

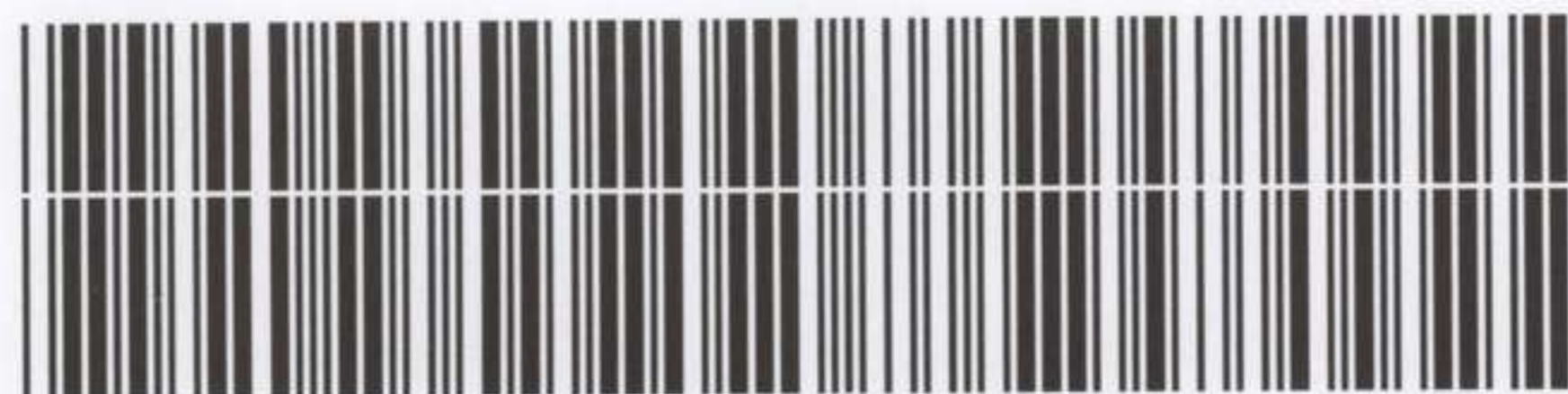
**AWM4**  
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,**  
**1914-18 War**

Infantry

**Item number:** 23/71/27

**Title:** 54th Infantry Battalion

April 1918



AWM4-23/71/27

262

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Australian Imperial Force.

**WAR DIARY**

OF

*54<sup>th</sup> Battalion*

FOR

*April 1918*

Signature of Officer compiling

*W. C. ... Capt.  
2nd in Command  
54<sup>th</sup> B. A.I.F.*

Signature of Officer Commanding

*W. C. ... Col.  
54<sup>th</sup> B. A.I.F.*

# WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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## INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

VOLUME 26.

PAGE 1.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	PAGE	Remarks and references to Appendices
REFERENCE Sheet 57D Bn Hd. Qrs. House P7e8.2	1/40,000 Monday 1st April.		The day was fine. The battalion, being under three hours to move, and the men having had a good rest, parades were started; two hours being devoted, both morning and afternoon, to smartening up drill and musketry. Major General Sir J.T. Hobbs K.C.B. V.D. inspected all the billets of the battalion during the afternoon and found everything in a most satisfactory condition. An inlying picquet of one platoon under 2/Lt Reid was established. This picquet also did patrol duty in the village during the night. B. company were again on outpost.		
Bn. Hd. Qrs. Chateau P.13b 7.8.	Tuesday 2nd April		Once again a fine day. Parades were carried out as per yesterday. As the battalion is likely to be in present position for an indefinite period a more suitable battalion Head Quarters was found in the Chateau. The old place was small and had no conveniences. Illuminated copies of orders were received from General Sir H.S. Rowlinson Bart. G.C.V.O. K.C.B. G.O.C. Fourth Army, congratulating No1719 Corporal G. A. Jr de Bell, 4629 Pte J. White 1022 Pte J. Buckley, all of A Company, for their gallantry in the raid on WHIZ FARM. G. Company took the outpost position during the afternoon.		
Bn. Hd. Qrs. Chateau P.13b 7.8.	Wednesday 3rd April.		A good deal of rain fell to-day. During the morning the C.O. (Lt.Col. D. Macenaghy, C.M.G. D.S.O.) and the S.I.C.4 Major B. D. Jack) inspected the billets and company parades. The nature of the parades is chiefly specialist training, every man being taught the Lewis Gun. Extra signallers are being trained under Lieut. Brewer and extra men as stretcher bearers by the M.O. The G.O.C. Division (Major General Sir J.T. Hobbs, K.C.B. V.D.) called on the CO in the morning, and in the afternoon the Brigade Major visited him and several matters were arranged. After dinner a meeting of all Officers was held in the Battalion Head Quarters Mess where the C.O. addressed them on Field Service Regulations Part 1. Chap.5. which is particularly applicable to the present situation. Duties of a liaison officer were fully dealt with. Other matters gone into were Discipline, Sanitation, Company parades and parade grounds. It was also decided that A. Company should supply the platoon to compete in the A.F.A. Competition. D. company was outpost company.		
Bn. Hd. Qrs. Chateau P. 13b 7. 8.	Thursday 4th April.		It rained practically all day and weather conditions were most disagreeable. No parades were held but lectures were given by platoon commanders and the M.O. on sanitation and minor tactics in		

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REFERENCE SHEETS

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
3n. Hd. Qrs. Chateau 13 b7.8.	Thursday 4th April	continued	Improvements were made during the afternoon to the billets. Rifle racks, bunks were put in. The C.O. was called to Brigade Hd Quarters re: preparatory measures for a move to another area. After mess a meeting of company commanders and Head Quarter Officers was held and the notes of the afternoons conference were passed on. The Nucleus was again gone into and a few alterations were made. On a reallocation of officers Lieut. Wicks went to D. Company and Lieut. R.A. Smith to B. Coy. A. Coy was on outpost.	
Reference sheets Amiens 17 Lens 11 2d 1/40,000	Friday April 5th		There was a dense fog all day. Orders were received at a late hour on the previous night giving details of the move. The battalion was to be ready to embuss at 5-15a.m. the transport marching by road. The transport left at 5a.m. for its concentration point on the HARPOUVILLE-TOUTENCOURT road and proceeded to DAOURS. The day was an ideal one for the movement of troops owing to the heavy fog. The battalion, together with the rest of the brigade assembled on the LOUVENCOURT-ACHEUX road at 5-15a.m. and embussed at 8-30a.m. The trip took 3 hours and was very interesting as several towns in which the battalion had been previously billeted <del>were</del> while on the Somme area last year were passed through. Several of the busses had minor accidents but all caught up with the column at its destination. Very often the occupants had to get out and help it in its struggle up the hills. The Brigade debussed at DAOURS and assembled on the roadside. The 54th battalion was ordered to detail two companies to act as Advanced Guard for the Brigade and also to take up an outpost position to cover AUBIGNY, the new billeting area. C. & D. Companies were given this task and were ordered to take up a position astride the canal, on a line running due North and South about 500 yards to the East of the village. Captain Crombie was appointed Advance Guard and Outpost Commander. When these companies were in position the rest of the Brigade moved into billets in AUBIGNY. Orders were received at about 6-30 to be ready at a moments notice to take over the Support line and relieve the 17th Lancers. The C.O. and Adj. visited Brigade Head Quarters and orders were issued at that the battalion would remain in billets for the night but were to act as support. All ranks were pleased as the previous twenty four hours had been very strenuous. For "Report on Move" see Appendix W. For "Warning <del>to</del> & Order No 5" see Appendix A. For Memo "Further to warning Order No 5" see Appendix B.	App. W.
3n. Hd. Qrs. Shelters 23c13	Saturday April 6th		A gloomy day with low visibility. Orders were received for the battalion to move to a Reserve area in Q23c & D. and Q29a & b to act as close support for the line battalion. The move was	App. A. App. B. App. C

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Reference Sheet 1/40,000. Hd. Qrs. 023cl.3. Telers.	Saturday April 6th (contd.)		was made in artillery formation over the open. Head Quarters was established at 023c 1.3.. Hot tea was served at 7p.m. All companies were distributed in depth; dug in <sup>in</sup> posts of platoons and half platoons in the following areas:- A. company in 029b, B. Company in 029a C. do do 023d, D. do 023c. Rear Battalion Head Quarters and Q.M. Stores remained at AUBIGNY.	Append C.
			Rain commenced to fall about 4p.m. and continued at intervals during the night Operation Memo. (Appendix C.) attached.	
Hd. Qrs. Telers 023cl.3.	Sunday 7th April		The day broke with clouds and light showers of rain. Later it became clear and continued so till about 3p.m. A hot breakfast was served at 6a.m. and another hot meal at 7p.m. Four N.C.O.s and thirty six other ranks were sent back to AUBIGNY to get a night's rest with some degree of comfort as they were already showing effects of exposure. The C.O. and Adjutant visited the companies. The Adjutant and Intelligence Officer visited Villers-BRETONNEUX, and as a result an order was issued placing the village out of bounds to this battalion. The area we occupy was shelled intermittently and one casualty was reported, two horses being killed at the same time. (8p.m.) Aeroplanes were very active on both sides while light rain fell. The positions were improved during the day.	
Hd. Qrs. Telers 023cl.3.	Monday 8th April		The sky was overcast all day and rain fell at intervals. The Battalion area was heavily shelled and our own artillery was very active. Lieut. W.T.R. Green was mortally wounded and died on the way to the Advanced Dressing Station, Lieut. J.A. Evans was wounded, and two other ranks (No 3629 Pte A.V. Churchland, and No 2219 Pte D. Shaw) killed and eight wounded. Chaplain Major Holliday read the burial service over the killed who were buried at 09a4.5. near the village of AUBIGNY. The line battalions 53rd and 55th, advanced 500 yards without opposition and dug in. Hot meals were supplied at 7a.m. and 7p.m.	
Do do	Tuesday 9th April		The Boche opened the day by a shoot directed on the battalion area. A shell fell in the dugout occupied by Head Quarters Officers. The Adjutant, Captain N. B. Lovett, M.C. Croix de Guerre, was killed. The C.O., Lieut. Colonel McConaghy, C.M.G. D.S.O. and the intelligence Officer Lieut. H.E.G. Staples, M.M. (both of whom died later at No 41 C.C.S.) were wounded. The Adjutant was buried at 09a4.5. and the C.O. and I.O. at NAMPS-AU-VAL. Lieut. O.C. Ferns of A. Company was also wounded severely. Later in the day word was received from the 9th Infantry Brigade Head Quarters that Major B. D. Jack who was acting as liaison officer with that brigade, had been killed and was buried in the cemetery at GENTELLS. Casualties in other ranks for to-day	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
ference sheet. D 1/42,000. Tuesday . Hd. Qrs. April 9th hateau Contd. 0c55			<p>to-day are 3 killed 6 wounded .</p> <p>Capt. Crombie took charge and shifted Battalion Head Quarters to the sunken road at 029a3.6 . The morning was misty but the weather cleared a little during the day but at night no time was visibility good.</p> <p>The battalion was ordered to relieve the 53rd battalion in the line this evening. At 5p.m. Major G. R. Lucas reported and took command temporarily and Lieuts Palmer and <del>ASKKX</del> Askham came up from AUBIGNY to act as Adjutant and Intelligence Officer respectively. The C.O. held a meeting of Company Commanders at which details of a proposed hop-over were discussed. An order (App M&amp;H1) was issued with the relief which was carried out without casualties, the relieved battalion being all clear by 11-25p.m.. Battalion Head Quarters was established at 030c5.5 at 7 p.m.</p> <p>The night was very quiet . Lieut. Pickup took out a patrol in the small hours of the morning of the 10th inst. but failed to get in touch with the enemy .</p> <p>Hot meals were delivered as yesterday.</p>	<p>APPH APP(H1)</p>
Do do	Wednesday. April 10th		<p>The day was slightly misty with a clouded sky and north Easterly wind. One hundred and fifty reinforcements arrived at Aubigny under Lieut. McArthur.</p> <p>A british plane, damaged, landed within our lines at 036b 6. 3 . Another plane carrying four markings dropped a bomb near the Support line and opened fire on our posts from its N.G. All ranks were busy and keen in preparing for the proposed stunt and all were disappointed when we were notified during the afternoon that it had been postponed. The C.O. and Adjutant visited the front line posts. A start was made in wiring the front with Lieut. D.A. McArthur M.C. as works officer. Lieut. Pickup and six other ranks patrolled the front and bombed an enemy post. We had several casualties from machine gun fire during the day.</p> <p>Intelligence summary for twenty four hours ending 6a.m. 10/4/18 is attached. (App.I.)</p>	<p>APP I</p>
Do do	Thursday April 11th		<p>The day was a clear bright one with good visilibility . Shelling of supports and back areas was intermittent. C. Companies Head Quarters was shifted to a "better hole" after it had endured a bombardment. The snipers were active on both sides . The front line asserted its superiority, but men in the support line had to keep their heads down. The C.O. and Adjutant made their usual visit to the front line post during the night . Wiring was continued.</p> <p>Captain Leedman, M.C. led his medical details to a shell wrecked chemists shop in the village, and returned with sufficient stock to make the D.A.F. look like a veritable dispense</p>	<p>APP II</p>

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**-INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.**

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Reference sheet. 32D 1/42,000	Thursday April 11.		The feeding of the battalion is being carried out to the satisfaction of all. The C.M. has had hot boxes made and manages to give the men two hot meals per night. Vide app. H1. The works officer had material carried up for wiring between our two left front line posts. Lieut. Pickup again patrolled our front. Machine Guns inflicted several casualties, two other ranks being killed. Intelligence summary for 24 hours ending 6a.m. 11th attached- APP. II	App. H1 App. II
Bn. Hd. Qrs. Chateau P. 30c 5.5	Friday April 12	Contd.	Once again we have had clear bright day with splendid observation. Battalion Head Quarters received its usual share of attention from enemy artillery. A blue cross gas shell burst in the upper storey. The M.A.F. assisted by a fatigue party from this battalion salvaged the engine of the plane which landed on the 10th inst. The brigade major visited the line and expressed satisfaction with the position. The artillery carried out a shoot on the enemy machine gun position located by Sergeant C.G. Murray of B. Company. The patrol part under Lieut. Pickup investigated the result and heard cries as of men wounded and men running back to the second line but did not secure any identification. Our artillery was very active during the night firing on concentrations of enemy troops which had been reported by the M.A.F. A good deal of gas was used. Wiring between the two left posts was completed. During the twenty four hours one man was killed and several wounded, the percentage of slight wounds being extraordinarily high. All the casualties were from machine gun fire. Notice was received that the 53rd battalion would relieve us on the night of the 13th/14th and a warning order (App. J.) was issued. Intelligence Summary for twenty four hours ending 6a.m. 12/4/18. is attached- App. III.	App. III App. J.
Bn. Hd. Qrs. Chateau P. 29d 25.70	Saturday April 13th		The day opened with a slight haze which gradually thickened. The weather became much colder. During the night 12th/13th the 56th battalion relieved our left front post. The platoon of B. Company which was relieved was withdrawn to supports. During the day this party was much worried by shell fire and was obliged to take to the open and naturally drew crabs where ever they went. There was one casualty in the neighbouring platoon of C. company. The day was quietest the battalion has had in the sector. A few rounds were put over this afternoon by our artillery to test barrage line. Head Quarters as usual during reliefs, was very busy receiving visitors from the incoming	App. IV

