

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

Engineers

**Item number:** 14/13/14

**Title:** 1st Australian Pioneer Battalion

April 1917



AWM4-14/13/14

# WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title Pages will be prepared in manuscript.

## or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Mametz Camp	April 1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup>	1917	A, C and D Companies Anyac Corps Light Railway Construction B. Company Infantry Training High Wood East Camp.	
Bancourt	April 5 <sup>th</sup>	1917	Battalion Headquarters moved from Mametz Camp to Bancourt A. C and D Companies Anyac Corps Light Railway Construction B. Company. Erection of Divisional Headquarters at Bancourt	
Bancourt	April 6 <sup>th</sup>	1917	A Company moved from Le Barque to Fremincourt B Company. Erection of Divisional Headquarters at Bancourt C and D Companies Anyac Corps Light Railway Construction Transport move from Fricourt to Bancourt.	
Bancourt	April 7 <sup>th</sup>	1917	A. Company. Erection of camp at Fremincourt B. Company. Erection of Divisional Headquarters at Bancourt C and D Companies Anyac Corps Light Railway Construction	
Bancourt	April 8 <sup>th</sup>	1917	A. Company. Erection of camp at Fremincourt. B. Company. Erection of Divisional Headquarters at Bancourt C and D Companies Anyac Corps Light Railway Construction 4 Lewis Guns and crews attached 21 <sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Coy - Divisional Reserve	
Bancourt	April 9 <sup>th</sup> 10 <sup>th</sup> 11 <sup>th</sup> 12 <sup>th</sup> 13 <sup>th</sup> 14 <sup>th</sup> 15 <sup>th</sup> 16 <sup>th</sup>	1917	A. Company Main Cambrai Road from I. 20 Central and forward B. Company. Erection of Divisional Headquarters at Bancourt C and D Companies Anyac Corps Light Railway Construction 4 Lewis Guns and crews attached 21 <sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Coy - Divisional Reserve	

W. A. Henderson Lt Col

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Bancourt	April 15 <sup>th</sup>	1917	A Company. Main Cambrai Road from I. 20 central and forward. B Company. 2 platoons erection of Divisional Headquarters at Beaumetz 2 platoons move to Lebuquiere. C and D Companies. Anyac Corps Light Railway Construction 6 Lewis Guns and crews attached 21 <sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Company.	
Bancourt	April 16 <sup>th</sup>	1917	A Company. Main Cambrai Road from I. 20 central & forward. B Company. 2 platoons erection of Divisional Headquarters at Beaumetz 2 platoons move to Lebuquiere C and D Companies Anyac Corps Light Railway construction 6 Lewis Guns and crews attached 21 <sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Company.	
Bancourt	April 17 <sup>th</sup> 18 <sup>th</sup> 19 <sup>th</sup> 20 <sup>th</sup> 21 <sup>st</sup>	1917	A Company. Main Cambrai Road from I. 20 central & forward. B Company. Erection of Divisional Headquarters at Beaumetz C and D Companies Anyac Corps Light Railway Construction 6 Lewis Guns and crews attached 21 <sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Company.	
Bancourt	April 21 <sup>st</sup> 22 <sup>nd</sup> 23 <sup>rd</sup> 24 <sup>th</sup>	1917	A Company. 2 platoons main Cambrai Road from I. 20 central & forward 2 platoons Construction of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Brigade Headquarters at Morchies B Company. Erection of Divisional Headquarters at Beaumetz C and D Companies Anyac Corps Light Railway Construction 6 Lewis Guns and crews attached 21 <sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Company.	
Bancourt	April 25 <sup>th</sup>		A Company. 2 platoons main Cambrai Road from I. 20 central and forward 2 platoons Construction of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Brigade Hqs at Morchies. B Company Erection of Divisional Headquarters at Beaumetz C Company. 2 platoons resting 2 platoons. move from High Wood East camp to Fremicourt D Company. Anyac Corps Light Railway Construction	

