

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

Infantry

Item number: 23/62/16

Title: 45th Infantry Battalion

June 1917



AWM4-23/62/16

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

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.

Ref Sheet 28 ¹/_{40,000}

Army Form C. 2118.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
KORTEPYP CAMP T266.7-5	11/6/17 11/6/17 11/6/17 11/6/17		<p>Bn at Kortepyp Camp. Training being carried out on and preparation being made for MESSINES offensive, all the Bn officers and majority of N.C.O.s inspected in front line on several occasions.</p> <p>Palmer Baths used on 3rd 4th and 5th. Tanks inspected by Co. Commanders on 3 6 17.</p> <p>7 6 17 Bn moved from Kortepyp camp to STINKING FARM near Hill 63.</p> <p>Bn engaged in Messines operations as per appendix I attached.</p> <p>Bn relieved in front line by 48th Bn. relief complete by 3 am. Bn moved back to subsidiary line T. 12. C. 6. 5.</p> <p>Casualties from 7/6/17 to 11/6/17 were very heavy being 9 officers & 92 OR killed 8 officers 344 OR wounded (include 1 officer wounded believed killed) 50 OR missing.</p> <p>Casualties among officers are:- Capt W. L. YOUNG M.C. killed 7 6 17. 2nd Lt R. A. M. MURRAY, M.C. killed 7 6 17. 2nd Lt W. W. GACHER. killed 7 6 17. 2nd Lt G. F. RYAN. killed 7 6 17. 2nd Lt L. GARLING wounded believed killed 7 6 17. 2nd Lt A. R. BARTON killed 9 6 17. 2nd Lt T. A. MCINTYRE killed 10 6 17. 2nd Lt H. B. ALLEN. killed 7 6 17. 2nd Lt SWANN. J. N. killed 7 6 17. 2nd Lt G. E. KNOX M.C. wounded 7 6 17. Capt J. A. HAND wounded 8 6 17. 2nd Lt L. O. FERGUSON M.C. wounded 7 6 17. 2nd Lt J. R. MCKENZIE wounded 7 6 17. 2nd Lt H. R. GRIFFIN. wounded 7 6 17. 2nd Lt R. LAGDEN. wounded 7 6 17. 2nd Lt L. C. SMYTHE wounded 7 6 17.</p>	
SWISSIGARY LINE T. 12. C. 6. 5	12/6/17	9pm.	<p>Resting and cleaning.</p> <p>Left and marched to LA CHYTTE arrived 12 midnight and camped there.</p>	
LA CRESNE	13/6/17 13/6/17 11/4/17		<p>Reorganising, equipping and training. Corps Commander inspected and addressed Brigade on 14 6 17, he expressed his admiration for the splendid work done by the Brigade in the recent operations.</p> <p>STEINWEERK Baths used on 13 6 17.</p> <p>15th Lt Col 48th Bn moving, D.S.O. assumed command of the 12th Inf Bde.</p> <p>Brig. Gen. J. G. Robertson D.S.O. having gone on English leave.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
CRESHE LACETTE.	15/6/17.		Major S. L. Perry assumed command of the 45th Bn. AIF.	
	17/6/17.	1pm	Left 19 CRESHE and marched to outskirts of BAILLEUL, en route for RENESCURE.	
RENESCURE	17/6/17		arrived RENESCURE. 3.30pm.	
	21/6/17		Solid training being carried on. Swimming parade also held at canal, RENESCURE.	
	21/6/17	7.30am	21st. Embussed for DOULIEU. arrived DOULIEU 12.15 pm.	
DOULIEU	21/6/17		Organization and solid training carried out. OTTERSTEENE Baths used	
	29/6/17		on 25th. 26.6.17. 1 officer and 4 O.R.s attended parade of representatives of 2nd ANZAC Corps troops. Inspected by H. R. H. D. de la Cour.	
			28th. Lt. Col. S. C. E. Kerwin, D.S.O. assumed command of 45th Bn.	
DOULIEU	29/6/17	8.30am	Left Doulieu and marched to KORTERPYP camp. T. 26.6.17. arrived 11.30am.	
KORTERPYP CAMP	30/6/17.		Bn (less 5 officers and 140 O.R.s which remained at KORTERPYP CAMP) moved to HYDE PARK Corner U. 19.6.30.8.5. Bn school started at KORTERPYP for the training of N.C.O.s, signallers, and Lewis Gunners Bombers etc..	
			Extracts from Orders.	
			AIF Order. List 179. 22.5.17.	
			Lt E. Kerwin, M.C. resumed duty from seconded list, dated 31.5.17.	
			AIF. List 180. 20.5.17. - Capt G. E. Kuse to be Major via Howden transferred. 9.5.17.	
			Lt E. Davies to be Capt via Kuse promoted 9.5.17.	
			A.I.F. List 184. 1.6.17. - 2/Lt J. H. Swann - 2/Lt C. R. McNEEN.	
			2/Lt H. R. Griffin is taken on strength from RFL 13.5.17.	
			" R. L. Gowing is transferred to 13th Bn. 21.5.17.	
			A.I.F. List 185. 5.6.17. 2/Lt H. R. Griffin to be Lieutenant. Dated 21.5.17.	

REPORT UPON OPERATIONS - CARRIED OUT BY 45th BN, A.I.F.

M E S S I N E S.

COVERING PERIOD FROM 8th to 11th JUNE, 17.

REFERENCE SHEET 28 S.W. 1
40,000

On the 7/6/17 the 45th Bn (acting under orders previously received), left its camp RORTEPYP LINES, NEURVE EGLISE, T.26.b.7.5. and marched by platoons to STINKING FARM, near Hill 63, U.7.a.6.7.