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**INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.**

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Reference sheet 2d 1/40,000. Bn. Hd. Qrs. Chateau 029D 25.70.	Saturday. April 13th Contd.		<p>Incoming battalion (53rd) and giving information re. the sector. The relief was assisted by the mist which made the night very dark. The relief was complete by 9-25p.m. The battalion took over bivouacs vacated by the 53rd Battalion as follows:-</p> <p>Head Quarters in Chateau at 029D 25.70</p> <p>A. Coy " Shelters at 029b B. " " " 023b C. " " " 023c D. " " " 029a</p>	App. IV
			<p>The darkness made the location of positions very difficult but all was settled by the time the hot meal arrived at 11p.m. It also was responsible for several members of the battalion clasping dead horses in a fervent embrace. The relief was otherwise uneventful. The C.O., Major G. H. Lucas was summoned to brigade head quarters and on his return held a meeting of company commanders and head quarter officers. It appeared likely from movement noticed by the R.A.F. that the Boche would attack during the early morning and preparations for our action were decided upon.</p> <p>Appendices:- Operation Order No 11- App K. Intelligence Summary for 24 hours ending 6a.m. 15th App. IV</p>	App. K.
Bn. Hd. Qrs. Chateau 029D 25.70	Sunday April 14th		<p>The morning was wet and cold with low visibility. Stand to was at 4a.m. with companies in assembly positions. Battalion Head Quarters were established for operations, at 029D 25.8. At stand to our artillery was subjecting enemy tracts and concentration areas to an intense bombardment, and twice about dawn they quickened their barrage fire but there was very little reply from the enemy. Excitement gradually simmered down, and as there was no sign of an attack developing all returned to bivouacs by 7 a.m. The day passed more quietly than usual with occasional shells in the village.</p> <p>Packs were brought up for the men as there has been very cold and men have been without blankets or overcoats. Working parties of 2 Officers and 75 other ranks were supplied from each of the companies for work on the reserve line under the 14th Field Company A.B.; Parties from A. &amp; B. Company reporting at 8a.m., from C. Company at 8p.m., and from D. Company at 9p.m. 115 other ranks joined the battalion at 8a.m.. These were portion of the 150 reinforcements who marched into AUBIGNY on the 10th inst.</p>	
Do do	Monday. April 15th		<p>To-day was very quiet nothing but the few usual shells being fired into the village. The expected German attack has not yet developed. Fatigue parties were supplied as for yesterday. Every-body got all possible rest.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Reference sheet 62D 1/40,000 Bn. Hd. Qrs. Chateau. P.29D 25.70	Tuesday April 16th.		<p>The day was cloudy but visibility was excellent. The usual shelling took place on the village. During the afternoon the C.O. was called to Brigade Head Quarters and, his return ordered companies to stand to in view of the imminence of an enemy attack on the village. Battle Battalion Head Quarters were again moved to O29B2.8 and when assembly was completed, a meeting of Company commanders and Head Quarter Officers was held. This was about 2-30. Plans were prepared to the counter attack should the enemy succeed in breaking through the 53rd Battalion or the Battalion in their right and gaining the village. Routes were reconnoitered by Company Commanders. In the counter-attack on the village, A. &amp; D. Companies were to form the front line with B. Company in support and C. in reserve. A. &amp; D. Companies reconnoitred the positions of the 33rd Battalion who had been charged with the defence of the village.</p> <p>In counter-attacking to restore the 53rd Battalion front line A. &amp; B. Companies were to be in front line with D. in support and C. in Reserve. The Battalion stood to all night, men being allowed to sleep fully equipped.</p> <p>At 2-30p.m. the enemy commenced shelling O29b &amp; D. very heavily with 5.9 H.E.. An enemy se replane was brought down south of VILLERS-BRITONNEUX. Orders from Brigade were received giving details of the relief by us of the 53rd Battalion on the night of the 17/18th. A. and B. Companies supplied working parties as for yesterday.</p>	
Do do	Wednesday April 17th.		<p>The day was misty giving very poor observation. The wind was blowing from 5 to 8 miles per hour. At about 4a.m. the enemy commenced shelling O29B and D. and the village of VILLERS-BRITONNEUX with 8", 9.9, 4.2, and 77 gas shell. Yellow cross and green cross were used.</p> <p>At about 10a.m. men began to feel the effects of the gas and by 5p.m. every man in three platoons of D. company (Nos. 13, 15, 16.) had been evacuated and the majority of Battalion Head Quarters as well. The Gas casualties <del>were</del> included the C.O. - Major G.R. Lucas, M.C. - the Acting Adjutant-Lieut. W. Palmer - the Medical Officer - Captain C.H. Leedman, M.C. - the Intelligence Officer - Lieut. Askhan - and the Signalling Officer - Lieut. H. Brewer. Two Officers of D. Company were also gassed (Lieut. Ma 11 F. and 2nd Lieut. Reid who has since died). Total casualties for to-day are 7 Officers 104 other ranks, 2 of the other ranks being wounded by shell fire the remainder being gas casualties.</p> <p>Captain J. H. Crombie took command at 3p.m. and at 7-30p.m. handed over to Major A.C.S. Holland who reported from the 55th Battalion to Command. During the previous day the relief was arranged with the 53rd battalion and all advance parties sent in. An Operation Order - vol 2 - was issued at 10a.m. to-day and forms Appendix L. Under instructions from Brigade Head Quarters this Order was cancelled at 6-30p.m.</p> <p>At 5p.m. a message was received from Captain Lindsay 53rd battalion, who was <del>isxxxx</del></p>	App.L.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Reference sheet 62D 1/40,000	Wednesday April 17th		Liaison Officer with the 174th Brigade to the effect that a prisoner captured by them had stated that the enemy intended to fill VILLERS-BRETONNEUX with Gas so as to make it untenable and then to take it, avoiding the village itself in doing so. The tip was taken, the C.O. deciding to shift Head Quarters from the Chateau and the engineers started digging a new Head Quarters in the sunken road at 029a3.6.	
Bn. Hd. Qrs P.29D 25.70. Chateau.	Contd.		Lieut. Dickinson and Lieut. Wark came from AUBIGNY to act as Adjutant and Intelligence Officer respectively. 11 reinforcements also joined from rear Head Quarters. Capt. Le Socuf 15th Field Ambulance, carried on as M.O. until Cpts Stewart, 14th Field Ambulance took over at 8p.m.	
Bn. Hd. Qrs. Shelters. 029A 3.6.	Thursday. April. 18th		At about 4a.m. the enemy recommenced shelling the village with Yellow Cross gas but this time very few casualties occurred. The shelters were not yet ready for Battalion Head Quarters but it moved to the sunken road at 7a.m. as the gas bombardment still continued. The day was damp and misty with a 10mph wind blowing. 17 more men were evacuated to-day from the effects of yesterdays bombardment. It is impossible to enter the village now without wearing a gas mask. Head Quarters was completed by 8p.m. During the day the C.O. was called to Brigade and, on his return, held a meeting of Company Commanders and Head Quarters Officers at which the details affecting the Battalion in a proposed Divisional side slip were gone into. Lieut. Pollock reported to Head Quarters from A. Company to take up the duties of Signalling Officer. Head Quarters signallers and runners were made up from companies. An R.A.P. was opened at 02306.5.	
Do do	Friday April. 18th		The day was very misty with sleet at intervals during the afternoon but the night was beautifully clear. Advantage was taken of the mist to complete and camouflage Head Quarters. The Warning Order was received from Brigade re. side slip mentioned in yesterdays summary. During the day the C.O. of the Berkshire Regiment visited our C.O. and arranged details of to-morrow nights relief. Our C.O. also visited the 55th Battalion and the Intelligence Officer the 32nd Battalion to make the necessary arrangements. Advance parties from A. and C. companies reported to 55th Battalion Head Quarters at 8p.m. At 10a.m. a Court of Inquiry was assembled at Battalion Head Quarters to inquire into and report upon the Gas casualties suffered by this Battalion on the 17th inst., It consisted of Capt. J.H. Crombie, (President) Lieut. J. Adams and Lieut. R.A. Smith (Members). During the day Capt. F.G. Downing and Lieuts. Steber and Allen reported from the Nucleus camp with 27 other ranks. Capt. R.G. Downing assumed duty as Adjutant and Lieut. Steber as L.G.O.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Ref. Sheet 2D 1/40,000. Bn. Hd. Qrs. - 19th April 189446 Qrs. 20th April Deep Dugouts. April 20th 18C9.8.	Friday		At about 8p.m. an enemy aeroplane dropped two green flares on a battery position about 300yds in rear of Battalion Head Quarters resulting in several H.A. shells near Battalion Head Quarters immediately after. Many enemy aeroplanes passed over-head during the night on their way to bomb AMIKMS. The Battalion area was shelled intermittently throughout the day.	
			The day was fine, the night being far too clear for patrolling. During the day the C.O. visited Rear Head Quarters at AUBIGNY.	
			At about 6a.m. the Second in Command of the Berkshires arrived with his advanced party, and at about 8p.m. his Battalion commenced to arrive. The relief was completed at 9-15p.m. Immediately on relief companies moved off independently to relieve the 55th Battalion. This relief was completed by 10-30p.m. without incident.	App. X App. D.
			Throughout the stay in the Reserve Area two hot meals were delivered daily at 7a.m. and 7p.m.	App. Z. Para. 1 & 2
Do do	Sunday April 21st.		Appendices:- D. Operation Order No6. 2X. (Para 1 & 2) Report on defences taken over from 55th Battalion. The day was fine with beautiful observation and the night moonlight. The Right Front Line Company of the 32nd Battalion was taken over by B. Company. Vide. Operation Order No7, Appendix E. Relief was complete without incident at 9-45p.m. During the night a gap in the wire in front of C. company was filled. A complete belt of wire now runs along the front of the Right Front Line Company.	App. E. App. Z. Para. 3 App. Va App. Za App. V
Do do	Monday April 22nd.		Appendices:- E. Operation Order No7. 2. Para 3. Report on defences taken over from 32nd Battalion V. Intelligence Summary for 24 hours ending 6a.m. 21st inst., The day was fine but the night clouded making patrolling possible. Lieut. Pickup took out a patrol but secured no identifications. During the afternoon a medium sirenwerfer opened from P. 14D.4.7 on to Support Line and Right Front Line Company Head Quarters. The artillery was informed and silenced it. The day was otherwise uneventful.	App. VI
			Appendices:- E VI Intelligence Summary for twenty four hours ending 6a.m. 22nd. Va Disposition Report for 21st and 22nd inst. Za Disposition Map.	App. Va App. Za.
Do do	Tuesday April 23rd.		The day was fine offering good observation. At night the sky became over-cast and a mist fell during the early part of the night and inter-company relief was carried out, A. and C. Coys	App. V11 App. Va

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Reference Sheet. 6201/40,000 3rd. Hd. Qrs. Deep Dugouts. 01809.8.	Tuesday 23rd Apl. Contd.		Companies interchanging, relief being completed without incident at 11-45p.m. Dispositions remained the same. The belt of wire was completed along the front of the left line Company. Their now remains a gap of 200 yards between the Right and Left Front line Companies and this gap is perpendicular to the front. During the day RUBIGNY was shelled with H.E. and Yellow Cross gas shell. All Rear Battalion Head Quarters were casualties. Rear B.H.Q. moved to DAOURS and the Transport Lines to a position on the DAOURS-AMIENS Road about 600 yards from DAOURS. The bread ration was contaminated so companies were ordered to eat the biscuits of their iron ration in lieu. Enemy shelling on the remainder of the battalion area was normal. Appendices:- VI Intelligence Summary for 24 hours ending 6a.m. 23rd	App. VII App. V App. 2a
Do	Wednesday 24th April.		The morning broke misty and the day remained mist throughout. At 3-45a.m. all were awakened by an intense enemy barrage which heralded an enemy attack on our Right Front Line Company. This attack extended to the right as far as HANGARD, and commenced at about 6a.m.. For a report of this days operations see the following Appendices:- Y. Report on Operations of 24th April. VIII. Intelligence Summary for 24 hours ending 6a.m. 24th. IX Do do do do do 25th.	App. Y. App. VIII App. IX. App. 2a
Do	Thursday. 25th April		The morning was misty and it cleared up about 11a.m.. The enemy bombardment continued intermittently all day, and enemy machine gun fire was directed on Battalion Head Quarters until the afternoon. This came from a orchard at the North western edge of the village of VILLERS-BRETTONNEUX. At about 11a.m. a battalion of the enemy was noticed advancing in artillery formation along the high ground in P.25D and P.26a and c. Our artillery were informed and they were dispersed with heavy casualties. About 200 walking wounded streamed back to the rear after our barrage ceased. It lasted for half an hour, Lewis Guns, Vickers Guns and rifles co-operating. At about 10p.m. the Company of the 2nd Rifle brigade which had formed a defensive flank on our right, was with-drawn and C. Company took over their line. During the morning we captured 3 prisoners of the 77th wurtemburger Regiment and on the previous afternoon two wounded prisoners of the 479th Regiment. Our casualties during the day were, Killed, 1 Other Rank, Wounded 1 Officer (Lieut. Holder.-gas-) and 10 Other R nks. Appendices:- IX Intelligence for 24 hours ending 6a.m. 25th.	App IX App X App 2a.

