

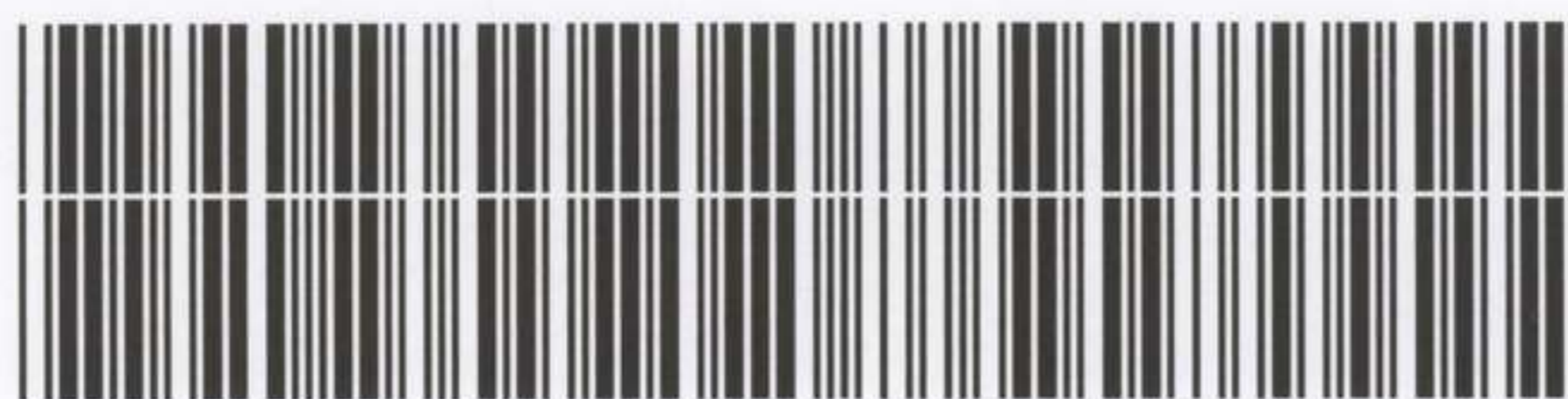
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Infantry

Item number: 23/74/14

Title: 57th Infantry Battalion

March 1917



AWM4-23/74/14

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

57th BATTALION

48

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

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
FRICOURT MAMETZ	1/3/17		The whole Battalion moving at 2 pm concentrated at MAMETZ Camp The area vacated at FRICOURT was occupied by Indian Cavalry. At 5.15 p.m. one of our balloons in the direction of BERNARAY Wood was seen to come down in flames.	
	2/3/17		Training was carried on, particular attention being paid to specialists live bombing and Lewis Gun firing were practised	
	3/3/17		The whole Battalion was again fully occupied training C & D Coy's went through the FRICOURT baths.	
	4/3/17	1430	Church Parades were held The Battalion moved to PERTH Camp. BERNARAY as per attached Appendix	Appendix 37 Appendix 38
SPR DUEDECOURT Intermediate Line.	5/3/17		The Battalion prepared to move up to the intermediate line as per appendix attached leaving PERTH Camp at 4.30 p.m. the move was completed by 7.15 p.m. Casualties 10P.	
	6/3/17		435 men were employed on work in the Sector. Shelling was slight A strong easterly wind blew all day	
Front Line	7/3/17		A slight fall of snow during the day. All men were employed on on work round the trenches. The Battalion took over the Front Line from the 60 th Batta as per Appendix attached. Relief completed by 11.30 p.m. 2 nd Lt MOTER wounded slightly.	Appendix 30
	8/3/17		Several slight falls of snow during the day. The day was very clear & observation good. The back areas were heavily shelled. Our patrols active examined the ground and enemy were along our front.	
	9/3/17		Lieut R. DOUTREBAND was evacuated to Hospital. There were several falls of snow during the day. Enemy artillery very active on our front and support lines till about	W.P. Capt

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

57th BATTALION A.I.F. (49)

