AWM4

Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries, 1914-18 War

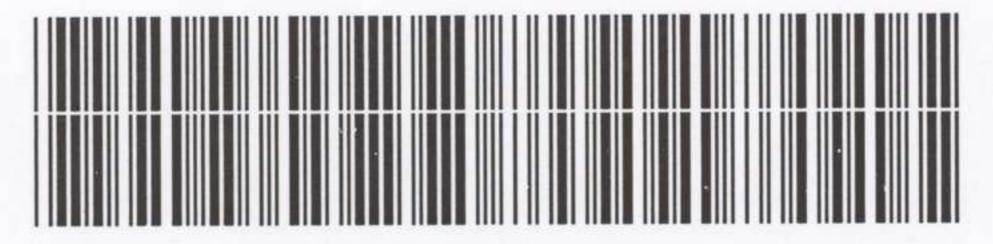
Artillery

Item number: 13/126/26

Title: 15th Australian Light Trench Mortar

Battery

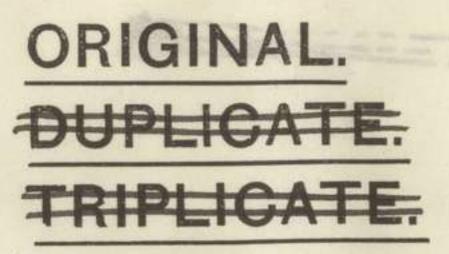
August 1918



AWM4-13/126/26

R.20,000-5/18-11069.

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Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

OF

15TH A. L. T. M. B.

FOR

August 1919

Signature of Officer compiling

Signature of Officer Commanding

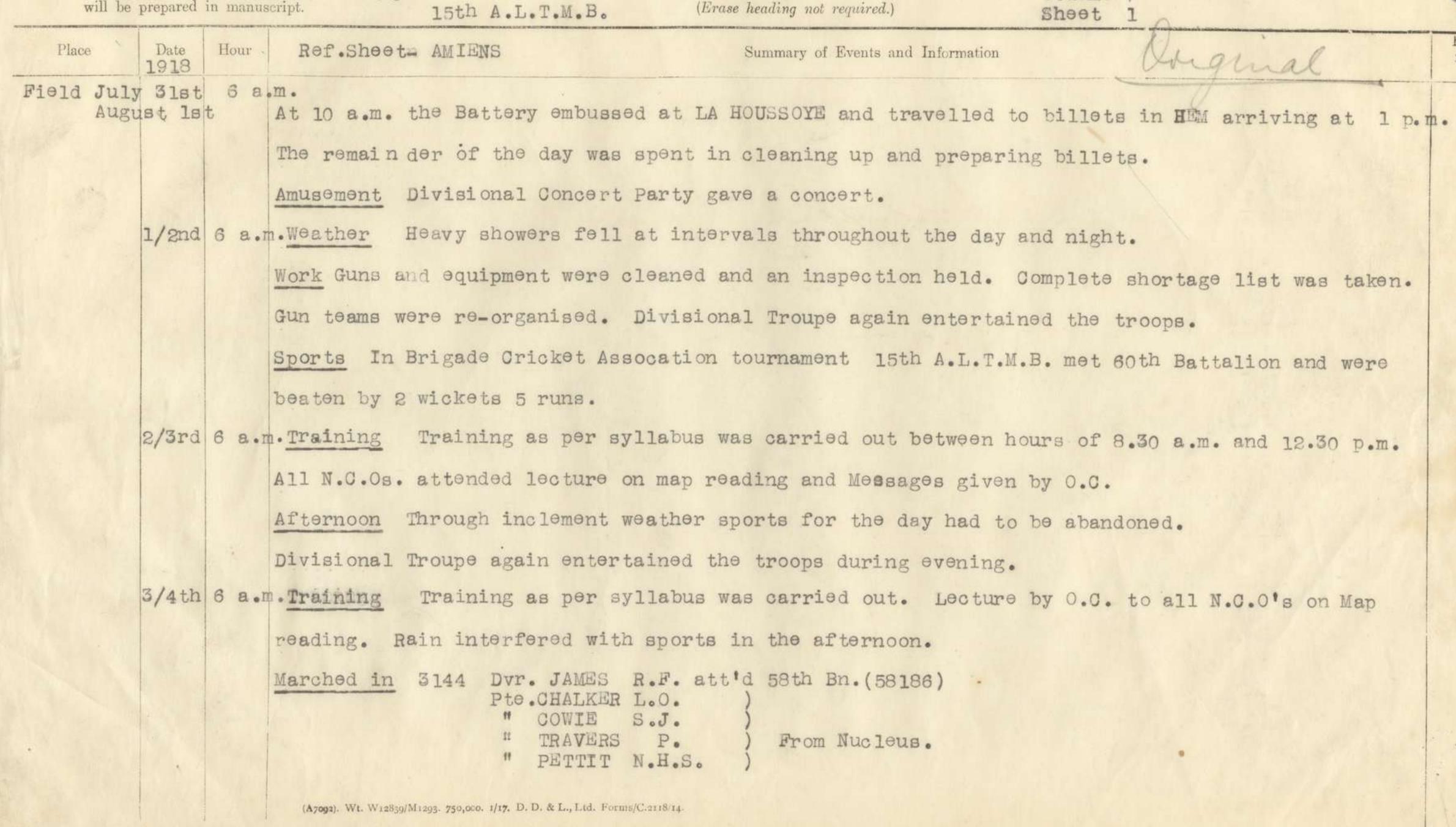
AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL RCDIG1008037

