd. instant. On relief the Battalion will occupy the Left Reserve Sector taking over the billets now occupied by 56th. Battalion.
2. The relief will be carried out as follows:-
 "D" Coy. 56th. Battalion will relieve "D" Coy. 53rd. Battalion in FRONT LINE.
 "A" Coy. 56th. Bn. will relieve "A" Coy. 53rd. Bn. in RAVINE.
 "B" Coy. 56th. Bn. will relieve "B" Coy. 53rd. Bn. in ROSE WOOD.
 "C" Coy. 56th. Bn. will relieve "C" Coy. 53rd. Bn. in DENYS WOOD.
3. On relief Companies will occupy the same areas which they formerly occupied when in the Reserve Sector. Battalion Headquarters will re-occupy New Brigade Dug-outs at 0.19.d.3.7.
4. All existing Lewis Gun A.A. positions will be handed over and taken over and maintained as at present situated. No alteration will be made except by Brigade authority.
5. All maps, documents and stores, including all Supporting Point rations and petrol tins will be handed over. Duplicate receipts for all stores etc. both taken over and handed over will be forwarded to Battalion Headquarters by 9 a.m. on 22nd. instant.
6. One guide for each platoon and one for each Company Headquarters will be at ESTANINET CORNER at 7.30 p.m. to meet incoming Battalion.
7. Two Lewis Gun teams from "C" Company, 56th. Battalion will arrive at DENYS WOOD at 6 p.m. O.C. "C" Company will have guides ready to take these teams to MARTENS FARM and DAMN STRASS to relieve Lewis Gun teams from "C" Company now posted there.
8. The usual Advance Parties will be sent forward under Company arrangements and will take over stores etc. in new area. These parties will move off as soon after 1 p.m. as possible.
9. The utmost care will be taken to leave all Company lines in a clean and sanitary condition, and the usual certificates to this effect will be rendered to Battalion Headquarters by 9 a.m. on 22nd. instant.
10. Lieut. R.A. LEE will hand over Gum-Boot Store to an Officer from 56th. Battalion. Lieut. LEE will remain at the Store until all Gum Boots now on issue to "D" Company are returned to the Store. A statement showing number of boots taken over and handed over will be forwarded to Battalion Headquarters by 9 a.m. on 22nd. instant.
11. The Battalion Bombing Officer (2/Lieut. F. GRIFFIN) will hand over all S.A.A., grenades etc. in Battalion dumps, and Os.C. Companies all in Company dumps and strong points garrisoned by their Companies.
12. The Battalion Scout Officer (2/Lieut. L. GALE) will hand over all patrol suits on issue to the Battalion and forward receipt for same to Battalion Headquarters by 9 a.m. on 22nd. instant.
13. Before leaving their present position Os.C. Companies will wire the word "DUBBO" to present Battalion Headquarters, and on arrival at their new billets will wire the word "BATHURST" to new Battalion Headquarters.

13. ACKNOWLEDGE.

Copy No. 1 File
 2 C.O.
 3 A. Coy
 4 B. Coy
 5 C. Coy
 6 D. Coy
 7 Adv. Bn. H.Q.
 8 56th Bn
 9 H. War Diary

A. C. Elliott
 Lieut.
 Adjutant 53rd. Battalion A.I.F.

Volume 25
Appendix 5

OPERATION ORDER No. 6.

COPY No.

APPENDIX 6

Ref. Map.
WYTSCHAETE
28 S.W.2
1/10,000

53RD. BATTALION A.I.F.

1. The 14th. Brigade will be relieved by the 2nd. Brigade on the 24th/25th. instant.

2. The 53rd. Battalion will be relieved by the 56th. Battalion on the night of 24th/25th. instant and will move to RIDGE WOOD No. 2 CAMP. (N.5.a.9.2.), by way of WYTSCHAETE-VIERSTRAAT road.

3. The Battalion will pass the junction of road leading from ESTAMINET CORNER to HOSPICE with main WYTSCHAETE-VIERSTRAAT road at the following times:-

"H.Q."	6.00 p.m.) Via WYTSCHAETE-
"D" Coy	6.05 p.m.) VIERSTRAAT Road
"B" Coy	6.15 p.m.) Via road from
"A" Coy	6.25 p.m.) ESTAMINET CORNER
"C" Coy	6.35 p.m.) to HOSPICE thence
		via above road.

4. Companies will move in parties of 15 at 50 yards interval.

5. An advance party consisting of Lieut. H.S. GELDARD MC, and 1 N.C.O. per Company and 1 from Headquarters will move off at once.

These guides will meet the Battalion at N.5. Central to guide Companies to the Camp.

Runners will be stationed at all cross roads to direct Companies.

As an additional precaution Companies will send 1 Officer, and 1 N.C.O. per platoon to reconnoitre the roads at once.

6. As there is likely to be a considerable amount of traffic on the roads strict march discipline must be observed.

7. Rear parties consisting of 1 Officer and 6 other ranks per Company will be left behind to hand over to relieving Battalion. All defence schemes, maps, area stores, gum-boots etc. will be handed over and receipt obtained. In addition these parties will be responsible for the cleanliness of Company billets, and the loading of stores etc. on limbers. After all loading is complete and Company billets handed over to relieving Battalion these parties will proceed to New Camp reporting to Adjutant on arrival.

8. Transport will be available as under:-

1 1/2 limbers per Company, 1 for Canteen and 2 for H.Q.

These will arrive as soon after 7 p.m. as possible. All Lewis Guns magazines, cooking gear and Officers kits will be loaded on limbers and one No. 1 Lewis Gunner will accompany each limber.

9. A hot meal will be available at New Camp at 8 p.m.

10. Details, R.Q.M. Store and Transport personnel will remain where present situated. ~~ON 25th instant the Brigade will move to the LOCRE Area.~~

11. Usual certificates of cleanliness will be rendered to B.O.R. immediately on arrival at New Camp.

12. Marching out states will be at B.O.R. at 4.30 p.m. and marching in States half an hour after arrival.

13. On 25th. instant the Brigade will move to the LOCRE Area. Order for this move will be issued later.

14. ACKNOWLEDGE.

Copy no 1 file

2 Co
3 A Coy
4 B Coy
5 C Coy
6 D Coy
7 HQ
8 Details Copy 1/13 War Diary
9 T.O.
10 564 Bn

Lieut.,
Adjutant 53rd. Battalion A.I.F.