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(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Front Line near Quevedecourt	9/3/17		2.30 p.m. when our light and heavy artillery opened on the enemy batteries and front line system. After this there was little shelling.	
	10/3/17		The day was cloudy and observation was poor. Artillery on both sides were quiet. Considerable work was put in on the front line system, posts were connected up and communication trenches were pushed on with	
	11/3/17		The weather was very clear and observation excellent. Aeroplanes were very active. There were several duels, three of ours were observed to fall and two of the enemy's. There were several observation balloons up.	
POSSUM Trench.	12/3/17		From noon to 12.30 p.m. our artillery strafed the enemy both on the front line and to the rear. At 12.40 the enemy retaliated and the fire was continuous and heavy throughout the afternoon. All calibres up to 5.9 in were used. Commencing at 6.30 p.m. the 60 th Battalion took over the front line system. We moved back to support with Batta H.A. at POSSUM Trench. Good observation throughout the day. Artillery were active on both sides. At 4 p.m. our guns commenced a severe strafe lasting for 20 minutes. The enemy did not retaliate as heavily as usual. A Coy and half B Coy went back to PERTH Camp to be bathed and generally cleaned up.	
	13/3/17		About 300 men were supplied for Engineer Working Parties. The day was comparatively dull, artillery were not quite as active as on previous days. Lieut DICKINSON rejoined the Battalion from Hospital.	
	14/3/17		C Coy & 1/2 B Coy went to PERTH Camp to be bathed etc, the other 1/2 C Coy returned. All day but artillery very active. Brigadier W.F. ELLIOTT resumed command of the Brigade and Lieut Col J.C. STEWART resumed command of the Battalion.	

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WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

57th Battalion A.I.F. 50

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Possum Trench	14/3/17		Word was received that Capt J.B. LAING and Lieut C.G. FORREST had been awarded the Military Cross and N ^o 3904 Sgt P.B. Malone the D.C.M. and N ^o 1153 Sgt WA MONEY the Military Medal. Our strength was increased by the arrival of 21 O.R. Returned Wounded and Reinforcements. Casualties 4 O.R. Wounded.	
FRONTLINE BARLEY Trench	15/3/17		Clear Day. Artillery fire normal in our sector, there was very little in our back area. There was a very heavy strafe to our left front. It was reported that BIHUCOURT was in our hands and that our troops were close to BIEF VILLERS Commencing at 6 p.m. we took over the front line from 60 th Batta, the relief was completed at 11.30 p.m. A Company under Capt McDONALD endeavoured to enter TILL Trench as per attached Appendix. The enemy wire was found to be very strong and thick and machine guns were very active. The party were unable to effect an entry. Casualties 2 O.R. killed, 5 O.R. wounded.	Appendix 40 Appendix 41
	16/3/17		again the weather was very favourable for observation. Nothing of importance happened during the day. At about 10 p.m. "A" Coy again attempted an entry into ATOM and TILL Trenches. They persisted until dawn, everywhere meeting opposition. At 5.20 a.m. on morning of 17 th another attempt was made which proved unsuccessful. During the night we established two strong points in NO MANS LAND	Appendix 42
	17/3/17		Our B & C Coys occupied ATOM and FIRE Trenches with patrols pushed out to the BEAULENCOURT - BAPAUME Road. At about 2 p.m. we occupied the trench round REINCOURT. Sniping was active but only small parties of the enemy were seen. With the exception of one 77 m.m. battery and a 4.2" battery the enemy used no artillery on our front. The weather was very clear and sunny. A few traps left by the enemy were found, we had no casualties as a result.	W. D. G. 3

WAR DIARY

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

57th Battalion A.I.F.

51

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
REINCOURT	17/3/17		At night patrols were pushed out. Lieut MEARA and 12 men patrolled BANCOURT but found it unoccupied.	
near Gueudecourt	18/3/17		The Advance Guard to the Division 59 th & 60 th Batt ^{ns} under Brig Genl H.E. ELLIOTT moved through our position at about 10 a.m. The Battalion then moved back to NEEDLE and Cow Trenches. Gum Boots were handed in & ankle boots reissued 57 th & 58 th Batt ^{ns} and 2 Sections of 15 th M.G. Coy under Lieut Col J.C. STEWART formed the Divisional reserve to be known as STEWART'S Force.	
	19/3/17		400 men were employed on Road work near GUEUDECOURT. Packs were brought up from PERTH Camp and distributed.	
	20/3/17		A party of 1 officer and 25 men were employed burying dead along our front. all available men were employed making the road from GUEUDECOURT to BEAULENCOURT. All Gum boots were returned to the Brigade Gum Boot Drying Shed.	
	21/3/17		40 men were again employed burying dead. About 350 bodies were buried. 9 officers and 380 men were employed on the GUEUDECOURT - BEAULENCOURT Road. Orders were received that STEWART Force would move forward tomorrow. The Battalion Transport moved from MONTAUBAN to near GUEUDECOURT. 2 nd Lieut LANGLEY and MCCAY joined the Battalion from 6 th C.T.B.	
REINCOURT	22/3/17		The Battalion moved to REINCOURT as per attached appendix. A Company occupied trenches on the outskirts of BARAUME. The march was very difficult owing to the greater part being very old trenches and shell torn ground. Our destination was reached about 11.30 a.m. The men were very tired but there were no stragglers. The Transport experienced great difficulty, only three limbers and the pack mules being able to reach REINCOURT. The men were rested and cleaned up during the afternoon.	Appendix 4 th