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Volume 7

Sheet



Army Form C. 2118.

Kemarks and

references to

Appendices

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence
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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

and the will be	Staff Manual resp prepared in manu	pectively. Title pages script. 15th A.L.T.M.B. (Erase heading not required.) Page 2	El .
Place	Date Hour	Summary of Events and Information Ref.62D 1/20,000	Remarks and references to Appendices
Field Aug	•4th 6 a.r	Marched out 1944 Dvr.DUFFY J.M. (58'52) ceased to be attached from 58th Battalion.	
	3/.5th 6 a	.m.N.C.O's received lecture by O.C. on Messages and Map reading. Orders were received to the	
		effect that the unit would move to billets in RIVERIE AREA. The Battery moved by route march	
		from HEM to RIVERIE starting at 8 p.m. and arriving about 9.15 p.m. We billeted for the night	
		Fairly heavy rain fell. During the day of the 5th preparation was made for a move forward.	
		This took place the same evening in heavy rain.	
	5/6 the a.	On the night of 5th/6th the battery moved from their billets in RIVERIE AREA for front line	
		system, starting at 8.20 p.m. Heavy showers fell. We moved by route march to trench system	
		near VILLERS BRETONNEUX, keeping time table as per Brigade Order No. 184. Traffic was exceedingly	
		heavy along the roads but good progress was made and unit was all under cover for the night at	
		3 a.m. on August 6th. Battery H.Q. were at 0.23.0.30.20. Wnemy shelling was normal in this	P
		area. Gas was noticeable.	PPE
	6/7th6 a.r	The weather has cleared up. Battery H.Q. still at 0.23.C.30.20. The day spent inpreparations	
		for coming event. The position was recommoitred. Enemy shelling was above normal. Gas being	NO NO
		used occasionally. Eight men from 57th Battalion and 8 from 58th Battalion were attached to	X
		the Battery as carrying party. Troops were rested as much as possible. Casualties - Nil.	2
	7/8th 6 a.m	Preparations were completed. Ammunition was fused and made up into one man loads. Major	100
		DIAMOND of "A" Company 2nd Tank Battalion was located and arrangements made. Mortars and (A7092). Wt. W12839/M1293. 750,000. 1/17. D. D. & L., Ltd. Forms/C.2118 14.	2

