

AWM4

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

Machine Guns

Item number: 24/3/1

Title: 3rd Australian Machine Gun Battalion

March 1918



AWM4-24/3/1

Original

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Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY



OF

THIRD AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN BATTALION

FOR

MARCH 1918.

Signature of Officer compiling

J. Henrick Lt

Signature of Officer Commanding

*W. Bayly Major
for CO 3rd Aust MG Bn*

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Army Form C. 2118.

158

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9th M.G. Bn
March Gup

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	Reference Map: HAZEBROUCK, 5.A.			
7th March 1918.		9 a.m.	Third Aust. Division relieved from LE TOUQUET - WARNETON Sector, during afternoon and evening, and moved back to hutments in LE NIEPPE - ROMARIN Area. Transport moved off by road for DEVRES Area.	J. Henricks Lt
	Reference Map: HAZEBROUCK 5.A. and CALAIS 13.			
8th March			Entrained at STEENWERCK for DESVRES, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 23rd M.G. Companies concentrating at BOURNONVILLE for the purpose of re-organising and forming 3rd A.M.G. Battalion. Companies billeted in the village under the command of Major J.M. WELLS, D.M.G.O. <u>Appointments:</u> Lieut. Harris, E.A. 9th M.G. Coy. to be Battalion Transport Officer. Lieut. Tyzack, T.O. 10th M.G. Coy. to be Battalion Quartermaster. 2/Lieut. Henrick, J.O. 23rd M.G. Coy. to be Battalion Intelligence Officer.	J.H.
BOURNON-VILLE	9th March 1918		Day devoted to cleaning clothes and equipment, kit inspection, and making billets comfortable.	J.H.
	10th March		Transport arrived in afternoon, having been 3½ days on the journey. The weather was fine and on arrival horses, limbers, and harness were in a highly creditable condition.	J.H.
	11th March	3 p.m.	Training for the week as per Appendix 1 was carried out. Recreational sports frequently indulged in. Physical condition and morale of the men were excellent. Rugby Match; 9th M.G. Coy. v. 23rd M.G. Coy. Latter Company won by 8 pts. to 3.	APPENDIX 1. J.H.
	13th March		Lieut-Colonel A.C. Blacklow transferred from 35th A.I. Battalion to command 3rd A.M.G. Battalion. Major J.M. Wells handed over to the Colonel and remained in the Battalion in the capacity of Second in Command. Having established Battalion Headquarters the C.O. at once took in hand the organisation of the Unit.	J.H.
	15th March		<u>Appointment:</u> Captain T.M. Mansfield appointed Battalion Medical Officer.	J.H.
	16th		<u>Appointment:</u> Captain C. Brodziak transferred from 34th Battalion for appointment as Adjutant.	J.H.