Volume 75 Appendix VI

Operation Order No. 7

COPY NO. 11

Ref. Map
Sheet 28.
1/40,000.

53RD. BATTALION A.I.F.

APPENDIX 7

1. The Battalion will move to-day by march route to GORDON FARM (N.14.b.) and there entrain by light railway for REMINGHAMST.
2. The Battalion will move in two trains as follows:-
1st. Train at 10 a.m.... "H.Q.", Details and "A" Coy.
2nd. Train at 10.30 a.m. "B", "C", and "D" Companies.
Party travelling by first train will pass Southern end of present Camp at 8.45 a.m. and party travelling by second train at 9.15 a.m.
Order of march as above.
ROUTE.. Camp-N.10.b.9.8.-N.15.c.2.3.-N.14.b.6.8.-GORDON FARM.
O.C. Details will reconnoitre and select his own route.
3. DRESS.. full Marching Order for all ranks. Steel helmets to be worn.
One blanket to be carried rolled round pack. Puttees to be worn. All water bottles to be filled.
4. The following intervals will be maintained on the march.
Between Companies.. 100 yards. Between platoons.. 50 yards.
5. Lieut. A.H. PETRIFFER will act as Battalion Entraining Officer and travel by last train.
6. All Lewis Guns and magazines will be carried when leaving present Camp.
7. The undermentioned articles of Winter clothing will be withdrawn forthwith and stacked by Companies at Q.M. Stores in centre of Camp:-
2nd. Blanket.. Sheep skin jackets.. Leather jerkins.
Gloves fingerless.. Gloves woollen.. Cap comforters.
These will be collected in bundles by Companies. Blankets to be rolled in bundles of ten. When these are collected and stacked O.C. Coys. will report accordingly to Adjutant. This must be complete by 7 a.m.
8. All surplus Officers' kit will be collected and stacked at Q.M. Store by 7 a.m. It is essential that kits be reduced to the barest minimum. ~~XXXX~~ All surplus kits must be securely fastened and labelled.
9. O.C. Details and Transport Officer will arrange direct with Q.M. where to stack the articles in paras. 7 and 8.
10. A guard of 1 L/Cpl. from "B" Coy. and one elderly man from "A"; "C" and "D" Companies will report to Adjutant at B.O.R. at 7 a.m. This party will remain as a guard over all surplus gear.
11. All Officers' valises and gear to be taken forward will be stacked outside B.O.R. by 7.30 a.m.
12. Usual certificates of cleanliness will be rendered to B.O.R.
13. Marching out states to be at B.O.R. by 7.45 a.m. and marching in states half an hour after arrival.
14. On 26th. instant the Battalion will move to WIPFENHORN. Order for this move will be issued later.
15. ACKNOWLEDGE.

Copy No. 1 File.
" " 2 C.O.
" " 3 "A" Coy.
" " 4 "B" Coy.
" " 5 "C" Coy.
" " 6 "D" Coy.
" " 7 "H.Q."
" " 8 Details.
" " 9 Q.M.

" " 10 T.O.
" " 11. 12. 13. War Diary ✓

Al Elliot
Lieut.,
Adjutant 53rd. Battalion A.I.F.

Volume 95's Appendix VII

OPERATION ORDER NO. 8.

COPY NO.

APPENDIX 8

Dated 25th/ March 1918.

Ref. Map
SHEET 28.
1/40,000.

53RD. BATTALION A.I.F.

1. The Battalion will move to WIPPENHOEK AREA tomorrow, 26th. instant, and occupy Camp at G.32.a.5.5.
2. Order of March... "H.Q.", "D", "C", "B", and "A" Companies.
Starting Point.... Cross roads G.28.a.4.6.
The Head of the column will pass the Starting Point at 10 a.m.
3. The following intervals will be maintained on the March:-
Between Companies.. 200 yards.. Between Platoons... 50 yards.
4. DRESS. Full marching Order for all ranks. Steel helmets to be worn.
Blankets to be rolled round packs.
5. First Line Transport will accompany the Unit keeping 200 yards in rear of the Battalion, and with intervals of 50 yards between every 6 vehicles.
6. All Lewis Guns, magazines, Signalling gear, Officers' kits and Stores will be stacked on road outside Company billets by 8.30 a.m. All loading to be complete by 9.15 a.m. Companies will arrange their own loading parties. One No. 1 Lewis Gunner per Company will accompany the limbers acting as brakesmen.
7. Advance parties consisting of 1 N.C.O. per Company and one from Headquarters, also 1 man from Transport will report to Lieut. H.S. GELDARD MC, at B.O.R. at 8.30 a.m.
8. Mid-day meal will be cooked on route. Two cooks will accompany each cooker, remainder marching with Companies.
9. Officers' chargers will report at 9.30 a.m.
10. The usual certificates of cleanliness will be rendered to B.O.R.
11. Marching Out states to be at B.O.R. at 8.30 a.m. and Marching In states half an hour after arrival.
12. Watches will be synchronised at B.O.R. at 8.30 a.m.
- 13 ACKNOWLEDGE.

Copy No.	1	File.
"	2	C.O.
"	3	"A" Coy.
"	4	"B" Coy.
"	5	"C" Coy.
"	6	"D" Coy.
"	7	"H.Q."
"	8	"Q.M."
"	9	"T.O."
"	10, 11, 12	War Diary. ✓

A.P. Elliot
Lieut.,
Adjutant 53rd. Battalion A.I.F.

Volume 75 Appendix VII

Ref. Map
SHEET 27
1/40,000

OPERATION ORDER NO. 2

53RD. BATTALION A.I.F.

COPY NO. 11
Dated 26th. March 1918.

