

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

Machine Guns

Item number: 24/9/2

Title: 4th Australian Machine Gun
Company

August 1916



AWM4-24/9/2

August 1st 16

9 am - whole Brigade on manoeuvres. 15th, 14th, 16th Batt^s, 3 Sections of M.G. Coy, attacked Hut Ridge about 1 mile S. of Warloy with 13th Batt + 1 Section of M.G. Coy. in reserve. Machine Guns followed 4th wave.

11 pm. - Brigade again carried out same manoeuvres - Reserves did not go into action.

August 2nd

Range practice - testing of auxiliary tripods. Best method of employment was found to be not lying full-length on his back, resting head on legs of No 2 + thereby sighting onto target.

August 3rd

Range practice -

August 4th

All packs + surplus gear were dumped in No 8 Rue de Rucire and preparations made for moving to Brickfields, Albert. Left Warloy 9.30 pm

August 5th

August 5th 1916.

12.30 a.m. arrived Tricketfield and bivouacked, ready to take up position in front line at 1 hour notice. At 4 p.m. instructions were received to relieve the 6th Mo. Coy. who were in position at Map Sheet 57 D. S.E. Sq. ~~4 guns~~ R 34 c. 6 1/2. 2 to R 35 c. 9 1/2. 4.

August 6th 1916.

4 p.m. Moved out to relieve 6th Mo. Coy. who had guns in following positions Sheet 57 D. S.E. Square R. 34 Central 2 guns Strongpost R 34 b 5. 0. R 34 a 8 1/2. 9 1/2 and R 34 c 5. 0 (Cemetery) 2 additional g.

Relief was completed at 12 midnight. Considerable difficulty was experienced in carrying out relief owing to insufficient guides. This is very essential when relief by any unit is being carried out.

August 7th 1916.

9 a.m. Major Milton C.O. was wounded & Lt Mitchell who was in Reserve took Command of Coy. Reports received from 1st line showed 2 guns the 6th Coy not relieved, and 2 guns were then placed in following positions. Sheet 57 D S.E. R 34 c 5. 1 & R 34 c. 6. 3 1/2.

Aug. 7th Continued.

All day the enemy have thrown a large number of shells along our front but apart from an attack about 4 a.m. nothing of importance has occurred.

No. 2 Section reported 1 gun blown up by shell at R 34 C.05.

Consolidating positions - auxiliary tripods being used as trench is not built strongly enough for gun emplacements.

Aug. 8th. 1916.

Operation orders, 15th Batt advance in 4 successive waves and consolidate a position on line running from Sheet 57 D. S.E. R 33 c. 2.7. to R 34 b. 9.6.

Artillery commenced bombarding enemy's line at 9.10 p.m. until 9.20 p.m. when artillery lifted & continued to lift each two minutes until 9.30 p.m.

First wave was to leave parapet before the first lift of the artillery & be as close to the enemy's line as possible. Each wave was to follow at 2 minutes interval.

Attack was successful and line now occupied by 15th Batt runs from 57 D. S.E. R 33 d. 7½. 7. to R 34 b. 9.6. Connecting with 14th Batt at R 34 b. 1.3. by means of a Sap.

487
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August 9th, 1916.

15th Batt. advanced & consolidated position Map Area of Martiniwick R 33 d. 6. 7. running to R 34 a 5. 3.

14th Batt. swung round left flank R 34 a. 5. 3. to R 34 a. 9. 0.

Communication was Established by 16th Batt. with 15th Batt on right and Suffolk regiment on left.

Machine Guns did not advance on account of ~~loss~~ already being in a better position.

200 rounds were fired on Enemy's working party. - One gun with Sgt Penally in charge is missing since night of 8th August, 1916. Message received from him time 9 p.m. 9/8/16 states that he was in position 30 yards behind line occupied temporarily by 15th Batt on night of 8th inst. Map reference approximately R 34 b. 9. 1. He stated he was unable to retire until dark, but owing to heavy bombardment probably gun & gun team will not return.

