

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

Infantry

**Item number:** 23/7/19

**Title:** 7th Infantry Brigade

March 1917



AWM4-23/7/19

1st Aust Infantry Brigade

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WAR DIARY.

MARCH 1917.

March 1917.

- 1st. Preparations for assault on MALT & GAMP TRENCHES completed at 7 p.m. Brigade H.Q. moved to Forward Brigade H.Q., GILBERT ALLEY.
- 2nd. At 3 a.m., Brigade attacked MALT & GAMP Trenches, and after stubborn resistance which lasted until 2 p.m., enemy was driven out, and objectives gained. Total prisoners 75. Material captured included --  
two machine guns, and four trench mortars "GRANATENWERFERS"  
For details see report on Offensive Operations attached, and marked "A".
- 3rd. Forward Brigade H.Q. closed at 10 a.m., G.O.C. and Brigade Staff returning to MARTINPUICH WEST.
- 4th. Aeroplane from No. 23 Squadron, Pilot 2nd/Lieut. W.E.JONES, crashed in rear of Brigade H.Q. New line being consolidated.
- 6th. Major General HOLMES, C.M.G., D.S.O., 4th Australian Division visited Brigade H.Q.,
- 7th. Brigade H.Q. moved at 8 p.m., to LE SARS CUTTING. H.Q. 6th A.I. Brigade established earlier in the day in portion of same Dug-out.
- 8,9, 10th. Nothing unusual. No alteration or change in disposition.
- 11th. A De HAVILAND Scout Aeroplane of No. 32 Squadron R.F.C. came down in SCOTLAND TRENCH. Pilot 2nd/Lieut. A.C.RANDALL.
- 12th. Relief by 5th A.I. Brigade commenced at dusk. Owing to indication of enemy evacuation of WARLENCOURT and GREVILLERS LINE, strong patrols were pushed out. At 2-10 a.m., 17th Bn. which relieved 28th Bn. in front line established post in WARLENCOURT LINE. One prisoner of 1st Guards Reserve Regiment captured. Order to push out from right and left of Point of Entry were issued, and at 4-50 a.m., command of sector was handed over to G.O.C., 5th A.I. Bgde. Two sections 7th A.M. Gun Coy remained in line under orders of G.O.C. 5th A.I. Bgde. On completion of relief Brigade less 28th Bn. and T.M. Btty moved to BECOURT CAMP. 28th Bn. and T.M. Btty. to ACID DROP CAMP.

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14-18th Training carried on.

17th. G.O.C., inspected 25th and 27th Bns. at 10-30 a.m. 28th Bn and T.M.Btty at 2 p.m.

18th. G.O.C., inspected 26th Bn. at 10-30 a.m.

19th. At 2-20 a.m. received order to move to BAPAUME and relieve 6th Aust. Inf. Bde. as Advanced Guard 2nd Aust. Division. G.O.C., and Staff arrived BAPAUME at 6 p.m. Relief completed at 10 p.m. on 20th.

21st. Forward Brigade Headquarters established in BEUGNATRE at 2-20 p.m. Disposition of Bns. 26th Right Bn. 27th Centre Bn. 25th Left Bn. 28th Bn. in Brigade Reserve at BEUGNATRE. Received Orders to attack NOREUIL & LAGNICOURT.

22nd Preparations for attack on NOREUIL & LAGNICOURT completed 12 noon. O.O.89 & O.Mell & 12. App. "B"

23rd. At 5-30 a.m. G.O.C., visited the line with G.O.C., 2nd. Aust. Div. Attack on NOREUIL & LAGNICOURT postponed for 24 hours.

24th. At 11-30 a.m. Major. General HOLMES, C.M.G., D.S.O. 4th Aust. Div. Brig. Gen. GLASGOW 4th Aust. Div. Major General SMYTHE, V.C. 2nd. Aust. Div., Brig. Gen. JOHNSTON, C.R.A. 2nd. Aust. Div. Brig. Gen. LOTBINIERE, C.E. 1st Anzac visited Bgde. H.Q. Corps Commander 1st Anzac Corps visited Bgde. H.Q. and arranged for attack on LAGNICOURT only for morning of 26th as Div. on left were not ready for concerted attack. 2nd/Lieuts. GIBSON and LOWE, No. 23 Squad. R.F.C. killed by Aeroplane crashing to ground in rear of Bgde H.Q.

25th. Nothing unusual. Disposition unaltered. Remains of 2/Lieuts. GIBSON & LOWE buried in BEUGNATRE Churchyard at 4 p.m., At 7 p.m. Forward Brig. H.Q. moved from BEUGNATRE to VAULX arriving at 8 p.m.,

26th. At 5-15 a.m. Bde attacked LAGNICOURT and after stubborn resistance occupied the Village, and successfully held it against two counter attacks. See report on Offensive Operation. Appendix "C" At 12 noon Bde. H.Q. Dug-out in BAPAUME was blown up by a concealed enemy mine. No.849 Sgt. J.GIRVAN. 28th Bn. and No. 895 Pte. C.A.JIPSON, 25th Bn. Attached Bde. H.Q. Staff were killed, and all office records were destroyed. Relief of Bgde. by 13th A.I.Bde. was commenced at dusk Appendix "D" Operations for period 21st to 26th March inclusive shown in Summaries. Appendix "E"

27th. Relief still in progress. Gen. GLASGOW and Staff arrived at Bgde. H.Q. at 4 p.m.

28th. Relief of Bgde. by 13th A.I.Bde. completed at 4 a.m.,

29th. Bde. less 25th Bn. established at SHELTER WOOD CAMP. 25th Bn. at ACID DROP CAMP. B.H.Q. SHELTER WOOD N.

WAR DIARY

March 1917

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March

30th/31st.

Refitting and training of Brigade gone on with.

*Mellington, Capt*

*for* Brig. General.  
Commanding 7th Australian Infantry Brigade.

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7th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE

March 7th 1917.

Report on Offensive Operations carried out by  
7th Australian Infantry Brigade from 27th February 1917, to  
March 2nd 1917, inclusive.

Reference Map LE SARS. LOUPART WOOD - LE BARQUE.

On the Night 28th February.

Strong patrols were sent to reconnoitre the enemy's position. Those from the 28th Battalion worked up in front of GAMP TRENCH to the Junction of MALT & EMMA TRENCH, and found the wire intact, and the trench occupied. Those of the 27th Battalion examined the front of MALT TRENCH from the Junction of MALT TRENCH & EMMA ALLEY, to the Right, with the same result.

These patrols were ordered to endeavour to enter the trench, as it had been reported that the trench was unoccupied. As it was desired to take the trench on the succeeding night, there was no time to cut the wire; it was decided to make an attempt to get the trench from the rear. The 28th Bn. was ordered to move round to the west of Sunken Road, M.4.d.05.30, and take GAMP TRENCH in rear. The 27th Bn was to co-operate by pushing through gap at LOUPART WOOD and taking MALT TRENCH from the rear.

This operation failed, the 28th Bn. finding the lower part of GAMP TRENCH empty, but with wire inside and over the top, and about 150 yards West of the Junction, strongly wired on both sides. This wire was also strong in front of MALT TRENCH to the Left.

The 27th Bn. was met by a very heavy machine gun fire, and although they got to the wire, could not get through.

The 26th Bn. was then ordered to move up from MARTINPUICH and endeavour to get round to the rear of MALT TRENCH. One Company was to work up to west of Sunken Road at M.4.d.05.30, and attack MALT TRENCH at M.4.b.3.0. "A" Company was to work round to the Right, and cross MALT TRENCH about M.5.d.10.55. up to which point, the 5th Brigade held. A third Company was to dig EMMA ALLEY.

The Left attack was to be held back until the Right had got into position on the Right rear of MALT TRENCH. Owing to the guides losing their way, it was found that the Companies could not get into position before daylight, and the Battalion was withdrawn.

The result of these operations showed that the trench was too well held, and the wire too good to warrant the trench being taken without preparation.

Time being given, a frontal attack was then planned.

The 26th Bn. was ordered to attack MALT TRENCH from and including LOUPART WOOD to the trench junction, with three Companies. The 28th Bn. was ordered to attack from thence to M.4.b.30.05 with two Companies. The 27th Bn was to follow the 26th Bn. attack up LOUPART ROAD, and protecting their flank, enter and bomb up MALT TRENCH to the

Right; one Company was to be used.

On the 1st inst., the Artillery and medium Trench Mortars proceeded to cut the wire, the bombardment being maintained until 7 p.m. Scouts were then sent out by the 27th and 28th Bns. to examine the wire from LOUPART ROAD to the trench junction, and from thence to M.4.b.30.05 respectively.

On the former front, five lanes from six to fifteen yards wide were found to be cut, aggregating 50 yards. On the latter front, the scouts reported the wire cut.

On these reports being received, it was decided the attack should go on.

ZERO time was fixed for 3 a.m. and the infantry attack for ZERO plus 10. The barrage opened promptly, and was well placed and dense. The infantry followed close under the barrage, and were well up when it lifted.

The 26th Bn. was held momentarily on the wire, but soon found a lane, and gained the objective, which was then consolidated.

Posts were immediately put out in front.

The 28th Bn. struck the wire which proved to be intact. They were beaten back by machine gun fire and bombs, and retired to shell holes. They were then re-organized, and made another attempt to get through by cutting the wire. This failed for the same reason, and they again retired. The O.C. attack, then organized parties of bombers, and moving through the portion of trench held by the 26th Bn. they proceeded to bomb up to the Left. After a bomb fight lasting until 2 p.m. they gained the whole of their objective, and consolidated.

A Company of the 27th Bn. moved as ordered, and entering the trench moved up 150 yards in the first rush, and there they put in a block. Later, they bombed on some distance further, but the leading squad of bombers, getting ahead ~~in~~ in their eagerness, was cut off by the enemy. Four were killed, and the remaining two escaped over the parapet. The enemy evidently having been reinforced, drove our men back to LOUPART ROAD, there with the aid of 20 bombers of the 26th, they held on. Colonel Slane then sent up fresh bombers, and the enemy was driven up the trench, and after a furious fight, our men junctioned with the 17th Bn. at the junction of MALT TRENCH and LAYTON ALLEY at 10.30 a.m. The position was consolidated, and a line of posts was established along the whole front.

The conduct of Officers, N.C.O's and men, was splendid, great dash and perseverance being shown. The fighting was severe, but the men simply would not be refused.

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LESSONS LEARNED.

