

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

Infantry

**Item number:** 23/61/6

**Title:** 44th Infantry Battalion

March 1917



AWM4-23/61/6

ORIGINAL

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.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

44 Bn

1917

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Armentieres	1.3.17.		<p>Our artillery dispersed enemy working party at a gap in enemy's parapet 100 yds to the right of the BECQUE.</p> <p>At 2 pm enemy shelled WILLOW WALK with H.E. at 5 pm enemy sent over H.E. bursting about 200 yds to right rear of Bn Hqrs.</p> <p>At 9.10 pm, 9.45 pm &amp; 10.10 pm enemy opened with one minute shoot with H.E. and shrapnel landing in the vicinity of Japan Road, WILLOW WALK &amp; BUTERNE FARM. Snipers of enemy active, slightly wounding in the cheek one of our Sergeants. 6 Enemy captive balloons observed. Enemy and our own aircraft very busy. As many as 20 planes seen at once.</p>	
	2.3.17.		<p>Our artillery fired on enemy's front &amp; support trenches opposite No 5 locality and E Gap for 1 1/2 hours. Enemy retaliated with Minnewerfer, H.E &amp; shrapnel. Our snipers claim one hit. Patrols located working party on enemy's wire and had them dispersed by Artillery. Enemy sent over Pineapples on front line of each locality.</p>	
	3.3.17.		<p>Enemy ranging on Left Coy's Hqrs. one shell blowing up bay kitchen. At 6 pm enemy put up the following rockets. one red in direction of Brune Rue. immediately followed by one bursting into red &amp; green stars which was much to the right of the first. Then two red ones further back followed immediately by a burst of shrapnel.</p>	
	4.3.17.		<p>Enemy sounded horns when our artillery opened. Evidently to warn enemy to take cover.</p>	
	5.3.17.		<p>Our artillery opened fire at head of the BECQUE with good effect. Enemy sent up two red rockets, one at 6.10 pm one at 6.15 pm. Nothing followed.</p>	
	6.3.17.		<p>Battalion relieved by 42nd Bn at 6.30 am, moved into billets at Armentieres and became "D" Battalion.</p>	
	7.3.17.		<p>Battalion engaged in working parties.</p>	
	11.3.17.		<p>Two companies left Armentieres and marched to Ploegsteert. At 3.30 pm. A Coy billeted at the PIGGERIES C Coy at the CATACOMBS near HYDE PARK CORNER.</p>	
	12.3.17.		<p>These two Coys moved into the line at PLOEGSTEERT WOOD. relieving 4th Bn NZRB. at noon relief complete. Other two Coys. D Coy &amp; C Coy 42nd which are attached to 44th Bn while raiders are training in Armentieres marched to PLOEGSTEERT and occupied billets previously occupied by other 2 Coys</p>	