10

10

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

*JMC*

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.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Volume 26. Page II.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Reference sheet 62D 1/40,000 Bn.Hd. Qrs. Shelters. O1807.2	Friday 26th April		<p>The morning was misty but the day good for observation. Things were very much quieter than for the last couple of days but intermittent bombardments still continued.</p> <p>The Battalion was relieved in the line by the 55th Battalion who took over dispositions as in Appendix 2a. C. Company was not relieved. At 1-30a.m. it was withdrawn as the 60th Battalion had linked up in rear and were moving up shortly afterwards. Companies moved to bivouacs in the banks in our I8C and D, where a hot meal awaited them.</p> <p>During this tour in the line, two hot meals were delivered daily, one at 3a.m. and one at 9p.m. Dry rations were also delivered at 9p.m. Rations for the front line Companies were carried <del>by</del> from cross roads in O18b by the Reserve company (D.). The Support Company carried its own rations. Great credit is due to the Quarter-Master and Transport Officer for the way in which they delivered the rations. Their respective staffs are also to be commended for the excellent manner in which they carried out their duties under the most adverse circumstances.</p>	<p>App. F.</p> <p>App. X.</p> <p>App. XI.</p>
<p>Appendices:-</p> <p>F. Operation Order No 7a</p> <p>X. Intelligence Summary for 24 hours ending 6a.m. 26th</p> <p>A.I. Do do do do do 10p.m. do</p>				
Do do	Saturday. 27th April		<p>A misty day which was uneventful. Several enemy planes were over. Everybody was cleaning up and resting. Two hot meals were supplied at 8a.m. and 6-30p.m.</p>	
Do do	Sunday 28th April		<p>Another uneventful misty day with everybody resting.</p> <p>Five officers - Lieuts. Carrick, Morley, Back, and 2nd Lieuts. Rowe, and Midgley - and 57 other ranks marched in from Reinforcement Comp. Hot meals were supplied as for yesterday.</p>	
Do do	Monday 29th April		<p>The day was showery. Fifty men from each company and Battalion Head Quarters were bathed and given a clean change of under-clothing at the Divisional Baths at CORBIE. The day was otherwise un-eventful.</p> <p>The C. O. - Major A. C. Selwyn Holland visited the 53rd Battalion on receipt of a warning Order re. relief of 53rd Battalion in the line on the night of the 30th Apr/1st May. Advance Parties were sent in.</p>	
BnD Hd. Qrs. Shelters. O12B 90.35.	Tuesday. 30th April		<p>The day was cloudy and showery. The C.O. visited Rear Battalion Head quarters during the afternoon. The remainder of the Battalion was bathed.</p> <p>The 54th Battalion relieved the 53rd in Line Left to-night. Relief complete 10-15p.m. vide APP.G. and 2a</p>	<p>App G.</p> <p>APP. 2a</p>
<p>A6945 Wt. W11422/M1160 350,000 12/16 D. D. &amp; L. Forms/C./2118/14.</p>				

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WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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.

or  
-INTELLIGENCE-SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Volume 26 Page 12.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Reference Sheets 7D and 62D /40,000 n.Hdr. Crs. TA90.35.	30th April.		<p style="text-align: center;"><u>RECAPITULATION FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL, 1918.</u></p> <p>Up to the night of the fourth the Battalion lived in ease and comfort at ACHEUX, one company per day suffering very minor hardships in the out-post position in front of the village. A strenuous day, commencing with the bus trip and ending in a march of two miles, brought us into an area where we were destined to undergo many vicissitudes.</p> <p>First of all two companies - A. and D. - suffered intense cold in an out-post position in front of AUBIGNY on the night of the 5th while the remainder of the Battalion were billeted in the village. On the 6th we moved into a Reserve position to the North of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX where we remained till the 9th, a day that will always be regarded as one of the blackest in the history of the Battalion. The Battalion was awagened with the news that the Adjutant, Captain, N.B. Lovett, M.C. Croix de Guerre, was killed and the C.O., Lieut. Col. D. McConaghy, C.M.G. D.S.O. and the Intelligence Officer, Lieut. H.E.G. Staples, M.M. were seriously wounded. Both these Officers have since died. Later in the day news was received that Major B.D. Jack had been killed while acting as LIAISON Officer with the 9th Australian Infantry Brigade.</p> <p>Major Lucas 56th Battalion took command and the battalion relieved the 53rd in the line the same night and remained in until the night of the 13th/14th. when it returned to the Reserve area. During this tour in the line nothing exciting happened although we continued to have frequent casualties.</p> <p>Our next stay in Reserve from the 14th to the 20th, proved just as uneventful except for the 17th, when the whole of the Head Quarters Staff, including the Officers, were gassed. Two Officers and three complete platoons of D. company were also gassed. 2nd Lieut. Reid, of this company has since died from the effects of gas. Major A.G. Selwyn Holland, 55th Battalion took Command, Capt. R.G. Downing, was appointed Adjutant.</p> <p>Our next trip in the line lasted from the 21st to the 26th, inclusive. During this tour the Battalion, or rather two companies of the Battalion - A. and C. - came involved in the second battle for Amiens. The sector was a new one and was situated in front of the BOIS de VAIRE. The right flank of the enemy attack coincided with the centre of the Battalion. Again, as at BELLECOURT, the Battalion stopped him, and when the right flank <del>gave</del> unit gave way, rendered valuable assistance in restoring the situation.</p> <p>We came into Reserve again in a new area. Here the personnel was able to obtain a much needed bath. The end of the month finds us again in the line in a new sector.</p> <p>The thanks of the Battalion is due to the Quarter-master and Transport-Officer and their respective staffs for the excellent manner in which they have fed the Battalion during the month.</p>	

WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

*MC*

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.

or  
**INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY**

(Erase heading not required.)

Volume 26 Page 13.

Summary of Events and Information

Remarks and references to Appendices

Place

Date

Hour

RECAPITULATION (contd)

Bn. Hd. Qrs.  
012A90335.

30th April.

The following Appendices are attached:-

- P.1. Table of battle casualties for month.
- P.2. Disposition of Officers as at 9th inst.
- P.3. Do do 17th do
- P.4. Do do 30th do

*[Signature]*

Captain  
2nd in Command.  
54th Battalion, A.I.F. (Compiling Officer.)

*[Signature]*

Lt. Col.  
Commanding  
54th Battalion, A.I.F.

# WAR DIARY APPENDIX

OF

~~Fifty Fourth Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces.~~

FOR

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APRIL

8.

## LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.	Date.
A.	Warning Order No 5.	5th
B.	Further to warning Order no 5.	5th
C.	Operation Memo	6th
D.	Operation Order no 6.	20th
E.	Operation Order No 7.	21st
F.	Operation Order No 7A.	26th.
G.	operation Order No 8.	29th
H.	Operation Order no 9.	9th
Ha.	Ration Table issued with operation order No 9.	9th
J.	Warning Order No 6	12th
K.	Operation Order No 11.	13th
L.	Operation Order no 12.	17th
Pl.	Table of Casualties for April.	
P2	Disposition of Officers	9th
P3	Disposition of Officers	17th.
P4	Disposition of Officers	30th
W	Report on move from ACHSUX to AUBIGNY	5th
Y.	Report on Operations of 24th April	24th
Z.	Report on Defences in Sectors taken over from 55th Battalion on night 20/22nd and from 52nd Battalion on night 21/22nd.	22nd
ZA	Disposition sketch.	
I.	Intelligence Summary	10th
II.	Do do	11th
III.	Do do	12th
IV.	Do do	13th
V.	Do do	21st
VI.	Do do	22nd
VII.	Do do	23rd
VIII.	Do do	24th
IX.	Do do	25th
X.	Do do	26th
XI.	Do do	x26th



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SECRET.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE

APPENDIX A

App A.

15

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION

WARNING ORDER No.5.

5/4/18.

REFERENCE MAP - 62.D. 1/40,000

1. The 14th A.I. Brigade will relieve a Cavalry Brigade in the Line tonight. The Boundaries are not definitely known, but are approximately as follows:-

SOUTHERN BOUNDARY.

Road in P.25.d.

NORTHERN BOUNDARY.

Cross Roads in P.20.a.

The Brigade will be disposed as follows:-

Line Right -- 53rd Battalion.  
Line Left -- 55th Battalion.  
Support Right 54th Battalion.  
Support Left 56th Battalion.

No further details are to hand. An Order will be issued upon receipt of same. Companies will, however, be prepared to move at half an hours notice.

Special attention will be paid to the following points:-

Dress will be Full Marching Order.

Companies will each take in five Lewis Guns with sixteen Magazines per Gun. The remaining Magazines will be pooled as B.H.Q. Reserve. The Q.M. will ensure that these are ready for delivery to any point at a moments notice.

Every man must carry 120 rounds S.A.A. in pouches and in addition a 50 Round Bandolier. Company Commanders will ensure that a sufficient quantity of Rag and Oil is taken in.

The usual supply of Very Pistols and Cartridges will be taken in.

The Q.M. will arrange to immediately supply "A" and "B" Company with Bombs as follows:-

2 Bombs to every man of the Bombing Sections, and  
2 Rifle Grenades to every man of the R.G. Sections.

The Battalion Tool Limber will be located at Battalion H.Q. and will be at Companies' disposal, requisitions to be sent through the usual channel.

5/4/18.

*N. Lovett*

Capt. & Adjt.

54th Battalion, A.I.F.

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*App B.*

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES  
FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION

FURTHER WARNING ORDER No5 5/4/18

In accordance with instructions from 14th A.I. Brigade the 54th Bn. will remain in Billets in the present location to-night. Companies will nevertheless be prepared to move at fifteen minutes notice. In the event of no alarm being given during the night Company Commanders will report to B.O.R. at 9a.m. on the 6th instant.

"A" and "B" Company will, if the Battalion remains in present location, relieve "C" and "D" Coy in the outpost line at 12 noon to-morrow.

The CO. desires that as few sentry posts as possible be employed on the Outpost line. All posts must be manned by double sentries, relieved alternately and an unceasing vigilance maintained.

It has been reported that this village has been bombarded with Gas-Shells, Companies will therefore take all necessary precautions to guard against this.

5/4/18

(Signed ) N. Lovett Capt And Adj. 54th Battalion A.I.F.

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"A" Coy.  
"B" "  
"C" "  
"D" "  
Q.M.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

APP C

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

A message has been received from BLOCK that an attack is expected on the whole Corps Front this afternoon. The two Reserve Battalions will stand by to move immediately. The forward movement to assembly positions will commence at once. The 56th Battalion will clear AUBIGNY first. Movement will be made in Artillery formation over the open."

O's.C. Companies will immediately arrange to stack packs at Q.M. store and assemble ready for movement. Outpost Companies will withdraw, stack packs, and assemble in the village. An endeavour should be made to get all Companies in position ready for the movement by 2-30p.m.

*A. C. Arkhlow*  
Lieut. & Asst. Adjt.

6/4/18

54th Battalion, A.I.F.



REFERENCE FIFTY FIFTH BATTALION  
 REPORT  
 ON D. 1/40,000  
 OPERATION ORDER No. 6  
 20/4/18.

1. (a) The Southern Boundary of the Australian Corps is to be adjusted as follows:-  
 From F.18 Central along R.R. Grid to S.24.e.03.
- (b) The 14th A.I. Brigade will be relieved by the 55th Infantry Brigade on the night 20/21st April, 1918, in the Sector from the VILLERS-BRESCHEUX - MARPUSSE ROAD (exc.) to the S.24.e. Grid through F.18 Central.
2. On the night 20/21st inst., the Berkshire Regiment will take over the positions at present held by the 54th Battalion. One Company and four Platoon Guides per Company will report to B.C. at 7p.m., where they will report to Lieut. R.N. Clark - who will give them their instructions - they will then guide the incoming Battalion to its position. When relief is complete Companies will notify Battalion Headquarters by the code word ACID, and will then move out independently to relieve the 54th Battalion left Sector as follows:-  
 "C" Coy. 54th Batta. relieves "B" Coy. 55th Bn. in Front Line.  
 "A" Coy. 54th Batta. relieves ( 2 Platoons "C" Coy. 55th Bn. in Support & ( 2 Platoons "A" Coy. 55th Bn. in Reserve.  
 "D" Coy. 54th Bn. will occupy shelters in bank running from O.18.e.7.5. to O.18.e.8.8.  
 "B" Coy. 54th Bn. will occupy shelters round Cross Roads in O.18.e & D.  
 "D" & "B" Companies will move direct to their positions which are at present vacant. "A" & "C" Companies will move to new B.C. in deep dugouts at O.18.e.9.8., where they will be met by guides from the 55th Battalion, who will guide them to their new positions. Completion of this relief will be notified to B.C. at O.18.e.9.8. in code.  
 Battalion Headquarters will close at present position and reopen at O.18.e.9.8. on completion of the first relief. All movement will be in file with 100 interval between Platoons.
3. RATIONS. A Hot meal will be issued to Companies before leaving their present positions. Separate instructions have been issued in reference to rations in the Line.
4. DRILL. Fighting Order. Greatcoats will be worn and Waterproof Sheets carried. Steel helmets will be worn and Respirators at the "alert".
5. All Area Stores etc. in present area will be handed over and receipts obtained. "C" Company takes over the whole of the Trench Stores of the "B" Company which it relieves. "A" Company takes over 50% of the Trench Stores of each Company of the 54th Battalion which it relieves. Duplicate receipts to be forwarded to B.C. as soon as possible, together with copies of receipts for all trench stores, maps, secret documents etc., taken over in the forward area.
6. Company Commanders will arrange to take with them a proportion of Picka and move yokes in their area. The balance will be returned to the S.M. Store by the ration line.
7. There will be no movement by day forward of the Reserve Line.
8. All reports, ration states, daily states etc., will be forwarded to B.C. not later than 12 noon daily.
9. Intelligence reports will be forwarded as follows:-  
 Daily intelligence summary by 6a.m.  
 Situation reports 3-30a.m. & 3-30p.m. daily by wire.  
 Preliminary Patrol report by 5a.m. by wire., and detailed report with intelligence summary.

A C K N O W L E D G E.

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APPENDIX D

No. Copy	"A" Company
1	"A"
2	"B"
3	"C"
4	"D"

C. V. & T. O.  
H. H.  
War Diary.

(a) The contents of the War Diary are to be adjusted as follows:-

From 1.12.1917 onwards along with the...

(b) The War Diary will be reviewed by the War Diary Brigade on the 1st/11/1918. In the event of any change being required, the War Diary will be revised by the War Diary Brigade on the 1st/11/1918.

On the night of 1st/11/1918, the War Diary Brigade will take over the position of War Diary from the War Diary Brigade. The War Diary Brigade will report to the War Diary Brigade on the 1st/11/1918. The War Diary Brigade will give their instructions to the War Diary Brigade on the 1st/11/1918. The War Diary Brigade will give their instructions to the War Diary Brigade on the 1st/11/1918. The War Diary Brigade will give their instructions to the War Diary Brigade on the 1st/11/1918.

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SECRET.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

APP E.

Copy No. 10

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

OPERATION ORDER No. 7.

REFERENCE SHEET - 62 D. 1/40,000.  
-----0000000-----

21/4/18.