1. That attacks hastily launched and without proper preparation against an entrenched enemy, frequently fail, and are costly.
2. That a prepared frontal attack is less costly, more often successful, and more quickly accomplished than bombing attacks.
3. The length of time occupied in a stubborn bombing attack, necessitates fresh parties being held in readiness, with large supplies of bombs. It is invariably the side which can throw in the last reinforcement of bombers, that seems to win.
4. It was shown that 18-pndr fire hurriedly done will not cut good wire.
5. The impossibility of successfully attacking even moderate wire, which is uncut, except at heavy sacrifice.
6. That wire cut in lanes makes an entry possible.
7. From prisoners' statements, it would appear that machine gun and Stokes Mortar barrage were very effective, and kept the enemy under cover.
8. That the men actually in the attacking force should not carry tools. A separate party to follow the attack should be detailed for this purpose. Most of the tools carried by the Fourth platoon were dropped in no man's land, and were difficult to find when wanted.
9. The necessity for further instruction in, and insistence on carrying out of orders relating to the use of ground flares for indicating new line to aeroplane contact patrols. A contact patrol on the morning of the 2nd inst. called repeatedly for signals, but got none. As a consequence, the pilot ran great risks in trying to find out the situation for himself, and wrongly reported MALT TRENCH strongly held by the enemy, the only portion being held by us, being 50 yards West of the LOUPART ROAD. At the time mentioned, we held about 500 yards of the trench.

APPENDICES.

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|-----|--|
| (a) | Statement of Casualties                |
| (b) | Statement of Prisoners & enemy killed. |
| (c) | Statement of guns etc captured.        |
| (d) | Operation Order No. 79.                |

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APPENDIX A.CASUALTIES (27th to 28th February 1917 inclusive)

<u>27th February</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Missing</u>
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27th Bn.		2/Lt. SCHLEUTER 5 o/ranks.	
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28th Bn.		3 "	
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28th February

26th Bn.	2/Lt. REID	Lieut. R. WHITAKER	
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27th Bn.	5 o/ranks	Capt. GOULD. 36 o/ranks.	
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28th Bn.	Capt. McINTYRE 2/Lt. AHNALL 4 o/ranks	2/Lt. GLYDE 6 o/ranks	
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26th February

7th M/Gun Coy	1 o/rank	2 o/ranks.	
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<u>TOTALS</u>	3 Officers ) 10 o/ranks )	Killed.	4 Officers ) 46 o/ranks )	Wounded.
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APPENDIX A.b.CASUALTIES (For 1st-2nd March 1917 both inclusive)

<u>Unit.</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Missing</u>	<u>Remarks.</u>
25th Bn.		N I L		
26th Bn.	11 o/r	66 o/r	3 o/r	
27th Bn.	24 "	80 "	8 "	
28th Bn.	5 "	33 "		
M/Gun Coy	1 "	3 "		1 Wounded still at duty.
T.M.Bty			1 "	Believed wounded.
<hr/>				
	41 o/r	182 o/r	12 o/r	
<hr/>				

OFFICERS.

25th Bn.	N I L		
26th Bn.		Capt. CHERRY " WOODS Lt. GLASGOW " HALL 2/Lt. BOWMAN	Still at duty
27th Bn.	Lt. LUCAS Lt. BOTTEN 2/Lt. CALDWELL	Capt. JULGE	
28th Bn.		2/Lt. GLYDE " LEAVER	
M/Gun Coy	N I L		
T.M.Bty	N I L		
<hr/>			
	3	8	
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APPENDIX B "B"DETAIL OF PRISONERS & MATERIAL.Detail of prisoners captured 1/2nd March 1917.Unit

	Unwounded	Wounded
1st Bn. 64th R.I.R.	57	
1st Bn. 1st Guard R.Rgt.	1	
28th Regt. Pioneers	5	
Units unknown	-	12
	<u>63</u>	<u>12</u>

TOTAL 1/2 -- 75.

No. of German dead counted ----- 106.

APPENDIX "C"Detail of materials captured, 1/2nd March 1917.

2 Machine Guns.

4 Trench Mortars. - "GRANATENWERFER"

*Mr Gary*7th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE

March 21st 1917.

## Headquarters,

25th, 26th, 27th, 28th Bns.

Machine Gun Company

O.C., "B" Squad, 13th A.L.H., )

8th Field Engineers, )

Advance Guard Artillery Brigade )

O.C., "B" Coy 1st Anzac Cyclist Corps )

O.C., Bearer Sub-Division 5th Field Amb)

For information.

Preliminary Operation Memorandum No. 11.

An attack will be made on the LAGINCOURT, NOUREIL, LONGATTA Line on the morning of the 23rd inst. Preliminary reconnaissance will be made by you at once. The Brigadier will refer to this matter in his interview with you tomorrow.

Acknowledge.

Captain,  
A/Brigade Major, 7th Australian Infantry Bde.

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*Non-Dum*

*att B"*

7th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE

SECRET

March 24th 1917.

Operation Order No. 89

Reference - Map France - 57 C. N. F. Ed. 5.A.

1. Advanced troops of the enemy supported by Artillery are holding the line LAGNICOURT-NORVILLE-LONGATTE. The 5th Australian Division is on our Right, and has occupied BEAUMETZ and MARCHIES. The 7th Division on our Left occupies the line C.7.central - ST. LEGER.
2. The Advanced Guard will attack LAGNICOURT, and establish a line of posts approximately on the line C.24.d.7.7., C.18.d.9.1., C.18.c.5.7., C.18.c.55.60, C.17.d.7.4 C.17.c.53, C.22.a.39, connecting on the Right with the Left post of the Brigade on Right, and on the Left with the Post at C.15.d.4.0. All roads leading towards the enemy and to the flanks, will be watched. The boundaries between Battalions will, when the objective is gained, be a prolongation of the present boundaries
3. The 5th Australian Division will simultaneously with our advance, advance to the line of the LAGNICOURT - BEAUMETZ Road, and will establish posts on the LAGNICOURT - DOIGNIES Road, their Left post being about C.24.d.7.7.
4. The objective is as follows :- The Sunken Road from C.30.a.5.8 to LAGNICOURT. The village of LAGNICOURT and the Sunken Road from LAGNICOURT to C.17.c.55.30.
5. The 26th Battalion plus two Companies 28th Battalion will attack from C.30.a.5.6. to Road junction at C.23.b.55.75 (exclusive).  
The 27th Battalion will attack from the Road Junction at C.23.b.55.75, inclusive to C.17.c.55.30.  
The 25th Battalion will take over the post at C.15.c.5.3. together with its picquet and support, from the 27th Battalion.  
The 28th Battalion, less two companies, will be in Reserve in Cutting at C.26.d.5.5. at which place it will assemble one hour before ZERO time.
6. The Advanced Guard Light Horse (less 1 troop) will assemble near Artillery Brigade Headquarters at I.1.5.7.6. 1 hour before ZERO time, and will post a mounted orderly at those Headquarters. On the objective being gained, they will push out and gain touch along the Advanced Guard front with the enemy, and maintain touch until relieved by Infantry. One troop will report to Brigade Major at Brigade Headquarters 1 hour before ZERO time.
7. The O.C., Advanced Guard Engineers will detail a party to accompany the attack on LAGNICOURT. The O.C., will remain at Brigade Headquarters.
8. The Artillery action is shown in Appendix "A", and details will be given later.

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- 9. The O.C., 7th Machine Gun Company will place two machine guns at the disposal of each of the C.O's 25th, 26th 27th Battalions. He will arrange to cover the attack by engaging enemy machine guns and by barrage fire. On the objective being gained, he will cover the picquet line.
- 10. The O.C., 7th A.L.T.Battery will move his personnel, without guns, to VAULX, reporting arrival to Brigade Major 1 hour before ZERO.
- 11. The 1/2 (B) Company 1st Anzac Cyclist Corps will assemble at Brigade Headquarters 1 hour before ZERO time, the O.C., reporting to the Brigade Major.
- 12. Phone communication will be maintained if possible with companies. The Brigade Signal Officer will arrange to maintain phone communication between Brigade Headquarters and Battalions. Visual signalling will be established where practicable. The following Light signals will be fired on gaining the objective :-  
 LAGNICOURT -- 4 white Very Lights at intervals of 15 seconds between each light.
- 13. (a) RED GROUND FLARES will be burnt by attacking troops when contact aeroplanes sound KLAXON HORN or fire Very lights  
 (b) Aeroplane Signalling panels, Battalion ground sheets, and station calls (alphabetical letters) will be put out at Battalion Headquarters. These will be kept open all the time contact planes are over, but will be covered immediately on approach of enemy planes.  
 (c) O.C., 3rd Squadron R.F.C. is arranging for a temporary landing stage for contact planes about H.17.a.9.0. No troops of any description will be allowed within a radius of 500 yards of this spot.  
 O.C., 28th Battalion will detail a guard to make the necessary arrangements for "policing" this area.  
 Forward Battle Dump to replenish expenditure of mobile echelon ammunition is at Advanced Guard Headquarters, BEUGNATRE.
- 14. The Bearer Sub-Division less 1 Officer, 10 p/ranks will be stationed at VAULX at G.26.c.75.75. Forward Dressing Station will be at BEUGNATRE H.11.c.95.00.
- 15. Watches will be synchronized with the Brigade Major FOUL HOURS before ZERO.
- 16. ZERO date and time will be notified later in code.
- 17. Reports to Forward Advanced Guard Headquarters I.1.b.55.05 - VAULX.
- 18. This cancels Order No. 88 issued at 5 p.m. 23rd March 1917.
- 19. Acknowledge by wire.

*M. Wellington* Captain,  
A/Brigade Major, 7th Aust. Inf. Brigade

Issued at 9 pm (P.20)  
For distribution see over.



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 E. D. G. H. I. J. K.

ADVANCE GUARD - 2nd AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

ADDENDUM to Operation Order No. 89.

Reference maps 57.C.N-W-B. VAULX-VRAUCOURT. 1/10,000  
 57.C.N.W. Ed. 5.A. 1/10,000

(1) To map Reference in operation Order No. 89 add  
 57.C.N.W.2. VAULX-VRAUCOURT. 1/10,000.

(2) Care will be taken that Summer Time is adopted in  
 reckoning Zero Time.

(3) The 20th Brigade is attacking LONGATTE simultaneously  
 with our attack on LAGNICOURT.

(4) The C.O., 25th Battalion will arrange to keep in  
 close touch with the right of the 20th Brigade.

(5) After the capture of LAGNICOURT and after the Posts  
 mentioned in para 2 of Operation Order No 89 have been established  
 the C.O., 27th Battalion will send strong Patrols to reconnoitre  
 MOREUIL and if it is unoccupied they will push through it.  
 Posts will then be established on the general line C.17.d.7.4,  
 C.17, Central, C.10.c.5.95. If 20th Brigade attack has  
 succeeded the line will be carried to C.3, Central. If this attack  
 fails the line will be established along the line C.9.d.5.95,  
 C.9.c.7.5, C.8.d.15.5, where touch will be established with  
 the nearest Post of the 20th Brigade.

(6) For the purpose of the Operation the boundary between  
 the 20th Brigade and the 7th Australian Brigade will be the  
 road C.13.b.7.3, C.8.b.6.3, C.3, Central.

(7) On the 20th Brigade gaining LONGATTE the 25th Battalion  
 will push forward Patrols to establish Posts linking up the  
 right of the 20th Brigade and the left of the 27th Battalion.  
 Should MOREUIL be unoccupied the 25th Battalion Posts will be  
 established on the line C.10.c.5.95, -C.3, Central at which points it  
 will be in touch with the 27th Battalion and the 20th Brigade  
 respectively.