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# WAR DIARY

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Bancourt	April 26 <sup>th</sup> 1917		<p>A Company 2 platoons main Cambrai Road from I 20 central of forward  2 platoons Construction of 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Hqs at Morehies</p> <p>B. Company Erection of Divisional Hqs at Beaumetz</p> <p>C Company 2 platoons move from High Wood East camp to Fremicourt  2 platoons Amzac Corps Light Railway Construction</p> <p>D. Company Amzac Corps Light Railway Construction</p>	
Bancourt	April 27 <sup>th</sup> 28 <sup>th</sup> 29 <sup>th</sup> 1917		<p>A Company 2 platoons main Cambrai Road from I 20 central of forward  2 platoons Amzac Light Railway Construction</p> <p>B. Company Erection of Divisional Hqs at Beaumetz</p> <p>C and D. Companies Amzac Corps Light Railway Construction</p>	
Bancourt	April 30 <sup>th</sup> 1917		<p>B and C Companies resting and Infantry Training</p> <p>A and D. Companies Amzac Corps Light Railway Construction</p>	

W.A. Henderson L. Col

22-4-17  
5 pm

HANDING OVER REPORT ON ROADS AND  
WORKS IN HAND.  
1st Pioneer Battalion.  
1st Australian Divisional Area.

Ref. Road Chart attached. R.F. 1/20,000.

ROADS.

General. The general condition of the roads in the 1st Australian Divisional Area is good. The principal work required is provision for drainage and obstacles to be removed, i.e., trees fallen across the roads in the forward areas; railway bridges blown down where over roads and craters formed at cross roads.

Trees have been removed in the areas behind a line through BERTINCOURT, VELU, MORCHIES, and VAUX. The Canadians are repairing the bridges where destroyed and there are still several craters to be filled in.

The following gives a detailed condition of the roads and the condition at the present time.

Main BAPAUME-CAMBRAI Road. The Corps have taken over this road up to and including the crater at BERTROOT FACTORY, I.17.d.5.8. Forward of this point the pave is in good condition and clear of obstacles up to CRUCIFIX, J.13.e.7.7. At this location a crater has been blown but has been filled in, 75% being completed, a by-pass timber track has been formed on the North side, which will take heavy Motor-lorries, but not tractors with guns owing to sharp curve. Work at this point and beyond must be carried out during the night.

From J.9.central, trees have been fallen across the road from both sides and have not up to the present been removed. A crater has been blown at J.9.b.5.3. and the culvert across water course at J.10.a.8.5. has also been destroyed. Material is available at both points for repairs.

BANCOURT-HAPLINCOURT-DELSAUX FARM and BEUGNY Roads. This road varies in condition. From BANCOURT to HAPLINCOURT it is in fair condition, bad portions being about in the vicinity of O.2.b.5.7. Drainage is the principal trouble on this road, special attention being required at O.3.a.2.5. The portion of road running through HAPLINCOURT is in very good condition and requires practically no work on it except attention to watch drainage during wet weather. From HAPLINCOURT to I.34.c.2.8. is medium and drainage principal trouble. At I.34.c.2.8. a crater has been blown and is only partially filled in. Vehicles can swing clear on either side; from this point through to BEUGNY the road is good. A filled in crater at I.28.a.2.1. requires topping off with bricks or metal at intervals as it settles.

O.3.b.0.8. VILLERS-au-FLOS to BEAULENCOURT. The road is in fair condition. The portion just before it enters VILLERS-au-FLOS at O.3.a.2.8. is on low ground and requires drainage. The road through the Village is good. The two craters are filled in. From VILLERS-au-FLOS to BEAULENCOURT is only medium condition, portions towards BEAULENCOURT broken by shell holes. This portion of road would not stand continuous heavy traffic.

BANCOURT-FREMICOURT-Mills Cross Roads to LEBUCQUIERE. This road can be used as a relief road by troops, horsemen and lightly loaded limbers moving to LEBUCQUIERE, VELU and BEAUMERIE. From BANCOURT to I.25.a.2.7. is a medium road and in fair condition. It particularly requires drainage between I.25.a.3.0. and I.25.a.2.7. where water lies after rain. The road through FREMICOURT is in good condition, craters, all shell holes, and the road have been repaired and drained.

