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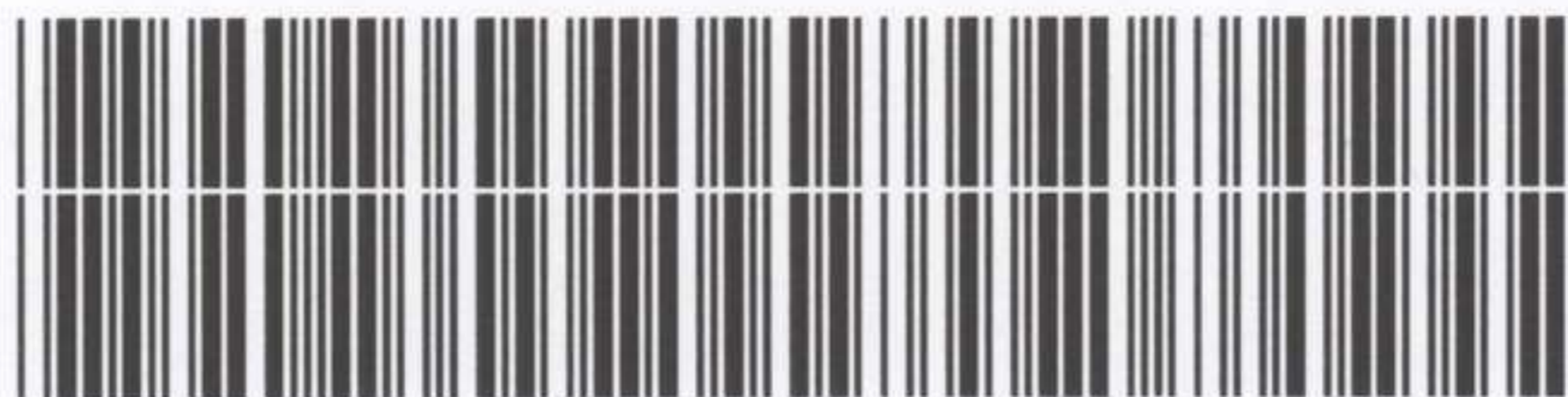
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War**

Machine Guns

Item number: 24/13/21

**Title: 8th Australian Machine Gun
Company**

February 1918



AWM4-24/13/21

CONFIDENTIAL.

ORIGINAL.
~~DUPLICATE.~~
~~TRIPLICATE.~~

Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

8th Aus. Machine Gun Coy.

FOR

February 1918.

Signature of Officer compiling

O Bridgeford Capt.

Signature of Officer Commanding

O Bridgeford Capt

8th AUSTRALIAN
MACHINE GUN
COMPANY

271

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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.

OR
~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Company HQ U3A1.1 BRS-WARNETON in the field	1/2/18.		Battery Positions visited during the morning, and arrangements made for improving the positions.	
			The Batteries are disposed as shown in (Appendix A.) Weather very misty throughout the day. Enemy artillery very quiet, our artillery carrying out intermittent shooting throughout the day.	
Company HQ U3A1.1	2/2/18		Conference of CO. at Bde H.Q. to discuss defence policy of the Bde Sector. Low flying Enemy aeroplane over the Brigade Sector at about 11 am. Our planes were very active throughout the day. Our Artillery very active, the enemy retaliation being very slight. Weather bright & visibility good. Commenced improvements to Battery Positions. Dispositions unchanged.	
Coy. HQ U3A.1.1	3/2/18.		Morning bright & clear. Visibility very good. Both enemy & our own planes very active throughout the morning. Enemy attitude very quiet. Dispositions unchanged.	Maffey Stonington