(8) A contact Aeroplane will fly over the line at about  
 7 a.m. (new time)

(9) Order No 89 Para 2 line 3. For C.18.b.3.7. road.  
 C.18.d.3.7.

*H. Wellington* Captain.  
 A/Brigade Major, 7th Australian Infantry Brigade.

DISTRIBUTION -

(As per Order No. 89.)

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War Diary

APP "C"

APPENDIX. C

15

REPORT on offensive operations carried out by the  
Advanced Guard, 2nd Australian Division, against the village of  
LAGNICOURT - 28th March 1917.

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Report on Offensive Operations carried out by the  
Advanced Guard, 2nd Australian Division, against the village of  
LAGNICOURT, 26th March 1917.

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1. The 7th Australian Infantry Brigade took over the duties of the Advanced Guard on the night of 19th/20th March 1917, with Headquarters at BAPAUME.

On 21st March, the Advanced Guard Headquarters moved to BEUGNATRE.

On 21st March, the Artillery was increased by 1 - 18 pndr and 1 - 4.5 Batteries, forming a complete Brigade, Under Lieutenant Colonel LLOYD. On 25th March, this was increased by the addition of another Field Artillery Brigade, and subsequently all the Heavy Artillery in the area forward of BAPAUME was placed at my disposal.

2. The Advanced Guard troops then consisted of :-

7th A.I. Brigade  
1 Squadron Light Horse  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  Field Company Australian Engineers  
2 Brigades Field Artillery  
2 Batteries 60 - pndrs  
1 Battery 6" Howitzers  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  Company Cyclists  
1 Bearer Sub-Division Field Ambulance

On 21st March 1917 orders were received to attack the villages of LAGNICOURT and NOREUIL. Arrangements for this were made, and were complete by noon 20th March 1917. It was thought desirable that this operation should coincide with an attack by the 7th Division on ECOUST and LONGATTE, and postponements were made from day to day, to enable this to be arranged. As the 7th Division however had wire to deal with, and time was required for cutting it, the Corps Commander ordered an attack on LAGNICOURT only, for the 26th March

3. At 5.15 a.m. (Summer time) on that date, the LAGNICOURT position was attacked. For objectives and troops see Advanced Guard Operation Order No. 89 and Addendum. Also Operation Memorandum Nos. 11 & 12 (Appendix "A")

4. NARRATIVE. (a) The morning was pitch dark, and the sky overcast. Some snow and sleet was falling. The assaulting troops were formed up opposite their objectives, and at a distance of about 1,000 yards, finding their positions with considerable difficulty. They were however ready to time, and advanced on the opening of the preliminary bombardment. Formations for the attack were as shown on map marked "Appendix B."

(b) The timing of the barrage proved satisfactory, the waves being close up at the lift. Little opposition was met on the Right and Left of the village, but the enemy in the village offered considerable resistance.

(c) At about 8.30 a.m. a strong counter-attack developed against our Right and Centre. Several posts were lost

- 2 -

on the Right after hand to hand fighting, but with admirable coolness, a new line was formed, and this the enemy did not succeed in penetrating, although some parties got within 30 yards of our posts.

About 10 a.m. our Right troops had the situation well in hand, the enemy attack slackened, and their troops commenced to withdraw.

Various estimates have been given of the strength of the enemy attack on our Right. Taking all the reports from our own Officers, and the statements of prisoners, it would appear that the enemy strength was about 700.

The counter-attack against our Centre approached from the Right of NCREUIL, and from NOR EUIL itself. An advanced post on the road between the two villages had to fall back, but the Ridge between the villages was held by us successfully. The artillery got on to the enemy, and they were enfiladed by machine gun fire, and the attack fizzled out. This attack was well covered by machine guns from NCREUIL, and enemy artillery, preventing us following up the enemy. Enemy strength in this attack would appear to have been about 300.

Taken in conjunction, it would appear as if a Battalion at full strength was used for the counter-attack, one Company being detached to make a diversion on our centre. This Company was assisted by the garrison of NCREUIL.

(d) After the gaining of the objectives, strong patrols were sent in the direction of NCREUIL by 25th and 27th Battalions, but were forced to return before heavy machine gun fire, and the counter-attack.

Co-operation between the 15th A.I. Brigade and our Right was not complete, and touch on the line laid down in Divisional Orders was not obtained until about 4 p.m.

(e) The artillery barrage and support during the fight left nothing to be desired, and I am very grateful to the C.F.A. and Lieut. Colonel LLOYD for the skilful and thorough way in which the artillery arrangements were made, and the promptitude and accuracy of the fire, and for their whole-hearted support all through. The Heavy Artillery were also most helpful, and all eagerness to assist.

(f) The Light Horse did as well as could be expected under the circumstances, which did not apply to their arm, and in which Infantry patrols only were indicated. They were very keen, and where acting dismounted supplied valuable information.

(g) The condition of the roads rendered the Cyclists useless as such, but such was their keenness, that they acted on foot, and did some excellent reconnaissance work.

(h) The Flying Corps also were most energetic, and gave every assistance possible.

5.

I would also like to mention the ungrudging help given by the Divisional Train, and 17th Company A.A.S.C. The D.A.C. also was most energetic in pushing forward ammunition and bombs.

6.

Various estimates of the casualties visibly inflicted on the enemy range between 250 and 400 killed, and others must have been caused during the advance and retirement of the enemy by our artillery fire.

Our casualties are as shown in Appendix "C"

7.

#### LESSONS LEARNED.

(a) The value of the training of platoon and section Commanders in the independent handling of their Units was exemplified, most of the fighting, particularly during

- 3 -

the enemy counter attack being done by these small Units.

(b) The necessity to hold suitable bodies in reserve for counter-attack, and not fritter away reserves in small reinforcements.

(c) The advisability of always providing for the protection of ones own flanks, irrespective of what Units are operating there in conjunction. Although there was at no time any great danger of complete success on the enemy's part, a Battalion being held ready for counter-attack and only waiting for the order, the impression that troops were protecting our Right certainly delayed the launching of that attack.

(d) The launching of the reserve in good time.

(e) The value of Lewis guns used from the hip in the attack. These were successfully used in dealing with hostile machine gun positions and strong points. The radiator however soon became too hot to touch, and the gun had to be directed by the left hand on the sling. A wooden grip is suggested. The slings were fastened to copper wire wound round the radiator - the leather collar would not have lasted. A metal fastening is in my opinion absolutely essential.

(f) There was an excellent example of the co-operation of Lewis gun, rifle grenades, and bayonet, in the attack of a machine gun position.

(g) It is suggested that rifle grenades have a place in the Echelon.

8.

In addition to the recommendations forwarded herewith (Appendix "E") I desire to mention the following :-

Lieut. Colonel LLOYD, whose help and skillful handling of the Artillery contributed largely to the success of the operation.

Brigade Staff:- Captain WELLINGTON, Brigade Major, and Captain HARRISON, Staff Captain, who worked very hard and enthusiastically, and did excellent service.

Lieut. Colonel READ, C.O., 28th Battalion, whose assistance all through while in Reserve, was very helpful.

Major DAVIS, who temporarily commanded 25th Battalion after the death in action of Major LEE, carried out his duties very well.

Captain WALKER, A.S.C., who was of great assistance, which was freely given. Captain WALKER went round the front line with the Staff Captain, to make himself au fait with the conditions.

Lieut. BROUGH, D.A.C. was very energetic, and succeeded in keeping us well supplied with bombs and ammunition.

- 4 -

Captain GILCHRIST, 6th Field Company Australian Engineers, whose energy and promptitude in all engineering work, and particularly in the discovery of wells and in wiring the captured position, was very praiseworthy. His daring reconnaissance of the captured position was also very useful.

Further details are furnished by the reports of the C.O. 26th and 27th Battalions, and the O.C. 7th Machine Gun Company, which are attached (See Appendix "D" )

For list of Prisoners and Captured material, see Appendix "E"

Brig. General.  
Commanding 7th Australian Infantry Brigade.  
G.O.C., Advanced Guard,  
2nd Australian Division.

LIST OF APPENDICES.

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- A. Operation Orders.
  - B. Map Showing Dispositions.
  - C. Casualties.
  - D. Reports of Unit Commanders :
    - (a) 26th Battalion.
    - (b) 27th Battalion.
    - (c) 7th Machine Gun Company.
    - (d) Signalling Officer.
  - E. Prisoners and Captured Material.
  - F. Recommendations for Honours and Rewards.

## APPENDIX. C

APPENDIX "C"CASUALTIES, 24 hours ending 27/3/1917.

	Officers.			o/ranks.		
	K.	W.	M.	K.	W.	M.
26th Battalion	2	5	1	19	81	34
27th "	-	-	-	120	30	1
28th "	4	2	-	17	57	2
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>48.168</u>	<u>37</u>	

Names of Officers.

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Missing</u>
<u>26th Bn.</u>	Capt. CHERRY, P.H. 2/Lt. CORNER, F.	Lt. HAMILTON W.J.F. 2/Lt. BIESKE H. 2/Lt. MILNER E. Capt. COOPER, V.S. D.S.O. Lt. LLOYD, F.C., M.C.	Lt. HUMPH- RIES, T.S.
<u>28th Bn.</u>	Lieut. COOK, W.E. Lieut. POWELL, G.E. 2/Lt. PUGH, A. 2/Lt. JERRY, A.	2/Lt. HUGO, F. 2/Lt. EDMONDSON, E.	

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App. D (a)

APPENDIX C

29th March 1917.

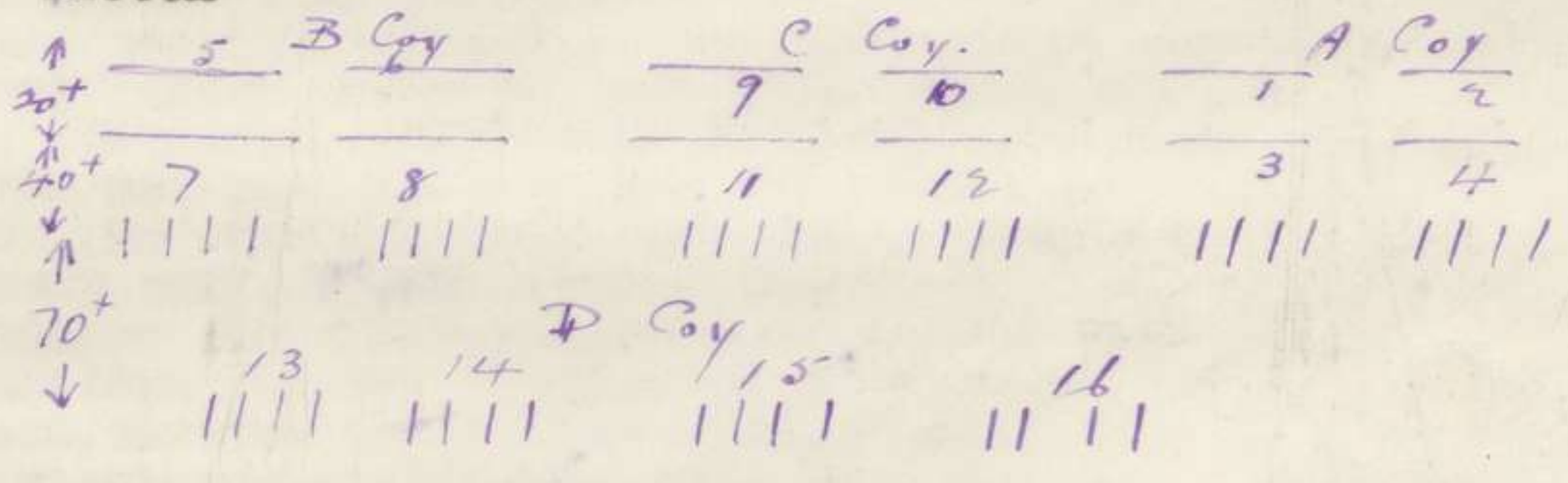
The G.O.C.,  
7th A.I. Brigade,

Report on attack of LAGNICOURT

(1) The Battalion plus 2 Coys. of the 28th Bn was ordered attack the village of LAGNICOURT on the morning of the 26th inst. Zero time being 5 -15 a.m. The attack took place under cover of artillery fire, and the 27th Bn. were co-operating on our left, the 15th Brigade A.I.F. on our right. The preliminary dispositions for the attack are as shown in Battalion Operation Order copy attached herewith. The Patrols as ordered in para 5 of Order were in position by 9-30 p.m. on the 25th remained out until the attacking Coys. advanced through them when they withdrew to the line held. Road through C.29.a. and C.28.b. as previously arranged.