W. D. L. A

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

57th Battalion A.I.F.

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(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
REINCOURT	23/3/17	0730	Orders were received to stand by in readiness for any immediate move as the 29 th Batt ⁿ at BEAUMETZ had been heavily attacked. The 59 th Batt ⁿ were ordered to restore the position, but this was not necessary.	Appendix 44
		0900 1800	The Batt ⁿ moved to FREMICOURT to await further instructions. Guides were met at MILL CROSS to guide the Battalion forward to take over the outpost line immediately in front of BEAUMETZ extending to the right as far as the left of VEU Wood from the 29 th Batt ⁿ . Relief was completed without any casualties by 11.30 p.m.	
BEAUMETZ	24/3/17	0440	Enemy shelling throughout the night was very consistent with 77 mm, 4.2" 5.9" and 8.1" light Col J.C. STEWART DSO took over command of the Outpost line from Lt Col CLARKE DSO, 30 th Batt ⁿ . Major R.M.C. AITCHISON assumed temporary command of the Batt ⁿ .	
		1545	The enemy shelling continued heavily on the front line and back area. A party of the enemy estimated at 60 strong attacked our left flank. After a stubborn fight we had to fall back slightly but shortly after drove the enemy out and reoccupied our former position. At the same time a party of the enemy estimated at between 250 and 300 men attacked our picket on the right front of BEAUMETZ. From information received later this party was to take over our outpost position but lost direction and came across our position. They were driven off after a fierce fight and established themselves in a shell hole mine crater about 500 yds away. The enemy casualties were very heavy, about 60 dead being seen. Five unwounded and one wounded prisoner were taken and passed back.	
		2100	At 3.45 p.m. the 59 th Batt ⁿ advanced on our right front and a distance of from 500 to 1000 yards where they established themselves. The 57 th Batt ⁿ took over this new line at about 8 p.m. A party of 1 Officer and 35 OR. with Lewis Gun moved out and occupied a farm house at crossroads J.R.C. 7.4. This they did with very little opposition. Our casualties to date were 2 officers wounded (Capt W.P. TRAINOR and 2 nd Lieut KIMPTON.) 8 OR. killed, 25 OR. killed wounded.	Appendix 45

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WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

57th BATTALION A.I.F.

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(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BEAUMETZ	25-3-17		<p>The weather was very clear, a beautiful day for observation. Aeroplanes were very active, there were several duels at least five of our machines being brought down in our area.</p> <p>The farms taken last night was consolidated. Several large fires were observed in DEMICOURT. Shelling was constant throughout the day all calibres up to 5.9" being used, the back areas received particular attention. Our patrols were very active across our front during the night.</p> <p>At 5.15 a.m. the 58th Battⁿ on our left advanced towards LOUVERVAL. "A" Coy 57th Battⁿ under Lieut KEYS moved across as support Coy to 58th Battⁿ they subsequently took part in the advance. Our Artillery fire was very heavy on the enemy front line and supports. "A" Coy sustained 2 killed and 21 O.R. wounded.</p> <p>Rain and snow fell intermittently throughout the day. 2nd Lieut STALEY and 16 O.R. returned from 1st ANZAC School. 67 O.R. reinforcements joined the Battalion.</p> <p>At about 10 p.m. a large party of the enemy attacked the farm and forced our men to retire. Later during the night patrols were sent out and the farm reoccupied.</p> <p>One Company of 59th Battⁿ moved up as a local support during the night. They rejoined their own Battalion a daybreak.</p> <p>Further falls of rain, sleet and snow during the day. Shelling, particularly with 77's was kept up by the enemy throughout the day. LEBUCQVIERE received particular attention.</p> <p>Commencing at about 6 p.m. the 31st Battalion took over from us. The relief was completed about midnight without mishap.</p>	
		26/3/17		
		2200		
		27/3/17		

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WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

57th BATTALION AIF.