APPENDIX 9

1. The Battalion will entrain tomorrow, 27th. instant, for "X".
2. DRESS. Full Marching Order. Steel helmets to be worn. Water bottles to be filled.
3. "B" Company will act as Brigade Detraining Party and will travel (with cooker) by No. 1 train leaving HOPOUTRE (L.17.d.) at 11.45 a.m. 55th. Battalion are detailing a senior Captain to act as Brigade Detraining Officer.
4. The remainder of the Battalion with transport will travel by No. 2 train leaving HOPOUTRE at 2.45 p.m.
5. Lieut. A.H. PETTIFER will act as Battalion Entraining Officer.
6. An Advance party consisting of 1 N.C.O. per Company and one from H.Q. will report to Lieut. H.S. GELDARD MC, at B.O.R. at 9.45 a.m. This party will take bicycles and will travel by No. 1 train, reporting at detraining Station to Brigade Headquarters representative at R.T.O's. Office.
7. The following railway arrangements will be rigidly adhered to:-
 - (a). No troops or transport will be permitted to enter the Station yard until the R.T.O. is ready.
 - (b). All trains will consist of 1 Officers' carriage, 17 flat trucks, and 30 covered trucks. Each flat truck will take on an average 4 axles. Each covered truck will take 6 H.D. horses or 8 L.D. horses or 40 men.
 - (c). No personnel or stores will be allowed in the brakevans at each end of the train or on the roofs of the trucks. No covered truck should be used for luggage, as it restricts space for personnel.
 - (d). Transport will arrive at the Entraining Station 3 hours before the departure of the train, and personnel 1½ hours.
8. The entrainment of all Units must be completed half an hour before the departure of the train.
9. Breast ropes for horse trucks must be provided by the Transport Officer. Ropes for lashing vehicles on trucks will be provided by the railways.
10. Transport is allotted as follows:-
 - 1 Limber per company, 1 for Transport, 1 for "H.Q." and 2 for R.Q.M.
 - Company Limbers (excepting "B" Company) will carry S.A.A., Lewis Guns, magazines, and Company Orderly Room box. All limbers will be loaded, and Officers' kits stacked on road outside ~~main~~ camps at 10 a.m.
 - "B" Company limber will carry Officers' kits in lieu of S.A.A. and will be loaded by 9 a.m.
11. The Battalion will move to Entraining Station in the following order:- "H.Q.", "A", "C", and "D" Companies. The Head of the Column will pass cross roads at L.17.d.7.3. at 1.5 p.m. O.C. "B" Company will make his own arrangements for proceeding to Entraining Station.
12. Hot tea or cocoa will be provided at the train and a hot meal cooked on cookers during the journey.
13. Marching out states to be rendered to B.O.R. by 9 a.m. Transport Officer will render a state showing all personnel, vehicles, H.D. horses, L.D. horses and mules in details.
14. Usual certificates of cleanliness will be rendered to B.O.R. before marching out.
15. ACKNOWLEDGE.

Copy No 1 File

2 C.O.

3 A

4 B

5 C

6 D

7 HQ

8 A.H. PETTIFER

9 G.M.

10 T.O.

11 War Diary

12 do

13 do

Lieut. Adjutant 53rd. Battalion A.I.F.

Volume 25 Appendix IX

OPERATION ORDER NO. 10

COPY NO.

28th. March 1918.

53RD. BATTALION A.I.F.

Ref. Map
LENS
1/100,000

1. The 14th. Infantry Brigade will occupy billets in the Village of LOUVENCOURT on 28th. March 1918.

2. The 15th. Infantry Brigade will be in advance of the 14th. Brigade in the LEALVILLERS Area and are providing the Outpost Line of the 9th. Division.

3(a) The 53rd. Battalion billeted in the Eastern portion of the Village are providing one Company ("A" Company) as Outpost Company. The Outpost position is on the line of the ridge running North and South through the first U in LOUVENCOURT.

(b). Major F.T. ROBERTS D.S.O. will be O.C. Outposts.

(c). The Picquet Line will cover a sector on the Outpost line shown above.

(d). This line will be the line of resistance.

(e). Detailed instructions will be issued separately to O.C. Outposts.

4. In the case of development of an enemy attack towards this position the Battalion will be utilised to reinforce and hold the Picquet Line. Companies will be ready to move at 10 minutes notice on orders from Battalion Headquarters. All Officers will at once reconnoitre routes to the Outpost position and make themselves familiar with the Outpost Line.

5 ACKNOWLEDGE.

Disposition.

Copy No. 1 File.

" " 2 C.O.

" " 3 "A" Coy.

" " 4 "B" Coy.

" " 5 "C" Coy.

" " 6 "D" Coy.

" " 7 "H.Q."

" " 8 R.Q.M.

" " 9 T.O.

" " 10 "O.C. Outposts.

" " 11, 12, 13 War Diary. ✓

R. P. Elliott
Lieut. ,
Adjutant 53rd. Battalion A.I.F.

APPENDIX II
COPY NO. 11

Dated 30th? March 1918.

Ref. Map
SHEET 57.D
1/40,000

OPERATION ORDER NO. II

53RD. BATTALION A.I.F.

1. The Battalion will move by march route to-day to billets at HARPOVILLE. (U.4.d. and U.5.a.).
2. Order of March.... "H.Q.", "A", "B", "C", and "D" Companies. The Head of the Column will pass cross roads at U.5.a.7.9. at 8.30 a.m.
3. The following intervals will be maintained on the march:-
Between Companies... 200 yards. Between Platoons.. 100 yards.
4. DRESS.. Full Marching Order for all ranks. Steel helmets to be worn.
5. An Advance Party consisting of 1 H.Q.O. per Company and one from "H.Q." will report to Lieut. H.S. GILDARD MC, at B.O.R. at 7.00 a.m. sharp. This party will proceed on bicycles.
6. Officers' kits will be stacked at R.Q.M. Store at 7.00 a.m. sharp. All loading to be complete by 7.30 a.m.
7. On arrival at HARPOVILLE "D" Company will be ready to take up an Outpost position for the protection of the Village.
8. Usual certificates of cleanliness will be rendered to B.O.R. before marching out.
9. Marching out states to be at B.O.R. by 7.30 a.m. and marching in states half an hour after arrival.
10. ACKNOWLEDGE.

Copy No. 1	File.	Copy No. 6	"D" Coy.
" "	2 C.O.	" "	7 "H.Q."
" "	3 "A" Coy.	" "	8 "Q.M."
" "	4 "B" Coy.	" "	9 "T.O."
" "	5 "C" Coy.	" "	10, 11, 12 War Diary.