(2) The assembly on the jumping off line was a most difficult operation owing to the night, which was a particularly dark one and one Coy for a time was lost. Two Company Commanders and myself were lost for two hours earlier in the evening, it was impossible to see 5 yards ahead.

(3) The actual formations decided on were as shown in sketch



Owing to "B" Coy not being present when forming up 13 and 14 Plat. Platoons actually formed the wave on the left of "C" Coy. With reference to the right flank considerable trouble would have been saved had the original arrangements been adhered to. I understood that the 60th Battalion A.I.F. were operating on our right and I had made all arrangements with the C.O. (Col. Davies) his left Coy Commander also went over the ground with my right Coy. Commander. It was not until 4 a.m. on the 26th inst., that I understood the 58th had been substituted. I did not know what arrangements had been made at all. My right Coy. Commander stated that the people on his right were not on the jumping off line agreed upon so he extended his right and went over as one wave (1,2,3 and 4 Platoons in one wave in two lines) There was insufficient time to warn me of his intention and alteration of plan:- Extension to 5 paces.

(4) The artillery opened at Zero time and the attacking troops also commenced to advance at that hour. The barrage was good, but a little slow the attacking party got well up to the edge of the village before the lift. The men however much prefer this and are willing to take the risk of casualties from our own artillery.

(5) The actual advance to the edge of the Village was good we had several casualties in the first wave from machine gun fire but the men were not to be denied and went straight ahead. A searchlight played on the right Coy advancing

ac

(2)

across the open, for a moment the men stopped but the Officer at hand cheered them on and one of our Lewis Guns firing from the hip put the light out of action, it is now in our possession

(6)

The left and right Coys. had no determined opposition and advanced rapidly to their objectives as laid down in the Operation Order, with the exception of the right who were compelled to place Posts well to the right to protect their flanks. Posts were put out at C.24.d. (approx) The Centre Coy. ("C") had some very hard fighting, first at the edge of the village (South side) and later in the village itself. Many hand to hand counters took place but the Coy. reinforced by two platoons of "D" Coy. fought with great dash and brilliancy led by Capt. Cherry. 3 of the 4 Officers were casualties before 6 a.m. Capt. Cherry was later killed by a shell at about 4 p.m. I cannot speak in sufficient glowing terms of this brave and gallant Officer, and his loss to the Bn. and A.I.F. is an enormous one indeed. The enemy were forced gradually out of the village, and in this respect I would like to mention the splendid co-operation of Lewis gunners, bombers, and rifle grenades. The firing of the Lewis gun from the hip was a great success. The guns swept the roads and under cover of their fire, bombers on each side of the road cleared the houses. At one point the advance was held up by an enemy Strong Point. Captain Cherry asked for a Stokes, but before it arrived, he attacked it by holding in front with a Lewis gun, sending bombers around each flank, and these rushed the point under cover of Lewis guns and rifle bombs. All the men in the strong point were killed. The Lewis guns used were red hot, and the No.1. on one gun states he was unable to touch the gun with his hand, but had to ~~grip~~ hold the grip and the strap only. ~~C.B.F.~~ Company eventually reached the northern edge of the village, and were greeted with cheers by the men who were already digging in in front. It was not until about 12 noon however before the village was mopped up by "D" Company. A few snipers still held out. One platoon of 28th Battalion were sent up to assist them.

(7)

The actual position taken up at 8 a.m. is shown by red color on the attached map. The Battalion on our Right were not in the position, and had not gained their objective.

(8)

At about 8 a.m. the enemy were observed massing for a counter-attack on road in C.13.b. This attack developed rapidly, but very carefully, and eventually reached our position from directions shown by blue arrows on map. Three of our posts were captured - they were well on the forward slope, and had a good view. These three posts at C.24.b.6.2. approx, C.24.b.5.4., and C.24.b.6.7. were subjected to heavy shelling with 5.9 guns, under which the counter-attack advanced. Two men from the post at C.4.b.6.7. retired, and state that the Lewis gun had been blown out, and all the remaining men casualties. The Corporal (a most reliable man) stated that he saw the men in post at C.24.b.5.4. stand up and meet an overwhelming force of the enemy, with the bayonet, the Lewis gunner clubbing one with a gun. The post at C.24.b.5.7. also confirmed this, and the Officer, Lieutenant NOTLEY decided to withdraw to the Factory corner C.24.b.3.4. after sending across to "B" Company's Right post, and telling them to hold on as he was only straightening his line. The post under Lieutenant Stapleton at C.24.d.6.7. held out but at one time the enemy were within thirty yards of it. This Officer stated that the enemy were on three sides of him, and the men had great trouble with their rifles being put out of action by mud. The Lewis gun also failed, for the same reason.



(3)

At 10 a.m. the enemy who were well held, commenced to withdraw, and eventually commenced to dig a line approx. 400 yards from our posts. The position at 12 noon was unaltered on the Left, but on the Right, is shown by blue on map.

The enemy when advancing to the counter-attack, used yellow flares to denote his position.

Captain CHERRY with great forethought discovered some German flares, and fired them from his position at C.24.b.2.1. and the barrage ceased for some time.

- (9) The communications from the front line were bad owing to enemy shelling, and runners were used. Battalion H.Q. during the counter attack were too far back. Mounted orderlies were asked for and received, but they did not prove satisfactory, being timid when the village was being shelled. The messages re the counter-attack were received by me about 4 5 minutes after being written, and artillery targets could not then be definitely given.
- (10) The Light Horse co-operation could have been more active and pushing, and earlier details of the counter-attack might then have been received.
- (11) The Vickers gun on the Right flank ordered to proceed to C.24.b.3.5. did not arrive. I should like enquiries to be made re this, as I feel certain the counter-attack would have been stopped earlier had this gun arrived.
- (12) The enemy shelled the Sunken Roads heavily, and they should as far as possible be avoided.
- (13) I desire to express my admiration of the 28th Battalion. The Officers, N.C.O's and men all fought with great dash and gallantry, and without their assistance the position would have been almost untenable.
- (14) The 58th Battalion during the afternoon filed down the road being held by our troops in C.24.d. and eventually got into position at about 4.30 p.m. on our Right.
- (15) Our casualties were not so heavy as were at first thought. They are appended.
- (16) The enemy suffered heavily. Two machine guns, two Trench Mortars, and 70 prisoners were taken, and it is estimated that at least 200 were killed. Considerable telephone gear, bicycles were also obtained.
- (17) In conclusion I desire to say that the morale of the men is excellent, and the experience gained should prove of great value to the Battalion. I cannot speak too highly of their fighting qualities, and while regretting the casualties, feel certain that the men are more confident than ever that they are more than a match for enemy when led by such dashing officers as Captain CHERRY, Lieut. LLOYD, Lieut. STAPLETON, and others.

(signed) J. Travers,  
Lieut. Colonel.  
28th Battalion.

CASUALTIES - - 26th Battalion.March 21st to noon March 26th 1917.

<u>WOUNDED.</u>	Captain P. J. THORN 2/Lieut R. A. WILLS Lieut. W.J.F.HAMILTON 2/Lieut BIESKE 2/Lieut E. MILNER.		and 79 o/ranks
<u>KILLED.</u>	2/Lieut F.W. CORNER,	"	15 "
<u>MISSING.</u>	2/Lieut T.S. HUMPHRYS (Believed to be a prisoner of war )	"	34 "
<u>SICK.</u>	--		21 "

Noon March 26th to noon March 27th 1917.

<u>Wounded</u>	Captain VMS. COOPER, D.S.O.	17 o/ranks
<u>KILLED.</u>	Captain P.H. CHER RY,	4 "
<u>WOUNDED &amp; at DUTY.</u>	Lt. F.C. LLOYD, D.C.M.	

<u>TOTALS</u>		Officers	O/ranks
	Killed	--	2
	Wounded	--	6
	Missing	--	1
	Sick	--	-
			<hr/>
		9	170
			<hr/> <hr/>

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App. D (b)

APPENDIX C

Report by Lieut Colonel SLANE, C.O., 27th Battalion, on the Operation carried out by 27th Bn. 26/3/1917.

- - - - o o o - - - -

1. The Battalion was ordered to attack the LAGNICOURT - NOREUIL Road from Fork Roads C.23.b.65.75 to C.17.c.40.35. On obtaining this objective, posts were to be established at various points in advance of and to the Left of this Line, and the original picquet line swung forward, thus completing the line from C.15.d.2.3. to left flank of new position. This movement was intended to secure the left of the troops attacking LAGNICOURT, and to enable me to make a closer reconnaissance of NOR EUIL, with a view to its occupation.
2. Troops allotted for the attack were "A" and "C" Companies, with one Vickers gun. "B" Company held the original picquet line, and was detailed to swing round half-left, using its Left post at C.25.d.2.3. as a pivot, and to establish touch with the Left post of attacking Companies. One Vickers gun was detailed to remain near Left ~~Post~~ Post of "B" Company, to bring enfilade fire to bear on enemy, in event of his counter-attacking from NOREUIL. "D" Company was held in Battalion Reserve in the Cutting at C.26.d.
3. The attacking troops were in position (NORBUVE - MORCHIES Road C.22.a.b.d.) at 5 a.m., and the advance commenced at ZERO time 5.15 a.m. The objective was captured without casualties, several of the enemy killed, a number driven out by Lewis gun fire, and 8 prisoners taken by 5.45 a.m. A platoon of "C" Company occupied the Cutting C.23.b. 65.75 - C.17.d.7.4. to bring fire to bear on enemy escaping from LAGNICOURT along QUEANT Road, or trying to counter-attack from QUEANT. The line as indicated was established by 7.30 a.m. in the face of a strong counter-attack, which developed from NOREUIL. About 250 to 300 enemy infantry took part in this counter-attack, and were supported by four or five machine guns, which brought covering fire to bear on our men. This counter-attack was stopped 50 yards from our new line by our rifle and Lewis gun fire, and Lieut. DICKENS moved a platoon of "B" Company into a position which enabled him to bring flanking fire to bear on the enemy. I got into communication with O.C. 12th Battery A.F.A., whose fire was immediately forthcoming, and was so well directed, that the enemy was driven off in some places, and so held down in others that my men were able to crawl forward and to the crest of the Ridge C.22.a. & b., 16.d., and 17.c., where some effective sniping was carried out. The Vickers gun at C.15.c.2.2. was used at this stage with good effect. Prior to the counter-attack, two strong patrols attempted to enter NOREUIL on both roads, but were held up by machine gun fire. The enemy's artillery, .77 m.m., 4.2, and 5.9 were active throughout the day, and most of our casualties were due to this cause. The new picquet line was well dug in, and touch established on both flanks, two platoons of Reserve Company being sent up to thicken the line. The enemy was most persistent, but was well held, and appeared to have withdrawn by nightfall.