54

(Erase heading not required.)

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BEAUMETZ	27/3/17		As Coy were relieved they moved back to billets at FREMICOURT Lt Col CLARKE DSO. took over the command of the outpost line from Lt Col STEWART DSO who then resumed command of the Battalion Our Casualties for the tour of duty in the outpost line were 2 Officers wounded 12 OR Killed and 66 OR Wounded.	
FREMICOURT	28/3/17		The Battalion moved to VILLERS-AU-FLOS as per attached Appendix Accommodation was very limited and Companies were very scattered, a few were accommodated in dugouts but the majority were housed in shelters & ruined houses.	Appendix 46
VILLERS AU FLOS	29/3/17		The day was spent cleaning up, checking shortages of kit and equipment and reorganising	
	30/3/17		Setting up drill and training was commenced. Specialists were brought up to strength and trained. It was decided to establish a Bathing Baths. A room was selected and tubs were gathered from the ruins. A staff was put in charge but a lot of work was necessary to get the baths in working order. A canteen was built.	
	31/3/17		Training was continued, particular attention being given to specialists. Capt R.W. ELLIOTT left to join the 65 th Bato 6 th Division Our Strength was 40 Officers 919 OR: those actually with Unit were 25 Officers 729 OR.	

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57th Battalion A.I.F.

Appendix No. 37

Operation Order No 19

4. 3. 17

1. MOVE

The Battalion will move to PERTH Camp near BERNAFAY at 2.30 pm today in the following order: -

Headquarters

A Company

B "

C "

D "

Companies will move in file at a distance of 50 yards between platoons and 100 yards between Companies. Dress full marching order, one blanket will be carried. Advanced Guard. Lt Col L. V. Walker and 2 ORs per Company will proceed and take over PERTH Camp at 11.30 am.

The second blankets, rolled in bundles of 15, securely tied on three places and labelled will be stacked near the entrance to the Camp by 1 pm. Officers valises will also be stacked in the same place at 1 pm.

Transport Guard of 1 NCO & 10 men will be supplied by A Company to report to the lumber at 1 pm.

Rearguard A rearguard of 1 officer & 16 ORs will be supplied by D Company. All hutments and surroundings must be left scrupulously clean.

W. Dickinson Capt,
Adjutant.

- Copy.
1. War Diary
 2. Files
 3. A Coy
 4. B
 5. C
 6. D
 7. Lewis Detachment
 8. Signaller
 9. Grenadiers
 10. Scouts
 11. Transport
 12. O.M.

Appendix No 38 Copy No 1
 57th Battalion
 Battalion Order No 19
 operations 4. 3. 17

1. The Battalion will move to
 the support line tomorrow the
 5th inst. at 4 pm.

Order of Move

H. Qrs

A Coy

B

C

D

packs, valises, surplus kits &
 second blankets will be stored
 in hut now used as a
 Regimental Office by 10 am.
 Sandbags will be worn in
 the place of puttees.

2 grenades, 6 sandbags & 120 pounds
 SAA. per man to be carried.

Filled water bottles & unexpired
 portions of days rations to be
 carried. One H. CO per Company

to report to Lt Walker Br H Qrs
 at 9 am. Distance of 100 yards
 to be maintained between
 Companies.

W. Hutchinson Capt
 Adjutant

Copy 1. War diary
 2. Files
 3. A. Coy
 4. B. Coy
 5. C. Coy
 6. D. Coy
 7. Hospital
 8. Camp

Guido

Avon
R.A.

No 1 War Diary
 2 Filed
 3 A Coy
 4 B
 5 C
 6 D

57th Battalion A.I.F. Appendix 39
 Operation Order No 20 Appendix No. 39"

6th March 1917

INTENTION.

The Battalion will relieve the 60th Battalion in the Front line system of trenches on the night 7th March 1917.

DISPOSITIONS.

Front line.

A company will relieve the right company of 60th Battalion, ^{leaving Possum Reserve} at 6 p.m.

B company will relieve the left company of 60th Battalion leaving BULL LANE at 6 p.m.

C company will relieve Support company of 60th Battalion in Pork and Stormy trenches leaving at 6 p.m.