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Coy HQ. U3A11. 110000 WARETON	4/2/18		Morning Bright & clear. Our planes very active over enemy lines opposite the Brigade Sector. Our Artillery very active throughout the day apparently carrying out registration shoots. All Battery Positions visited. Improvements to positions being continued with. These improvements consisted in constructing overhead splinter proof cover & revetting trench. Dispositions unchanged	
do.	5/2/18.		Our own & enemy planes again active throughout the morning. Enemy shelled our front line (Right Centre Bn sector) with Field Artillery & High Minnewerfer. Weather fine & clear. Visibility good. Continuation of improvements to Battery Positions.	
do	6/2/18		Enemy artillery more active than usual. Our Artillery carried out various shoots throughout the day. How fly E.A. over our lines late in the evening. Visited Ops M.G. Coy HQ. & question of Co-operation discussed. Visited Batteries during day Dispositions unchanged	
do	7/2/18		Enemy Artillery more active than usual, special attention being paid to STEIG NAST FARM (USA 2.7) Weather misty & rainy. No visibility. Intersection relief completed by 6.30 pm. Work on Battery positions Dispositions unchanged.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Coy. HQ U3A1.1. 1/10000 WARNETON	8/2/18.		Rainy & misty throughout the day. Aerial Activity nil. Enemy Artillery fairly active on right Pn (30 th) sector. Visited Batteries during the evening, everything alright & men quite comfortable. Dispositions unchanged.	
do	9/2/18.		Rain & mist throughout the day, visibility improving during the afternoon. No aerial Activity. Our Artillery very active throughout the day on enemy's front system of defence. Capt Pondgeford rejoined the Company from seconded list, & assumed Command from Today. Dispositions Unchanged.	M. G. O.
do	10/2/18.		Weather fair with slight mist. Visited B. Battery at 9.30 pm. At 10 pm a raid was carried out by the 10 th Aus Inf Bde, the operation being very successful. A diversion in the way of a Chinese attack was carried out by the Messines Group Artillery (13 th F.A. Bde) in conjunction with the 8 th L.T.M.B. on the right (30 th Pn) sector. Retaliation to this attack very slight, although the enemy opposite this sector showed a great deal of uneasiness & put up many coloured flares but there was no response. Met Divisional M.G.O. at 3 rd Pn HQ. & visited the Battery positions with him. Dispositions unchanged.	Pondgeford Capt

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Coy. HQ USAI. 1/10000 WARETON	11/2/18.		Weather mild. Visibility good. Visited B+C. Batteries reconnected alternative positions from which to carry out harassing fire. Artillery on both sides very quiet. Aerial activity below normal. Dispositions unchanged.	
do	12/2/18.		Misty throughout the day. Visibility bad. Met Brigade Commander at 32 nd Bn HQs explained machine gun dispositions to him. Visited Bde HQs (8 th) discussed the question of relief with the G.O.C., Bde Major and C.O. 15 th Aus M.G. Coy. It was decided to alter the existing distribution of the guns as follows. Each of the 8 th & 15 th M.G. Companies to have 8 guns forward and 8 guns in rear on S.O.S. This meant each Coy. would be covering a Battalion front & not 4 as previously. This new distribution facilitated Control & supplies by having the guns distributed in depth. At midday the portion of the S.O.S. line allotted to our SOS Batteries was taken over by the Messines Group Artillery, the Machine Gun SOS Batteries then being used to superimpose the Artillery Barrage according to requirements.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Coy H.Q. V3A11. 110000 WARRINGTON	12/2/18.		Visited B.C. and D Batteries found everything correct & men quite comfortable & healthy. General improvement carried out to Battery positions. Dispositions unchanged.	
do	13/2/18.		Visited H.Q. of 15 th Aus M.G. Coy & discussed question of relief to take place during the night 14 th /15 th Feb. Conference of section officers at Company H.Q. to discuss details of this relief. During the night 13 th /14 th Feb Nos 1 of Nos 1 & 2 Sections visited guns of 15 th M.G. Coy that they would be taking over from, with a view to becoming acquainted with the positions and obtaining all available information. Right rain throughout the day. Visibility bad. Dispositions unchanged.	
do	14/2/18.		Right rain throughout the day. Notification received from Bde that relief arranged for 14 th /15 th would not take place till night 15 th /16 th inst. Sections notified accordingly. Visited B & D Batteries during the night. Dispositions unchanged.	
do	15/2/18.		Completion of arrangements for relief. Relief carried out without any casualties.	P. Bridgeport