1. On the night 21/22nd April, the 14th A.I. Brigade will increase their frontage to the North - taking over from the 8th Brigade the front to the road in P.8.b. (inc.)
2. On the night 21/22nd April the 54th Battalion will take over the front from the right line company of the 32nd Battalion (with existing boundaries,) and the N.En. Boundary will be now on the E.S.W. line through P.14.a.0.5.
3. RELIEFS.  
"B" Company 54th Battalion relieves "A" Company 32nd Battalion. 1 Company and 4 Platoon Guides of the 32nd Battalion will meet "B" Coy. at 9p.m. at P.13.b.8.7. and lead them to their positions. Completion of this relief to be wired to B.H.Q. by code.  
Copies of receipts for all stores, documents etc; taken over, to be forwarded to this H. Q. as soon as possible after completion of relief.
4. MOVES.  
(a) The two platoons of "A" Company at present occupying reserve line will move as follows :-  
1 Platoon to Strong Point at P 19.a.4.2.  
1 Platoon to approx P 13.b.1.3. where they will dig in. This position will be selected by O.C. "A" Coy. with a view to being included in continuous support line to be dug through P 13 & P 19 Central. The O.C. "A" Coy will also select and dig his own Coy H.Q.'s. at approx P 13.c.8.4.  
(b) "D" Company will move from its present position and occupy the reserve line as follows :-  
Half of Coy from O 24.a.9.o. to O 24.b.3.8.  
Remaining Half Coy from o.18.d.6.6. to O 18 b 7.1.  
These moves will be made direct between Companies, who will notify completion of dispositions, and exact location of posts, and Coy. H.Q.'s to B.H.Q. as soon as possible. All Companies will forward with their Intelligence Summary on the morning of 22nd a disposition sketch showing location of all posts etc. accurately.
5. NOTIFICATIONS.  
A hot seal will be issued to Companies before they move from present positions.
6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

Issued to :-

Copy No 1	"A" Coy.
" " 2	"B" Coy.
" " 3	"C" Coy.
" " 4	"D" Coy.
" " 5	Q.M. & T.O.
" " 6	H. Q.
" " 7	32nd Bn
" " 8-11	Wardrum.

Capt & Adj. 54th Battalion. A.I.F.

1. The 54th. Battalion will be relieved on the night of the 26th. April by the 55th. Bn. and will then take over the dispositions in Reserve at present occupied by the 55th Bn.
2. Details of inter-company reliefs already arranged direct between Co. C. Companies of the two Bns to be adhered to with the following in addition-  
 (a) Co. C. 'B' and 'C' company will each detail 1 company and 4 platoon guides to be at crossroads in O 18 b at 9pm, where they will meet the 55th Bn. and guide them in.  
 Co. C. 'A' and 'D' Companies will detail 1 coy guide only to be at crossroads as above.  
 (b) Co. C. Coys will also detail 1 N.C.O. and 4 O.R. to be at crossroads O 18 b at 6pm, where they will meet a guide and proceed to the new position. The N.C.Os after reconnoitering the area and checking any stores to be taken over, will report to Lt R.A. Smith at 55th Bn. HQs. Lt Smith will sign any receipts. The 4 O.R. will return to cross roads at O 18 b by 9.30 pm to meet their coys and guide them to the new area.
3. RELIEFS.  
 'A' Coy 55th Bn. relieves 'A' Coy 54th Bn.  
 'C' Coy 55th Bn. do 'B' Coy 54th Bn.  
 'D' Coy 55th Bn. do 'C' Coy 54th Bn.  
 'B' Coy 55th Bn. do 'D' Coy 54th Bn.
4. Completion of relief to be notified in code to Bn. HQ. and occupation of new positions by code word 'DIGGER'.
5. Duplicate receipts for all area stores etc handed over and taken over to reach Bn. HQs not later than 12 hours after completion of relief. Dumps will be made of all picks and shovels in Coy areas at Coy HQs and receipts obtained.
7. Bn. HQs will close at present location and re-open at O 18 C 7.30 on completion of relief.
8. RATIONS. Rations including a hot meal will be delivered by limber direct to Coys in the new area at 10.30 pm (approx)
9. A C K N O W L E D G E.

Capt. & A/Adjt.

DISTRIBUTION.

54th Battalion A.I.F.

C.O. 54th Bn.	Copy No 1
'A' Coy	" " 2
'B' Coy	" " 3
'C' Coy	" " 4
'D' Coy	" " 5
Q.M. & T.O.	" " 6
C.O. 55th Bn.	" " 7
War Diary	" " 8-10

27/4/18

APPENDIX G 22  
Copy No. 12  
29/4/18

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES

Ref Sheet 62d  
1/40,000

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

OPERATION ORDER. No 8

1. The 54th Battalion will relieve the 53rd at the front line left on the night 30th April/1st May 1918.
2. Company reliefs will be carried out as follows.-
 

'B' Coy 54th Bn.	will relieve	'D' Coy 53rd Bn.	In line right
'D' " " " "	"	" 'B' " " "	In line left
'C' " " " "	"	" 'C' " " "	In supports.
'A' " " " "	"	" 'A' " " "	In reserve.
3. Guides will be found by 53rd Bn. and will meet our incoming Coys. at 53rd Bn. Head-Quarters (012b 9.4) at 9 p.m.
4. Trench stores secret documents etc will be taken over and copies of receipts forwarded to Battalion Hd Qrs. within 12 hours. Any picks and shovels at present with Coys. will be dumped at Bn HQ before 7 P.M.
5. Completion of relief will be notified to 54th Battalion Head-Quarters by the message 'TINHAT'
6. Battalion Head-Quarters will close at present position and will reopen at 012b 9.4 on completion of relief.
7. RATIONS will be issued as usual to-morrow morning night at 6 pm, after which the rationing arrangements as for our last tour in the line will be adhered to. Ration limbers will bring each Coys rations twice nightly to each Coy HdQrs whence they will be distributed direct by Coys. In addition to the usual water supply there will be also a water cart within easy reach of each Coy (position will be notified later)
8. ACKNOWLEDGE.

(Signed) R. G. Downing Lt.  
a/Adjutant 54th Battalion A.I.F.

Distribution.

- Copy No 1---C.O.
- " No 2--A Coy
- " No 3--B Coy
- " No 4--C Coy
- " No 5--D Coy
- " No 6--T.O.&Q.M.
- " No 7--53rd Bn.
- " No 8--File
- " No 9/11-- War Diary.





62.

app H (1) APPENDIX HA<sup>2H</sup>

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.

54th Battalion. 9/4/18.

To all Companies & Q.M.s

The following will be the rationing arrangements until further notice.

Serial No. Strength Supplied by Reporting to Carried to Time reporting

Serial No.	Strength	Supplied by	Reporting to	Carried to	Time reporting
1.	I	N.C.O. & 12 men	D. Coy	Batt. Hd. Qrs	A. Coy 4a.m.
2.	"	"	"	" " "	B. " 4a.m.
3.	"	"	"	" " "	A. " 8p.m.
4.	"	"	"	" " "	B. " 8p.m.
5.	"	8"	"	" " "	A. " 8p.m.
6.	"	8"	"	" " "	B. " 8p.m.
7.	"	12"	"	" " "	C. " 4a.m.
8.	2	"	"	" " "	C. " 8p.m.
9.	I	"	"	" " "	D. " 4a.m.
10.	2	"	"	" " "	D. " 8p.m.

(Signed) J. H. Cambie, Capt.

is Lieut. Act. Adj. 54th Batt.

SECRET.AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

Copy No. 8

WARNING ORDER. N°6

REFERENCE SHEET- 62 D. I/40,000.

12/4/18.

1. Fifty third Bn. will relieve the 54th Bn. on the night of the thirteenth - fourteenth April.
2. Each Company with the exception of D. Coy will supply 5 guides to be at B.H.Q. at 7-45 p.m..
3. Companies relieving are as follows:-
 

A.	53rd	relieves	A.	54th
D.	"	"	B.	"
C.	"	"	C.	"
B.	"	"	D.	"
4. Companies will each supply I Sargent to report to their relieving Coys. of the 53rd on the afternoon of 13th inst., to take over shelters stores etc.
5. S. O. S. S/A/A Grenades Picks and Shovels will be handed over and receipts must be given and taken.
6. Lewis Gun magazines will not be exchanged and must be carried up to the new positions.
7. After relief the village of Villers-Bretenneux will be out of bounds to this Battalion and only men on duty will enter it.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGE.

Issued to :-

Copy No 1.	C.O.R.
2.	B. Coy.
3.	A. "
4.	C. "
5.	D. "
6.	Q.m. T.O.
7.	53rd Btn.
8-II.	War diary.

(Signed)

W. Palmer . Lieut.  
Atg. Sgt.

Aust



SECRET.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.

Copy. no. 11.

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

OPERATION ORDER No 12.

REFERENCE SHEET 62D. 1/40,000.

17/4/18.

1. 54th Battalion will relieve the 53rd Batt in the line to-night 17/18th April. Companies as follows:-
  - A. Coy front line right relieve C. 53rd.
  - B. Coy front line left " B. "
  - C. " Support D. "
  - D. Reserve A. "
2. ADVANCE PARTY.  
A forward party of 1 Officer and 5 N.COs per Coy will be sent forward as soon as visibility permits to take over positions stores etc.
3. STORES.  
ALL S.A.A. bombs, S.O.S. signals picks and shovels will be taken and handed over, and receipts exchanged. Lewis Gun Magazines will not be handed over.
4. GUIDES.  
Guides will be supplied by 53rd Batt. to meet in-going Coys at out-going Coy Hd Qrs. if required.
5. ORDER OF MARCH.  
Order of march will be Hd. QRS, A, B, C, D.
6. DISTANCE.  
The following distances will be maintained 100 yards between platoons ten minutes between companies.
7. RATIONS.  
Rationing arrangements will be the same as during the last tour in the line. Rations for to-night will be drawn in present locations.
8. RELIEF.  
Completion of relief will be wired to Bn HdQrs. in code.
9. PACKS.  
Packs will be returned to Q.M. Stores this afternoon. The Q.M. will arrange transport.
10. ACKNOWLEDGE.

(Signed) W. Palmer. Lieut.  
Actg Adj. 54th Batt.

Issued to :-

Copy No 1.	Hd Qrs.
2-5	A, B, C, D. Coys.
6	53rd Batt:
7	Q.M. & T.O.
8-11	War diary.

## AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES. Appendix P.I.

## FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

## CASUALTY TABLE. for April.

Date	Killed.		Died of wounds.		wounded.		wounded by Gas.	
	Off.	O.R.	Off.	O.R.	Off.	O.R.	Off.	O.R.
April.	Off.	O.R.	Off.	O.R.	Off.	O.R.	Off.	O.R.
1st	-	2	2	x	2	4	nil	nil
2nd	2	1	2		3	5	nil	nil
3rd	-	-				6	nil	nil
4th		1				2	-	-
5th		1				4		
6th						5		
7th						2	7	98
8th						1		19
9th		3				10		
10th		1				10		28
11th						6	1	
12th		1				4		
13th						2		
14th						1		
Total.	2	10	4	Unknown.	2	62.	7.	145.

## STRENGTH ON 30th APRIL.

1st Battalion.	27	Officers	560	Other ranks
Total strength	35	do	762	do do.

A U S T R A L I A N I M P E R I A L F O R C E S .

F I F T Y F O U R T H B A T T A L I O N

Appendix 1, 2.

D I S P O S I T I O N O F O F F I C E R S . as at 9/4/18.

H E A D Q U A R T E R S .

Lieut. Col. D. MacDonagh, C. M. G. D.S.O. - Commanding.  
 Major. B. Dr. Jack.....-2nd in Command.  
 Capt. N.B. Lovett, M.C. (CdeG.).....-Adjutant.  
 Lieut. H.B.G. Staples, M.C. ....-Intelligence Officer.  
 Lieut. H. Brewer.....-Signalling Officer.

Major W. M. Holliday. -----Chaplain.  
 Capt. F. W. Hunt. -----Quartermaster  
 Capt. C. H. Leedman, M.C. ....-Medical Officer.  
 Lieut. A. P. Smith.....-Transport Officer.  
 Lieut. W. L. Palmer.....-Asst. Adjt.

"A" COMPANY.

"B" COMPANY.

"C" COMPANY.

D. COMPANY.

Capt. D.A. McNab, M.C. ....-O.C.  
 Capt. S. A. Benson, (Nucleus)  
 Lieut. G.A. Dickinson, Aubigny.  
 Lieut. C.A. Winterbottom  
 Lieut. A. C. Askham, (Aubigny)  
 Lieut. J.G. Steber, (Nuc.)  
 Lieut. C.C. Ferns.  
 Lieut. J.H. Pollock.

Lieut. J. Adams. ....-O.C.  
 Lieut. W.T.R. Green.  
 Capt. H.H. Young, M.C. (Aubigny)  
 Lieut. F.A. Pickup.  
 Lieut. C.J. Small (nuc)  
 Lieut. H.A. Smith.  
 Lieut. H. R. Allan.

Capt. J.H. Crombie. ....-O.C.  
 Capt. R.G. Downing, M.C. (nuc)  
 Lieut. D. McArthur, M.C. (nuc)  
 Lieut. W. L. Agnew.  
 Lieut. J.H. Barton.

Capt. A. P. Vine Hall. ....-O.C.  
 Lieut. R.M. Wark, D.C.M. (Nucleus).  
 Lieut. F.C.R. Small.  
 Lieut. J.H. Wicks.  
 2nd/Lieut. C.W. Harvey.  
 2nd/Lieut. R.T. Gilligan, (Nuc.)  
 2nd/Lieut. F.W. Reid.

On leave

Lieut. W. J. Treloir.  
 Lieut. P. Kinsella (Aust)

Schools.

Lieut. M.F. Kerrick.  
 Lieut. W.A. L. Senn.  
 2nd/Lieut. A.E. Rowe.  
 2nd/Lieut. R.J.D. Midgley.  
 2nd/Lieut. V.F. Back.

Hospital.

Lieut. C.C. Hart. (sick)  
 Lieut. F. Morley. (wounded).  
 Lieut. J. A. Evans. (w/18.)

DETACHED.

Major J. Hanson- Medical Board. HAVRE.  
 Lieut. C.E. Davis- Corps. Hd. Qrs.  
 Lieut. T. Seaman. Div. Claims Officer.  
 Lieut. F. P. Holder. Bdge. Gas Officer.  
 Lieut. F.W. Bennett, A.I.F. Hd.Qrs.

To 14th TRAINING BATTALION.

Capt. C.E. Shaw 1/1/18.  
 Lieut. C. Upfeld.  
 Lieut. A.G. Bates, D.C.M. 1/3/18

O F F I C E R S S E C O N D E D .

To 14th TRAINING BATTALION.  
 Capt. J.A.S. Mitchell -----1/2/18.  
 Lieut. J. Somerville -----29/8/17.

TO 14th A.I.F. T.M.E.

Lieut. C. Bennett.

S U P E R N U M E R A R Y L I S T .

Lieut. R.S. Healy.

Lieut. C.S. Deacon

Lieut. H. C. Sandbury. Lieut. L. Judd, M.C. (Perm. Supy.)

APPENDIX

P2

29

A U S T R A L I A N    I M P E R I A L    F O R C E S .

FIFTY    FOURTH    BATTALION.

DISPOSITION    OF    OFFICERS.    as at 17th/4/18.    Appendix. P. 3.

H E A D Q U A R T E R S .