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- 2 -

His casualties were heavy.

4. Our casualties were :-

12	o/ranks	Killed
30	"	Wounded
1	"	Missing

5. The artillery barrage was in every respect satisfactory.

6. The co-operation of artillery with this Unit throughout the day was beyond all praise, and at one stage undoubtedly saved the situation.

7. The telephone communication between fighting troops and battalion H.Q., and battalion and Brigade, were execrable, and will form the subject matter of a separate report.

(signed) J.F. SLANE, Lieut. Colonel.  
C.O., 27th Battalion.

*Para. 7 not  
concluded in  
G.O.C. 7 A.I. Bde.*

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APPENDIX "E"List of Prisoners taken, and Captured Material.

Unwounded	--	--	Off.	o/ranks
			-	33
Wounded (Including Prince Frederick Carl of Prussia )			2	15
			<hr/>	
			<u>2 Off. 48 o/r</u>	

Material.

- (a) 1. Portable Searchlight.
- (b) 2. Portable Trench Howitzers.
- (c) 3. Machine Gun.
- (d) 1. Trench Wireless Set.
- (e) 3. Field Telephones .

NOTE :- Items (a) and (e) are now in use, and approval is requested for their retention. Application is being made for the return of items (b), (c), and (d) as Trophies of War.

Att "D"

APPENDIX D

Copy No. 21

625

SECRET.

*for Dean*

7th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

March 31st 1917.

ORDER No. 90.

Reference Sheet 57.c.N.W. Ed. 2. VAULX-VRAUCOURT, 1/10,000.  
57.c.N.W. Ed. 5 A. 1/20,000.

1. The 7th A.I. Brigade now acting as the Infantry Advanced Guard of 2nd. Australian Division will be relieved by the 5th and 13th Australian Infantry Brigades. The relief will commence on the 27th inst., completing as early as possible on 28th inst., in accordance with attached relief table.
2. All details of the relief will be arranged mutually between Commanding Officers concerned, subject to the following:-
  - (a) Reliefs will be carried out by day where possible.
  - (b) To avoid congestion on the road, Infantry will use all suitable duckboard tracks - transport only using the BAPAUME-ALBERT Road South of LE SARS.
  - (c) Infantry of relieved Units will not leave their billeting area until relieving Units arrive.
  - (d) Completion of relief will be reported to Brigade Head Quarters in code, by priority wire.
3. All papers affecting the tactical situation, air photos, and maps showing dispositions, will be handed over on relief, and receipts will be forwarded to Bgde. H.Q. within 24 hours after relief is completed.
4. The following distances will be maintained on roads:-
  - 200 Yards between Battalions.
  - 100 Yards between Companies and Platoons.
5. Headquarters 7th A.I. Bgde. will close at VAULX on completion of relief and open at LE SARS at the same hour.
6. Acknowledge by wire.

Time issued 9.30 am 27/1

*M. Wellington* Captain.  
A/Brigade major, 7th Australian Infantry Brigade.

DISTRIBUTION:-

- Copies to :-
- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. 25th Bn.                                  | 12. 2nd. Aust. Div. "G" |
| 2. 26th Bn.                                  | 13. " " " " "Q"         |
| 3. 27th Bn.                                  | 14. G.O.C.              |
| 4. 28th Bn.                                  | 15. Staff Capt.         |
| 5. 7th A.M.G. Coy.                           | 16. Bde. Sig. Officer.  |
| 6. 7th A.L.T.M. Btty.                        | 17. O.C. 17th A.A.S.C.  |
| 7. B Squadron 13th A.L.H.                    | 18. 20th Brigade.       |
| 8. 1/2 B. Coy. 1st Anzac Cyclist Corps.      | 19. 5th A.I. Bgde.      |
| 9. 5th Field Ambulance (Bearer Sub-Division) | 20. 6th A.I. Bgde.      |
| 10. O.C., Advanced Guard Artillery.          | 21. War Diary.          |
| 11. M.C. 6th Field Coy. A.E.                 | 22. File.               |
|  | 23/26 Spare (4)         |

7th AUSTRALIA INFANTRY BRIGADE

March 27th 1917.

Relief Table to accompany Order No. 90.

Date	Unit	From	To	Remarks
27th March	26th Bn.	VAULX	BAZENTIN	To come under orders 5th A.I. Bde BAZENTIN Brigade H.Q. to RALT SUPPORT.
	27th Bn.	VRAUCOURT C.19.	COUPE GUEULE	
	28th Bn.	VRAUCOURT C.26.d.	COUPE GUEULE	
Night 27/28th March	25th Bn.	Line Left	BAPAUME	
	7th M/G Coy	Line Left	BAPAUME	
	7th ALTB	Line Left	BAPAUME	
28th March	25th Bn.	BAPAUME	BAZENTIN	Brigade H.Q. to SHELTER WOOD
	26th Bn.	BAZENTIN	SCOTS REDOUBT N.	
	27th Bn.	COUPE GUEULE	SCOTS REDOUBT S.	
	28th Bn.	COUPE GUEULE	SHELTER WOOD S.	
	7th M/G Coy	BAPAUME	BAZENTIN	
	7th ALTB	BAPAUME	BAZENTIN	
29th March	25th Bn.	BAZENTIN	ACID DROP CAMP	
	7th M/G Coy	BAZENTIN	SHELTER WOOD N.	
	7th ALTB	BAZENTIN	SHELTER WOOD N.	

APPENDIX. D

7th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE

March 21st 1917.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. 20th/21st inst.

OPERATIONS. The 7th A.I. Brigade relieved the 6th A.I. Brigade as the Advanced Guard of the Division, the relief being completed at 10 p.m., 20th inst.

PATROLS. Patrols of 26th Battalion worked along the whole Battalion front and got in touch with companies on Right and Left.

A special patrol reconnoitred Cross Roads at C. 29.a.4.2. and reports two enemy machine guns at the Cross Roads commanding the approaches and the valley to the West of the road. The patrol managed to get up close to the Cross Roads and found the banks very steep, and about 20 feet high. On attempting to work to the East they were fired on at close quarters by the two machine guns, which are emplaced together at C.29.a.60.15.

Another patrol of 26th Battalion reconnoitred Cross Roads at C.22.b.2.0. but met with heavy rifle fire. They report enemy is holding road C.22 Central and C.29.a. as flares were being fired from this line.

At dawn our artillery shelled C.29.a.60.15. with shrapnel.

ENEMY ARTILLERY. Hostile artillery were active at intervals throughout the period, as per table appended :-

<u>Area Shelled.</u>	<u>Calibre.</u>	<u>Hostile Direction</u>	<u>No. of Rnds</u>
B.24.b.& d.	4.2 H.E.		
C.13.c.& d.	5.9 H.E.		
Cross Roads )	4.2	Rear of NOREUIL.	
I.4.b.8.7. )	Shrapnel		
C.27.c.& d.			
BOIS DE VAULX	5.9 H.E.		10.

Observers report shelling generally seemed to be at extreme range particularly shells of 4.2 and 5.9 calibre.

*J. Wellington* Capt,  
A/Brigade Major, For G.O.C., 7th Australian Inf. Bde.



CONFIDENTIAL

No. 2.

7th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE

March 22nd 1917.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY for 24 hours ending 6 a.m. 22/3/17.6.15 pm  
21OUR OPERATIONS:

ARTILLERY. Our artillery was active throughout the day. NOREUIL, LAGNICOURT, and roads connecting them were searched, and all known enemy machine gun positions were shelled.

AIRCRAFT. Aircraft activity on both sides was great throughout the day. At 4 p.m. five German planes flying over our Posts were attacked by four of our planes on patrol duty, one enemy plane being eventually forced to descend at C.26.c.5.7. On landing, the pilot attempted to escape, but was shot by one of our posts and severely wounded in the abdomen. He was captured and brought in, and proved to be Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia, the son of Prince Leopold Frederick of Prussia. The 26th Battalion, under the supervision of an R.F.C. Officer is removing the plane to vicinity of I.3.a.b.5.

PATROLS. Copies of patrol reports are forwarded herewith.

NEW POSTS. 25th Battalion established a new post at C.13.d.9.3. covering Road, and C.13.b.8.2.

26th Battalion established a post at Cross Roads C.29.a.4.2., and is held with a standing patrol, with one Lewis gun. A party of Light Horse with Hotchkiss gun are also in occupation.

26th Battalion established a new post at C.13.b.7.3., but shortly after daylight, this post was shelled out and had to be withdrawn to old position at C.13.b.4.2.

IDENTIFICATION. Light Horse patrols captured one prisoner of 91st A.I.R., 9th Company, 3rd Battalion, at C.29.b. square. Information received from prisoner has already been forwarded by wire.

ENEMY OPERATIONS.

ARTILLERY. Enemy artillery was very active during the day, and shelled the following localities freely.

VRAUCOURT COPSE	C.14.b. c d.
SUGAR FACTORY	b. 24.d.
VAULX Outskirts	C.25 square

Shells were mostly 4.2 and 5.0 H.E., with a sprinkling of 77 m/m. Most of the shelling appeared to come from the direction of the rear of LAGNICOURT.

No. 8

1917

REPORT ON THE BATTLE OF LAGNICOURT

1917

About 30 round of asphyxiating poisonous gas shells were fired to rear of BOIS WAULX at 9.50 p.m.

MOVEMENT. Movement of troops and transport was observed in LAGNICOURT and NOREUIL at intervals during the day. Trains were seen to move from LONGATTE and NOREUIL during the day, going in a N.E. direction from LONGATTE. A train was also seen in LIGNACOURT.

Two explosions were heard in NOREUIL during the morning. A party of the enemy who were cutting down telegraph posts near NOREUIL, were dispersed by rifle fire at 1,200 yards range.

At 9 a.m. movement of a small mounted party was observed at Cross Roads C.39.a. Snipers of Right Battalion fired on the party, wounding one Uhlan.