At 11 30 a.m. the Battalion formed up in "NO MANS LAND" U.2.c.7.6. At ~~xxx~~ 11 40 a.m. precisely they advanced in Artillery formation to Jumping Off ^{point} trench, O.33.c.9.5. At 12 noon word was received that Zero hour was put forward two hours, the Battalion by this time was well over the MESSINES RIDGE, and had to wait the additional two hours on Eastern slope of MESSINES" RIDGE, just in rear of RED DOTTED LINE. During this time a large amount of enfilade shrapnel was sent over amongst the troops coming from the direction of WARNETON and DEULEMONT.

$\frac{1}{2}$ hour before Zero hour the troops formed up on Tape Lines which were laid out in "NO MANS LAND" by Lt R.A.M. MURRAY, M.C., who was killed just as he had completed his task.

At this time the Germans were launching a counter attack and the hostile Artillery and Machine Gun fire was very fierce, and our losses were heavy.

The counter attack was driven off with the assistance of our Artillery barrage, a large number of casualties being inflicted on the enemy.

At Zero hour (3 10 p.m.) the troops attacked meeting heavy opposition, and enemy concrete Strong Point at O.34.a.95.15 was heavily garrisoned and owing to the severe Machine Gun fire the Bn was divided, two Companies easing off slightly to the right and two to the left. The two companies which bore slightly to the right were in close touch with the 47th Bn on their right, but the two companies on the left had both flanks in the air. The 49th Bn having failed to connect up. These two companies suffered very heavily, and a ~~great~~ great number of their Officers became casualties.

Capt. W.L. YOUNG, M.C. was killed at this stage. Although previously wounded he had continued to lead his Company until killed just before reaching his objective.

The two right companies gained all their objectives and captured 120 prisoners and two Machine Guns. The left Companies gained their first objective only.

At 5 p.m. the enemy again counter attacked but were driven off.

The two left companies having both flanks in the air and being greatly reduced in strength and the troops on the left ~~already~~ having already retired started to fall back on the RED DOTTED LINE. At about 7 30 p.m. our own barrage came down in front of the RED DOTTED LINE thus cutting off the two remaining companies in OWL TRENCH and OWL SUPPORT, this was most unfortunate as it inflicted a number of casualties on our own men. After "sticking" it for another hour these two companies together with the 47th Bn had to retire on the RED DOTTED LINE.

Early next morning the 45th Bn was reorganized and reinforced by two companies of the 48th Bn. They again went forward in daylight and re-occupied the position (OWL TRENCH and OWL SUPPORT).

The whole of the 45th Bn sector was held by Capt A.S. ALLEN. The retaking, consolidation, and beating off of the subsequent counter attacks and the organization and supervision of the whole of the operations in the front line up to the 11/6/17 was due to the untiring efforts of this Officer ably assisted by Lt T.A. McINTYRE, 2/Lt A.R. MUIR and 2/Lt. J. YOUNG.

From 2 p.m. to 11 p.m. on the 8/6/17 the whole sector was subjected to very heavy artillery fire. A counter attack was launched by the enemy at about 7 30 p.m., this was driven off inflicting very heavy casualties on the enemy.

On the night of the 8th/9th Lt T.A.McINTYRE, patrolled from our left flank to O.34.a.1.4. and got in touch with one company of the 51st Bn at this point.

On the afternoon of the 9th a bombing attack was made on OWL TRENCH and OWL SUPPORT, gaining a further 200 yards of enemy trenches, progress was stopped at this juncture by coming in contact with two German concrete Strong Posts heavily manned. While a block was being established a German counter attack was launched against this point, the attacking party was repulsed loosing about 20 casualties. *LT BARTON Killed.*

On the night of the 9th/10th the two companies of the 48th Bn attached were withdrawn and the 46th Bn took over that portion of the line which the 48th Bn had occupied.

At midnight a fighting patrol under 2/Lt A.R.Muir proceeded towards GAPPARD FARM. Much valuable information was obtained, but the objective was not reached on account of intervening ground being strongly held by the enemy.

At 10 30 p.m. on the night of the 10th., 50 men under Lt T.A.McIntyre attacked enemy's Strong Point on the left flank. This attack was made in conjunction with the 13th Bde attack on their sector of OWL TRENCH and OWL SUPPORT. Owing to the Artillery failing to come down on the first Strong Point the party met with very severe Machine Gun and Bomb fire from all flanks and could not reach the objective. Lt T.A.McINTYRE being killed in the attack.

The Bn was relieved by the 48th Bn on the night of the 10/11th. Relief was complete by 3 a.m. On relief the Bn moved in to the Old Subsidiary Line. (Reference T.12.c.6.5.).

During the whole engagement our losses were very heavy, they were as under:-

Officers Killed.	8.
Officers Wounded.....	8. This included 1 Officer believed Killed.
Officers Missing.	-
Other Ranks Killed.....	92.
Other ranks Wounded.....	344.
Other ranks Missing.....	50.

During the whole of the operations the garrison had to work incessantly on the consolidation owing to the dilapidated condition which the trenches were in. This together with the strenuous fighting in gaining the trenches and beating off the numerous counter attacks greatly tested the energy of the garrison, especially as they had been so greatly reduced in numbers. It was gratifying to note that notwithstanding the strenuous time which the men experienced they maintained an aggressive spirit throughout.

S.H. Perryman for.

Lieut-Col.

C.O. 45th Battalion, A.I.F.