Major C. R. Lucas-----T/Commanding.  
 Lieut. W.L. Palmer.--Atg. Adjutant.  
 Lieut. A.C. Askin ---Intelligence Officer.  
 Lieut. H. Brewer.---Signalling Officer  
 Lieut. G. A. Dickinson, Assist. Adjt.

Major W. M. Holliday. -----Chaplain.  
 Capt. W.F. Hunt.-----Quarter Master.  
 Capt. G. H. Leedman, M.C.-----Medical Officer.  
 Lieut. A. F. Smith.-----Transport Officer.

"A" COMPANY.

"B" COMPANY.

"C" COMPANY.

"D" COMPANY.

Capt. D.A. McNab.-- O.C.  
 Capt. S.A. Benson. (Nuc.)  
  
 Lieut. C.T. Winterbottom.  
 Lieut. J. H. Pollock.  
 Lieut. J.G. Steber. (Nuc)  
 2nd/Lt. C.W. Harvey.

Capt. H.H. Young, M.C.  
 (Aubigny)  
 Lieut. J. Adams.--O.C.  
 Lieut. R.E. Smith  
 Lieut. H.R. Allan. (Nuc)  
 Lieut. F.A. Pickup.

Capt. J.H. Crombie,-----O.C.  
 Capt. R.G. Downing, M.C. (Nuc)  
 Lieut. D. McArthur M.C. (Nuc)  
 Lieut. J. H. Barton.  
 Lieut. W.L. Agnew.

Capt. A. P. Vine Hall-----O.C.  
 Lieut. F.C.R. Small.  
 Lieut. J. H. Wicks.  
 2nd/ Lieut. R. T. Gilligan.  
 2nd/ Lieut. F.W. Reid.

SCHOOLS.

HOSPITAL.

DETACHED.

GEN COMMAND.

2/Lieut. R.J.D. Midgley.  
 "/Lieut. V.F. Back.  
 2/Lieut. A.E. Rowe.

Lieut. M.F. Garrick.  
 Lieut. W.A.L. Senn.  
 Lieut. J.A. Evans. (w)  
 Lieut. O.C. Ferns. (w)  
 Lieut. H.E.G. Staples (w)

Lieut. F.P. Holder.  
 Lieut. K.N. Wark. D.C.M.  
~~Lieut. J. H. Barton.~~  
~~Lieut. W.L. Agnew.~~

Bgde. Gas Officer Major J. Hansen.  
 Hon. Lieut. F. W. Bennett.

APPENDIX

P3

P3 301



AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION  
DISPOSITION OF OFFICERS.

Appendix. P.4. 30/4/18.

HEADQUARTERS.

Major A.C.S. Holland.-----Temp.-Commanding  
 Capt. J.H. Crombie.-----2nd in Command.  
 Capt. R.G. Downing, M.C.-----Adjutant  
 Major W.M. Holliday-----Chaplain  
 Lieut. J.H.P. Pollock-----Signaling Officer  
 Lieut. K.N. Wark. D.C.M.-----Intelligence Officer.

Capt. F.W. Hunt -----Quartermaster.  
 Capt. Stewart-----Medical Officer  
 Lieut. R.A. Smith-----Asst. Adjt.  
 Lieut. A.F. Smith-----Transport Officer.  
 Lieut. J.G. Steber.-----Act. L.G. Officer

<u>"A" Company</u>		<u>"B" Company.</u>		<u>"C" Company</u>		<u>"D" Company.</u>	
Capt. D.A. McNab, M.C.---O.C.		Lieut. J. Adams,-----O.C.		Lieut. D. McArthur, M.C.---O.C.		Capt. H.R. Young, M.C.---O.	
Capt. S.A. Benson (Nucleus)		Lieut. H.R. Allen		Lieut. W.L. Agnew		Capt. A.P. Vine Hall.	
Lieut. G.A. Dickinson		Lieut. C. J. Small. (Nucleus)		Lieut. J.H. Wicks.		Lieut. M. F. Carrick.	
2nd Lieut. C.W. Harvey		2nd Lieut. V.F. Back		Lieut. J.H. Barton.		Lieut. F. Morley.	
		Lieut. F.A. Pickup.				2nd Lieut R.J.D. Midgley.	
		2nd Lieut. A.E. Rowe.				2/Lieut. R.T. Gilligan. (Nuc.)	

SCHOOLS.  
Nil.

HOSPITAL.  
 Lieut. C. T. Winterbottom.  
 Lieut. W.A.L. Senn.  
 2nd Lieut. N. Patman.

WOUNDED.  
~~Capt. C.H. Leedman, M.C.~~  
 Major C. R. Lucas, M.C.  
 Capt. C.H. Leedman, M.C.  
 Lieut. J.A. Evans  
 Lieut. F.P. Holder.  
 Lieut. A.C. Askham.  
 Lieut. H. Brewer.  
 Lieut. O.C. Ferns.  
 Lieut. F.S.R. Small.  
 Lieut. W.L. Palmer.

On COMMAND.  
 Hon. Lieut. F.W. Bennett.

P4

APPENDIX P4-31

SECRET.AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

REPORT ON MOVE FROM ACHEUX TO AUBIGNY. APPENDIX. W. 5/4/18.

REFERENCE MAPS AMIENS II.  
AMIENS 17 ) 1/100,000  
LENS 11 )

At a meeting at Brigade Hd. Qrs. on the afternoon of the 4th inst., the C.O. ( Lt. Col. MASONAGHY) received warning that the Battalion was likely to move to a new area. Orders to this effect were received at a late hour the same night. The Battalion was to en-bus at 5-15a.m. the head of the battalion being at a point on ACHEUX- LOUVENCOURT Road about 800 yds from the out-skirts of the village of ACHEUX.

As details of the move had already been arranged at a meeting of Company Commanders on the evening of the 4th inst. no operation order was issued. The following arrangements were made, reveille at 3a.m., breakfast 3-30 move off 4-30 a.m. in the following order:- D, C, B, A, Hd. QRS. The order of march actually was C. A. Hd Qrs, B, D. as D. Company were not ready to move off to time.

As the transport was to go by road it was decided that each company should take on the busses 4 L.Gs with 12 magazines per gun the remaining guns went with the transport for defence against enemy air craft. Cookers were to supply a hot meal on re-joining the battalion at the end of the march.

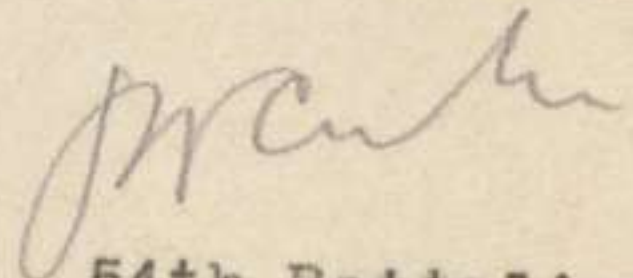
The day was an ideal one for the move being very misty. It was not till 8-30 a.m. that the battalion enbussed and moved off in company with the remainder of the Brigade. Owing to two busses breaking down accomodation was rather crowded.

The trip lasted and was un-eventful except that most of the buses at one time or other had to be pushed. The route was a familiar one to most of the old hands and was as follows:- ACHEUX -LEALVILLERS- TOUTENCOURT- HERISSART- RUBEMPRE- PIERREGOT-RAINNEVILLE- AMIENS- DAOURS. The debussing point was on DAOURS-AMIENS road 300yds due North of the second E in VECQUEMONT.

Here battalion rested for about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour while the men made up their packs Gallipoli fashion so that they could be readily dumped were the enemy suddenly met with.

Orders were received at the Brigade would march to AUBIGNY and billet. Two companies were to act as advance guard for the march and form an out-post line covering the village of AUBIGNY. C. & D. Coys were detailed for this with O.C. C. Coy as advance guard and outpost Commander.

A hot meal was provided about 4p.m. on the arrival of the transport which also had an uneventful trip.

Capt.  54th Battalion.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.

Ref. Map. 62D.  
1/40,000

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

24th April 1918.

REPORT OF OPERATIONS. 24 April 1918

On the morning of the 24th April the Battalion front line ran approximately North and South along the ridge west of the grid line of the squares PI9b PI3d with its right flank resting on the HAMMEL-VILLERS-BRETONEUX Road.

At 3-45a.m. the barrage of H.E. and Gas shell was put down by the enemy on our reserve line and back areas. This barrage continued with varying intensity until 5p.m. At 5a.m. a barrage by Mincerwerfer and M.G.s was put down in rear of front line and on supports and at 5-40 a.m. the enemy was seen advancing towards the wire of the right company. The right flank of his attack was apparently on the WARFUSSE- ABANCOURT-FOUILLOY ROAD. S.O.S. signals were fired but duded and the attack was repulsed by rifle and M.G. fire.

One enemy machine gun which advanced to the wire in front of our right post was put out of action by two Hales Rifle Grenades.

Owing to the thick fog at this time observation was very limited and touch with the enemy could not be maintained, but at 8a.m. when visibility improved considerably he could plainly be seen digging in on the plateau in front of our right post. The artillery did some good shooting on this target and in conjunction with rifles and Lewis Guns inflicted many casualties. There were also numbers of dead observed in front of our right flank.

Information was then received that the enemy had broken through the troops on our right flank and was in possession of VILLERS-BRETONEAUX but a Company of the 2nd Batt: Rifle Brigade on immediate right flank was still holding its position although heavily engaged. At 8-30a.m. however information was received from the Commanding Officer of the 2nd Bn. Rifle Bde. that he had been instructed to withdraw this company and form a defensive flank.

This with-drawal was effected later on but in such a manner as to leave exposed the right flank of the Battalion. At 9-25a.m. instructions were issued to the support Company to cover the gap thus caused. By 10a.m. this operation had been successfully completed, and the line now ran approximately from the original flank of the Battalion in PI9. through PI9c to the contour line through 024c, the support company being in touch with the front line on the left and the right Battalion on the right, with the reserve Coy in position to support the flank thus formed.

At this time the visibility improved considerably and large parties of the enemy could be seen moving along the road from WARFUSSE-ABANCOURT to Villers- Bretonneux and his w.Gs. began firing on our rear positions from the hedges on the northern edge of the village, but his Mincerwerfer barrage ceased. He was digging in on the ridge in P25d.

At 11a.m. enemy planes flew low over the line and his infantry burnt ground flares which showed strong points at approximately P25a.2.0., P20c.0.0. PI9d.5.0., and P25b2.8. At 11-20a.m. a party of about 200 prisoners could be seen marching in the direction of WARFUSSE- ABANCOURT.

The situation now became much quieter. Very little movement occurred until 3p.m. when about a company of the enemy was seen advancing in artillery formation in P26a. Artillery and M.G. fire was brought to bear on them. They dispersed and moved over the ridge into P26c.f. From this time onwards everything remained comparatively quiet until 11p.m. when the 15th Bde counter-attacked on our right and made our position secure.

The conduct of our men through the action was all that could be desired, their main object being to come to grips with the enemy, and great credit is due to the Officers, N.C.O.s, and men of A. and C. Coys for the prompt and energetic way in which they met each situation as it arose. The casualties inflicted on the enemy were very heavy although no definite idea of them can be given; while ours under the circumstances were very light being :- 3 killed, 10 wounded, 28 gassed of whom 4 wounded and 28 gassed were at rear Hd. Quarters AUBIGNY.

Sgt A.C.S. Holland Major  
T/Quadrant 54 A.S.

## APPENDIX Z

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.

APP. Z.

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

REPORT ON DEFENCES TAKEN OVER FROM 55TH BATTALION ON NIGHT 20th/21st  
& APRIL 1918.

REFERENCE SHEET

62d. 1/40,000 and APPENDIX Za.

1. The defences in the front line area consist of 4 platoon posts, 2 in the front line (each of these has two L.G. Guns) and two in local support (each of these has 1 L.G. gun). See App. Z.A. Company Hd Qrs. is in support line at P.13d 1515. These posts are well sited and all ground in front of Company sector can be covered from the two front posts also assistance can be rendered to flank units. Two L.T.M.s in position at P.19b58 can cover the dead ground in P. 14c. A vickers gun is also in position at P.19 b 4.2..

Trenches are 6ft deep and fire-stepped. Each post with the exception of P.19b 8.8. is well traversed and this post is being traversed immediately. Shelters are constructed of water-proof sheets.

A belt of wire runs from in front of 2nd Bn Rifle Bde. (on right) through P.20a 1.0. to P. 20a 0.5. and from P.19b 7.6. in a cresent to a point about 10 yds across road at P.20a 0.9. This leaves a gap of about 120yds in front of centre of the sector. This is being completed immediately. There is a reserve of 5,000 rounds S.A.A. in posts & 21,000 at Co.Hd. Qrs.

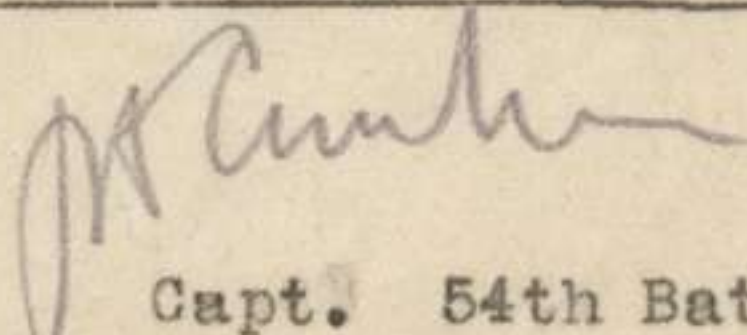
2. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~  
The Support Line consists of a continuous trench running from P. 13d 2.7. to P.19b 4.0., Four ft deep with a good parapet. Coy Hd Qrs. was dug by A. Coy 54th Bn. at P. 13c8.1. It is 6ft deep and well traversed with iron shelters dug into parapet.

All posts in Support Line have a good field of fire with no dead ground within 500 yds. There is a reserve of 3,000 rounds S.A.A. with each platoon and a 1,000 at Coy Hd. Qrs.

REPORT ON DEFENCES TAKEN OVER FROM 32ND BATTALION ON NIGHT 21/22nd  
APRIL. 1918.

REFERENCE SHEET 62d. 1/40,000 and APPENDIX Z a.

3. On the night of the 21st/ 22nd April B. Coy 54th Bn took over front line from A. Coy. 32nd Bn. The line was a system of out-posts running due North & South and very badly sited. Vide Appendix Za. Each section of trench was garrisoned by one section, accomodation for garrison being fair. These posts were about 40yds apart and were well stocked with S.A.A. and Mills hand grenades. The front was wired with the exception of a gap of 80yds from P.13d 8.3. to P.13d 8.5. Wire was approximately 50yds in front of post about 2ft high and three yds in depth. There are 4 listening posts in front of this wire. Coy Hd.Qrs. is at P.13d 4.4. with a reserve LG.at P.13c 9.8.

  
Capt. 54th Battalion.

## AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.

APP. Z.

## FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

REPORT ON DEFENCES TAKEN OVER FROM 55TH BATTALION ON NIGHT 20th/21st  
\* APRIL 1918.

REFERENCE SHEET

62d. 1/40,000 and APPENDIX Za.

1. The defences in the front line area consist of 4 platoon posts, 2 in the front line (each of these has two L.G. Guns) and two in local support (each of these has 1 L.G. gun). See App. Z.A. Company Hd Qrs. is in support line at P.13d 1515. These posts are well sited and all ground in front of Company sector can be covered from the two front posts also assistance can be rendered to flank units. Two L.T.M.s in position at P.19b58 can cover the dead ground in P. 14c. A vickers gun is also in position at P.19 b 4.2..

Trenches are 6ft deep and fire-stepped. Each post with the exception of P.19b 8.8. is well traversed and this post is being traversed immediately. Shelters are constructed of water-proof sheets.

A belt of wire runs from in front of 2nd Bn Rifle Bde. (on right) through P.20a 1.0. to P. 20a 0.5. and from P.19b 7.6. in a cresent to a point about 10 yds across road at P.20a 0.9. This leaves a gap of about 120yds in front of centre of the sector. This is being completed immediately. There is a reserve of 5,000 rounds S.A.A. in posts & 21,000 at Co.Hd. Qrs.

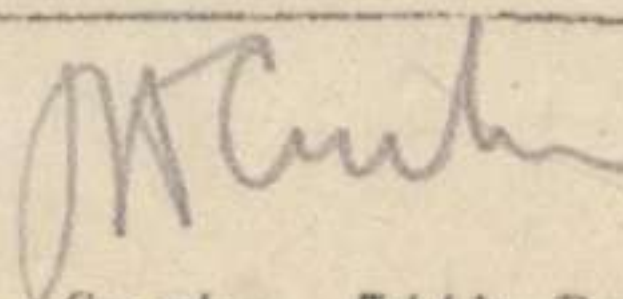
2. The Support Line consists of a continuous trench running from P. 13d 2.7. to P.19b 4.0., Four ft deep with a good parapet. Coy Hd Qrs. was dug by A. Coy 54th Bn. at P. 13c8.1. It is 6ft deep and well traversed with iron shelters dug into parapet.

All posts in Support Line have a good field of fire with no dead ground within 500 yds. There is a reserve of 3,000 rounds S.A.A. with each platoon and a 1,000 at Coy Hd. Qrs.

REPORT ON DEFENCES TAKEN OVER FROM 32ND BATTALION ON NIGHT 21/22nd  
APRIL 1918.

REFERENCE SHEET 62d. 1/40,000 and APPENDIX Za.

3. On the night of the 21st/ 22nd April B. Coy 54th Bn took over front line from A. Coy. 32nd Bn. The line was a system of out-posts running due North & South and very badly sited. Vide Appendix Za. Each section of trench was garrisoned by one section, accomodation for garrison being fair. These posts were about 40yds apart and were well stocked with S.A.A. and Mills hand grenades. The front was wired with the exception of a gap of 80yds from P.13d 8.3. to P.13d 8.45. Wire was approximately 50yds in front of post about 2ft high and three yds in depth. There are 4 listening posts in front of this wire. Coy Hd.Qrs. is at P.13d 4.4. with a reserve 10. at P.13c 9.8.



Capt. 54th Battalion.

War Diary

Original.

Z A

54<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 14<sup>th</sup> A.I. Bde.

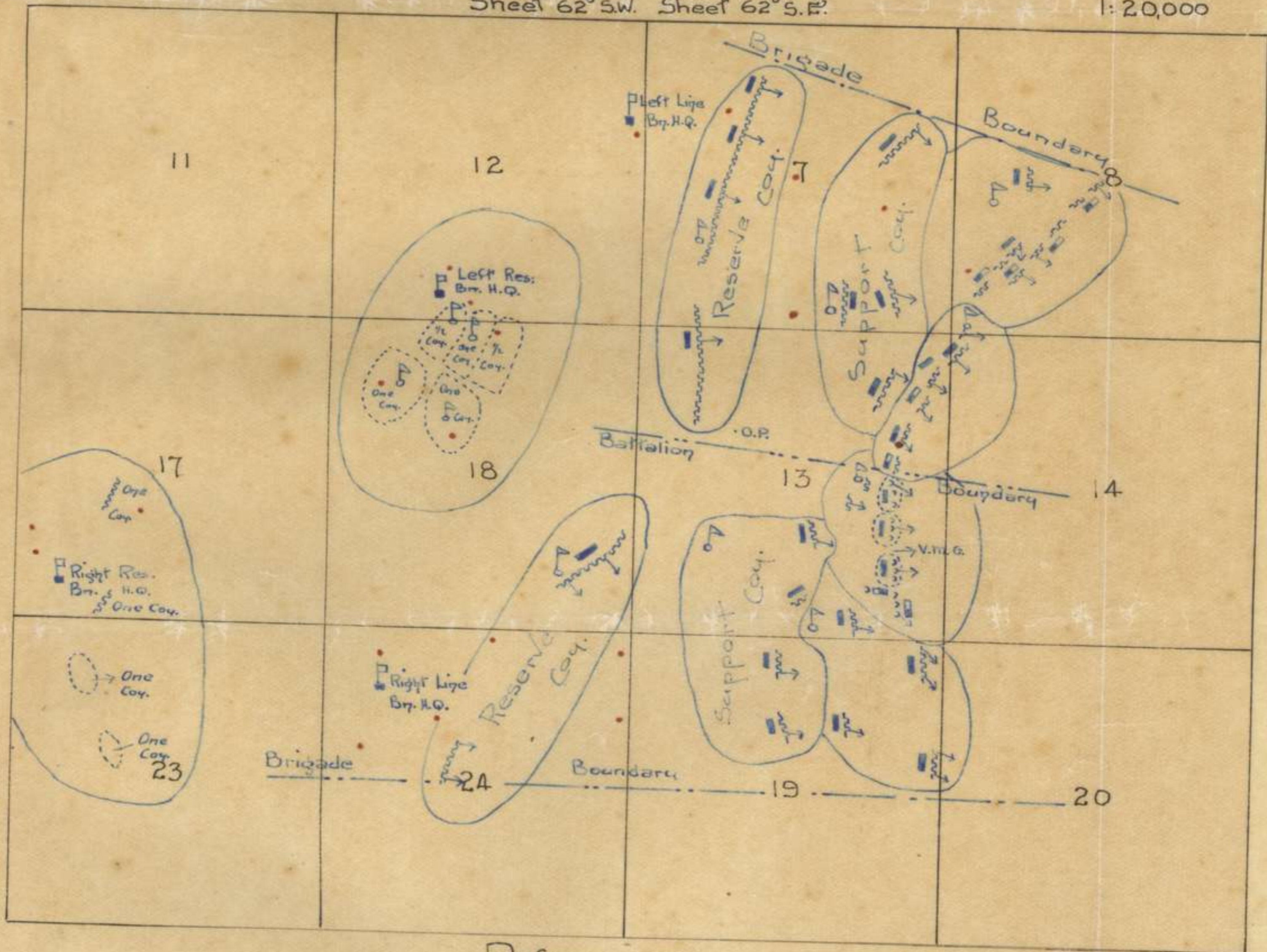
Volume 26

Appendix Z (a)

Disposition Sketch

Sheet 62° S.W. Sheet 62° S.E.

1:20,000



Reference

- Coy. H.Q.
- One Platoon
- Half
- Lewis Gun
- A.A. Lewis Gun



26a

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

APPENDIX

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY ---10/4/18.

1. (a) Our Artillery between 2a.m. and 3a.m. shelled enemy outposts immediately opposite our sector. At 5a.m. our 60 pdrs. commenced shelling rear of enemy's lines, fire maintained for 30 minutes. Activity increases towards, chiefly 18 pdrs.
- (b) A patrol of 1 Officer and 3 O/Ranks left No.7 Post at at 12-15a.m. they proceeded towards No.6 Post; they report the ground very muddy, nothing was seen of the enemy. Sounds of someone calling as if lost were heard from the direction of enemy's lines. The level ground facilitates operations during patrolling. No M.G. fire met with. Everything exceptionally quiet. Patrol returned through No.7 Post at 1-30a.m. Liaison Patrols were sent out between Posts and contact was maintained with Flank Units during night.
- (c) Nil.
- (d) Our M.G.'s fired intermittently during the period.
2. Nil.
3. Enemy shelling was very slight during night - only four 4.2 shells fell in our forward areas. At 5a.m. enemy strafed VILLIERS BRATONNEUX with 4.2 H.a. and several high velocity shells.
4. Patrols - Nil.  
Snipers fired occasional shots with no results.  
Machine Guns fired intermittently during night on tracks and roads - firing very low.
5. Nil.
6. Nil.
7. Nil.
- 8 Shells noticed to be exploding on very slight impact.
9. Only 12 white flares along our front during the night. Co colored flares.
10. Nil.
11. Company Headquarters at P.25.c.8.4. was a trench with very little accommodation. During the night shelters were erected to accommodate Company H.Q. personnel.
12. Ground is very muddy. Much surface water lying about forward areas.
13. 62D. 0.30.c.2.2.

*A. C. Ashman*  
 Lieut.  
 Intelligence Officer.  
 54th Battalion, A.I.F.

## FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

Our forward posts were attacked during the night  
 INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY--11/4/18.

1. (a) Our Artillery throughout the last 24 hours has been very active. Enemy Outposts and forward systems were subject to continued harassing fire. At 11p.m. and 2-15a.m. enemy outposts were heavily strafed with H.E. & Shrapnel. Out 80 pdrs. were active but owing to nature of country no results were observed.  
 (b) Liaison Patrols kept up continued communication with flank units and between posts. Two reconnaissance Patrols left Out post at 12-15a.m. and 1-50a.m. respectively. (report forwarded.)  
 (c) Our Snipers were particularly active. Two casualties were claimed.  
 (d) Our Vickers M.G.'s sprayed enemy tracks at intervals during the night.
2. Nil.
3. Enemy artillery chiefly active on our support and rear areas, although at 10a.m. Cross Roads O.30.O.d.9.3. and buildings in vicinity, also aerodrome P.25.d.5.6. were heavily strafed (5.9 H.E.) Searching Fire in Village VILLERS BRKTONNEUX with 4.2 H.E. (Field Guns) was continued during the period many buildings being demolished. At 9-30a.m. buildings in P.25.c.8.5. were heavily bombarded with 5.9 H.E. 30 direct hits being registered, direction of shelling was P.17. and 23. At 9a.m. and 4-30 Support Line shelled with 4.2 H.E. from direction of P.29.
4. Patrols. Nil  
 Snipers were very active at dusk, during night and "stand to" .. It was noticed during the day very little was done., presumably our snipers kept them quiet.  
 Machine Guns were very busy at night over our posts, and during the day at our aircraft. Constant fire was kept on Haystack and Company Headquarters in our Support Line.  
 T.M.'s Nil.
5. New Work.- enemy appears to be making a continuous line of trenches along our front, also deepening them. As much earth is thrown over the top during the day. Digging noticed at P.26.c.8.4. Machine Gun emplacement was located on a ruined stack at P.22.5.7.
6. At 6-30a.m. two flights of 15 enemy planes crossed our lines at a great height drawing much fire. They returned to their lines at 6-50a.m. Other hostile planes crossed our lines at 7-45a.m. 1 at 8a.m., 3 at 10-50a.m. and 10 Planes at 12 noon.  
 Our aircraft was very active. At 1-30a.m. 18 of our Planes dropped many bombs on enemy outposts and rear systems of defences. 1 of our Planes damaged by A.A. fire landed under control near the hangars in our lines; this plane released several bombs whilst over our outpost but without doing damage. During the day our planes harassed the enemy trenches with M.G. fire.
7. A good deal of movement was observed during the day at (P.26.c.8.4. and P.26.a.8.0., and was engaged by our Riflemen. A track from P.26.a.6. to P.26.a.7.3. running from a sap to line of telegraph poles in P.26.d. was observed.
8. Nil.
9. In the early hours of the night during the mist the enemy used numerous white flares along the sector.
10. A hostile balloon was observed at 161 degrees from P.26.2.0.7. At 5-50p.m. from the direction of MARCULCAVE smoke similar to that emitted from a locomotive was seen to travel across the open country beyond.

(P.T.O.)



- 11. Our Forward Posts were strengthened during the night.
- 12. Still very wet and sticky.
- 13. As before.

*A. B. Ashman*

11/4/18.

1. Our artillery during the night was very active. Many forward posts and forward systems were subject to heavy mortar fire. At 11 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed.

2. Our artillery during the night was very active. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed. During the night our artillery was very active and many forward posts were destroyed. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed.

3. Our artillery during the night was very active. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed. During the night our artillery was very active and many forward posts were destroyed. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed.

4. Our artillery during the night was very active. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed. During the night our artillery was very active and many forward posts were destroyed. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed.

5. Our artillery during the night was very active. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed. During the night our artillery was very active and many forward posts were destroyed. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed.

6. Our artillery during the night was very active. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed. During the night our artillery was very active and many forward posts were destroyed. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed.

7. Our artillery during the night was very active. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed. During the night our artillery was very active and many forward posts were destroyed. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed.

8. Our artillery during the night was very active. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed. During the night our artillery was very active and many forward posts were destroyed. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed.

9. Our artillery during the night was very active. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed. During the night our artillery was very active and many forward posts were destroyed. At 10 p.m. heavy mortar fire was active but owing to darkness of night was not observed.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY--12/4/18.

1. (a) Our Artillery was very active throughout the day and night shelling enemy forward areas, Night shelling increased to a bombardment at times. At 12-30p.m. concentrated fire was brought to bear on a forward enemy defence with the result that parapets seem to be damaged in many places. At the same time a fire was burning fiercely in vicinity P.27.a. and c. presumably a gun position. 18 pdr Shrapnel at 8p.m. firing into P.26.c., two rounds fell short over our support positions. Villages of WARFUSSE - ABINCOURT and MARCHICAVE were kept under continued fire during the afternoon, much brick dust observed. A heavy shelling of enemy front line and forward defences commenced at 6a.m. and was sustained for 1 hour. Front line reports that shooting was excellent.  
(b) A Patrol of 1 Officer and 4 O/Ranks left No.6 post at about midnight and moved forward to enemy positions near P.27.a & 6. The position was unoccupied - nothing was seen of the enemy. Liaison Patrols between Flank Units and Outposts were maintained during the night.  
(c) Our Snipers during the daytime were active and report less movement in consequence.  
(d) Our M.G.'s were very inactive. No targets presenting themselves. Occasional indirect fire by Vickers during period.

2. Nil.

3. Enemy Shelling was very constant, at 8-30a.m. Cross Roads O.30.d.g.3. and buildings near there were shelled with 5.9. Hows., Buildings in P.25.c. were subject to heavy shelling obtaining 100 direct hits, also P.25.d. was heavily shelled. About 3000 rounds were fired into these squares during the daytime. Our defences were damaged, four casualties resulted, also 4 men buried.