A. P. Elliot
Lieut.,
Adjutant 53rd. Battalion A.I.F.

Volume 13 Appendix

Ref. Map.
Sheet 57.D.
1/40,000.

OPERATION ORDER NO. 12

COPY NO.
Dated 30th. March 1918.

53RD. BATTALION A.I.F.

1. The Battalion will remain billeted in HARPONVILLE until further notice.
2. To provide local protection "D" Company has taken up an Outpost Position on the EASTERN side of the Village. Strong Points, forming the Picquet Line, are situated at U.5.c.8.2., U.5.d.3.8., U.5.a.8.5., U.5.a.3.8. This will be Line of Resistance.
3. In the event of an attack "B" Company will take up a line from U.5.c.8.2. to U.5.d.3.8.
"A" Company will take up a line from U.5.d.3.8. to U.5.a.3.8.
"C" Company will be in reserve, at Prisoners of War Compound on EASTERN end of the Village.
4. All Officers will at once reconnoitre these positions.
5. While the Battalion is in this Area, Gas Guards will be provided by all Companies, and all ranks will wear respirators when outside billets.

A. P. Ellwood
Lieut.,
Adjutant 53rd. Battalion A.I.F.

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Appendix XII

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28 Feb. February.

APPENDIX 1 36

(a) 1 Sgt. & 2 O.R. left S.P. 2.O.II. at 8.45 p.m. Proceeded to within 50 yds. of the TWINS, where their presence was suspected by the enemy, who fired flares upon them. Patrol took advantage of the light from the flares to observe for wire in front of enemy pill-boxes, but nothing was seen. The ground was good, but badly cut up around the TWINS. Patrol returned to S.P. 4.O.II. at 10.30 p.m.

(b) 1 Officer (Lt. J. B. Hastings) & 1 N.C.O. left O.12. a. O.7. at 12.15 a.m. On arriving at O.12. a. 3.5. M.G. fire from the Canal was encountered. The patrol halted & listened for some time, & were of opinion that an enemy listening post exists at O.12. a. 45.20., much talking & coughing being heard there. A working party was also heard. No M.G. fire was encountered from the GIANT, but movement was heard. No wire was located in front of the GIANT and TWINS. Patrol was fired on by a M.G. from the TWINS, a post which was always found alert. On account of the frost the ground was good. Patrol returned to O.12. a. O.7. O.11. b. 2.2. at 2.30 a.m.

1st March.

1 Officer (Lt. L. Davies) & 2 O.R. left S.P. 4.O.II. at 12.15 a.m. They found our wire in front of 4.O.II. cut by the enemy raiding party and the wire in front of 1.O.II. damaged by the bombardment. The night was very bright, thus preventing the patrol from closely approaching the enemy positions. The hedges were thoroughly searched for enemy posts, but none were found. The only sound heard was a solitary cough from the direction of the GIANT. Patrol returned to S.P. 1.O.II. at 2.35 a.m.

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UNIT.
STRENGTH OF PARTY.
NAME OF COMMANDER.
TIME OF DEPARTURE.
" " RETURN.
DATE.

Feb. 28 (a) -----
Feb. 28 (b) -----
Mar. 1. -----

REPORT MAP A.

EDITION 3

SCALE 1:10 000

LEGEND

A hand-drawn map of a military position, likely a trench system, with various features labeled in red ink. The map includes a grid of dashed lines and a solid line representing a trench or boundary. The labels are as follows:

- ENEMY MG^s
- ENEMY TMS
- ENEMY POSTS
- WIRE
- ORGANISED SNELL HOLES
- DUGOUTS
- NEW TRENCHES
- TRACKS
- O.P.
- L.P.

On the right side of the map, there are additional labels and symbols:

- 50.11
- CH (C IF CONCRETE)
- CH O M O R O L
- XXXXXXX
- 30.11
- (C IF CONCRETE)
- 20.11
- O.P.
- L.P.

Trenches corrected to 18.2.18

Front

British

Apprex

INDEX

100

Hollebeke

CH 11

100

Sold For

1001

Spider 11

Queens Twp. Sec.

261
2nd March.

APPENDIX 13 38

A fighting patrol consisting of 1 Officer (Lt. L. Davies) and 10 O.R. left S.P. 3.O.II. at 1 a.m. with the intention of covering as much of No Man's Land as possible and engaging any enemy patrols which appeared. Moving in a V formation, centre & flanks advancing alternately, the patrol covered a front of 30-40 yds. When 50 yds. beyond our wire, movement & coughing was heard in a row of trees, and this point was searched. Nothing was ~~heard~~^{found}, however, and it was thought that an enemy patrol was approaching our posts but got away quickly & unobserved on the approach of our patrol. The route was resumed, and hedges & ditches thoroughly scoured. Several unoccupied shell-hole positions were found. The GIANT was approached, but only coughing was heard. M.G.s. were very quiet. Patrol returned to S.P. 3.O.II. at 3.30 a.m.

3rd March.

- (a) 1 Off. (Lt. L. Davies) & 5 O.R. left S.P. 1.O.II. at 7.30 p.m. as a covering patrol for party arranging dummy raid. They found enemy very active with flares & M.G.s. from the GIANT & TWINS, and 2 M.W. bombs were fired from the direction of PUMP F.M. Patrol returned to S.P. 3.O.II. at 10.30 p.m.
- (b) A fighting patrol of 1 Off. (Lt. L. Davies) & 7 O.R. left S.P. 3.O.II. at 2 a.m. & approached dummy figures, lying in wait for enemy patrols. The enemy, however, appeared to be very quiet, M.G.s. were silent & no flares used. Patrol waited for 50 minutes, but no enemy approached. After examining dug-outs & shell-holes at 0.II. d. q.d. patrol returned to S.P. 3.O.II. at 3.45 a.m.

4th March.

1 Off. (Lt. L. Gale) & 4 O.R. left S.P. 1.O.II. at 11.15 p.m. Owing to time limit, the area covered was small, and patrol returned to S.P. 2.O.II. at 12.40 p.m., having encountered no enemy patrols. M.G. flashes from the GIANT & TWINS were observed.