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Coy. H.Q. U3A11. WARNETON	15/2/18		and completed by 7pm. (See appendix D) Weather fine visibility good. Bright moonlight night. Our Bombing planes heard crossing our lines at intervals throughout the night. Dispositions see Appendix.	
do	16/2/18		Visited section Head Qns of No 1 section covering Right Pn sector. Positions unsatisfactory. Weather fine visibility good. Bright moonlight night. Bombing planes again active. Dispositions as for 15/2/18	
do	17/2/18.		Notification received from D.M.G.O to the effect that it had been decided to alter the defence scheme for the guns to be in the Divisional Sector (See Appendix B) Enemy planes flew very low over the Brigade sector at intervals throughout the day. STEIGNAST Fm. was shelled consistently throughout the day. Two gas shells fired in the vicinity of No 7 gun position but had no casualties. Dispositions unchanged.	
do	18/2/18.		Discussed question of construction of new positions with C.O. 8th Field Coy A.E. These positions to be commenced as soon as selected by the D.M.G.O in conjunction with the Divisional & Brigade staff.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Coy. H. G. USA 1.1. 11000 WARWICKTON	18/2/18.		Harassing fire was carried out throughout the night on enemy organizations, tracks etc. In all an average of about 12,000 rds a night was ^{is} fired. (See Appendix C)	
do	19/2/18.		Weather fine, visibility good. Enemy low flying planes again very active. Visited 32 nd Bn HQ, & discussed Machine Gun positions with the C.O. Reconnoitred positions in the Support and Reserve Line & located new positions accurately. Locations of all positions under new M.G. defence scheme received from DMGO with instructions to carry on with new work immediately. This work commenced night 19 th /20 th & 7 battle emplacements constructed. Enemy Artillery active, chiefly shelling our support and Reserve Lines. Harassing fire carried out on enemy organizations in rear. Visibility good - Weather fine. Enemy low flying planes again active particularly over 32 nd Bn sector. Dispositions unchanged.	
.	20/2/18.		Went round right Bn sector and located new positions accurately in the support & Reserve Line Moved portion of ammunition from Right Bn sector forward positions back to the new positions in the support Line.	D. Maguire Capt

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~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.~~

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Place No. Date	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Coy HQ U3A11 110000 WARNETON.	20/2/18.		<p>Arrangements made with Bde for a working party of INCO and 20 O.R. to be attached to the Company to assist in the construction of the new positions for Carey ammunition. Party reported on 23rd inst.</p> <p>Heavy rain throughout the night. Activity below normal on the Bde front. Dispositions unchanged.</p>	
do	21/2/18		<p>Visited Reserve Line during the day found work on new positions very satisfactory. Men quite comfortable and cheerful, the ration issue being exceptionally good.</p> <p>On the night 21/22nd Feb 8th Inf Bde relieved by the 15th Aus Inf Bde in the right Bde sector of the Divisional front. This Company remained in the line and from completion of relief came under the tactical command of G.O.C. 15th Aus Inf Bde.</p> <p>Weather fine & clear. Visibility good. Aerial activity Normal.</p> <p>Dispositions Unchanged.</p>	
	22/2/18		<p>Visited guns in the Reserve Line and reconnoitred alternative positions.</p> <p>Dull rainy day. Visibility poor.</p> <p>Had telephone lines laid to Right Bn (37th) and Right Centre Bn (38th) to facilitate liaison work.</p> <p>dispositions unchanged. (See relief) (See Appendix E).</p>	