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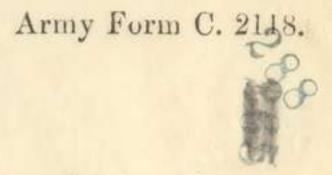
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Field	1918 7 the th		ammunition were carried to FOUILLOY and loaded on tanks. Personnel were made familiar with	
			tanks to which they were attached. Dispositions were 8 detachments each of 5 Battery men and	
			2 Infantry Carriers. Detachments carried 16 rounds of Stokes Ammunition each. Extra water	
			bottles and battle rations were issued. Enemy shelling normal considerable damage was caused	
			through the enemy setting fire to supply tanks near BRETONNEUX.	
	8/9th 6	a.m.	At 5.30 a.m. Battery moved forward with second wave of attack following tanks carrying mortar s	
			and ammunition. Keeping time with artillery barrage. On the morning of the 8th the battery was	
			in position agreed on to intercept the tanks, everything going well and to time. A heavy mist	
		72	along with dense smoke from artillery caused a little delay. However lie out position was	
			reached in good time. Tanks were closely followed to P.35.D. and V.5.A. whore mortars and	A
			ammunition were unloaded. One "A" shaped elevating stand was found to be lost from tanks.	9
			sections were now attached to Battalions in following manner 4 guns and teams to 57th Battalion	M
			and 4 to 59th Battalion. At 8.20 these Battalions moved forward in two waves in line of	5
			sections in single file. Teams in each case moved with second wave of attacking force. Little	X
			resistance was met with; and enemy shelling was scattered. Prisoners dribbled back in small	20
			prties. Our artillery was doticed at times to be firing short. With the exception of 9 rounds	o.
			of ammunition carried by two men who became casualties and 1 "A" shape elevating stand lost in	
			(A7092). Wt. W12839/M1293. 750,000. 1/17. D. D. & L., Ltd. Forms/C.2118 14.	

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

Volume 7 Sheet 4



	e prepared in man	uscript. 15th A.L.T.M.B. (Erase heading not required.) Sheet 4	(EW)
Place	Date Hour	Ref.Sheet 62D 1/20,000 Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Field	August 8/9th 6 a.	m.in action the whole of the Battery equipment was got right forward to final objective. No	
		targets presented themselves until the BLUE LINE (final objective) was reached. Mortars were	
		then distributed along the front in good defensive positions. Ammunition was got forward from	
		dumps established by Supply Tanks and 12 rounds were fired on M.G. to cover advance of 59th	
		Battalion. Battery H.Q. at W.17.C.9-5.	
		Enemy artillery seemed very weak. Apparently only one or two batteries of heavy artillery	
		and no light artillery were in action and firing on HARBONNIERES, which lay to our rear. The	
		weather was exceptionally fine and bright. No counter attack developed.	
		Ammunition expended 12 rounds Casualties - nil.	
	9/10th 6 8	m. Under excellent weather conditions and under cover of our advanced artillery and Machine Guns	
		the advance was resumed until the 1st Division came up and leapfrogged our division. Prisoners	
		streamed in again. Enemy machine guns were active in places, but were easily silenced, when	
		engaged by the mortars. 39 rounds were well spent in this work. While pushing forward a gun to	
		engage one of these "nests" 3 O.R. of the battery were conspicuous - L/Cpl.A.HARRIS, Ptes.SCOTT	
		and SMITH. Under heavy machine gun and rifle fire, Harris twice rushed forward to assist	
		wounded men. He himself being wounded in the attempt. The remainder of the day was comparative	1y
		quiet, except for occasional shots from enemy heavy artillery on HARBONNIERES . Throughout the	
		two days fighting all ranks of the Battery showed great dash and courage and endurance. All (A7092). Wt. W12839/M1293. 750,000. 1/17. D. D. & L., Ltd. Forms/C.2118'14.	400
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SUMMARY. INTELLIGENCE