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118. 150

or

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<u>Reference Map: HAZEBROUCK 5.A. and CALAIS 13.</u>				
BOURNON-VILLE.	22nd March	10.30 a.m.	Battalion Headquarters, 11th and 23rd A.M.G.Coys. left BOURNONVILLE, marched to LOTTINGHEM, and entrained for CAESTRE. Detrained and marched to STEENVOORDE arriving 11.15 p.m. (Battalion Operation Order No. 1.)	APPENDIX II. <i>J. H. K.</i>
		2 pm.	10th A.M.G.Coy. left BOURNONVILLE and marched to LUMBRES.	
		8 pm.	9th A.M.G.Coy. left BOURNONVILLE, marched to LOTTINGHEM and entrained for ABEELE.	
	23rd March		Battalion Headquarters, 11th and 23rd M.G.Coys. remained at STEENVOORDE. 9th M.G.Coy. detrained ABEELE and marched to billets in STEENVOORDE, arriving 5 p.m. 10th M.G.Coy. entrained LUMBRES en route to CAESTRE but detrained EBBLINGHEM and marched to BANDRINGHEM.	<i>J.H.</i>
	24th March	7.30 a.m.	Battalion Headquarters, 9th, 11th, and 23rd M.G.Coys. marched from STEENVOORDE to EECKE and enbussed to EBBLINGHEM. Battalion Headquarters and 23rd M.G.Coy. marched to RENESCURE and BLARINGHEM, 9th M.G.Coy. marched to billets in SERCUS Area. 11th M.G.Coy. marched to billets in RENESCURE. 10th M.G.Coy. remained at BANDRINGHEM.	<i>J.H.</i>
	25th March		Battalion Headquarters and 23rd M.G.Coy. remained at BLARINGHEM. 9th M.G.Coy. left 9.30 p.m. marched to STEENBECQUE and entrained for DOULENS. 10th M.G.Coy. entrained at ST. OMER for DOULENS and on arrival there were sent forward to MONDICOURT. 11th M.G.Coy. transport rejoined Company. At 5.30 p.m. personnel and transport moved to ARQUES and entrained for SOUTHERN FIGHTING AREA.	<i>J.H.</i>
	26th March	6 pm.	Headquarters and 23rd M.G.Coy. marched from BLARINGHEM and entrained at midnight at STEENBECQUE. (Battalion Operation Order No. 2.) 9th M.G.Coy. and transport detrained at DOULENS and marched to COUIN arriving 7 p.m. 10th M.G.Coy. arrived at MONDICOURT 6 a.m. and mounted 4 guns to defend village. At 4.30 p.m. proceeded by road to COUIN arriving 9 p.m.	APPENDIX III. <i>J.H.</i>

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			<u>Reference Map: HAZEBROUCK 5.A. and CALAIS 13.</u>		
	26th March	6 pm.	11th M.G.Coy. detrained at DOULENS and marched to POINT between THIEVRES and MARIEUX where troops and guns embussed for FRANVILLERS.	<i>J. Henrich</i>	
			<u>Reference Map: FRANCE. Sheet 62.D. 1/4000.</u>		
	27th March		Headquarters and 23rd A.M.G.Coy. arrived DOULENS 8 a.m. detrained and embussed for FRANVILLERS arriving 9 p.m. 9th M.G.Coy. marched to PAS embussed to FRANVILLERS, debussed and marched to HEILLY, Nos. 3 and 4 Sections going into the line. 10th M.G.Coy. left COUIN 5 a.m. marched to MARIEUX embussed to FRANVILLERS and marched to HEILLY. 11th M.G.Coy. debussed FRANVILLERS and were ordered to take up defensive positions between SAILLY-LE-SEC and MERICOURT-L'ABBE, in conjunction with 42nd and 43rd A.I. Battalions. Three sections posted to sweep the approaches in front of SAILLY-LE-SEC the fourth section covering MERICOURT. Transport Lines at FRANVILLERS.		<i>J.H.</i>
	28th March		Battalion Headquarters, and 23rd M.G.Coy. acting on instructions received by wire marched through HEILLY to RIBEMONT-sur-ANCRE, 23rd Coy. taking over village defences from General HEADLAMS force. 9th M.G.Coy. Nos. 3 and 4 sections rejoined Unit, and the Coy. marched out of HEILLY at 9 a.m. to billets at BONNAY. Nos. 1 and 2 sections proceeded to CORBIE, established Section Headquarters, guns being mounted at VAUX and LA NEUVILLE. Transport left COUIN and proceeded to FRANVILLERS. 10th M.G.Coy. took over front from main BRAY - CORBIE Road to MERICOURT from 11th M.G.Coy. 11th M.G.Coy. Section at MERICOURT moved to positions in old French System on right of BRAY - CORBIE Road. Transport at BONNAY.	<i>J.H.</i>	
	29th March		9th M.G.Coy. Transport and rest of Company left respective billets at FRANVILLERS and BONNAY and proceeded to CORBIE where Nos. 1 and 2 sections joined them, the whole proceeding to billets at CACHY, where Company Headquarters were established. Transport lines were established on outskirts of BOIS L'ABBE. 10th M.G.Coy. Positions were pushed forward to the crest running south from TREUX Wood, towards SAILLY-LE-SEC. 11th M.G.Coy. Line advanced in conjunction with 10th Bde. on left flank.	<i>J.H.</i>	