Bridge for Capt

8th AUSTRALIAN MACHINE GUN COMPANY.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Cay. HQ. U3A 1.1. 1/10000 WARRINGTON	23/2/18		<p>Attended Conference at 15th Aus Inf Bde H.Q. when question of defence policy was discussed and a Coordinated policy decided upon.</p> <p>Visited Head Qrs of 57th and 58th Bns and explained M.G. defence scheme to COs.</p> <p>Three new positions constructed in the support line.</p> <p>Activity on Brigade front much below normal throughout the night.</p> <p>Harassing fire carried out during the night on enemy organizations in rear.</p> <p>Discussed question of siting the Machine Guns in conjunction with the tactical wiring of the Brigade Sector. The idea is to get best use of the fire power of the guns.</p> <p>Our low flying planes more active than usual throughout the day. When flying over enemy lines they were heavily engaged by machine gun and anti-aircraft fire. Dispositions unaltered.</p> <p>Weather fine & clear.</p>	
do	24/2/18		<p>Visited guns in support line. Work proceeded satisfactory.</p> <p>Weather Bright & clear. Visibility clear.</p>	
"	25/2/18		<p>Weather fine and clear. Aerial activity on both sides above normal.</p> <p>General improvements to positions. Dispositions unaltered.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Coy. HQ W3A11. 110000 WARNETON	26/2/18.		Conference of COs at 15 th Bde HQ. It was decided to carry out two minor operations at some future date to be arranged. It was decided that Machine Guns would co-operate by put down a box barrage. Nothing definite as to points to be barraged was decided upon at present.	
do	27/2/18		Weather fine visibility good. Dispositions unchanged. Reconnoitred 2 right Bn sectors with CO. 8 th Field COY. A.E. & selected lines for the tactical wiring in conjunction with the sighting of the Vickers Machine Guns. Conference of section officers at Coy HQs to discuss harassing fire programme, on enemy organisations in rear.	
			Our artillery & trench mortars very active throughout the day on enemy posts and trench mortar emplacements.	
"	28/2/18.		Weather fine visibility good. Several improvements to gun positions. Weather fine & clear. Visibility good. Dispositions unaltered.	
			Casualties for period 1/2/18 to 28/2/18. Nil.	

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Atkinson Capt.

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WAR DIARY

OF

8th Aus. Machine Gun Company

FOR

14 February 1918.

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
"A"	<p>Map showing:-</p> <p>(1) dispositions from 15/2/18 ... to 24/2/18.</p> <p>(2) do from 24/2/18 to 28/2/18.</p> <p>From 1/2/18 to 15/2/18 the 16 guns were organized into 3 batteries (A.B.C) to be used for S.O.S. purposes only.</p>
"B"	Machine Gun defence Scheme.
"C"	Harassing Fire Map show areas ^{enemy} tracks &c fired on during the night.
"D"	Relief Order N ^o 1
"E"	Relief Order N ^o 2.

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APPENDIX "A"

1. Strong Points in Brigade Sector.
2. All dispositions shown in BLUE are those which existed from 15/2/18 to 24/2/18.
3. All dispositions shown in RED are those which existed from 24/2/18 to 28/2/18.
4. From 1/2/18 to 14/2/18 dispositions of three S.O.S Batteries

were as under

Battery "A" U4 A 60.70 Ref. 1/10000 WARNETON.
do "B" O33 C 40.30 Ref. 1/20000 Portion Sheet 28 S.W.
do "C" O 28 C 35.95. do do do do