D company will relieve Reserve company of 60th Battalion

Two platoons in CHEESE ROAD

Company H.Q. and two platoons at CHALK PITS leaving at 5 p.m.

GUIDES.

Guides from 60th Battalion for Band C Coys. will meet companies at the Tank near HAY TRENCH on arrival of the Companies.

Guide for A company will report at Coy. H.Q. POSSUM TRENCH at 5.30 p.m.

Guide for CHEESE ROAD platoons of D Coy. will meet them at BULL ROAD.

Guide for remainder of Coy. will meet them at BULL ROAD

Lewis Guns will be distributed as follows:-
 A company 5 Guns C company 2 Guns
 B 5 D 1

AID POST.

RATIONS

The R.A.F. will be at CHALK PITS near GUEUDECOURT.

Rations will be distributed before moving off.

All water bottles must be filled and extra water carried in petrol tins by Front Line Companies.

Copies of taking over receipts and handing over receipts in duplicate to be forwarded to Battalion H.Q. within 12 hours.

Attention is directed to Standing Orders re Dig-outs.

M. A. Dickinson Capt
 AMT

Appendix No. 40

Appendix No 40
57th Battalion A.I.F.

Operation Order No 22

1. The Battalion will take over the right of the Brigade Front Line System on the night 15/16 March 1917

Distribution

Right C Company

Left B Company

Pork and Stormy

Trenches } D Company

In Support

Cheese Road and } A Company

Chalk Pits }

2. Guides will be waiting at Cheese Road for B, C, and D Companies at 6 p.m.

If possible rations to be issued before Companies move off.

Companies will move as follows.

B Company - 6 p.m.

C Company 6 p.m.

D Company 6:15 p.m.

A Company 7 p.m.

Where gum boots are worn, gum boots will be stored under guard under Company arrangements.

15/3/17.

W. Dickenson Lt
Adjutant.

Operation Instruction No. Appendix No. "4"

Reference Map. 570 S.W.

1. It is anticipated that the enemy are on the point of evacuating the Line TILL-ATOM Trench
2. An investigation and if possible occupation of TILL Trench will be attempted on night 15/16 March 1917 at synchronised time.
3. The boundaries of the 57th Battalion movement will be between a Line from N. 22. c. 1.9. to N. 17. c. 1.9. and a Line on the left from N. 15. a. 0.5. to N. 9. d. 7.6. thence to N. 5. a. 0.0.
4. The movement will be carried out by A. Company maximum 120 all ranks. O.C. Capt. W.H.L. McDonald. on the following lines.
 - 4 Bombing Patrols of 1 N.C.O. and 8 men each backed up by a fighting patrol of 1 Off and 20 other ranks and Lewis gun team in rear.
5. The Bombing Patrols will if possible enter and establish themselves in the trench and upon a footing being secured the fighting patrols will follow.

By Zero the fighting patrols will be in position not closer than 400 yards from the objective, and will be ready to move forward and assist the Bombing Patrols in the consolidation of the trench when captured.
6. The patrols will advance at equal distances on the front but the inner patrols will converge inwards on to the junction of BARLEY with TILL Trench with the object of, if possible, effecting an entrance there and bombing outwards from point of entry.

This point will be covered by one Stokes mortar from about N. 15. d. 8.8.
7. If it is found that TILL Trench has already been evacuated a line must be pushed out to about N. 11. d. 0.0., N. 5. c. 0.0., N. 3. b. 7.4.; if this is done the greatest care must be taken that constant touch is kept with units on the Flank with whom O.C. Attack will work in close co-operation.
8. Ground flares will be used to signal position to aeroplanes should they be called for.
9. Zero hour 1 p.m.
10. Frequent reports to be rendered to Battalion H.Q.

W. Dickinson Capt
Adjutant

57th Battalion ^{Appendix 42}
H.F.

Operation Instruction N^o 2.
Reference Chap 57 C.S.W. 16-3-1917

1. Provided the wire can be cut today patrol action as laid down in Battⁿ Operation Instruction N^o 1 will be repeated. If possible posts properly dug in within 400 yards of the German trench.
2. Suggested points for the posts are vicinity of N. 15. W. 5. 5. and N. 9. d. 15. 05
3. The object of these posts is to facilitate observation of the enemy's movement and as an emplacement for STOKES mortars in the event of a bombardment by the enemy's line being necessary.
4. Our action is to be marked by the closest observation of the enemy and by frequent touch rather than by hard pushing to determine his strength and actions.
5. The posts detailed above will be occupied contingently.
6. Zero time will be noted if patrol action is to be repeated.