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Volume 7



will be prepared in manuscript. 15th A.L. T.M.B. Sheet 5 Remarks and S.E. Summary of Events and Information Date references to Place Hour 1918 August Ref. Sheet 62D 1/20,000 Appendices Field 9/10th 6 a.m. Guns and ammunition were carried right forward to final objective, which alone is proof of the exisiting spirit. Blue cartridges were again found to be defective. The chief failure being to explode the cap even though correctly struck. Enemy planes were active during the night and be mied the neighbouring towns. Killed 1 O.R. Pte.SMITH Casualties: Wounded 1 O.R. L. Cpl. HARRIS A. 38 rounds. Ammunition expended 10/11th 6 a.m. The weather continues to be fine and warm. At 10.30 a.m. the battery moved back to billeting area near DAOURS where we lived under canvas. Unit was under cover by 6.30 p.m. after At night enemy planes visited the area and bombed it between hours a long and thring march. of 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. Casualties - nil. Promotions - 653 Cpl. HENFON'J. to be Sgt. (vice 1031 Sgt. HOFFMAN . 11/12th 6 a.m. Weather still fine and warm. Reorganisation and cleaning up was commenced immediately. An inspection parade was held at 10.30 a.m. Clean underclothes were drawn, and a bathing parade held and dirty clothes returned. Troops rested during afternoon. 217 Pye BERHISEL D.W. (7 days hosp.) Evacuated to Field Amb. (influenza) 2808 Pte. BUCKLAND, D. (A7092). Wt. W12839/M1293. 750,000. 1/17. D. D. & L., Ltd. Forms/C.2118/14.

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

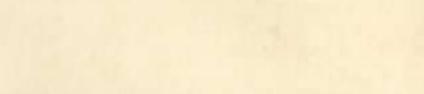
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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.



	Summary of Events and Information Ref.Sheet 62D S.E.	Remarks and references to Appendices
ield 12/13 th 6 a.m.	Still camped at DAOURS area. Guns and equipment were cleaned up. An inspection parade was	
	held at 10 a.m. Enemy planes visited area at night. Troops rested for the day. Preparation	
	made to move forward.	
	Promotions 4565 Cpl.PEADY T.A. to be Sgt. (Vice Sgt.BENTON J. marched out) 5065 Cpl.COOK A.L. to be L.Sgt. (Vice 1794 L.Sgt.RYDER M.W.)	
	Marched out 653 Sgt.BENTON J. (Transport duty to Aust. and 2 months leave) Evacuated Field.Amb. 1941 Pte.MURPHY J.	
	Battery move out and route marched to new billeting area South of HARBONNIERES at 8.30 a.m.	
6 a.m.	Reached new area at 2.30 p.m. Sheltered in dugouts ans in sunken roads at.	
	Enemy planes visited area at unight. One long range enemy gun shelled the vicinity of billets.	
	Still in dugouts South of HARBONNIERES. Teams now attached to Battalions for rations. Battery	
6 a.m.	Transport recalled to Battalion and substituted by 16 mules. Our ammunition dump located.	D
	Weather still fine and warm. Preparation was made to move to new position near MERICOURT sur	ITI
6 2 . 10	SOMME. Move took place at 6.30 p.m. moving by route march through HARBONNIERES. Enemy shelling	2
	fairly active. Enemy planes very active along main roads dropping bombs. Battery in positions	O X
	at Q.12.C.1.9. 12 midnight.	×
	Marched out 2956 Pte.SCOTT W.F.) On English Leave 3209 " PETTIT W.H.S.)	S. C.
16/17 th	Enemy artillery fairly active throughout the night on roads and gullies. Battery moved forward	
	(A7092). Wt. W12839/M1293. 750,000. 1/17. D. D. & L., Ltd. Forms/C.2118/14.	4