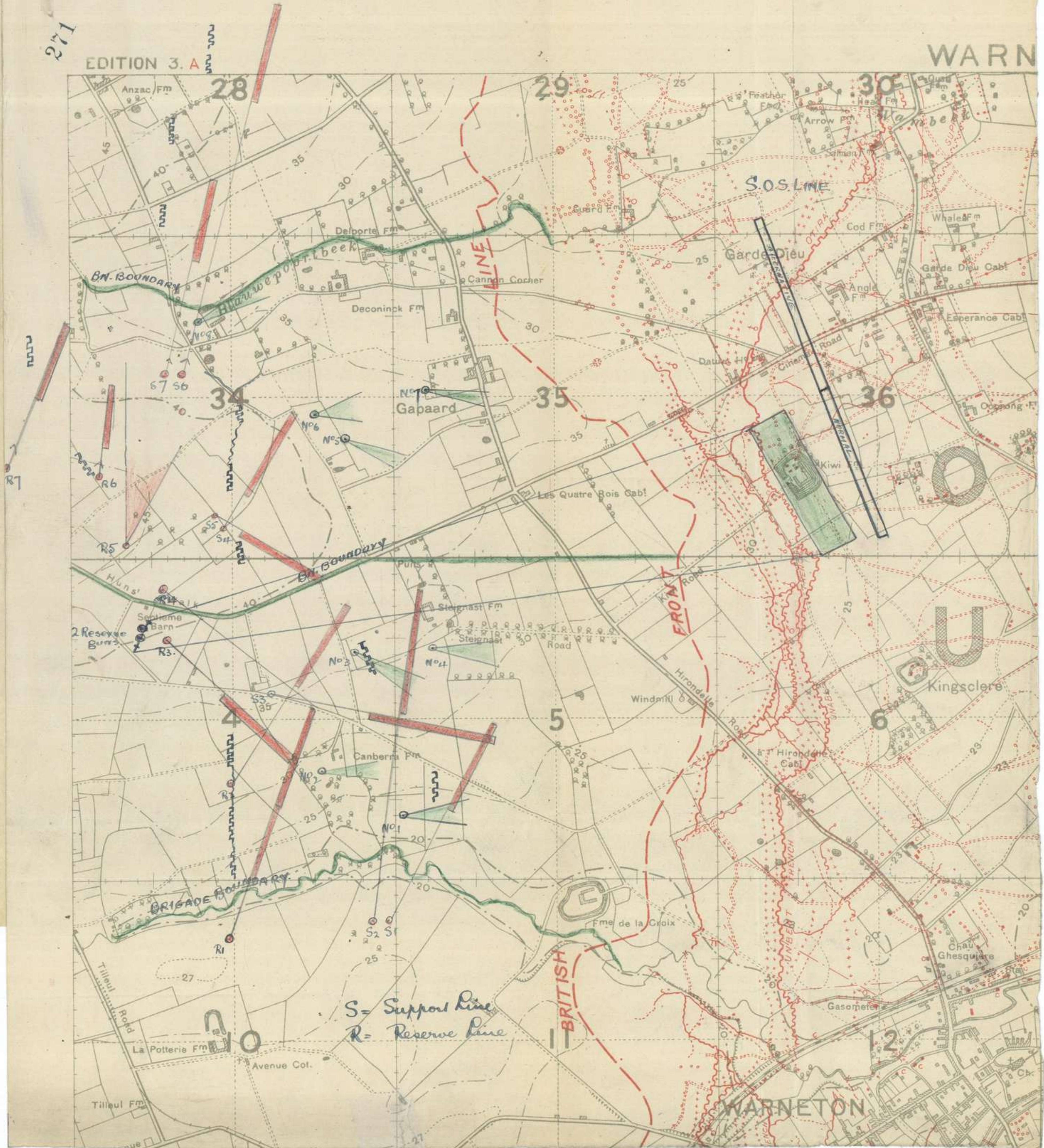
5. S.O.S. line of these batteries is shown in blue in O36 C.
On 12th inst this line (S.O.S.) was taken over by the Messines Group Artillery & the three Batteries were then employed to thicken the Artillery S.O.S line between the BLAUWEPPOORTBEEK River and the DOUVE River.

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EDITION 3. A

WARN



S = Support Line
 R = Reserve Line

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Machine Gun Defence Scheme
General Principles

APPENDIX "B"

8TH AUSTRALIAN
MACHINE GUN
COMPANY.

No. 1.
Date

1. The present defence scheme is based on the principle that no Vickers Machine Guns be employed forward of the Support Systems. It is considered that with the present numbers of Lewis Guns with a Battalion no assistance should be required from the Vickers Guns to defend the front line system of trenches.
2. With this in view the guns have been distributed along the Support & Reserve Lines so sited that they mutually support each other by placing bands of fire across the strong points in the Support Line. Similarly with the Reserve guns. This means the support guns defend the ground between the Support and front line & the Reserve guns between the Reserve Line & support Line.
3. The line of fire of each gun is arranged so that the beaten zone of each gun falls outside the wire protecting the post.
4. Each gun is allotted two tasks. In all cases these are
- (a) S.O.S Task or first task
 - (b) Placing band of fire across Strong Point - Second task
- Both these are shown on Map Appendix A.