4. Patrols Nil.  
Snipers kept up continuous fire on our support positions, 2 casualties resulting.  
M.G.'s were very active with indirect fire on back roads etc.

5. Work is being carried out in P.26.b. and d., so far he has no wire in front of ~~xxxxxxx~~ Posts. Enemy is everywhere camouflaging his trenches with grass sods. Much individual movement observed engaged in this operation. Several M.G. emplacements are located in enemy's second line of defence - these engage in sniping during daylight.

6. Hostile Planes were more active during period than hitherto. They crossed and recrossed our lines on numerous occasions. Contact Planes by aid of flares registered out outpost. At 9a.m. apparent allied planes dropped 8 bombs to rear and vicinity of our out post. During early part of evening many big enemy planes made excursions to our battery area and bombed. Several Planes flew low over our lines during the day. Our Planes were very scarce during the day but bombed enemy lines between 6 and 7p.m. also on positions in P.20.a.8.6.

7. A good deal of movement is noticed throughout the day enemy lines between P.20.b.8.d. Our snipers get a little practice there. There seems to be a dump of some description on the right of BOIS DES TAILL-  
LUX (P.22.a.8.0.)

8. enemy is using many sensitive fused shells which make movement in village very dangerous.

9. Fewer flares used than usual.

P.T.O.

10. Enemy had several balloons up during afternoon.

111 No. 4, 5, 6 & 7 Outposts were deepened about 6 inches., parapet strengthened and material carried forward for wiring. In all other trenches minor improvements were carried out, latrines dug and shelters made.

12. Muddy but improving rapidly, although slight fall of rain made some grassy areas to be damaged in many places. At the same time a fire was burning in the vicinity P. 27. a. and c. presumably a gun position. At 8 p.m. firing into P. 28. c., two rounds fell short over our support positions. Villages of WARBURNE - ABINCOURT and MARCAVA were kept under continued fire during the afternoon, much brick dust observed from the enemy front line and forward defences.

*Handwritten signature*

Lieut. Intelligence Officer. 54th Battalion, A.I.F.

13. Frank Units and Outposts were maintained during the night. (c) Our snipers during the daytime were active and report less movement in consequence. (d) Our M.G.'s were very inactive. No targets presenting themselves. Occasional indirect fire by Vickers during period.

111. 2.

Enemy shelling was very constant, at 8-30 a.m. Cross Roads O. 20. d. 2. 3. and buildings near there were shelled with 5.9 Howa. Buildings in P. 28. c. were subject to heavy shelling obtaining 100 dir-of hits also P. 25. d. was heavily shelled. About 3000 rounds were fired into these areas during the daytime. Our defences were damaged, four casualties resulted, also 4 men buried.

111. 4.

Snipers kept up continuous fire on our support positions, 2 casualties resulting. M.G.'s were very active with indirect fire on back roads etc.

Work is being carried out in P. 28. b. and d., as far as has no wire in front of trench. Enemy is everywhere camouflaging his trenches with grass sods. Much individual movement observed engaged in this operation. Several M.G. emplacements are located in enemy's second line of defence - these engage in sniping during daylight.

Hostile planes were more active during period than hitherto. They crossed and recrossed our lines on numerous occasions. Contact planes by aid of flares registered out outpost. At 9 a.m. apparent allied planes dropped 8 bombs to rear and vicinity of our out post. During early part of evening many big enemy planes made excursions to our battery area and bombed. Several planes flew low over our lines during the day. Our planes were very active during the day but bombed enemy lines between 6 and 7 p.m. also on positions in P. 20. a. 8. 8.

A good deal of movement is noticed throughout the day enemy lines between P. 20. b. d. Our snipers get a little practice there. There seems to be a dump of some description on the right of BOIS DES TAILLIAUX (P. 22. a. 8. 0.)

Enemy is using many sensitive fused shells which make movement in village very dangerous.

111. 9. Fewer planes used than usual.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

APP IV

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY 13/4/18.

1. (a) Our Artillery was very active during the day. The greater part of the shells going to the back areas. At 9-30a.m. the village of WARFUSSE - ABANCOURT was heavily shelled. A fire broke out as the result which burnt throughout the day. A sheet on enemy M.G. positions near P.26. central was carried out; sounds as of men wounded were heard.  
 (b) The usual liaison patrols were carried out. At midnight a fighting patrol left our front line.  
 (c) Our snipers were very active during the day keeping the enemy very low. Targets were not as good or as plentiful as on the previous day but 6 casualties are claimed. Our M.G.'s were not at all active and no T.M.'s were fired.
2. Nil.
3. Enemy Artillery in Forward Areas practically nil. The village of VILLIERS BRETONNEUX was shelled intermittently during the 24 hours by 4.2s. and 5.9s. Gas being used in the early hours. ~~The High Velocity~~ The High Velocity Small Shells used 4 days ago were noticeably absent.
4. No enemy patrols were seen. Snipers were less active owing to our fire. Machine Guns were fairly active particularly during the early hours of darkness- when they swept front line parapets causing 1 casualty. Fire which cleared the front line caught the Supports where 2 men were slightly wounded.
5. Work was observed near P.26. Central and a party was seen at work near the same spot by our patrols @ vide para 1. Sounds of hammering were heard continuously until 1a.m. until the second sheet was carried out - thereafter nothing was heard.
6. (a) Hostile Aeroplanes were active throughout the day. Flights of 6 to 14 machines were observed. 1 Plane was attacked and driven down in flames in approximately V.9. about midday. Hostile Planes were heard at 8-30 and 9p.m. proceeding in the direction of AMIENS. Our own planes were active during the day dropping bombs on enemy lines, in addition to bringing down a hostile plane they also destroyed an observation balloon in the direction of MARCELLEAVE.
7. A good deal of noise was heard in enemy lines during the night, -probably made by working parties. Small bodies of horse transport were observed on WARFUSSE - ABANCOURT - MARCELLEAVE Road at 5-15p.m.
8. Sneezing Gas was noticed in VILLIERS BRETONNEUX during the morning.
9. The enemy were using parachute flares dropped from planes in the early hour of the night. Serial flares ( string of beads) were noticed concurrently with the exhaust of our planes.
11. A telephone was installed in the central front line post. Fire steps were made in all Posts and Parapets strengthened. 100 yds of light wire entanglement was erected in left Battalion boundary and left post.
12. The ground is rapidly drying.
13. Unchanged.

*A. B. Ashman*  
 Lieut.  
 Intelligence Officer.  
 54th Battalion, A.I.F.

SECRET.AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY. to 6a.m. 21/4/18

REFERENCE SHEET 62D. 1/40,000.

1. Our Artillery was very active during night carrying out prearranged shoots and at other times maintaining slow rate of fire. At 1-30am our L.T.M.B.s carried out a shoot no patrols were out during the night except the usual liaison patrols between flank units and out-posts. Our Machine guns fired intermittently during the night.
2. Nil.
3. Enemy very quiet during night. No shelling on our front.
4. There was no enemy M.G. or T.M. fire during night
5. enemy could be heard cutting trees at 2-45a.m.
6. Our planes were over enemy lines at 11-15p.m. enemy planes crossed our lines at 11-25 p.m.
- 7&8 Nil
9. enemy signal lamp seen in front of left of sector at 9p.m.
- 10& 11 Nil.
12. Dry.
13. 024a4.6.

(Sgd A.C. Selwyn Holland Major.  
T/Cmdg. 54th Batt:

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APPENDIX *VA*

SECRET.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.  
FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

*App Va*

20/4/18.

*Ref Sheet 62D*  
DISPOSITION REPORT.

*App Va*

BATTALION HEAD QUARTERS			O.24.a.4.6.
Front line C. Coy	Coy H.Q.		PI3.D.2.3.
	I Platoon		PI9B9.3.
	I "		P.19.B.9.8.
	I "		P.19.B.4.5. P.13.D.4.2.
Support Line. A. Coy.	Coy. H d Qrs		O.24a.9.05.
	I Platoon		P.19b.3.5.
	I Platoon		P.13D.15.10.
	2 Platoons	from to	O.18D5.2. O.24A.9.0.
Reserve Line. B. Coy.	Coy H.Q.s		O18D.4.
	4 Platoons	from to	O18D55.20. O18D3.8.
D. Coy.	Coy. H.Qrs.		O24A15.15.
	Company	from to	O24A25.25. O24A1.1.

*App Va*

DISPOSITIONS 22/4/18

BATTALION HEAD QUARTERS.			O.24.a.4.6.
Front line C. Coy	Coy H. Q.		PI3.D.2.3.
	I Platoon		PI9B9.3.
	I Platoon		PI9B9.8.
	I Platoon		P.19.B.4.5. PI3.D.4.2.
Right half.	I Platoon		
	I Platoon		
	I Platoon		
	I Platoon		
	I Platoon		
Left half. B. Coy.	Coy H.Q.		PI4.A.2.3.
	I Platoon		P.1300.35.
	I Platoon		P.13a.95.70.
	I Platoon		P.14 a.3.1.
	I Platoon		P.14a 5.2.
Support Line. A. Coy.	Coy H.Q.		P.13c5.5.
	I platoon		P.19b0.5.
	I Platoon		P.19a95.90.
	I Platoon		P.19a4.2.
	I Platoon		P.13b 1.3.
Reserve Line. D. Coy	Coy H.Q.		O.18d.6.4.
	I Platoon	from	O.18d 5.2.
		to	O.18d9.6.
	I Platoon		O.24.a. 9.2.

*App Va*

DISPOSITIONS on the morning of 24/4/18

These are the same as for 22/4/18. except as follows:-  
A. Coy. In Front Line right  
C. Coy in support.

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SECRET.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY. to 6 a.m. 22/4/18.

REFERENCE SHEET. 62D. 1/40,000.

- I.a Our Artillery was very active during the twenty four hours particularly during the early morning until daylight. Particular attention being paid to BOIS de VAIRE ad the valley running through PI4 to the North of this Wood. Two short bursts of 18 pounder hrapnel occured at 1-53 p.m. at P. 19b 8.8. approximately 100 yds in rear post.
- b. A patrol of one Officer (Lieut. Pickup) and four other ranks left our lines at 2a.m. from P.20a.0.6. and proceeded along the WARPUSSE-ABANCOURT ROAD. Patrol turned off to the left along the road running through P.14c.a. far as P. 14c. 5. 7. the belt of trees at this point being examined with no result. A large working party could be heard digging at about P.20a.9.5. No enemy was seen. The object of the patrol was to become acquainted with No Man's Land. The Patrol returned at 3a.m.
- c. Nil.
- d. During artillery shoots our ~~ammunition~~ M.G.s co-operated with bursts of fire.
- 2. Nil.
- 3. Enemy shells O.24a. and O18d. from 2p.m. until 5p.m. with 4.2 and 5.9 H.E. about a hundred in all. At 6.5p.m. enemy shelled O24b. with salvoes of 77 about 30 in all.
- 4. Quiet. No patrols were encountered or seen. W.G.s & T.M.s have fired very little. There was no T.M. fire during the night. M.G.s fired from edge of BOIS-de- VAIRE but were apparently using indirect fire as none was directed at the front line post.
- 5. Nil.
- 6.A. Hostile machines were over our lines frequently during the day. Nine crossed at about 11-40 a.m. & 4 at 5-35p.m.. Single machines crossed at 3-5p.m. 5p.m. and 7-25p.m. and several between 10-30 p.m. and 1-30 a.m.
- B. Our planes were active during the day patrolling the front and crossing the lines a number of times. A plane showing a star instead of the usual rings crossed over our lines at mid-day. One plane was brought down at a considerable height but owing to poor visibility could not be identified.
- 7. Very little movement was seen during the day. Odd men were noticed at different times going into the sunken road south of BOIS de VAIRE. Enemy stretcher-bearers (2 squads) carrying stretchers were also seen there.
- 8. Nil.
- 9. No flares were used by the enemy during night. Verrey lights were fired from planes in rear of enemy lines and burst into two white lights.
- 10. Enemy posts in front of right Co y sector appeared to be at P20a 99.50, P20b 15. 80, P20a 99. 90. and P14d(not certain).
- 11. One block and one bay were built in post P19b 9. 8. also 80yds of wire in front of this post.
- 12 & 13. Un-changed.

(Signed) A. C. Salwyn Holland. Major.  
T/Cmdg. 54th Battalion.

Ab2.

App VI

SECRET.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.  
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY to 6a.m. 23/4/18.

REFERENCE SHEET. 62D. 1/40,000.

- I. A. Our artillery has been very active during the 24 hours carrying out pre-arranged shoots. Inter-mittent shelling at frequent intervals was carried out on front line posts, support Bois de Vaire and back areas with HE. and Shrapnel. At 12-45a.m. well directed fire was brought to bear on enemy working parties at P.20a.9.9. the party being dispersed. Fire was also directed on P.28C6.3. at 12-15p.m. and 1-30p.m. movement having been observed at this point.
- B. Regularly liaison patrols were maintained between units on flanks and between our own posts during the night. A patrol of 1 N.C.O. and 6 men left our line at P.13d 7.3. at 1-30 a.m. and moved to the left along the left Coy front about 200 yds in front of our wire. No enemy was seen or heard. Patrol returned at 3a.m. to P.13a 6.2. objects of patrol was to cover platoons whilst digging the new positions rendered necessary. owing to re-adjustment of inter-battalion boundaries.
- C. Nil.
- D. Our machine guns were very active during the night through-out the sector .
- 2. Nil.
- 3. Enemy artillery was not very active during the period. About 6 4-2 were fired on P.19b & P13d during the morning. At 5-45 p.m. about 25 5-9s were fired on reserve on O24b. At 5-15 a.m. about 6 77 gas shells were fired on O23a and b. Four pine-apples fell in the vicinity of support line in P.13d and these appeared to come from direction of P.20a.9. 5. Time 11-45a.m. enemy did not appear to have any patrols out during the night. At 3p.m. a sniper fired on post at P.13 b 7.3. from direction of Bois de Vaire but position could not located. During the day enemy M.G.s fired on our planes from some distance in rear of of his posts. Between 1-45 and 2-15 a.m. several M.G.s opened up from Bois de Vaire with indirect fire on cross roads in P. 13c . During night a single gun occasionally fired a short burst.
- 5.A. Nil.
- B. Enemy wire in front of Bois de Vaire is apron wire on wood picke about 3'6" high . This wire also runs "and 3 along crest of hill to-wards and past P.28c 6.3.
- D. Pine-apple gun situated approximately P.20 a 9.5.
- 6. A. Hostile planes fairly active crossing our lines at 6-20 a.m., 11a.m. 1-30p.m. and 7-45 p.m. One hostile machine in enemy lines during the





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6. A. Contd.