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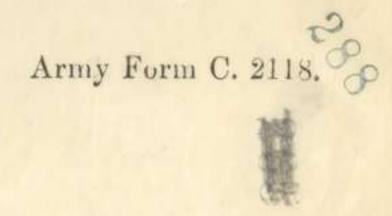
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
F101d	1918 August 6 18/19th	a.m.	Some of Targets engaged LUC WOOD(R.3.Gentral) TRENCHES (R.9.B) M.G.(R.9.C.9-1) M.G's and Bank (R.9.D.4-1 to 7-3.) Ammunition expended 130 rounds	
			Seconded for duty Lieut.S.E.WOOTTON(from 60 th Bn.) Struck Off 2128 L.Cpl.Bush R.H.(Evac C.C.S.Asthma) 2808 Pte.BUCKLAND D.(7 Days Hospital)	
	19/20 th		Enemy artillery was very quiet during the day. Our artillery fairly active, notably from about	
		a.m.	7.30 p.m. on our direct front firing on Strong enemy M.G.nest(R.9.C.9.3)	
			During the night enemy Artillery was active in irregular bursts of about twn minutes duration.	
			An enemy Aeroplane passed over our lines at about 6.30 p.m. Flying at a low altitude. Enemy	
			machine gun fire below normal during the period.	
			Works "Strafing"positions were prepared and stocked and ammunition was got forward and made	T
		J. W.	ready. Minenwerfer we have got a splendid sample of Minenwerfer and have alternative positions	IT
			for it. The men are keen and have been given Targets and registrations. A good supply of	Z
			ammunition (including Gas shells) is available.	×
			Targets engaged Strong Points (R.21.8.7-7) and (R.9.8.) LUC WOOD (R.3.8. and C.) Machine Guns Our Minenwerfer registered on LUC WOOD.	8
			(R.21.D.0-0) (N.10.D.0-1/1.	
			Ammunition expended Stokes 110 Hinonwerfer 10.	
			Attached 3049 Dvr.GUY J.M. from 59th Bn., attachment ceased Dvr.DEPPELER returned to 59th Bn. (A7092). Wt. W12839/M1293. 750,000. 1/17. D. D. & L., Ltd. Forms/C.2118-14.	-

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.



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Place	Date 1918	Hour Summary of Events and Information Ref. Sheet 62D S.E.	Append
Field Augu	August 20/21st	Except for occasional bursts of, Artillery and M.G. fire the enemy was very quiet. He continues	
		to shell RPOYART with shells of large Calibre. A frie was caused in rear of our lines and it	
		burnt throughout the day. Enemy bombin g planes passed over our lines at about 2 a.m. and	
		dropped several heavy Bombs. A patrol of Right Coy. Right Battalion reported an enemy working	
		party at R.15. and R.16. a and C these were engaged and dispersed. They re-appeared later and	
		were again fired on and a harrassing fire was kept on the location at intervals during the night.	
		Our artillery was active during the 24 hours.	
		Targets engaged Working party (R.15 and R.16.a. and c. (dispersed), enemy posts (R.21.b.8-8 and R.15.D.7-7) suspected M.G. R.9.C.9-1, enemy post R.21.D., Strong Points - R.3.D.95-00 and R.9.B.	
		Targets engaged by our minenwerfer during day enemy position in and around LUC WOOD R.3.A, B & C.	
		Ammunition expended Stokes - 120 rounds, Minenwerfer 40 rounds. Casualties nil.	
	21/22nd	Enemy artillery activity very much below normal during the whole period. Enemy machine guns	
		were also less active during the night opening only in rare bursts.	
		Fewer flares were noticed probably owing to bright moonlight. Enemy aeroplane flying low,	
		crossed our lines. During the whole period our artillery kept up harrassing organised shoots	
		Medium Tranh Mortars and our Mortars and minenwerfer also fired during period.	
		Targets engaged Trench between COPSE at R.15.B.4-2 to ROAD in R.21.B.6-7 area traversed. Trench R.0.C.9-1 and enemy working party was dispersed (Infantry report).	
		Machine guns, R.9.b.15.60 and R.9.B.3-8. Enemy strong point on grid between	