During the night, sounds of motor vehicles were heard entering and leaving LAGNICOURT and NOREUIL.

*N. Wellington* Captain,

For G.O.C., 7th Australian Infantry Brigade.

Enemy activity was very active during the day and included the following localities:

LAGNICOURT  
BOIS WAULX  
LIGNACOURT

Shells were mostly 4.2 and 3.1. The direction of the shells appeared to come from the direction of the east of LAGNICOURT.

*Handwritten notes:*  
Co. A  
1st Battalion  
1917  
17

625

PATROL REPORTS5.15 a.m. 27th Bn.

The patrol went about 300 yards up the valley from B. Coy's post.

About here they heard a noise like a cat moving, and suspect strongly that it was an enemy signal.

They then inclined to their right to the first road. From here they heard movement on the road about 300 yards in front. They crossed the road, turned to the Right, and then turned back towards A. Coy's posts.

No movement was seen while they were returning.

Hour of return 12.45 a.m.

5.25 a.m. 27th Bn.

A scouting party returned at 4 a.m. having reconnoitred the road and cross roads at C.22.central.

No enemy were seen, but motor traffic was observed entering and leaving the village of LAGNICOURT.

Rifle shots were also heard from the village.

No. 3. Post reports enemy post about C.15.b.6.6.

26th Bn.

In company with Corporal Adriesen, I went on patrol at 9 p.m. last night. We went on the LAGNICOURT ROAD as far as C.22.central, and then down road to Right as far as C.22.b.0.9. That turned N.E. and came out on LAGNICOURT ROAD at about C.23.a.5.4. Proceeding down the road we struck an enemy post at about C.23.b.3.5. They opened fire on us at a range of about 15 yards, and we returned it and ran. The post is on the South side of the road along the hedge.

625

Cy + L.H. V

APPENDIX. E

C O P Y

Report from O.C. Patrol, R. Sector, LAGNICOURT.

To report that after occupying the Cross Roads C.29.a. observed that LAGNICOURT was occupied by enemy at 10 & 11 a.m. Saw considerable movement at what I now know to be ammunition dumps in C.24.c. Wagons were brought to and fro..

Also saw movement of troops and wagons on road from NOREUIL at C.11. and C.12. Small wagons drawn by horses; Now believe them to be horse drawn wagons on light railway, as well as ordinary vehicles on road.

Saw much movement behind HINDENBURG LINE and DROCOURT QUEANT LINE in V.26 & 27, and on high ground. 4 horse wagons contained a load that looked like telegraph poles. Troops in parties of 40 or so came up to trenches at V.26 and small parties moved back along road on high ground. Road appeared to run through V.26, 21, 22 and so on. I could see smoke and steam of train in rear of QUEANT, but did not see the train itself. My sergeant on Left, Sergeant R.H. JOFF, saw a train move slightly on to the L. of QUEANT - after a gun fired towards VAULX and immediately disappeared North. Could follow steam for about a mile. This occurred about three times between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

At C.23.b. the roads NOREUIL-LAGNICOURT and VAULX-LAGNICOURT are linked up by a series of trenches from C.23.b.4.8. to road C.23.b.4.5. At first point there is an O.P. and at last point on G. side of road, there is another O.P. observing along valley S.S.W.

Saw a man laying wires into an old brick kiln at C.23.b.8.6. Machine Guns fired on one of our aircraft from village about 4 p.m. From sound, appeared to be in houses on W.side of LAGNICOURT about C.23.b.5.0.

Saw a post of enemy entrenched on Road in rear of NOREUIL at C.11.c.4.4.

(signed) J.C. Morris, Lieut.  
"B" Squadron, 13th A.L.H.

## APPENDIX E

File

No. 3.

7th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE

March 23rd 1917.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY for 24 hours ending 6 a.m. 24/3/17.OUR OPERATIONS.

During the day, registrations were carried out by all batteries. Suspected m.g. at C.23.b.45.85 and C.23.b.8.4. were fired on.

Enemy movement observed at Road C.9.d. was fired on; Posts and roads were searched.

Our 4.5 Howitzers searched the roads and area South and West of NOREUIL and LAGNICOURT.

ENEMY ACTIVITY.

ARTILLERY. Enemy shelled intermittently throughout the day with 4.2 and 5.9 in vicinity of VAULX. The following places received most attention :- C.27.c.2.6., C.26.d.2.7., C.26.b. A 5.9 gun was located at 75° true bearing from C.26.b.8.3. West end of VRAUCOURT was also shelled during day and night with 5.9's. At 5 a.m. intense barrage was put over valley in rear of VRAUCOURT COPSE lasting 20 minutes. No action followed.

MOVEMENT. Puffs of smoke were seen issuing from train stationed at bearing 49° T.B. from C.26.b.8.7. Later train was seen moving, and was last seen on bearing 69½° T.B.

LAGNICOURT was seen to be smouldering in many places. Engine was seen moving along railway line at C.f.c. running N.E.

About 1 a.m. on 23rd, rapid rifle or m.g. fire was heard about 200 yards in front of our post at C.15.c.5½.2. A patrol was sent out at once, but nothing was discovered except m.g. was heard firing in the village.

Throughout the day movement was observed in villages of LONGATTE and NOREUIL. Parties of 3 and 4 were constantly moving in and around the villages. Transport were seen leaving NOREUIL, and going towards LONGATTE in the early morning, but had disappeared before artillery could be directed on them. Party of cavalry, strength about 30 was seen moving across C.5.c.4, C.3, about midday, and disappeared behind LONGATTE. At 10 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. a train was seen moving along line in direction of C.6., C.5., C.4. Explosions were heard during the day in ECOUST and LONGATTE and started a fire which burnt throughout the day.

A m.g. was heard in LONGATTE firing at our planes. m.g. was also heard firing from direction of BANKS OOD on our left of our position.

At 9 a.m. a large column of smoke was seen issuing from C.24, C.4.5.

At 12.30 p.m. hostile train near NOREUIL moving east. At 2.50 p.m. five or six men seen coming out of building, C.25.b. and moving towards NOREUIL. At 4.50 p.m. enemy train about 2 trucks was observed moving out of NOREUIL travelling east.

In all cases when possible, our artillery engaged and dispersed the parties.

- 2 -

AIRCRAFT.

At 1.45 p.m. two enemy planes were seen hovering over our own lines, but did not attempt to cross our front.

At 8.25 a.m. enemy balloon up at T.B. 11° from I.4.a.5.7. and at 2 p.m. hostile balloon at T.B. 81° from same point.

Enemy balloons were also seen during the day at magnetic bearings 40° and 115° from G.P. C.13.d.7.9.

Enemy planes crossed our lines several times during the day, and were fired on by H.G. and A.A. guns.

Our planes were active throughout the day, and were continually fired on by A.A. guns from N.E. direction.

IDENTIFICATIONS.

At 4.45 a.m. a party of about 25 enemy approached our Centre Battalion Post at C.15.c.55.20. They appeared to stumble on it by accident. Bombs were exchanged, and one enemy killed. He belonged to 120 R.I. Regt. Ersatz Battalion.

GENERAL. A well with good drinking water was found at VAULT at C.2) .c.5.3.

PATROLS. Patrol reports are attached herewith.

*R. J. Williamson* Captain,  
For G.C.C., 7th Australian Infantry Brigade.

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ADVANCED GUARD PATROL REPORTS

(To accompany para )

----- CYCLIST ----- (A)

March 22nd 1917. 12-30 p.m.

Interim report by Cyclist Patrol observing from C.23.b.1.0.

9-15 a.m. Train going N. , from behind LAGNICOURT. Enemy Balloon N.E. of Village of LAGNICOURT. Smoke from small fires rising in LAGNICOURT. Our guns intermittently shelling village accurately.

10 to 10-30. Enemy shelling VAULZ from N.E. of LAGNICOURT.

10-15. Train going N.E. from LAGNICOURT.

12-10 p.m. report by Cyclist Patrol observing from C.8.d.1.5.

10 a.m. Train seen moving behind NOREUIL.

No movement of troops seen in LONGATTE. Machine gun approx. from Crucifix C.8.b. My patrol shelled from the direction of NOREUIL. Enemy shelled VAULZ heavily.

1-30 p.m. Final report from Cyclist Patrol observing from C.23.b.1.

After 10-30 a.m. no smoke seen rising LAGNICOURT very careful observation.

11-5 Three men seen to enter Village at C.23.d.1.4. not bothering to take cover.

11-50 Train seen going from N.E. to S.W. approx. 5 to 7 miles behind LAGNICOURT.

1-45 p.m. Report of Cyclist Patrol observing NOREUIL from C.15.c.2.2.

No movement of troops noticed in the Village. On the high ground in rear enemy could be seen in small numbers. Smoke observed in rear of NOREUIL which appeared to be that of a train in motion.

5-55 p.m. Report by Cyclist Patrol observing from C.14.b.5.8. Noticed one of the enemy come to an C.P. at C.15.d.5. He came to his post about every 10 minutes. At 2 p.m. two trains came from a N.E. direction towards NOREUIL and one returned. Observing from C.15. Central I saw trench running from C.9.d.9.1. to approx. C.15.b.9.5. and then disappears. I observed for one hour with glasses and saw no movement or wire. 4 men were noticed moving in the village. (Signed) G.H. BUTLER, Lieut.

----- LIGHT HOUSE ----- (B)

Relieved other patrol at 12-30 p.m.

From a point C.4.a.2.2, observed at 1-17 p.m. working parties of enemy. Took a magnetic reading. Main party then ... Small parties on both sides - appear to be tearing up line. Line passes through U. Cannot say whether large or small gauge. Also saw a horse drawn vehicle moving along road through U. a. evidently to LAGNICOURT.

Could just see movement in rear of wire. My position for observation not too good. Cross roads C.23.a. being hotly shelled at intervals. One Balloon away to R. appearing, but does not affect our sector. Another Balloon arises from N.E. (in rear of QUEANT) To-day rather indistinct. Enemy throwing heavy stuff into NOREUILS also VAULX.

(Signed) J.C. ... Lieut.

625

Centre Patrol Report 26th Bn.

I proceeded as far as the Sunkon ad C.22.b.0.1. where Lieut. Hamilton remained. From there I proceeded in to a distance of some 400 yards on the lefthand side of the gully, when I crossed some at the end of some excavations made in the bank.

Crossing almost in a direct line, I came to a shallow line of trenches on the right hand side of the gully, C.23.c.5.0. From this point I sent a corporal and 10 men ahead, three of which went in front, acting as a screen, and myself remaining behind with five men. The corporal proceeded a distance of some 300 yards, and sent a runner back reporting all clear.

I proceeded in this manner over the brow of the hill on the right of the gully, and continued on towards the village, a distance of about 500 yards. I ultimately worked out way to the edge of the village, taking up a position with men in front of and behind a hedge, & on the edge of the village C.23.d.15.80. Here there was a hedge stretching for about 100 yards on our right, and about 50 yards on our left. The distance between the two last named hedges being about 100 yards.