August 10th, 1916.

Operation order No. 32 - 13th Batt went out, Captured & Consolidated Enemy trench Ferme du Moquet R 34 a 34. 65. 86. and Established a block at points 38 & 35

16th Batt made good point 13 in R 34a.,
61 in R 33b., thinned up points 78
and 28 in R 33d.

4th Inf. Coy co-operated by using 6
guns on indirect fire paying attention
to communication trenches leading into
R 34a 34.65 + 86.

August 11th. 1916.

Last night I was called upon to
supply 16th Batt with 4 guns as they
were expecting a heavy counter attack.
Guns were put in front line which had
been newly dug and immediately it was
daylight the enemy heavily shelled the
new trench. Gun crews were buried
nearly all men suffering from shell shock
& under the circumstances guns had to
be withdrawn. Guns were taken into
front line under instructions from C.O. 16th
Batt. This I consider a great mistake.
Trench could have been more easily
defended by fewer guns. Very heavy
bombardment by the enemy has continued
throughout the day, and about 6 p.m.
enemy attacked and is now occupying
small portion of our trench and
adjacent shell craters. Under instructions
from G.O.C. Bde, 2 additional guns

have been sent to C.O. 16th Batt. as a ⁶ reserve of fire.

August 12th. 1916.

Throughout night enemy bombarded our position but nothing eventuated.

Our own artillery kept firing during the greater portion of the night, preparing position to be attacked at 10.30 p.m.

10.30 p.m. ^{13th} 16th Batt moved out to occupy trenches adjacent to Ferme de Moquet but owing to a Division on the left being held up they did not occupy their objectives.

(13th) 16th Batt advanced & occupied a position on the Quarry - #

This operation was carried out in conjunction with the 50th Batt.

M.G. Coy was instructed to assist # in operation by using indirect fire.

Guns in front lines advanced, but owing to no suitable positions in new line retired & occupied their old positions from which a good field of fire was obtainable.

~~16th~~ - Relieved by 13th M.G. Coy

13th August 1916.

Relieved by 13th M.G. Coy who took over our old positions. This relief was carried out at 7 a.m. at which

times we always found most suitable for relieving. Total relief was completed at 9.30 a.m. ⁷

About 8 a.m. enemy threw up a heavy barrage and during our evacuation 2 guns No 1900 + 1901 were blown to pieces.

As soon as relief was completed and all instructions handed to incoming Company we bivouaced at Brickfields

14th August 1916.

Instructions received to proceed to Warloy and occupy billets. Note received to be prepared to move to La Vieoques.

15th August 1916.

9 a.m. Brigade moved out en route for La Vieoques but when outside Contay received instructions to return to Warloy + await further orders. Orders received to move to La Vieoques at 9 a.m. on 17th inst.

16th August 1916.

Guns overhauled + repacked in limbers ready for moving. Trench mounts, hyposcopes, disappearing mounts, pack Saddlery and all surplus gear which we have

not sufficient space for in our limbers &
was dumped. - to be brought on by motor
transport.

17th August, 1916.

Orders received to proceed to La Vieogre
via Contay, Hermissart, Rubenpre, Dalmas.
On arrival at destination orders received
to be ready to proceed to Halloy at 10
am, next day.

18th August 1916.

arrived at Bernois and Established
in billets.

19th August 1916.

St. Watts had to attend an inquiry
concerning the action of certain members
of this Company on night of 10th +
11th Aug. while attached to 16th Batt.
Programme of training set out but
owing to heavy rain guns were cleaned
in billets.

20th August 1916.

Parade of Brigade when Genl. Cox handed
out Congratulatory Cards to those recommended
during our operations at POZIERES.

Monday 21st Aug 1916.

Programme of training carried out. 9

Tuesday 22nd Aug 1916.