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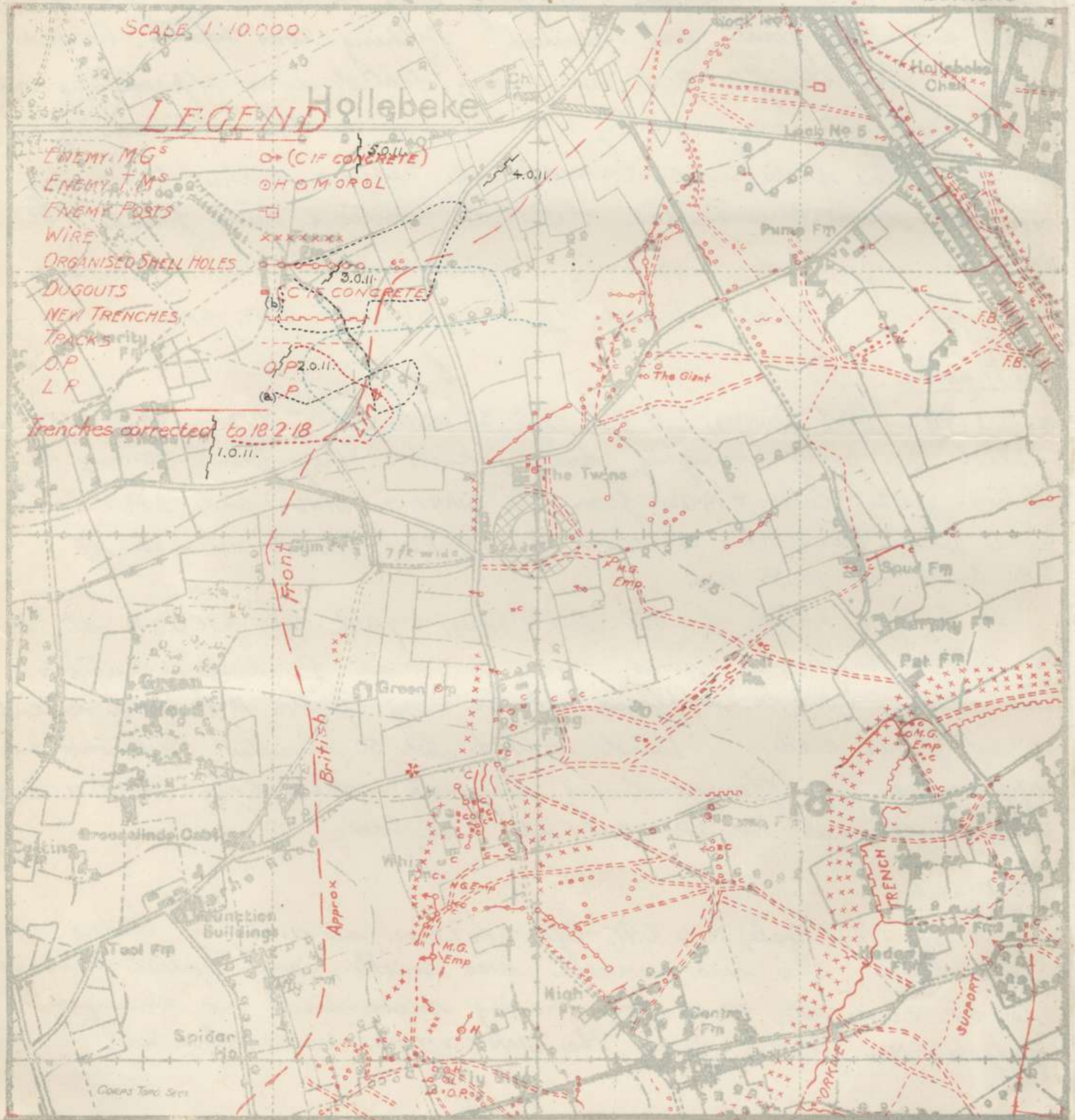


UNIT.
STRENGTH OF PARTY.
NAME OF COMMANDER.
TIME OF DEPARTURE.
RETURN.
DATE.

Mar. 2.
Mar. 3.
Mar. 4.

REPORT MAP A.

EDITION 3



5th March.

1 Off. (Lt. L. Gale) & 9 O.R. left S.P. 4.O.II. at 9.15. p.m. Sounds of working were heard in the direction of PUMP Fm., and some of the enemy were heard walking at approx. 0.12. c. ~~7.9.~~ 7.9. Patrol lay outside the GIANT for some time, and talking was heard. Suspecting the presence of a patrol, enemy challenged, and, no reply being given, opened M.G. fire upon us. Enemy wire here was found to be in a bad state. Patrol returned to S.P. 4.O.II. at 12.25. a.m.

6th March.

1 Off. (Lt. Gale) & 7 O.R. left S.P. 3.O.II. at 8. p.m. Patrol approached the TWINS, heard talking, and saw enemy sentry walking up & down his beat, with rifle slung over shoulder. The ground in front of THE TWINS was found to be in a very bad state. Patrol was continually harassed by fire from the TWINS, and returned to S.P. 2.O.II. at 11. p.m.

7th March.

1 Officer (2nd Lt. L. Gale) & 8 O.R. left S.P. 2.O.II. at 7. p.m. Much shouting & movement was heard at the TWINS, especially when our T.M.^s fired on that point. M.G. fire from the GIANT and TWINS ^{was constant}, but the latter was silenced by our T.M.^s. No enemy patrols were seen. Patrol returned to our line at 11. p.m. From 7 p.m. to 8. p.m. it acted as protective patrol during inter-company relief.

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8th March.

APPENDIX 13

At 7 p.m. 1 officer (2nd Lt. L. Gale) & 8 O.R. left S.P. 3.0.11. They examined the ground at 0.11. d. 8.8. and found the enemy post (□?) not in existence. No enemy patrols were seen during the night. The M-Gs at the GIANT were very active, and shouting was heard & flares sent up when our barrage opened up south of our front. S.P. 4.0.11. was reached at 11 p.m.

9th March.