W. D. [Signature] Lt Col  
44 Bn

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
ARMENTIERES	13. <sup>3</sup> .17.		<p>A Raiding party, details as under, from the Battalion, attempted to enter the enemy trenches at 11.40 pm under cover of a rolling barrage &amp; smoke barrage.</p> <p>O.C. Raid Capt C. Lamb. O.C. Assault. Lt. J. E. S. Taylor. Platoon Commanders. Lt. W. H. Cooper, Lt. R. Skinner Lt N. Lewis, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. C. D. W. Lintott, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt T. H. Porter, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. A. H. Bond.</p> <p>O.C. Reserve party. Capt Biles. Companies furnished troops as follows:- "A" 1 platoon "B" 2 platoons "C" 2 platoons "D" 1 platoon Reserve party of 4 NCOs &amp; 30 OR.</p> <p>It was intended to carry out a raid against enemy F.L &amp; S.L. between railway in I. H. a and the road running S.E &amp; N.W. in I.S.d.</p> <p>Party moved from billets Armentieres at 8 pm to point of exit in our trenches, according to order. At 11.20 pm all men clear of F.L &amp; reached point of assembly at 11.37 pm without casualties. Enemy searchlights were operating at 11.40 pm (Zero time) all our batteries opened fire simultaneously. Infantry moved forward 50 yds close to enemy wire. Enemy put down exceptionally heavy barrage on his F.L. and between raiders &amp; our parapet. Party moved into enemy wire where first casualties occurred. Enemy barrage increased in intensity. Party pushed on &amp; found borrow ditch which had been forded previous night, flooded &amp; unfordable except on southern flank where two sections waded across &amp; entered enemy's F.L. trench. Owing to delay caused by flooded ditch &amp; number of casualties incurred as result of check. O.C. Assault ordered withdrawal at 11.50 pm. Further casualties passing through enemy barrage. Total casualties. Killed 1 Officer 8 OR. Wounded 3 Officers 39 OR. Missing 12 OR.</p> <p>Heavy nature of ground in No Mans Land rendered rescue of wounded difficult. Work undertaken by patrols from 35<sup>th</sup>, 42<sup>nd</sup>, 44<sup>th</sup> Battalions, Some very plucky rescues effected from vicinity enemy wire, under fire from M. Guns. &amp; a number of rescuers wounded. In addition to barrage enemy retaliated on our F.L &amp; S.L. trenches inflicting several casualties on Garrison. The flooding of borrow ditch &amp; the boggy nature of No Mans Land combined with rapidity of effective enemy barrage on his F.L. trench contributed materially towards preventing successful accomplishment of assigned objective. All ranks worked splendidly &amp; the following were especially noticeable.</p> <p>Capt. C. H. Lamb. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. C. D. W. Lintott. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. A. H. Bond. Sgt. R. G. D. Andrews. Sgt. H. Scarr Sgt. J. O. Gaze Sgt Bell (42<sup>nd</sup> Gm) Sgt O'Connor (35<sup>th</sup> Gm)</p> <p>C/Cpl H. Baynes Plt R. J. Hurd</p>	<p>Ref. Map 36 NW 4 BOIS GRENIER Edition 6 D 1/10000</p> <p>Brigade Operation Order No 45 of 12.3.17 Memorandum of Instructions</p>

*W. J. ...*  
44<sup>th</sup> Bn

# WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118. 592

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## or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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PLOEGSTEERT.	13.3.17.		D Coy 44 <sup>th</sup> and C Coy 42 <sup>nd</sup> moved into line with our other two Companies relieving the rest of 4 <sup>th</sup> Bn NZRB. Relief complete at 5.30 pm. Our L.T. Mo fired 20 rounds into Enemy's front line at Birdcage. Our 18 pdrs were also active on Enemy's front line trench. M.T. Mo bombarded enemy trench during the afternoon to right of E. Gap. In retaliation enemy fired a few H.E. Shells behind support-line & shrapnel on C. Trenches, doing very little damage.	
	14.3.17.		Our L.T. Mo and Artillery were fairly active during the day but there was very little retaliation. Front line trench badly damaged in places through rain bringing down parapet. A party of the enemy were seen passing a gap in their parapet. 5 with blue caps, 2 with black caps some with steel helmet	
	15.3.17.		Our Artillery put 20 rounds of Shrapnel into enemy front line trench & M.T. Mo fired 70 rounds on to the BIRDCAGE. & H.T. Mo fired 6 rounds. At 10.30 am Enemy fired H.E. on our support line, together with Shrapnel & repeated again at 2.15 pm. At 5.20 pm he ranged on to our front line. At 8 pm he started a bombardment with H.E + gas shells and at the same time commenced firing gas shells from Trench Mortars placing the shells along the edge of wood. At 8.30 pm he put up rockets. One red followed by green then red. and immediately opened fire on the whole sector with gas shells. He continued to shell the sector for about 30 minutes and continued throughout the night about every two hours ceasing at 4.15 am. The gas contained in the shells was PHOSGENE. Owing mainly to precautionary measures being taken in time, there were no casualties. Our artillery silenced several of the Mortars being used. During the day two of the enemy were seen with blue caps and one with black.	
	16.3.17.		Our T. Mo fired on enemy front & support lines with good effect. No retaliation for our T. M. Shoot. Our snipers claimed two hits on huns passing gap in parapet. Gas from previous night hung about the trenches & wood & numerous dead rats were seen about. "Dud" Gas shells were handed to Divisional Gas Officer	
	17.3.17.		Enemy fired 40 "dud" shells into our wire about 2 pm & later H.E. into support-line causing four casualties. A searchlight appeared at night close to enemy F.L. trench, but disappeared on artillery fire being brought to bear on it.	
	18.3.17.		Our artillery fired on their S.O.S. lines in response to rockets sent up by the enemy which were the same as our S.O.S. signals. There was the usual artillery exchange throughout the day. One casualty - slightly wounded.	
	19.3.17.		Battalion relieved by 42 <sup>nd</sup> Bn at 7 am & went into billets at PONT DE NIEPPE. & engaged on working parties.	
	27.3.17.		Battalion moved into line & relieved 42 <sup>nd</sup> Bn at 6.30 am. Considerable artillery activity during the day.	