Brigade Exercise - attack by 4 Battalions in four waves. Machine Guns advancing in 3rd wave. 1st wave gained 1st objective - 2nd wave 2nd objective 3rd wave to go to 2nd objective & dig communication trenches back to 1st objective. 4th wave to dig forward to 1st objective. This operation was worked in conjunction with aeroplanes.

2 p.m. Brigade left Pernois for TALMAS. Arrived Talmas 5.30 p.m.

Wed. 23rd Aug 1916.

Left Talmas 11 a.m. for VAN-DE-COURT. Arrived Van-de-Court about 5 p.m. Preparations made for immediate move.

Thurs 24 Aug 1916.

Awaiting orders to proceed.

Friday 25th Aug 1916.

Range practice, programme of training carried out. Orders received to proceed to Brickfields.

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Saturday. 26th August 1916.
 Left Van. de. Court at 9 am. &
 arrived at Brickfields at noon.
 Orders received to carry out relief of No. 6
 M.G. Coy. by 10 p.m. on 27th Aug.

Sunday 27th Aug. '16
 Relief of No 6 M.G. Coy completed
 at 10 a.m. All their gun positions
 taken over. Gun positions Sheet 57 D. 5E.
 R 34 b. 0. 3. R. 34 b. 1 1/2. 3 1/2. R 34 d. 7 1/2. 8. -
 latter gun was withdrawn owing to
 position being unsuitable for machine gun
 fire. Remaining guns of Coy. (13) were
 placed on indirect fire, resulting in
 a barrage extending from R 32 b. 5. 5.
 through Squares 26 D. 27 C. 28 b. 29 a.
 This barrage is being continuously
 maintained. A heavy barrage was
 placed on 32 b. so as to allow
 11th Batt to attack Point 54 on
 Ferme du Mouquet map. Attention
 was also paid to sap running
 through R 27 c. d. to 33 b. 2. 8. This
 attack was unsuccessful - Batt.
 being driven back by M.G. fire from
 Mouquet Ferme. Reports received
 state that excellent work was
 done by our indirect guns. We have a

barge extending from R 276. along trench running towards Monquet Farm to R 27d. 3.3.

Monday 28th August 1916.

Preparations made for an attack by 14th and 15th Batts. 14th Batt. to secure line Ferme du Monquet map R 27d. 73 excluding R 27d 42.12. to near contour 145, Bombing as far as possible along trench 42. 69. 12, 38, and towards 54, making 77 good. This attack failed owing to heavy enfilade fire from Thiéval and Ferme du Monquet. 14th + 15th Batts relieved by 13th + 16th.

Tuesday 29th August, 1916.

Attack Planned - 13th Batt, 1 Coy. 15th, 16 Lewis guns + 1 Tickers, on objectives R 28 c. 95. to R 27d. 73 inclusive. 16th Batt, 1 Coy, 14th. Bn. 20 Lewis guns, 4 Tickers attack + consolidate line R 27d. 73. Exclusive to Enemy strongpoint R 33a, 54 + Monquet Ferme. One Company 14th - Brigade Reserve Machine Gun Coy. arranged for overhead fire on trenches leading towards R 28. C. 95, R 28 c. 03, R 27 d. 73, R 27 d. 42 towards R 27d. 12 + sap leading from R 28d. 57 to R 34. b. The attack was carried out at 11 pm. but again failed - partly retiring onto their old position.

Wednesday, 30th August, 1916. 12

13th & 16th Balts. relieved by 48th & 47th respectively - No 4 M.G. Coy. was ordered to remain in line until such time as arrangements for their relief could be made. Allotment of guns were the same as previously.

Thursday, 31st August 1916.

M.G. Coy still in the line - word received that we would probably be relieved tonight by 13th Coy.

Numerous reports received state that our position at the Quarry (R 336.) was heavily shelled ^{yesterday} by our own guns.

A Mitchell
Lieut
No 4 M.G. Coy.