Army Form C. 211

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15th A.L.T.M.B.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Field	1918 A gust 21/22nd	1	Ref.Sheet 62D S.E. R.J.C. and D. and R.9.A. and B., enemy patrol R.9.B.2-6 dispersed.	
			Minenwerfer targets ugaged LUC WOOD; WOOD and ROADS R.9.D. and R.10.C. Strong points in R.15.E Ammunition expended Stokes 137 rounds Minenwerfer 35 rounds.	
			Marched in 2171 Sgt.LOUGHLIN J.E.) From Aust.Corps School 3364 Cpl.MIERS J.N.) via 5th Div.Nucleus. 3515 Pte.GALVIN P.J.)	
			1978 L.Cpl.RI.SMAN G.V.) 2273 Pte.FLOOD B.C. From 4th Army Rest Camp 5651 BAXTER G.H.W.) Via 5th Div.Nucleus. 5333 Cpl.BELL C.V.)-Base Via 5th Div. Nucleus.	
			Attached - 3437 Pte.MARTIN A.E. from 60th Bn.	
	22/23rd	1	Day fine. Night clear and mild. Enemy artillery below normal but machine guns alert and	
			at times diring very long bursts. During the night our Mortars opened gun fire at intervals	
			on such machine guns within range and the usual burass of fire on enemy posts.	6
			At 4.45 a.m. our Mortars opened up in conjunction with our artillery to thicken barrage on	東
			enemy front line. Preliminary to attack by 1st Division. Biring on known points of enemy	8
			activity. Attack by 1st Division was carried out with dash according to plan and the tide of	e ch
			battle rolled on leaving us very soon almost clear of enemy shell fire.	
			Ammunition expended Stokes 260 rds Minenerwerfer 25 rounds. Casualties nil.	9

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Volume 7

15th A.L.T.M.B. Remarks and Summary of Events and Information references to Hour Date Place Appendices 1918 Reference Sheet 620 August At 9 m.m. the Brigade moved forward. The Battery still being in Reserve and moving with Field 29/30 th Enemy was shelling in scattered bursts as Brigade approached VILTERS the soth Battalion. A considerable number of Gas shells were used in every salvo and lowlying areas CARBONNEL. to windward were made comfortable by sneezing and mustard gas. Towards evening Battery took up position in trenches on high ground in N.29.B. A message was received from Brigade at 6 am 3 a.m. to report to Brigade Headquarters when Orders were received for move. At 8 a.m. again in close touch with 60th Battalion Battery moved forward. Brigade moving in a 30/31st Morth Easterly direction towards PERONNE keeping BARLEUX on our Deft. As however the crossing had not been made good by the Brigade in the line. The 15th Brigade moved to reserve position near BARLEUX. Battery H.Q. being established at N.18.C.2-2. near 57th Battalion. Two Mortars were sent to 59th Battalion with orders to take up position in BASTION I.33.D.2-9. and 80 rounds of ammunition were got forward to these guns. Battery H.Q. were moved into trench partly occupied by 57th Battalion. H.Q. being given as Aug. 31/1st Sept. Left of 57th Battalion H.Q. Day was spent inworking up ammunition to Forward dumps and guns. Casualties Wounded 4565 Sgt. PEADY T.A. (since died). Struck off 5167 Cpl. OLSEN W.H. Casualties were caused by shell from 77 m.m. gun which was firing at point blank range from PERONNE and 6 a.mwas one of the last shells fired from this gun. (A7092). Wt. W12839/M1293. 750,000. 1/17. D. D. & L., Ltd. Forms/C.2118/14.

(A7092). WE. W12839/M1293. 750,000. 1/17. D. D. C. D., 1.10.