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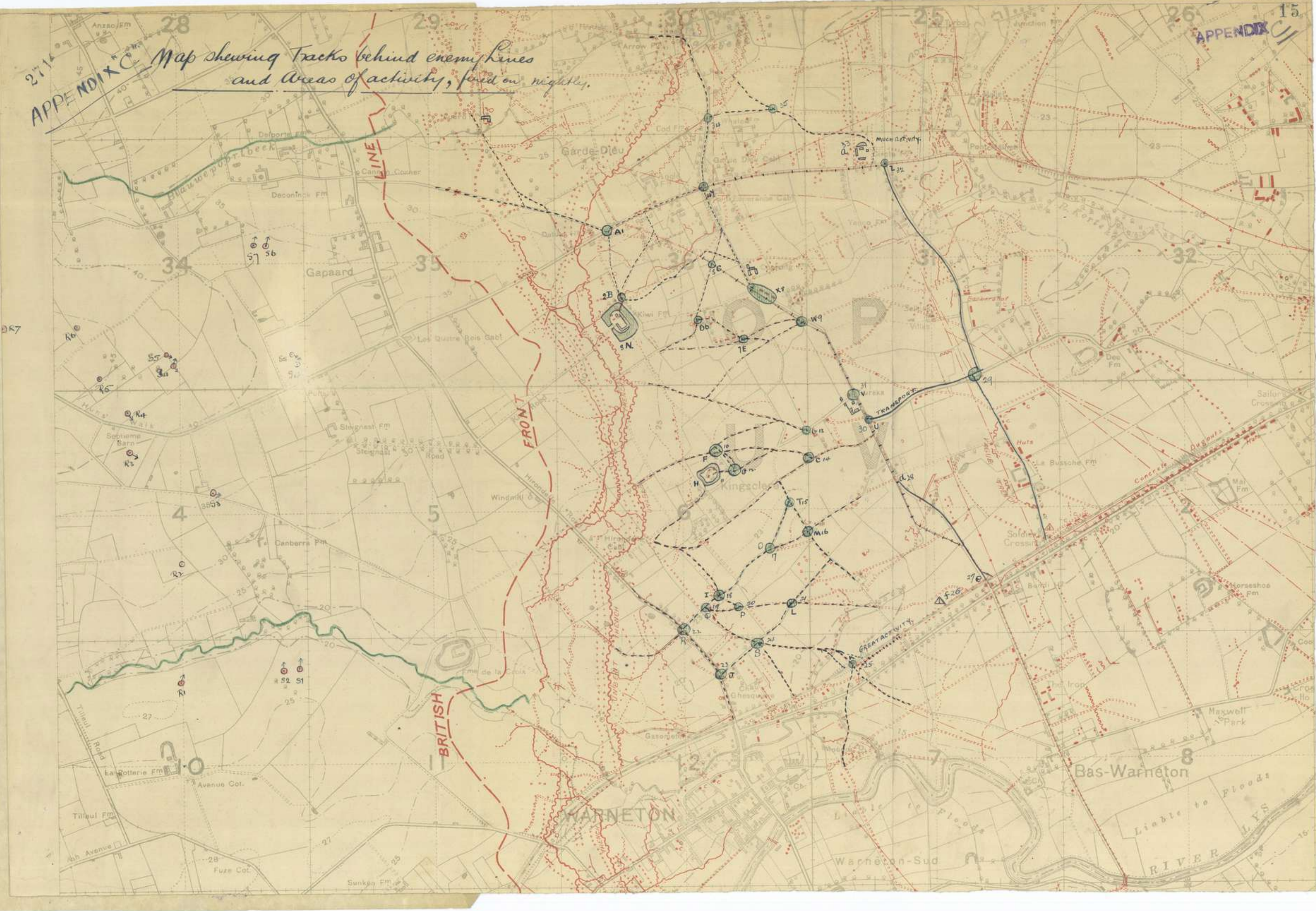
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APPENDIX C

Map showing Tracks behind enemy Lines
and Areas of activity, found on nightley.

APPENDIX C

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8th AUSTRALIAN
MACHINE GUN
COMPANY.

No.

Date

Appendix C

FIVE

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D

8th Aus Machine Gun Coy Order No.Copy No 67.
13/2/18.

- The 8th Aus Machine Gun Company will relieve the 8 forward guns of the 15th Aus M.G. Coy at present in the two right Pon Sections on the night 15th/16th Feb 1918
- Sections will be disposed as under:-

No 1 Section	Right 4 guns
No 2 ———	Left 4 guns
No 3 ———	B Battery
No 4 ———	C Battery
- Gun teams at present on S.O.S batteries will be relieved on the night 15th/16th Feb 1918 by gun teams at present at Rear H.Q.
- Sections will move as under

Section	From	To	Time of arrival	Remarks
No 2	Rear H.Q.	Bethlehem dump	5 pm	Guides will be at dump to meet sections
No 1	do	do	5.15 pm	
No 3	do	do	5.30 pm	
No 4	do	do	6 pm	
- On completion of intersections reliefs the relieved sections will move direct to HILLSIDE Camp.
- Mens Kib will be transported along