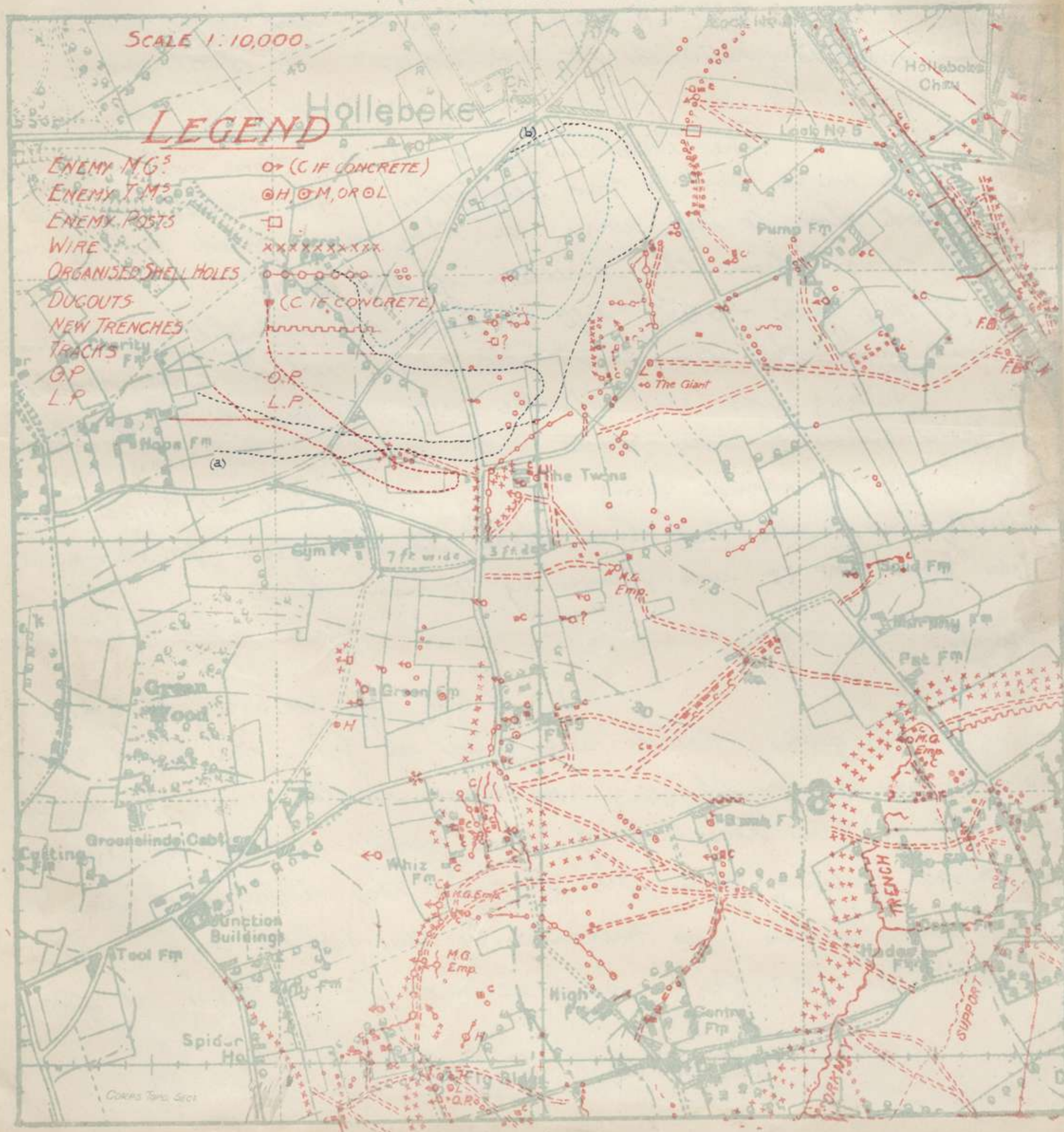
- (a) 1 N.C.O. & 3 men left S.P. 1.0.11. at 8 p.m. and were out until 10.55 p.m. when they returned to S.P. 3.0.11. A slight smell of gas was encountered soon after leaving, & the patrol had to stop for a short time. The wire in front of the TWINS was reconnoitred & found to be in a fair to bad condition. The patrol suspected a listening post close to this wire, as they were fired on by M-Gs from the TWINS & from the direction of the GIANT.
- (b) 1 Off. (2nd Lt. L. Gale) & 3 O.R. left S.P. 4.0.11. at midnight and reconnoitred our front from this point to S.P. 2.0.11., which was reached at 3 a.m. Talking was heard at the GIANT & TWINS, but no M-G. fire came from either of those places. No enemy patrols were seen or heard. An abandoned enemy position was found at 0.11. d. 60.35; apparently no work had been done to this post for some time. M-G. fire from PUMP Fm. was traversing No man's land.

10th March.

2 Officers () & 2 O.R. left S.P. 3.0.11. at 8 p.m. On warning being given, patrol was fired on from the GIANT, TWINS, PUMP Fm. & GYM Fm. Shouting was heard at the TWINS, and flares were sent up from the rear of that place. Several of the enemy were heard walking from the GIANT in the direction of the TWINS. Further investigation was prevented by the patrol being subjected to shell-fire, gas & M-G. fire. Patrol returned to S.P. 2.0.11. at 9.30 p.m.

UNIT.
 STRENGTH OF PARTY.
 NAME OF COMMANDER.
 TIME OF DEPARTURE.
 " " " RETURN.
 DATE.
 REPORT MAP A.

Mar. 8. ---
 Mar. 9. ---
 Mar. 10. ---



17th March.

A fighting patrol of 1 Officer (Lt. L. Gale) & 8 O.R. left S.P. 4.O.11. at 10.30 p.m., but no enemy patrols were seen or heard.

Working parties were heard at the rear of GIANT and south of TWINS. Enemy M.G.s were fairly quiet and very few flares were put up. Patrol returned to S.P. 4.O.11. at 3 a.m.

2nd March.

2 Officers () & 2 O.R. left S.P. 1.O.11. at 8.15 p.m., returning to S.P. 2.O.11. at 11 p.m. Patrol reconnoitred the wire in front of the TWINS and was enabled to examine it well on account of a heavy fog, and because the enemy sent up few flares. M.G.s were quiet, and working parties were heard at same places as previous night.