- lines during the morning.
- B. Our planes were very active and crossed enemy lines on numerous occasions. Bombs were dropped and M. G.s fired on enemy in Bois de Vaire and in back areas. During bombing men were seen to leave one post on extreme right of ~~road~~ wood.
- 7 A. There has been considerable movement behind enemy lines in pairs on sky-line. They all appear to go to and leave the same place P.28c 6.5. (artillery directed to this target twice during day.)
- 7 B. Enemy were heard working in front of Bois de Vaire about mid-night probably at P.28c 6.3.
- 8 A. Nil.
9. Nil.
10. Nil.
11. Right company completed wire in front of sector 45yds being put in. Post at P. 19 b9.8. has been traved being formerly a straight piece of trench. Left company have dug section posts at P13d 3.9. and P.13d. 7.1. to conform with new boundary. The accomodation of all posts in the sector has been improved.
12. Wet after mornings rain.
13. Un-changed.

(Signed) A.C. Selwyn Holland. Major  
T./ Cmdg. 54th Batt.

*App VIII*

SECRET

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY. to 26 a.m. 24/4/18.

*Ref Sheet 620*

- 1.A. Our artillery was very active throughout the day much attention being paid to Bois de Vaire , cross roads in P14b, WARFUSEE-ABANCOURT, and P2Cb&d. At 7-45p.m. two salvos of 18 pounders were fired on M.W. position at P.14d 4.7.. Shots as set down took place at stated times during the night .
- B. Regularly liaison patrols were maintained between posts, Companies, and flank units, during the night . Two patrols were sent out during the night, one from the right coy and one from left coy:-  
 Right Coy patrol , consisting of 1 Officer (Lt.G.A. Dickenson) and 11 other ranks left our lines in P.19b 9.1. at 12-40a.m. carrying Lewis Gun. Patrol moved to-w P20c 5.7. and whilst waiting at this point saw an enemy party of four at about P. 20a 5.4 moving back hurriedly towards their own lines under the fire of our 18 pdrs. Patrol was un-able to investigate further on account of our own shell fire which was playing on the intervening ground between enemy lines and patrol. Patrol then moved to-wards P.20a 8.8 but saw no signs of enemy in vicinity of Bois deVaire. Concentration of our artillery in front of the wood at 1-50 a.m. prevented further investigation in that direction. Patrol then moved tow rds cross-roads in P. 20a and returned through our lines at P19b 9.1. at 2-10a.m. Enemy M.G. fire was silent whilst patrol was out . our T. M. s fired incendiary shells whilst our Patrol was near Bois de Vaire but without material result on the wood.  
 Left Coy Patrol consisting of 1 Officer(Lt. F.A.Pickup) and 14 or . ranks left post at P. 13d 7.3. at 2-30am. and patrolled to about P.14c 6.3. where an enemy patrol of about 12 strong was met but this party retired to Bois de Vaire on approach of our Patrol. The party then proceeded to about P.14a 0.5.where an enemy standing patrol was seen . The sergent with the patrol proceeded to within a few yards of the enemy and estimated their strength at 20. Patrol then got to within 20yds of them and opened fire. The enemy immediately dispersed, several of them falling down and firing. Two of the enemy were seen to fall as though hit . The Patrol then returned to our lines at about P.14a 0.0.at 3-30am.
- C. At about 5p.m. three of the enemy were seen walking along ridge in



Para C.

- in P.20a 5. 2. Two of our snipers opened fire on them making them double for about 510 yds where they disappeared.
- D. During the afternoon T.M.s in left batt: sector were active firing on to enemy out-post at P.14b 7.3.
2. Nil.
3. During the morning a few 77s landed near tree at P13a 5.2. During the afternoon very heavy artillery fire was heard to go over sector into back areas. At 3-45a.m. a heavy bombardment opened confined at first mainly to flanks and our reserve line it dropped after a time on to the whole of the sector. No gas shells were used although reported from flanks and in rear. Half a hour after shelling commenced gas shells started to fall in sector mainly yellow cross and blue cross. Gas shelling ceased at 7.a.m.. M.M.W. fired on front line posts of both coys at 4-45a.m. and artillery retaliation was asked for on P.14d4.6. at 5-15a.m.. Telephone communication with Cps failed at 5-45a.m. and with Brigade at 3-45a.m. It was restored at 4-45a.m. shelling still proceeds.
- 4A. Enemy shows more activity in N.M.L. vide patrol reports.
- B. Snipers very quiet.
- C. A little M.G. fire was heard from Bois de Vaire during the night.
- D. Between 7-30 p.m. and 8p.m. seven or eight M.G. shells fell near right front line coy H.Q. in P. 13d. Gun position was located at P.14d 4.7..
5. Nil.
- 6A. About 15 enemy planes flew over our front line between 7 & 8p.m. also during the afternoon one enemy plane was very active. It was apparently an artillery observation plane.
- B. Several times during the day our planes crossed enemy lines dropping bombs on targets in rear. At 7p.m. 15 of our planes flew over enemy lines and each dropped bombs. At about 9-30 p.m. one of our planes dropped several incendiary bombs in the vicinity of WIENCOURT in W12 with the result that several explosions took place and these were still in progress with a large fire this morning. Apparently a dump.
7. Nil.
8. Nil.
9. Nil.
10. Our 18 rdrs dropped one shell short at P.13d.7.5. at 5-30 p.m.
11. About 150 yds of wire 2ft. high five yds in depth has been erected on left Coy front. Wire has been connected between cross roads at P19b 9.0. & P.19b 9.9.
12. Dry.
13. Right front Coy and Support Coy interchanged without incident.

(Signed) A.C. Selwyn Hilland. Major.  
T/Cmdg. 54th Battalion.

APP. IX

SECRET.AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY TO 6a.m. 25/4/18.

REFERENCE SHEET 62d. 1/40,000.

- 1.A. Our artillery was very active right throughout the 24 hours shelling areas of enemy movement and putting down S.O.S. barrages. Areas particularly shelled were Bois de VAIRE, P.20a & P.20c. During bombardment numerous 18pdrs shells fell in the vicinity of our left coy posts and behind them and in re support Coy Hd. Qrs.
- B. Regular Liaison patrols were maintained during the night between posts and flank units. At 2-30a.m. a patrol of 1 Officer (Lt. F.A. Pickup) and 12 O.R. left our lines at P. 13d 7.3. with the intention of patrolling the valley running from P. 14c, thence back to our lines along the grid P. 13. but owing to our heavy shelling along this valley patrol could not move more than a hundred in front of our wire.
- C. Our snipers were very active during the day more especially during the evening firing on targets on P.20a. Several casualties are claimed including one man carrying an M. G.
2. Two wounded prisoners of 479 Regiment were taken during the afternoon of the 24th. On morning of 25th 3 prisoners of the 77th Wurtenburger Rgt. were taken.
3. At 3-45a.m. 24/4/18 the heavy bombardment by enemy commenced and continued intense until about 6-40 a.m. and it settled down to desultory fire which continued with varying intensity until about 11p.m. when another intense barrage was put down in response to red flares sent up from enemy lines.
- 4A. Nil.
- B. During the early morning bombardment enemy machine guns put a barrage on our out-post positions. At 3-50a.m. 24/4/18 enemy opened up an intense bombardment of M.W. & Pineapples on to P1 3b and on P.19b, all fire coming from Bois de Vaire and positions in P.20a. & B.
5. New earth-works were seen running from Southern edge of Bois de Vaire through P. 20a.
- 6.A. Although the day was very foggy several hostile planes crossed our lines at 5-30 p.m. . An enemy plane crossed our lines on several occasions during the day flying very low.
- B. Our contact planes flying very low crossed our lines at 5-50 a.m. and 7a.m. observing result of enemy attack.
7. Much movement was seen during the day in P20a & C. . The men were wearing full marching order.
8. At 11p.m. on the right of our sector several enemy flares bursting into two reds apparently an S.O.S. were fired.

9. During enemy bombardment a fair amount of gas shells was used particularly blue & yellow Cross. Enemy carried out an attack on our right during the morning 24/4/18. During the attack communication was kept up with the flank units and assistance given them with L.G. and rifle fire .
10. Enemy snipers were active during the day firing on our front and support lines. M.M.W. s bombarded our front and support line systems during the day .
11. About 50yds of knee high wire were erected on our left Coy front.
12. Dry.
13. Unchanged.

(Signed) K. Walk. Lieut.  
For Major T/ Cmdg. 54th Battalion.



SECRET.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.

FIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY to 6a.m. 26/4/18.

REFERENCE SHEET

62D. 1/40,000.

- 1.A. Our artillery was very active during the period. During the morning BOIS de VAIRE was shelled by heavies. At 2-20p.m. a heavy barrage ceasing at 3p.m. was placed on the wood. At 2-30 p.m. areas P.20a &c were heavily shelled owing to enemy movements. At 3-35p.m. heavy fire was directed on to the north edge of the BOIS de VAIRE, village of Hamel, and Hamel-Marcelcave Road. Shoots as pre-arranged were carried out during the night. Between 2p.m. and 5p.m. our 60pdrs firing from N.W. direction dropped about 20 shells (dud) short in vicinity of P.13d 1.5. One gun of an 18pdr batt. continues to drop short in vicinity of P.13d 1.5.
- C. Regular liason patrols were carried out during the night. The patrol consisting of 1 Officer (Lt. F.A. Pickup) and 14 other ranks (with L.G. left our lines from P.13d 9.3. at 1a.m. and moved into valley at P. 20a 3.7. thence over a rise to cross roads in P.20a. Here the enemy out-post line was encountered. The right party of patrol searched cutting at P.20a 2.5. which was found to be un-occupied. Left party approached the cross roads where they were halted. The L.G. was immediately brought into action, two enemy M.G. s one on each side of the road opening at the same time. Rifle fire was also exchanged and our party threw bombs into enemy position. One of these was seen to burst under an enemy M.G. The position consisted of a continuous parapet with small holes in rear sufficient to hold 1 man lying full length. The right party retired over the rise and the left party moved along the valley to about P.20d 0.4. where a large enemy party (about 40) was observed. Fire was opened on them and they dispersed. The cross-roads at P.20a 3.6. is held by about 30 to 40 men. Patrol returned to our lines at 2.30a.m. without casualties.
- D. Our snipers were very active on right of left Coy sector through-out the day, numerous targets being offered and several casualties claimed.
- E. Our M.G.s were active during the night especially during artillery bombardments. L.G.s on right of left coy sector fired on numerous targets during the day inflicting casualties.
- 2. One prisoner wounded of 2nd Coy 478th Regiment (attached to Battn H.Q. as runner) was brought in during the night. This man attempted to pass on of our posts on right of sector and on being challenged replied "It's all right chum" and continued on his way, but was promptly shot by the challenger.
- 3. From 9a.m. until 11a.m. enemy artillery shelled road junction P.13c along road to sky-line, and along sky-line to P.13a mostly 77 and 4.2 H.E. From 11-45 a.m. there was a heavy concentration of fire on support trench and S.P. P.13d 4.2. At 2-45 p.m. enemy replied to our barrage by shelling our out-post line. Between 3-30p.m. & 4-15p.m. enemy shelled valley in P.13b&d. From 6-30 to 6-30p.m. enemy shelled our left battalion reserve with gas shells. At 7p.m. enemy opened up an intense bombardment on our right gradually extending it over the valley in P.13d. It slackened off at 8p.m. At 11-45p.m. a few salvos of 77s were fired on the out-post line.
- 4. During the day enemy was more active in sniping. He appears to be putting large patrols into N.W.L. and to be pushing forward his posts. From 1-45p.m. to 2-15p.m. M.W.s were very active firing on P.13c from BOIS de VAIRE (P.14d 4.7.) From 3-30pm. until 4p.m. the valley in P13a&c was intermittently shelled with M.W.s.
- 5. A new strong-post appears to have been dug at P.2ic 5.0.
- 6.A. Three enemy planes flew over our lines continuously from 9-15a.m. until 11a.m. flying very low and opening bursts of M.G. fire on our out-posts. This was repeated at 1-30 pm. During our bombardment at 2-45p.m. on the BOIS de VAIRE five enemy planes circled over the wood for 15 minutes. At 4p.m. two enemy planes flew over our right

## 6.A.Contd.

- right coy sector dropping one white verrey light . This was repeated at 4-8p.m. when enemy barrage opened up at 7p.m., one flight of eight and one of five B.A. circled over barrage firing white flares. During the afternoon two enemy balloons were observed from P.13b S.3. on a true bearing of 142 and 183 respectively .
- B. Four of our planes flew over enemy back areas during the morning. One plane patrolled our lines from 10-35 a.m. until 1-15p.m. . At 2p.m. one machine flying very low over BOIS de VAIRE brought an artillery barrage down on the wood. At 3-40 p.m. one of our aeroplanes dropped seven bombs behind our out-post line ~~xxx~~ at inter-company ~~boundary~~ <sup>boundary</sup> and also opened up bursts of M.G. fire on our positions. The machine was marked Fl.. At 6p.m. one of our planes flew over BOIS de VAIRE and was heavily fired on by A.A. fire. During the afternoon one of our machines was brought down by a direct hit from one of our own shells in Q23.
7. At 1-30 p.m. much movement was observed in sectors P.20c & P20a. One Coy of about 70 men and two M.G.s was observed all were in full marching order.
8. Nil.
9. At 7p.m. enemy fired two reds followed by two greens on right of sector . At 11-25p.m. green flares followed by golden clusters were sent up .
10. Nil.
11. 1100yds of knee-high barb wire was erected along left coy front line .
12. Dry.
13. Unchanged.

(signed) R.G. Downing. Capt. for Major  
T/6mdg. 54th Battalion.



SECRETAUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES.App. XIFIFTY FOURTH BATTALION.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY TO 10 p.m. 26/4/18.  
 REFERENCE SHEET  
 62D 1/40,000

- 1.A. Our artillery was very active during this period firing on enemy forward and also back areas.
2. Dead Germans in front of right post were identified as 358th R.I.R. shoulder straps of coat of one enemy dead being sent back to BdeHQ.
3. During the morning enemy artillery was quiet on our right sector but after mid-day our support lines and road in P.13c & d were shelled intermittently. Intense bombardment opened up on our right at 2-30p.m. but eased off about 3p.m.
4. Nil.
5. Nil.
6. Enemy contact machines were over our lines at 4-30 & 5p.m. Our machines patrolled enemy lines throughout the day.
7. A fair amount of movement could be seen on Hamel- MARCELCAVE ROAD during the day.
8. Nil.
9. Enemy fired two red and several orange flares in front of VILLERS-BRETONNEUX at 9p.m.
10. Nil.
11. Nil.
12. Dry.
13. Cl2c 7.2. A relief was effected between this battalion and 55th Btn. at 9-45 p.m. without incident.

(signed) K. WARK. Lt. for Major  
 T/Gmdg. 54th Battalion.