I had just taken up the position when a flare was sent up from the end of the hedge on our right rear, followed at intervals by two more. While here, I observed a man walk from the end of the hedge on our left rear, to the extreme end of the hedge on our right, where we lost sight of him. While here we could plainly hear the rumble of waggons on the roads.

I then sent the corporal and ten men back the way we had come, and myself and the remaining five men taking a different route and following round the end of the hedge on our right. I crossed the gully at a point a good deal higher than the point at which we had crossed it going out, but saw nothing to report. I joined up with the corporal and his party about 200 yards from the point where I had left Lieut Hamilton. The patrol lasted five hours.

(signed) A.D. Brown, Sgt.

Patrol report 25th Battalion.

A patrol of 1 Officer and 15 other ranks proceeded along eastern side of main road to LONGATTE. Posts were located in vicinity of Crucifix C.S.b.7.0., and at C.S.a.13.9.

Vehicles were heard moving in the village.

Patrol returned along same route as going out.

(signed) J. . Turner, I.O.



Left Company Patrol. 26th Bn.

In accordance with instructions received, I took out a patrol of 4 H.Q.O. and 10 men to ascertain if the village of LAGNICOURT was still occupied.

Before leaving point C.22.d.8.0. I posted a standing patrol of 1 H.Q.O. and 6 men.

On leaving the above point I got close to the Sunken Road (which had trees only on the near side which were all cut down, and a high bank on the far side)

I pushed along to within 50 yards of point C.23.b.3.4. when the enemy challenged. Receiving no reply he immediately fired three shots, which splashed the dirt in the faces of the three leading men. This post also called on and ran to a post at C.23.b.5.2. which is evidently a machine gun post. We kept still for awhile, when a flare was sent up from first post. After withdrawing about 50 yards, another shot was fired.

The junction of the two roads is in my opinion manned strongly by snipers, supported by a machine gun in the latter post, where a small light was seen moving about.

The patrol left at 9.30 p.m. and returned at midnight 22/23rd.

C.22.b.5.2. appears to be a small wood.

(signed) F. Brand, 2/Lieut.  
"B" Coy.

Centre Patrol.

At 7 p.m. with Corporal C.H. Robertson and 12 men, I left Coy H.Q. and proceeded to Cross Roads. From there, crossed the plain road to Sunken Road on Left of Cross Roads to see if standing patrol had been established, but could not see same, but met Lieut. Hamilton.

Left Cross Roads and proceeded to LAGNICOURT, adopting two printers, followed by screen of scouts, consisting of six men. Corporal Robertson on right flank, and self in centre. Covering party of 4 men following, extended order, as covering party. Discovered barbed wire fence of four wires running at right angles to road, and about 200 yards from starting point. From here we worked Left crossing a disused trench 30 x 2 feet approx. with earth heaped up on top side. Left flank crossed shallow dummy trenches, distant about 100 yards from corner barbed wire fence, and direction half left. We then worked back to road and three men were detected moving in file between embankment on top of road. Heard challenges and answered. We immediately lined on embankment, intending to investigate. Two of our men on right flank near embankment tripped over low wire, about six inches from the ground. A German flare was fired immediately. We noticed what looked like a wooden frame with earth spread around and levelled. We remained there about 30 minutes, and another flare was fired, and two men were seen observing. Embankment was about 35 yards from road, and parallel to it. Flare was fired about 500 yards ahead of wire fence. We moved up about 10 yards under cover of embankment, and heard four shots fired. Further forward was able to hear picking on road to right. Another flare was fired to our Right about 50 yards distant. We then noticed a dim light in village. The last flare was fired 150 yards on village side of first flare.

Could hear transport on Right of village

On our way back four more shots were fired towards road. Lieut. Hamilton who we met at starting point went out with two men and verified this. We then returned to Right Coy post and reached Right Coy H.Q. at 12.30 a.m. Actual time on patrol 4 hours.

(signed) Sgt. J.R. Hickling,

ADVANCED GUARD PATROL REPORTS.INFANTRY - - - C.Contre Battalion - - 1.50 a.m.

With party of Battalion scouts, I left B. Coy Outpost at 10 p.m. and patrolled the Sunken Road leading to the village of MOREUIL. We remained there for half an hour, watching for movement. We heard enemy in the village, and in a trench running from C.16.a.35.65 to C.16.a.1.9., and they seemed to be in large numbers. We saw flares fired from the trench, besides hearing machine gun and rifle fire.

While I was out, no enemy patrol was met, and before I returned, the artillery opened on the enemy strong post at C.16.a.1.9. and on the village, with good results.

I returned at 1.30 a.m. by the same road by which I went out.

(signed) Cpl Johnson, 27th Bn.

O.C., B. Coy Report.

Lieut. Dickens and Corporal Johnson patrolled along Sunken Road running into village of MOREUIL. UP TO A POINT about C.15.b.2.0. From here they observed a great deal of movement in south western portion of village, and as far back as Church at C.10.2.4.0.

A trench evidently used as a strong point is situated on the extreme outskirts of village at C.16.a.1.9. - C.16.a.35.65. Troops were seen to move out of house to left of this trench, and immediately to get into this trench. From this trench a good field of fire directly down valley is obtained.

Train whistles were heard, presumably from village, but possibly were from the ridge behind the hill.

Lieut. Dickens reports that if our artillery could fire on this portion of village where I have mentioned movement was seen, good results would be obtained. He also states that he and Johnson would willingly patrol this portion of the front at daybreak tomorrow.

(signed) J.W.K. Beddome, Lieut.  
O.C., "B" Coy

Special Patrol Report "B" Coy, 7th Bn.

Report from Lieut. Dowling, reads :-

"At 4 a.m. all men were standing to in the picquet line. About 4.45 a.m. the Right sentry group came in. About this time the enemy put a heavy barrage on VRAUCOURT COPSE, lasting about 10 minutes, and then lifted. At this time, figures were seen running across our front. Fire was opened on them by the men and Lewis gun in the picquet line, and by the left sentry group, which had not returned. The Germans appeared to be surprised by our fire, and quickly dispersed.

Enemy appeared to be making for VRAUCOURT COPSE, and not to be aware of our position. Apparently he came along the sunken road, and then made a dash for the wood. He left one dead and many were seen to be wounded. The war raged about a quarter of an hour after their retreat.

The enemy's barrage was very heavy indeed, and consisted of shells of all calibres. Also numerous machine guns, evidently firing indirect fire.

Our casualties totalled one reported killed, five slightly wounded..

(signed) J.K. Boddams, Lieut  
O.C., "B" Coy.

Special Patrol Report 96th Bn.

23/3/17

About 5 a.m. hostile artillery barraged front on our right and left. Later a report was received that the village of BEAUMETZ had been recaptured by the enemy, and following this, a message was received from Battalion on our Right, asking for assistance to protect their Left flank, in order that they could withdraw troops for a counter attack. One platoon was accordingly sent at 8 a.m. A message was received that we were again occupying ~~the~~ BEAUMETZ, and that our platoon was being returned to us.

Two prisoners reported to be taken at BEAUMETZ  
Identification 95th Regiment, 1st Machine Gun Company

(signed) J. Travera, Lt. Col.  
96th Bn

CONFIDENTIAL.

No. 4.

7th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

24th March 1917.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY for 24 hours ending 6 a.m. 24/3/17.OUR OPERATIONS.

ARTILLERY. Our 18 Pounders were active during the day and shelled LAGNICOURT intermittently also roads in C.16.a.b. & c. Fire was directed on to road C.24.b. where movement of wagons was reported also on parties moving along road between NOREUIL and LAGNICOURT. Our 4.5 Howitzers swept LAGNICOURT and area in front of Village also cross roads at C.16.a.5.5.

PATROLS. Reports attached.

AIRCRAFT. Our Planes were active all day but were kept at bay by hostile A.A.Guns.

ENEMY ACTIVITY.

ARTILLERY. Enemy Artillery was active during the day with 5.9's and 4.2's and .77 m.m. The following targets received most attention:- Vicinity of C.27.a. 5.9 and 4.2's from 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ ° True Bearing from C.27.d.1.3. C.27.d. and L.3.a. 5.9. H.E. and 4.2. H.E. from 30° True Bearing from C.27.d.1.8. Sunken Road at C.26.d. 5.9 and 4.2's from above direction. BOIS de VAULX and Cross Roads at C.29.a.4.3. were heavily shelled with 5.9's. and 4.2's VAULX was shelled intermittently with 5.9's. and 4.2's during the day.

AIRCRAFT. Enemy planes were active but were kept from crossing our lines by our A.A.Guns and our planes.

MOVEMENT At 10.25 a.m. train was seen to approach Village of NOREUIL from a N.E. direction returning at 10.40 a.m. suspected to have stopped at a Building in C.16.b.4.9. AT 2.30 p.m. Gun mounted on a limber was seen leaving vicinity of C.17.d.3.7. moving North. Trains were heard North of LONGATTE during day but out of observation. An explosion was heard in LONGATTE. Fires were seen in LAGNICOURT and NOREUIL fairly freely. Smoke of enemy engine was seen at 47° True Bearing from C.28.c.8.8. Enemy Officer seen at C.29.b.1.0. using Field Glasses. Working party of 10 men seen digging at C.17.a.1.3. A large working party was seen on road south of railway line at D.3.c. Felled telegraph posts were seen to be loaded and carted to QUEANT. movement in two and threes was seen in Villages of NOREUIL & LAGNICOURT. Five more dead Germans were found last night near VRAUCOURT COPSE These were some of the party that attempted to raid one of our posts on night 22nd/23rd inst. A prisoner was also found at this spot who had been wounded in the raid and had laid out all day. He belonged 119 R.I.R.

MISCELLANEOUS About 4 p.m. a small red paper balloon blew over VRAUCOURT from direction of NOREUIL which has been forwarded to proper authority.

From Post at C.29.a.5.2. a report was received that a working party were out on right of LAGNICOURT judging by noises made. A Patrol was also observed apparently a covering party.

*7th*  
*[Signature]* Lieut.  
 For G.O.C., 7th Australian Infantry Brigade.

7th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADEPatrol Report 25th Bn. 24/1/17.

At 2.45 a.m. in conjunction with a 27th Bn. Patrol under Lieut. Dickens, I made a reconnaissance of the ground on the Left of the valley towards NONOUIL Village, as far as the enemy trench.

I met with no opposition, but the leading scout was challenged by the sentry, but no action was taken against us.

Five men were observed to enter the enemy trench, and a listening post of two men was seen on the bank to the Left and slightly in front of the trench.

Coughing could be heard along the trench to the Right.

Two vehicles with headlights (presumably motor lorries) were clearly observed coming from the Right along the road into NONOUIL.

No wire was seen in front of enemy trench.

The patrol returned safely at 4.15 a.m. to post held by B. Coy, 27th Bn. without apparently having been detected.

(signed) J.R. Kay, Lieut.

Report of O.C., C. Coy. 25th Bn.

A patrol of 1 N.C.O. and 7 c/ranks went out through No.2 Post C.21.d.4. and worked along Left of Sunken Road to about 300 yards beyond Cross Roads at C.22 Central.