13 March.

1 officer (Lt. L. Gale) and 3 O.R. left S.P. 4.O.11 at 9 p.m. and proceeded as far as O.12.C.2.9 when an enemy barrage opened and caught them. The first shell blew the patrol into the air and wounded one man. The patrol at once returned to S.P. 3.O.11 at 10.20 p.m. One man was killed just before reaching our line; but his body was recovered and buried at WYTSCHAEDE.



261
14 March.

APPENDIX

46

1. N.C.O (Capt Wolman) and 3 O.R. left S.P. 1. O.II at 12 midnight and reconnoitred the ground across O.II.d from the TWINS to the GIANT. The ground along the whole route was very wet and slippery owing to recent rain, and the ground in front of N°3 post was very shell torn.

Sounds of hammering and a working party was heard at the GIANT. The patrol returned to S.P. 3. O.II at 2.40 am.

15 March

1 officer (Lt L. Gale) and 6 O.R. left S.P. 3. O.II ^{at 8 p.m.} to act as a covering party to the inter company relief, but were driven in again after a short time by hostile artillery fire.

They again went out and found the ground much drier but very shell torn around artillery targets.

Working parties were heard at the GIANT and TWINS.

16 March

Two patrols were sent out with the object of familiarising men with the ground and to locate enemy working parties as targets for the L.T.M.B. The first went out from S.P. 4. O.II at 9 p.m. and returned to S.P. 1. O.II at 11 p.m. whilst the second left S.P. 1. O.II at 12 p.m., returning by S.P. 3. O.II at 3 am. No enemy patrol or working party was heard or seen.

17 March. 1 Officer (Lt L. Gale) and 3 O.R. left S.P. 2. O. II at 12.30 am, returning to S.P. 4. O. II at 3.30 am. The ground as far as O. II. d. 34 was found to be in good condition, and an old dugout was found there in good condition. The enemy was unusually quiet. No patrols or working party were located.

18 March.

1 Sgt (Sgt J. Dohearty) and 3 O.R. left S.P. 1. O. II at 12 am and proceeded straight towards the TWINS. A listening post was located at O. II. d. 8.3. The route was then towards the GIANT where sounds of a working party were heard as well as wheeled transport in rear. Everything was very quiet and the patrol returned to S.P. 3. O. II at 3 am.

19 March.

1 bpl (bpl J. Black) and 4 O.R. left S.P. 4. O. II at 1 am and proceeded towards the GIANT; from there they went towards the TWINS and returned to S.P. 1. O. II at 3 am. No movement was noticed, and the ground was very wet and slippery.



UNIT.
STRENGTH OF PARTY.
NAME OF COMMANDER.
TIME OF DEPARTURE.
RETURN.
DATE.

March. 17. ----
March. 18th. ----
March. 19th.

REPORT MAP A.

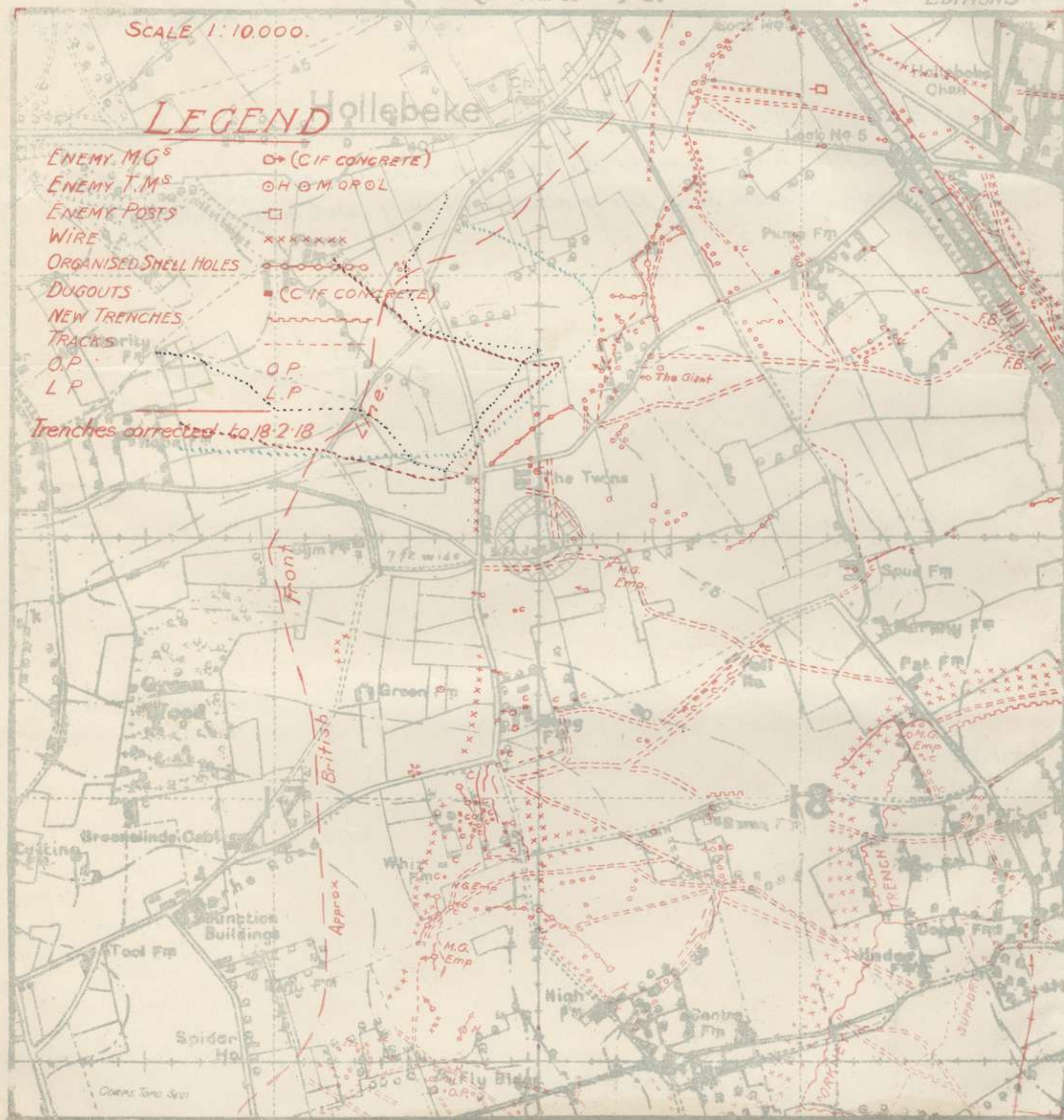
EDITION 3

SCALE 1:10,000.