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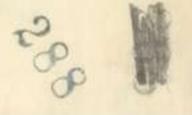
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Place Date Hour R	ef.Sheet 62D S.E. Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to
ield August	and relieve 17th Division (English) Tranch Mortar Battery. The night was fairly quiet. Owing	Appendices
	Battalion relief and movement of mortars no shooting was done. (2133 L.Opl.CLIRKE E.A. Marched out (from Nucleus to Aust.Corps School) (1978 ". RIASMAN O.VI. (3140 " SANDOE	
	Artillery on both sides very active. Enemy M.G's very busy. Our front line companies endeavour	d
6 a.m.	to push our line forward by Patrols. Right Coy. of Right Battalion were successful and dug in	
	near enemy wire. Throughout the operation enemy M.G. and rifle fire was heavy. Our Mortars	
	were prepared to co-operate under instructions from Coy. Commanders but were inable to fire as	
	the position of our Patrols was uncertain during the night along the whole front. Forward	
	Dumps were established and ammunition carried forwards to new Gun emplacements.	
18/19th	During the day the Enemy was very quiet. Towards evening his Artillery became very active,	
	firing in bursts of about 10 mins. duration at intervals during the night. Our own artillery	
	firing was above normal also mostly in bursts. At about 2 a.m. gas was used by enemy. His	5
	shelling with same lasting about half an hour. Proyart was again shelled by a gun of large	
	Calibre and bombs were dropped on that Town. After 4 a.m. enemy was very quiet.	- P - Z
	Operations At 12 midnight in liaison with 59th Battalion fire was brought to bear on	1 9
	suspected points of Machine Gun activity. As a result enemy M.G.Fire was much below normal	
	on our sector during period and some direct hits may be assumed. (A7092). Wt. W12839/M1293. 750,000. 1/17. D. D. & L., Ltd. Forms/C.2118/14.	

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.



Place	Date Hour	Ref.Sheet 62D S.E. Summary of Events and Information	Remarks at references Appendice
	1918 August	Owing to the advance of the 1st Division we are now well back. On word being received that we	Zippendie
Field	22/23rd	are to move out to VAIRE sous CORBIE for a rest preparations were made and Battery moved by	
		march route along Canal to VAIRE. Battery reported in Billets at 9 p.m. A hot meal was	
		waiting and was appreciated by all.	
	23/24th	A clean change of clothing was obtained from baths for every man in the unit. Shortages were	
		taken and each man's issue was completed. Battery gear was also overhauled and replacements	
	6 a.m.	made. Mortars were cleaned.	
	24/25th	Battery was inspected.	
		Marched out 2171 Sgt.LOUGHLIN J.E. to O.T.C. and placed on Supernumerary List.	
	25/26th	Fair weather continues. R.C's attended Church Parade in Village Church. There was also a	
	6 a .r	.Voluntary Parade for Protestants. Promotions - 4485 Cpl.FLEMING A.T. Appointed A/Sgt. 4578 Pte.RICHARDSON H.T. " L.Cpl.	
	26/27 th	Training carried out during morning. Afternoon de voted to sport. Battery was inspected	
		and addressed by Gen.Sir.J.J.T.HOBBS at 11 a.m.	
	6 a.1	.Marched out Lieut.R.D.CHALMERS to U.K.Leave.	
	27/28th	Training carried out during morning. Sport in afternoon. Marched out 2867 Pte.H.PARKER	
		and 454 Pte.McBRIDE A.G. on Paris Leave. Marched in 2662 Pte.GRIFFITHS S.G.V. From Hosp. (re-attached from 58th Bn.)	
			1
		(A7092), Wt. W12839/M1293. 750,000. 1/17. D. D. & L., Ltd. Forms/C.2118/14.	1

DURING RECENT OPERATIONS.

Experience in recent operations has proved Pack Bules to be of little use. In the allotment of two per Hortar it . works out at one mule to carry the Mortar complete and l mule to carry ;2 rounds of amaunition, In a General Advance this would make it easy for the mon up to a certain point, after which Observation and other causes would make it necessary for the men to carry on. If a similar operation was in view again I would advecate for 2 Limbers and 12 Hules (The same number of Hales all told). Limbers could carry about 180 rounds and all the Mortars and the mules would also carry their quota and also be available beyond the point which wheeled traffic is possible. Thus having a large Hobile echelon of Ammunition on hand. Another disadvantage with Mules only is that a large part of their time would necessarily he spent their own forage and water and also their awkwardness in carrying rations for the personnel of the Battery. During recent operations there was not at any time any shortage of ammunition either in front line or rear dumps. As it was a case of being constantly on the move it was necessary for the carriers attached to the Gun Teams to bear all the Mobile Ammunition as a great deal of the moving had to be done through trenches etc. to escape enemy observation and fire. When a team got into a semi-permenent position from which they were likely to fire extra ammunition was at once got up to them from forward dumps by the best means available.

Sgr. H.S.McGOLL, Capt.