WAR DIARY

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~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
			Reference Map: <u>FRANCE, Sheet 62.D. 1/40000.</u>	
			Operations of 30/31st March 1918.	
VILLERS-BRETONNEUX		2.30 pm.	9th M.G.Coy. Instructions were received for 9th A.I.Bde. to counter-attack and re-establish a line from V.9.a.2.0. (COPSE west of MARCELCAVE) to AUBERCOURT, and to capture the latter town which was in the enemy's hands. No.3 Section under 2/Lieut. J.S.Ross was to support 33rd A.I. Battalion and No. 4 Section under 2/Lieut. L.S.Piper to support 34th A.I.Battalion. The work of the two sections will be taken separately.	
		3.10 p.m.	No. 3 Section moved with 33rd A.I.Bn. from BOIS D'AQUENNE across country arriving at assembly point 200 yards west of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX and AUBERCOURT V.I.S.S. Reconnaissance made of approaches through LANCER WOOD which was being subjected to heavy enemy fire.	
		5 pm.	During a lull in the enemy's shelling men and limbers were hurried through the wood and guns got into position on summit of hill overlooking enemy position. Right sub-section placed under control of Capt. Fry of 33rd Bn. Left sub-section engaged enemy machine guns and troops that were engaging our advancing troops. After some time enemy abandoned positions in disorganised groups leaving many casualties on the spots from where his guns had been fired.	
		8 pm.	Reconnaissance showed left flank to be lightly held, so one gun was sent forward and placed in a commanding position on extreme left flank of Infantry. Another gun went forward to a position to the left of the centre company - latter moved forward with their reserve company (34th Bn.) when it advanced through the 33rd Bn. Ammunition was taken to the guns by pack animals.	
		11 pm.	Enemy counter-attacked but was driven off by machine gun and rifle fire suffering many casualties. All guns dug in and remained in position till relieved by English troops at 6 a.m. 31st March. Casualties - 4 Other Ranks, Wounded. <u>No. 4 Section.</u>	
		3.30 pm.	The section moved with 34th A.I.Bn. from BOIS L'ABBE and moved across country in column of route via west of CACHY to assembly point in U.11.central, north of BOIS de HANGARD.	
		6 pm.	One gun with "A" Company, 35th Bn. worked round the north side of LANCER WOOD under covering fire of No.3 Section's guns and successfully pierced the enemy's lines establishing a position 200 yards in front of same, and held this till 33rd Bn. had consolidated. Then "A" Coy. withdrew and joined up with 33rd Bn.	
			A5834 Wt.W4973/M687 750,000 8/16 D.D. & L. Ltd. Forms/C.2118/13.	