LEGEND

ENEMY M.G.^s O (C IF CONCRETE)
ENEMY T.M.^s OH O.M. OR O.L.
ENEMY POSTS □
WIRE xxxxxxxx
ORGANISED SHELL HOLES oooooo
DUGOUTS ■ (C IF CONCRETE)
NEW TRENCHES ~~~~~~
TRACKS - - - - -
O.P. O.P.
L.P. L.P.

Trenches corrected to 18.2.18



WAR DIARY.

REGIMENTAL QUARTERMASTER'S DEPT.

RATIONS.
QUALITY &
ISSUE OF.

The rations issued to this Battalion during March were excellent. In spite of sudden moves, the A.S.C. Supply Coy. were always surprisingly prompt in their issuing on arrivals at destinations.



COOKING.

The cooking of the rations received perhaps more attention during this month than ever before, a precaution which proved invaluable during the recent hurried moves.

It has been realized that no Unit can satisfactorily move day after day continually without great care being taken that meals served during, and at the termination of a march, are of the very best.

TRANSPORT
of RATIONS
to the LINE.

There was no change in the method of transporting rations to the line during March, as compared with that of Feb. The unloading places were altered however, owing to hostile shell fire being encountered at Clark & Preston Dumps 3 nights out of 5. It was thought advisable to unload at WARWICK SIDING & SNIPERS TREE only.

There was little doubt that from ON RAET WOOD, linewards, observation by the enemy was perfect, and the red-head

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Q)

light must have been noticed. Needless to say, the red light was stopped, with the result that no shelling occurred while the train was unloading.

Several nights the train service was disorganized, necessitating the use of other systems of railroad, causing great delay to Q.M.'s and Coq. carrying parties.

BATHS.

Two Coys were able to institute hot baths in the support positions, which proved of great benefit to the men. It was realized however that baths without a complete change of underclothing was not satisfactory. Arrangements were therefore made with Coys Baths Officer to draw clean clothing. This was despatched per train as required.

COMFORTS.

Each Coy as its time came for a tour of duty in the front posts, was supplied with comforts - Cocoa & Milk, Curry, etc. which were used to supplement the ordinary ration, and ^{was} greatly appreciated. The Y.M.C.A. established a Cocoa Kitchen in the Ravine and this department supplied the means of transport for the comforts to keep this Depot going.

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APPENDIX 14

(3)
CLOTHING
EQUIPMENT
etc.

It was realized in Feb'y, that the men of this unit, on being relieved, would require a large amount of clothing to re-equip them. These requirements were therefore anticipated and a small weekly indent was submitted to D.A.D.O.S. As the clothing became available it was prepared for issue, and then stored ready for the Battalion being relieved. On relief from front line, Companies rendered shortage lists, and in spite of the hurry of the move, every man of this unit requiring an exchange of clothing & equipment, was supplied at Reninghelst, and in addition, all the old unserviceable clothing was returned to D.A.D.O.S.'s depot in accordance with D.R.O.'s. The position re clothing and equipment of the men of this Battalion, in spite of adverse circumstances, is still excellent.

MOVES.

The recent moves of the Unit, have at least shown the necessity of being able to march out in one load. Although there were so many articles issued to be carried, and yet not allowed for in Transport arrangements.

Within an hour of notice, this Battalion, lock, stock, & barrel can be on the road, a truly wonderful performance.

APPENDIX 14

H

FAT &

PAPER.

The saving of Fat Paper has
 unavoidably suffered a relapse this month.
 No efforts were spared however to maintain
 the Standard.

BOOTS

The position re boots is excellent.

Walter B. Pearson
 Capt. Q.M.

Volume 28 Appendix XIV

Transport Section

From the 1st to 20th of March, while the Battr was in the line the painting of all vehicles was completed.

The work being so light during this period, exceptional opportunities were afforded, for painting & general overhauling. Every advantage was taken, & the Harness & Vehicles were brought up to a very efficient standard.

The Stable accommodation was excellent & every opportunity was given the animals to graze.

Frequent inspections were carried out. During this time, by Capt Greive & judging by reports submitted by him, the Transport was never in better condition.

From the 20th to 24th, the usual routine was carried out. Kit inspections were carried out & shortages made up. About this time a parade was held of the Pack Troop, every thing proving

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Satisfactory.

On Sunday the 24th one of the riding Horses had to be destroyed.

While out grazing, he stayed too near the edge of an old trench, & slipped in. Every effort was made to get him out, but apparently in his wild endeavours to free himself he ruptured his stomach. Acting on advice from the V.O. he was shot, duly skinned, & buried.

On 25th the Battalion moved from Kemmel to Reninghelst. The whole move was accomplished with no regrettable incidents or accidents. Good Stabling & accommodation was encountered at the new camp.

On the 26th the Transport again moved, with the Battalion, to Hopontie, good Stabling & accommodation was again found.

The morning of the 27th the Transport embarked for Mondicourt & after a very successful trip duly arrived, where the unloading of Horses & Vehicles was speedily carried out.

A move was made the following morning at 4 AM for Louvencourt which was reached about 9.45. Good Billets were found for the men & an excellent field was provided for

The Animals & Vehicles

The 29th Good Friday was devoted to cleaning up & preparing for a further move. The animals were rested.

The morning of the 30th again saw us on the road en route for "Harponville". Some bad roads were encountered on this journey, but every thing arrived safely.

The Billets in this village are warm & dry & all the men seem happy & very cheerful.

Open lines, are again the lot of the animals, who seem to be getting used to it after their long spell in Stables.

The 31st. The usual Routine was carried out. Other than for Rations very little carting has been done.

Harness cleaning occupies the greater part of the day, owing to the dirty condition of the roads, rain having fallen.

J. G. Davis Lt
M.O.
53 Battalion

Volume 15 of Appendix 15