Patrol returned through No.2. Post at 12.15 a.m. without seeing or hearing anything of the enemy.

(signed) K.A. Friedrichs, Capt.

Report O.C., B. Coy 27th Bn.

The scouts moved out from B. Coy Post at C.15.c.55.2. about 2.45 in conjunction with a similar patrol of the 25th Bn. 25th patrol worked up the Left bank of Sunken Road in valley. 27th patrol worked up Right bank.

Patrol advanced until challenged by enemy at C.16.a.19 - C.17.a.55.65, when they were about 60 yards from the enemy. Patrol waited here for about 15 minutes, but had to return owing to daylight beginning to break.

Vehicles were indistinctly observed in village, and a fire was also noticed. Flares were fired from various positions in the South eastern portion of village, including one from about 150 yards right of where enemy challenged.

One of our scouts on right flank noticed 8 of the enemy moving towards trench where they disappeared from view.

This post is apparently strongly held.

(signed) J.K. Soddome, Lieut. O.C. B. Coy

Patrol report 26th Bn. 23/24th March 1917.

At 7.45 p.m. I and Corporal Roberson, with 12 men reported at A. Coy H.Q., and left there for patrol work, reaching Cross Roads C.29.a.4.2. about 8.45 p.m.

We visited D. Coy posts to Right and Left Cross Roads, and then the post held by 30th Battalion in Sunken Road 500 yards Right of Cross Roads. We crawled out from C.29.c.69, and after proceeding about 100 yards quarter Left noticed several men lying flat about 50 yards ahead. We immediately got in touch with 30th Battalion post, and D. Coy 26th Battalion post on Right of Cross Roads, and found that 30th Battalion had seen this party, but had taken it for our own. I immediately established a post between 30th and 26th Battalion at C.27.c.69, and then Corporal Roberson and 4 men followed the German party, with my men covering his crawl. The Huns moved back first from flanks in sections, and then the centre afterwards, using every care not to attract attention, eventually falling into Sunken Road about C.29.d.7.7. Heads could be seen along this road for about 50 yards. Corporal Roberson then consulted me, and he after we got back to our posts met the 58th Battalion party changing over with the 30th. We decided to ask the officer for 10 men to strengthen our party, in order to investigate further, but the officer did not give us any men, stating that he would report to his H.Q. on returning. We then placed a further post towards D. Coy 26th, as 5 Huns were noticed crawling towards D. Coy 26th post direction. These men then were noticed to crawl back to Sunken Road and disappear. We kept a careful observation from 10 o'clock, the last time we caught sight of them, until 12 1/2 o'clock, when we reported to Post on Right, and withdrew to Cross Roads, warning J. Coy 26th Battalion, who had relieved D. Coy, that we were going back to H.Q. A. Coy, which we reached about 1.15 p.m.

The driving of iron posts could be plainly heard at the time we were out, and appeared to be going on in half left direction towards road leading from Cross Roads to village LIGNACOURT. The idea that the Huns were trying to outflank the 30th Bn. post struck me, hence my reason for establishing posts as I did, especially as enemy party was between 20 and 30 men.

(signed) J.R. Hickling, Sgt. 26th Bn.

*Law*

Patrol Report

Capt. Cooper  
 O.C. "B" Coy

Travelled by track  
 indicated ----- to C. 23 d. 28. 6

Sentry lighting pipe seen at abt. C. 23 d. 9. 5. 6.

Lights seen at C. 23 d. 9. 8 & C. 23. b. 5. 2

No advanced posts observed, & the village  
 seemed quiet.

A.H. Brown  
 23/3/17

625  
CONFIDENTIAL.*File*  
7th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.no. 5  
25th March 1917.INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY for 24 hours ending 6 a.m., 25/3/17.OUR OPERATIONS.

ARTILLERY. Our Field Guns and Heavies were active all day. LAGNICOURT was shelled by our 18 pounders, small parties were dispersed and roads swept. Cross roads in enemy lines were shelled intermittently. Our 4.5 Howitzers shelled intermittently throughout the day, LAGNICOURT receiving 80 rounds. The result of shooting was observed to be effective.

PATROLS Report Attached

AIRCRAFT. Our planes were particularly active during the day as were those of the enemy. Two of our planes were seen to fall behind enemy lines, one in C.1.b. and one in C.16.d. Large numbers of enemy collected around fallen planes. One of our planes just after leaving Landing Station at BEUCNATRE burst into flames and fell to ground both Pilot and Observer being killed.

ENEMY ACTIVITY.

ARTILLERY. Enemy Artillery was busy all day and shelled VAULX and vicinity intermittently. VRAUCOURT & BOIS de VAULX were shelled with 4.2's from True Bearing 60° from C.26.b.8.3. A 5.9 Battery was seen firing from 30° True Bearing from C.26.b.8.3. VAULX was shelled with 8".

AIRCRAFT. Enemy planes were active all day several of which crossed our lines but were forced to return by our own planes and A.A. Guns. At 10.30 a.m., our planes forced one hostile one to descend behind his own lines.

MOVEMENT. Considerable enemy movement was seen in vicinity of Villages of MOREUIL and LAGNICOURT. Train seen on several occasions to approach MOREUIL. Transport was also seen on a track in vicinity of C.17.d. Train was observed in rear of LAGNICOURT. Men were seen cutting down telegraph poles in rear of LAGNICOURT and removing wire etc., Enemy observer was seen at C.23.d.4.2. on roof of building. Several trains heavily loaded were seen to leave QUEANT. Where possible Artillery was directed on to these targets.

MISCELLANEOUS. At 8 a.m. 23rd inst., a party of 20 approached our Post at C.14.c.7.9. which was dispersed by rifle fire two being killed. They apparently were not aware of our Post and wandered towards it. 4 explosions at a great distance N.E. of LAGNICOURT were heard.

*R. Hunter* Lieut.  
For G.O.C., 7th Australian Infantry Brigade.



7th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.PATROL REPORTS.28th BATTALION.25th March 1917.

A double patrol advanced towards LAGNICOURT on either side of the road from the Cutting (C.29.a.4.2.) After making close reconnaissance along the whole road to the Village it was found that the enemy had dismounted his machine gun from its emplacement C.25.d.4. (approx) Along the right hand side of the road in close vicinity to the emplacement it was found that the enemy had 4 large dug-outs the entrance of which was covered over with sheet iron which was leaning against them with earth thrown over the outside so as to screen it from observation. Patrols then proceeded to investigate the contents of the outskirts of the Village for 100 yds on each side of the road. The right patrol reported all clear. The left patrol observed a light in what appeared to be a trench at foot of brick wall in vicinity of C.25.d.4.3. After making a close reconnaissance they were convinced that the Post was held strongly. They next proceeded to come in close touch with patrol on the right, this they did and after forming a screen commenced their return journey making absolutely certain that they cleared the road as they proceeded and again found there was nothing to hinder their advance.

Patrol returned to Company Head Quarters after a 4 hours reconnaissance.

(Signed) Percy H. Cherry.  
Captain.

"B" Coy 1st Anzac Cyclists Patrol

Observation point C.8.d.1.5. Visibility good. No sound or movement in LOBERT. Heard four machine guns firing at our planes from point just N.E. of village. Saw one of our planes apparently brought down at about C.1.b.0.5. (a battle plane) at 9.30 a.m.

Confirm wire round S. of village as per my C.Y.B.2 of 23rd. Apparent small break in wire at C.8.b.6.8. Wire also seemed to run round from C.9.a.0.9. to N.E. of village.

(signed) J.J.H.C., Capt,  
B. Coy, 1st Anzac Cyclists

625

Patrol Report "B" Coy. 27th Bn.

Patrol of 1 N.C.O. and 7 o/ranks went out from post at B. Coy, C.15.c.55.2. about 8 p.m. to patrol ground in C.16.a. to ascertain if there be any cover for troops about 200 yards or so from enemy posts.

Patrol moved along Sunken Road in valley, then by bearing to the Right, covered all ground between C.15.d.2.9. C.16.a.5.0. Patrol then worked towards village NOREUIL for about 150 yards, but no suitable cover was observed.

Flares were fired from posts in front of village. Several rifle shots were also heard, but village was quieter than the last several nights.

There is no wire opposite post in South Western portion of village.

Corporal Johnson is confident he could guide a Company up Sunken Road in valley to a point about 200 yards from village to be in position to attack at dawn.

Corporal Johnson, L/Cpl Robertson approached NOREUIL up Left bank of Sunken Road in valley to a point 300 yards from village in daylight - afternoon about 2.50, 24/3/17. One of the enemy was noticed to walk from end of village at C.10.b.3.5. to point about C.10.b.2.2 where he disappeared from view.

The post previously reported in South Western part of village does not cross vehicle road running into village.

(signed) J. K. Beddome, Lt. O.C., "B" Coy

Report from O.C., "C" Coy

Scouts report having patrolled Sunken Road from C.27.a.2.7. to a point 1200 yards at C.23.b.0.4. at which point they found an occupied post; also they saw several lights in the village of LAGRICOURT.

(signed) A. R. Burton, Lt.  
For O.C., "C" Coy.

*am "E"*

625

CONFIDENTIAL.

No. 5.

7th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE.

26th March 1917.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY for 24 hours ending 6 a.m. 26th March 1917.

OUR OPERATIONS.

ARTILLERY. Our 18 Pounders have been active all day and engaged the following targets:-  
LAGNICOURT at 5 a.m. 25th inst. heavy bombardment. Cross Roads in MOREUIL and LAGNICOURT, Village of MOREUIL and Railway Station. Parties of enemy in C.11.a. and C.4.d. Our 4.5 Hows. fired on LAGNICOURT and Cross Roads in Village also Cross Roads in MOREUIL and Railway Station. Our fire was reported to be effective.

PATROLS. Our Cyclists Corps report that they were in touch with Division on our Left at B.17.b.

AIRCRAFT. Our planes were very active and had several encounters with enemy planes. Four of our Planes were reported to be brought down by enemy.

ENEMY OPERATIONS.

ARTILLERY. Enemy shelled as usual in vicinity of VAULX. The following targets receiving attention:-

Locality shelled.	Time.	No. Rds.	Calibre.	Hostile direction
Sunken Road. C.26.d.	10-15. 10-20 a.m.	5.9	4.2.	60° T.B.
" " "	11-25. 11-50 a.m.	5.9	4.2.	60° T.B.
C.26.b.	1.10. 1-20 p.m.			
T.B's. from O.P. at C.26.t.8.3.				

AIRCRAFT. Enemy planes were very active during the day and on several occasions crossed our lines but were forced to retire by our planes and A.A.Gun fire. Enemy Observation Balloons were noticed on following T.B's. 60° 74½° 79½° 81½° from C.26.t.8.3. These Balloons only remained up for a few minutes and were then drawn down.

ENEMY MOVEMENT. Enemy transport drawn by eight horses was seen moving along track running North in vicinity of C.17.b. Two of the enemy seen moving in the vicinity of C.23.b. A machine Gun position is suspected at C.23.b.21.6.

*[Signature]*  
Lieut.  
For G.O.C., 7th Australian Infantry Brigade.