WAR DIARY

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Reference Map: FRANCE Sheet 62.D. 1/40000.				
SAILLY-le-SEC.	31st March	2 am. 3 am.	Enemy counter-attacked but was driven off by machine and Lewis gun fire with evident casualties. Similar tactics were adopted by enemy with similar results.	
		5 a.m.	Ammunition was brought up by pack mules to within 200 yards of gun positions. Guns were dug in. Relieved by Imperial troops and moved back to billets in CACHY. Casualties - NIL.	
		12.15 p.m.	11th A.M.G.Coy. During the morning the enemy shelled our positions & The villages of SAILLY-LE-SEC and VAUX-sur-SOMME. Enemy advanced and attacked on Brigade front from River SOMME to BRAY - CORBIE Road under cover of his artillery and long range machine gun fire. Two waves comprised the first attack. The left section of guns immediately opened fire at ranges from 12 to 14 hundred yards, inflicting numerous casualties. On the right, in front of SAILLY-LE-SEC seven different waves were counted. The section of guns in J.28.b. swept with indirect fire the low lying ground near the River SOMME along which the strongest parties of the enemy were approaching. As soon as the leading wave came in sight in J.35.b. and d. two sections situated in trench running through J.29.d. opened up with direct fire inflicting heavy casualties. Each succeeding wave was similarly dealt with and occasionally the battery in J.28.b. also used direct fire on enemy parties, which were observed from their position.	
		3 pm.	Enemy attack ceased. The following is an extract from an 11th A.I.Bde. Report.:- "Our Brigade Picquet line, consisting of two companies was never at any time penetrated, and held their line throughout. At one time the enemy attempted to envelop our right flank next to the River SOMME but was entirely checked by the prompt action of the Vickers gunners who were firing on that flank." Company Reserve of S.A.A. was near Coy.H.Q. in SAILLY-LE-SEC, The fore portion of a G.S. Limbered Wagon, with two mules, being kept close by. As soon as the action started this limber was used to carry ammunition to within 200 yards of the guns. The Reserve was replenished from a dump 4000 yards in rear where another G.S. Limber had been kept in readiness. <u>Ammunition Expended during the action - 27000 rounds.</u>	<p><i>J. D. Hewrick Lt</i></p>

158/

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APPENDIX

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WAR DIARY

OF

THIRD AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN BATTALION.

FOR

MARCH

1918

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
I.	Syllabus of Training.
II.	3rd Aust.M.G.Bn. Operation Order No. 1.
III.	3rd Aust.M.G.Bn. Operation Order No. 2.
IV.	Disposition of Guns March 31st, 1918.

*3rd Aust. M.G. Bn.
March 1918*

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118. 158

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or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

APPENDIX I.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information				Remarks and references to Appendices
<p><u>THIRD AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN BATTALION.</u></p> <p><u>SYLLABUS OF TRAINING .</u></p> <p><u>WEEK ENDING 16th MARCH, 1918.</u></p>							

Day. 9.0 a.m. to 10.0 am. 10.0 to 11.0 am. 11.0 to 12 noon. 2.0 to 5.0 p.m.							

	Monday 11th	Drill	Kit Inspection and Cleaning		Recreational Training.		
	Tuesday 12th	Drill	General Description	Gun Drill.	do.		
	Wednesday 13th	Drill	Mechanism.	Gun Drill.	do.		
	Thursday 14th	do.	I. A.	do.	do.		
	Friday 15th	Points B.D.&.A. Care & Cleaning	Stoppages & Minor Repairs	Practice T.O.E.T.	do.		
	Saturday 16th	T.O.E.T.	T.O.E.T.	T.O.E.T.	do.		

5.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. Lectures for N.C.O's. to be given by selected Officers.							
(a) Map Reading.							
(b) Duties.							
(c) Work for following day.							

APPENDIX

J. Heinrich

WAR DIARY

or

APPENDIX I.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices		
<u>THIRD AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN BATTALION.</u>						
<u>Syllabus of Training for Week Ending 23rd March, 1918.</u>						
	<u>Day.</u>	<u>9.0 to 10.0 a.m.</u>	<u>10.0 to 11.0 a.m.</u>	<u>11.0 to 12 noon.</u>	<u>1.30 to 2.30 pm.</u>	<u>2.30 to 3.30 pm.</u>
	Monday 18th	Close Order Drill Saluting - 15 min.	Mechanism & Stripping.	Musketry and Revolver Practice.	Lecture by C.O. in grounds in rear of Chateau.	
	Tuesday 19th	do.	R A N G E	P R A C T I C E S.		Recreational Training.
	Wednesday 20th	Companies at Disposal of Company Commanders.		F O O T B A L L.		
	Thursday 21st	Close Order Drill. Saluting 15 mins.	R A N G E	P R A C T I C E S.		Recreational Training.
	Friday 22nd	do.	Packing Limbers.	Standard Tests.	T. O. E. T.	do.
	Saturday 23rd	Battalion Parade and March Past of Chateau. Dress - Marching Order.		Parade Ground rear		
Companies will parade one fighting limber packed at Battalion Headquarters on Wednesday at 11 a.m.						
During each morning half an hour will be devoted to games. The actual times for these games will be left to the discretion of Officers Commanding.						