*[Handwritten signature]*

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?LOEGSTEERT.	27.3.17.		Our Hows fired 60 rounds on suspected Minnewerfer positions & some trenches. Patrols reported our wire badly knocked about where enemy attempted raid the previous night. Enemy artillery active during the day. One H.E. penetrated a dug out in HUNTERS AVENUE in which five men were sheltering. Casualties 1 killed 1 wounded. Two of the enemy were seen by patrols in front of their own wire and were fired on. T-Boy also reported hearing working parties behind F.L. trench & sounds of trucks moving close up. Patrol at left locality was fired on at 3 am. Casualty - 1 Killed	
	28.3.17.		M.T.Ms fired on suspected Minnie positions. Hows and 18 pdrs fired on same positions at 5.15 pm. Heavy T.M. also fired on enemy F.L. Enemy retaliated by putting over 15 "Coalboxes" & some "Pineapples" also H.E. 30 rounds at H.T.M. position causing slight damage to trench. Casualties 1 killed 1 wounded.	
	29.3.17.		Our Artillery shelled enemy F+S.L. trenches at intervals during day with good effect. Patrols reported finding white tape leading from our wire across No Mans Land to a shell hole near enemy trench. During the day another tape observed 50 yds to right of one picked up preceding night. A Hun was seen looking over his F.L. parapet apparently studying No Mans Land in the direction of where tapes were found. Disappeared when fired on by snipers. Was wearing blue steel helmet with large brass badge. During the morning periscopes frequently in enemy's <sup>front</sup> line opposite position of tapes. Patrols also reported three enemy duckboards bridging creek outside our wire in same locality. Enemy snipers very active. Reported distinct sounds tapping heard opposite HAMPSHIRE.T. during early hours of morning. Enemy artillery very active mostly directed against our own, but later on left of sector one shell entered signallers dug-out killing the signaller. Casualties - 1 Killed.	
	30.3.17.		Our M.T. Mortars fired on enemy wire & suspected snipers post with effect. Enemy wiring party dispersed by L.G. fire. Enemy retaliation for H.T. Mortar shoot. H.E. & shrapnel. Casualties - 1 wounded. Working parties heard through the night hammering stakes. Enemy captive balloon seen to <sup>break</sup> drift away & drift into their own territory. Enemy aeroplane over our lines 7 pm to 7.20 pm. Enemy rockets fired during night 1 green one star. 1 green 2 stars 1 green 3 stars, 1 green 5 stars, 1 green shower sparks.	
	31.3.17.		Our artillery active on suspected Minnewerfer positions & enemy C.Ts. Our Lewis Guns prevented enemy from repairing wire. Patrols brought in Bordele Cap found in our wire: Grey with red band, two metal badges. Enemy retaliation has considerably damaged our works in places. & men have worked well repairing same. Enemy artillery very active during the day with 5-9 Hows & "Coalboxes" also some shrapnel & "Minnies" Casualties - 2 Slightly wounded 1 severely wounded. Enemy wiring has support and subsidiary lines. Parties of enemy seen in his trench wearing light grey uniforms, blue caps, white bands, or shrapnel helmets. aircraft active on both sides. The body of a British soldier was found in shell hole of water between F.L. and supports. Appears to have been dead some weeks. Letters on the body only means of identification. Supposed to be Gunner Viner. Royal Artillery & German shovels brought in from No Mans Land. heavy with long handle and sharpened all round <del>blade</del> portion of blade to be used for fighting. Tapes found in No Mans Land marking raid area had two stick grenades placed along them about every two yards. Approximate hostile fire during the day. 20-5-9's 10-4-20, 26 "Coalboxes", 30 "Pineapples" 2 Minnewerfers, 2 "Rumjars" & quantity of shrapnel.	W.D. [Signature]