W. Hutchinson Capt
Adjutant 57th Bⁿ

Appendix No 42
Copy No 1

Operations Order No 21

Reference Map Sheet 57 C ^{21.3.17} Fiana $\frac{1}{40,000}$

1. In accordance with Stewart Force Brigade Order No 3 the 57th Batta will move from NEEDLE & COW Trenches to the Area BANCOURT - BAPAUME tomorrow 22nd inst.

2. Companies will move as under passing the Batta starting point, NEEDLE trench & ELLIOTT WALK at 8am and the Stewart Force starting point CHEESE ROAD (N 26. a. 3. 4) at 9am

Have
A Coy
B Coy
C Coy
D Coy

The Battalions will move to the BAPAUME BEAULENCOURT Road in column of route and from there on the regulations and distances for the SOMME area will apply

3. Light line transport will move under Lt Col McCallum independent of the column.

4. Dress, Marching Order, one blanket wrapped in ground sheet & rolled sausage fashion round the pack.

Full water bottles and unexpired portion of day's rations.

5. A company will detail a rear guard of 1 officer & 8 orks to collect & bring along all stragglers.
6. Reports to the head of the column.

W. J. Dickinson Capt
adjutant

- copy 1 - War Diary
 2 - File
 3 - A Coy
 4 - B }
 5 - C }
 6 - D }
 7 - Transport.

Appendix No. 44

Appendix No. 44
Copy No. 257th Battalion AIF

Outpost Order No 1

23.3.17

1. The Battalion will take over the outpost line from J. 13. 6. 0. 9 to 14. Centre from a Battalion of the 8th Brigade on the night 23/24th March 1917
2. Dispositions will be as under: -
Front Line will be held by 3 Companies
from Right to Left
D Coy
C
B
A Coy will be kept in support at LE BUCQUIERE.
3. Guides for each Coy will be at MILLCROSS at 6 pm. Coys will go forward in the following order
B Coy
C
D
A
Relief will be completed as soon as possible after 8 pm as possible.

Coy
order

Appendix No. 44

Copy No 1 War Diary
 2 Files
 3 A Coy
 4 B Coy
 5 C Coy
 6 Transport
 7 Transport

Appendix No. "45"

"A" Form Appendix 4 Army Form C. 2121.

MESSAGES AND SIGNALS. No. of Message

Prefix.....	Code.....m	Words	Charge	This message is on a/c of :-	Reed. at.....m.
Office of Origin and Service Instructions.					Service.
		Sent		(Signature of "Franking Officer.")	From.....
		At.....m.			By.....
		To.....			
		By.....			

TO { 57th Batt
58th Batt

Sender's Number * A 322	Day of Month 24/3/17	In reply to Number	AAA
----------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------	-----

at 9 pm. tonight 57th Battalion will attack and capture Farm at I.S.C. 4.6 establishing a post of 1 Platoon. One part of 58th Battⁿ will conform to make the line continuous when the position is captured.

From _____
 Place O.C. Outposts
 Time _____

The above may be forwarded as now corrected. (Z) J. J. Dickinson Capt
 Censor. Signature of Addressor or person authorised to telegraph in his name.

° This line should be erased if not required.
 T. & W. & J. M. Ltd., London. W 14042/M44. 75,000 12/15. Forms C 2121/10.

Appendix No 46

57th Battalion A.I.F.
 Operation Order No 23
 Reference Map 57^c $\frac{1}{40,000}$ 28.3.17

1. The Battalion will move to VILLERS au FLOS on this date by direct road south from FLEMICOURT.

Order -

Headquarters

A Coy

B

C

D

Companies will move at a distance of 100 yds between Companies.

One Officer per Company will report at once to Lieut Douhetand at Btn. He will report the strength of Companies.

Transport will move independently under Transport Officer.

Head of Column to pass starting point junction of roads in I 25 6 8 8.

@ 2.30 pm.

- Copy 1 War Diary
 2 Filed
 3 A Coy
 4 B
 5 C
 6 D
 7 Transport
 8 Q.M.

W. Robinson Capt.
 Adj. 57th Btn A.I.F.