APPENDIX I

J. Henrich Lt.

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APPENDIX II.THIRD AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN BATTALION OPERATION ORDER No. 1.

Battalion Headquarters,
22nd March, 1918.

Reference Map: CALAIS and HAZEBROUCK 5.A.

INTENTION: On receiving instruction the Third Aust. Division will move forward into Corps Reserve Area.

INSTRUCTION: (a) The 11th and 9th Bde. Groups will move on the 22nd instant.
 (b) The 10th Brigade Group will move on the 23rd instant.
 (c) Personnel of the 11th and 9th Bdes. will entrain at LOTTINGHEM. Train Transport of the 11th and 9th Brigades will entrain at DESVRES.
 (d) Personnel of the 10th Brigade Group will entrain at DUMBRES. Train transport of the 10th Brigade will entrain at WIZERNES.
 (e) the 11th and 9th M.G. Companies will move according to the above instructions with their respective Brigades.
 (f) The 10th M.G. Coy. will move with the 10th Inf. Bde. Group.
 (g) The 23rd M.G. Coy. will be prepared to move on receipt of instructions from these Headquarters.
 (h) Transport other than train transport will move by road with their respective Brigades.
 (i) Time. Hour of departure will be notified later.

Reports: Until further notice all reports will be rendered to the present Battalion Headquarters.

(Sgd.) C. BRODZIAK, Captain,
Adjutant,
Third Aust. Machine Gun Battalion.

DISTRIBUTION:

1. O.C. 9th M.G. Coy.
2. O.C. 10th M.G. Coy.
3. O.C. 11th M.G. Coy.
4. O.C. 23rd M.G. Coy.
5. Q. M.
6. R.M.O.
7. C.O.
8. H.Q. 3rd Aust. Div.
9. War Diary
10. File.

APPENDIX III.THIRD AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN BATTALION OPERATION ORDER No.2.

Battalion Headquarters,
26th March, 1918.

Reference Map: HAZEBROUCK and LENS 1/100000.