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- with the rations to WULVERGHEM dump by limbers on afternoon of 15th inst. Then by trucks to BETHLEEM 7th dump. Rear H.Q. will arrange for extra trucks & pushing parties for same.
- Kib of men who are relieved will be transported back on the above trucks from Bethlehem dump. Limbers will wait at WULVERGHEM dump till trucks return. One half limber to be sent to D battery on afternoon of 14th inst to pick up their Kib.
- No rations will be delivered to D Battery on afternoon of 15th inst but will be brought up to Bethlehem dump & ration by relieving portion of No 4 Section. From 14th inst onwards rations for the 4 Sections will be drawn at BETHLEEM dump.
- Gun teams at present with the batteries will hand over their gunbooks to relieving sections to obtain receipts. No gun books are to be taken over from the 15th Aus M.G. Coy.
- A copy of all receipts for stores taken over will be forwarded to Coy H.Q. as soon as possible after relief.

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APPENDIX D

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3.

The following will be taken over from
The 15th Aus M.G. Coy

- (a) Tripods
- (b) Ammunition
- (c) T. Bases
- (d) Trench Stores.
- (e)

11. Q.M.S. will arrange for a hot meal to be
served to relieved sections when they arrive
at HILLSIDE CAMP

12. Completion of reliefs will be phoned to
Company Head Qrs by word DIGGER

W. D. Pondge Capt
C.O. 8th Aus M.G. Coy.

Distribution

Copy No	Section	
1	NO1	Section
2	NO2	—
3	NO3	—
4	NO4	—
5	Rear HQ	
6	File	
7	War Diary	
8	8 th Aus Inf Bde.	(for information)
9	30 th Pn	do
10	32 nd Pn	do

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APPENDIX E 18
Copy No. 6.THE AUSTRALIAN
MACHINE GUN
COMPANY.8th Aus. Machine Gun Order No 2

Reference BAS-WARNETON 1/10000

Place Coy. HQs.
Date 21/2/18

1. Personnel of Nos 1, 2, 3 & 4 Sections at present on the line will be relieved on the night 22nd / 23rd Feb 1918 by personnel of these sections at present at Rear HQs.
2. Strength of incoming sections to be:-
Each gun team 3.
1 Runner & 1 Batman per Section.
3.

No 1	Section	O.C.	Rieut Ford
No 2	"	O.C.	Rieut King
No 3	"	O.C.	Rieut Scouler
No 4	"	O.C.	Rieut Watson.
4. Dispositions of relieved sections will be taken ~~over~~ as at time of relief.
5. One gun of No 1 Section will be under the Command of O.C. No 3 Section. Location of this gun is at the SAIT. PILLBOX U4B25.17.
6. Sections will move as under:-

Section	From	To	Route	Time of Arrival	Remarks.
No 1	Rear HQ	Cross Rds MESSINES (032 D50-30)	MESSINES ROAD. WULVERGHEM	6pm.	Section officers will arrange for guides
No 2	do	do		do	to be at Cross Roads
No 3	do	do		do	MESSINES to meet
No 4	do	do		do	incoming Sections

7. On Completion of reliefs relieved sections will move direct to HILLSIDE CAMP by the MESSINES - WULVERGHEM. Road.
8. Kits of incoming personnel will be transported to Cross Roads MESSINES by limbers.
Kits of relieved personnel will be put on these limbers which will wait at the above Cross Rds.
9. Incoming personnel will carry 24 hours rations.
On after the 22nd instant all rations will be brought to MESSINES and taken over by the carriers who will be living at MESSINES.
Each sections rations will be done up as at present.

10. All gum boots will be taken over by relieving Sections receipts given.
A copy of all receipts to be sent to Company H.Q.s.
11. Q.M.S. will arrange for a hot meal to be served to sections when they arrive in camp.
12. Completion of relief will be phoned to Coy H.Q.s by word COBBER.

Distribution

Copy No 1	O.C. No 1 Section
2	O.C. No 2 Section
3	O.C. No 3 Section.
4	O.C. No 4 Section.
5	Ream H.Q.s.
6	War Diary
7	File.

D. Indigeford Capt.
C.O. 8th Aus M.G. Coy.