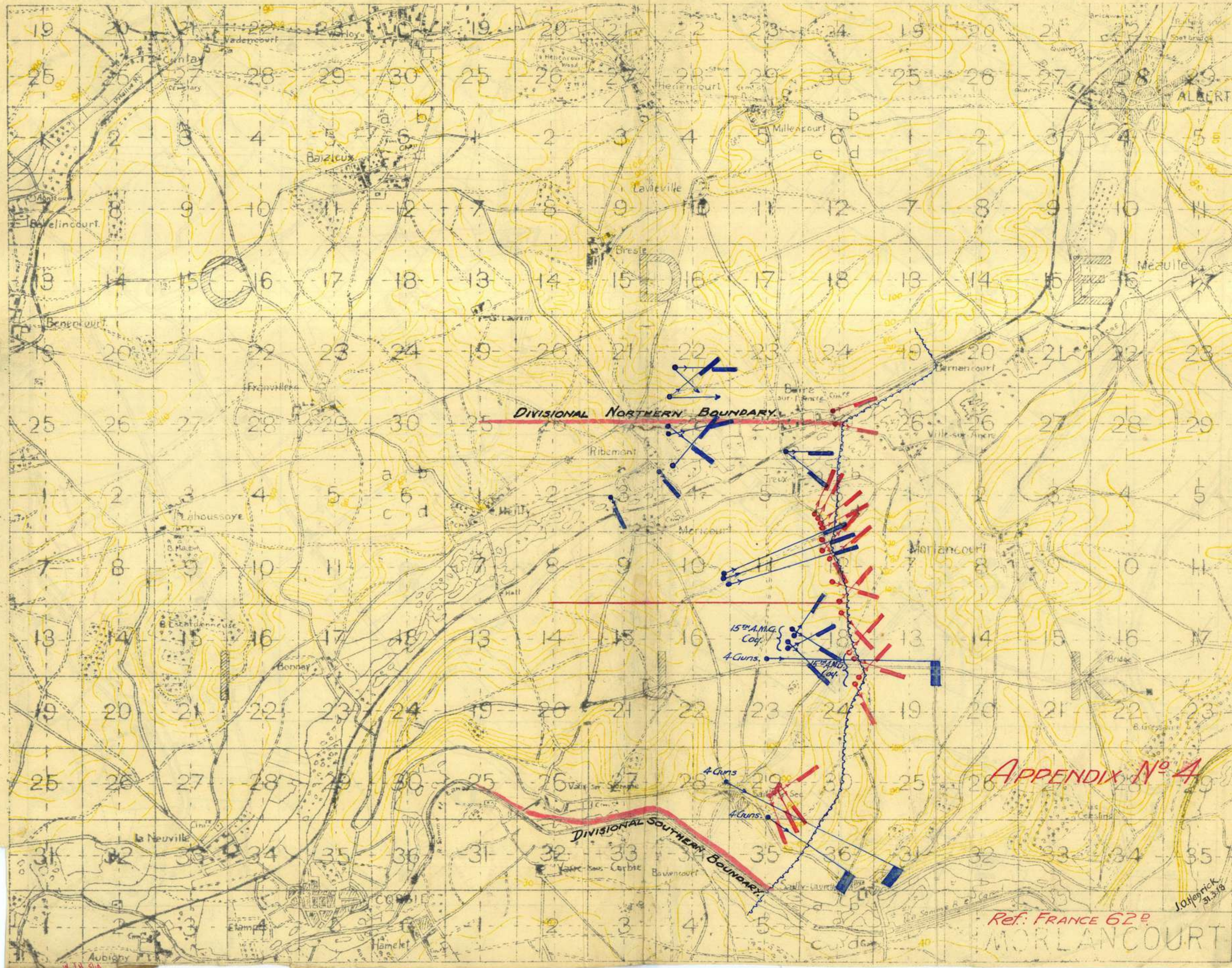
1. INTENTION: The Third Aust. M.G. Battalion will move as part of the 3rd Aust. Division from BLARINGHEM Area to DOULLENS where they will detrain.
2. INSTRUCTION: The Third Aust. M.G. Battalion less 9th, 10th & 11th M.G. Companies will move by road from BLARINGHEM to STEENBECQUE where they will entrain at 12 midnight 26/27th March, 1918.
3. ROUTE: BLARINGHAM, LE CROQUET, STEENBECQUE Station.
4. ORDER OF MARCH: 3rd M.G. Bn. Headquarters (less transport)
23rd M.G. Company.
23rd M.G. Company Transport.
5. STARTING POINT: Railway Crossing.
6. TIME: 6 p.m.
7. REPORTS: To head of column.
8. GENERAL: (a) A complete marching out state (in duplicate) showing the number of men, horses, G.S. limbers, G.S. wagons, two wheeled vehicles and bicycles, to be handed to the Adjutant at the starting point.
(b) Brest ropes for horse trucks must be provided by the Companies themselves. Ropes for lashing vehicles will be provided by Railway.
(c) Rations for 27th March can be issued to units at Railhead.
9. Acknowledge.

DISTRIBUTION:

1. C.O.
2. O.C. 23rd M.G. Coy.
3. Transport Officer.
4. Q.M.
5. R.M.O.
6. War Diary.
7. File.
8. Spare.

(Sgd.) C. BRODZIAK, Captain,
Adjutant,
Third Aust. Machine Gun Battalion.

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Yds



APPENDIX No 4

Ref: FRANCE 62nd
MORLANCOURT

10/11/1918
31.3.18