From

From I.26.a.1.7. to I.28.a.2.1. is a medium road but only lightly metalled; it is easily drained. It is blocked at MILLS CROSS by a large crater, all roads being sunken at this point. This crater is only partially filled and still a large portion of work to be done on it. This point is impassable to G. S. waggons with any loads on them, when the loose earth is sodden. The road from I.28.a.2.1., I.28.b.5.2. is very bad and with a crater at I.28b.5.2. From I.28.b.5.2. to LEBUCQUIERE is a medium road with a filled in crater at I.29.b.6.4. The road through LEBUCQUIERE needs clearing and a crater only 50% completed at I.30.b.2.8. requires completion. There is a by-pass round this crater.

J.8.c.2.1. BRAUMETZ-VELU-J.25.c.1.9. to BERTINCOURT. This is good from J.8.c.2.1. to the first crater in the village at J.14.c.5.5. which requires filling in. The road through village requires clearing, while a crater at J.20.a.1.4. is in a bad condition and only partially filled in. From this point to J.25.c.8.9. the road is good. At J.25.c.8.9. a large crater has been blown and requires filling in, a by-pass on the West side can easily be formed. The road on through J.25.c.1.9. to BERTINCOURT is in good order and requires little attention, except at J.31.c.5.7. where a culvert has been destroyed and replaced by one which is not sufficiently strong to take heavy motor traffic.

HARLINCOURT to BERTINCOURT. The first portion of the road from HARLINCOURT to O.4.d.3.7. is good, the remainder is bad, in some places almost impassable to wheel traffic, especially at O.5.d.8.6. where all the top formation has been cut away. The road is also blocked with trees at O.5.c.8.8. The road into BERTINCOURT is in the next Divisional Area and is blocked at entrance to village.

FREMI COURT to VAULX. This road is in fair condition astride the railway. Between FREMI COURT and the railway it is bad, being cut up with heavy guns and tractors. At I.13.d.6.8. it is very level and drainage is difficult. The road in good weather and if in repair will stand all traffic, but cuts up very quickly in wet weather.

BEUCNY to VAULX. In fair condition and cut up very much, but will not stand heavy traffic in wet weather; only a very thin skin of metal on a chalk formation.

BEETROOT FACTORY (I.17.d.5.8.) to MORCHIES. Takes a great amount of traffic and is in fair condition; drainage requires attention. The road has been blocked in places with earth from gun positions cut in the side of the road. The road through the village requires clearing.

CRUCIFIX (J.13.a.7.7.) to MORCHIES. Road blocked in places with guns and infantry dugouts. Earth will have to be removed to make roadway clear. This is a sunken road most of the distance between the two points. The surface of road is in fair condition, but mud requires removing.

NOTE. Most of the roads are suitable for one way traffic only. The metal formation not being wide enough to take vehicles passing in opposite directions.

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DUGOUTS.

NEW BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS. At J.20.c.8.3. BEAUMETZ, a New Brigade Headquarters has been started and is now almost complete. Attached plan shows the accommodation proposed, the coloured lines showing the completed work. This position is in a deep sunken road, which has been camouflaged overhead. The bank excavated and huts as shown put close up against it. There are four Tarpaulin covered huts with boarded floors, three Armstrong huts and Cook-house. The dugout accommodation consists of three stairways with connecting gallery between. At foot of each stairway is a 9ft. x 6ft. cubicle, with 24ft. head cover. The dotted lines show the proposed cubicles for additional accommodation which would have been completed had the Division been staying in.

AMMUNITION DUGOUTS. At I.21.d.1.9. Ammunition dugouts are being constructed as shown in attached plan. 9 have been completed, 0 semi completed and 5 opened up. A siding has been put in off the Decauville Track to bring the ~~ammunition~~ ammunition up to dug outs for storage, where it will be picked up by Horse or Motor Transport. The existing road running past dugouts is only wide enough for single vehicle and no room to turn. It is proposed to remove the debris from the broken down bridge to allow of a circuit being formed. Waggon coming in empty and pulling out on to main road at BEUGNY.

W.A. Henderson Lt. Col.

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APPENDIX



AMMUNITION DUGOUTS NEAR BEUGNY

57° 1. 21. D. 0. 9.

Scale = 20' to 1"

From Beugny

R o a d

TO CAMBRAY  
Railway  
FROM BARLEINE

Completed work coloured Brown

21.

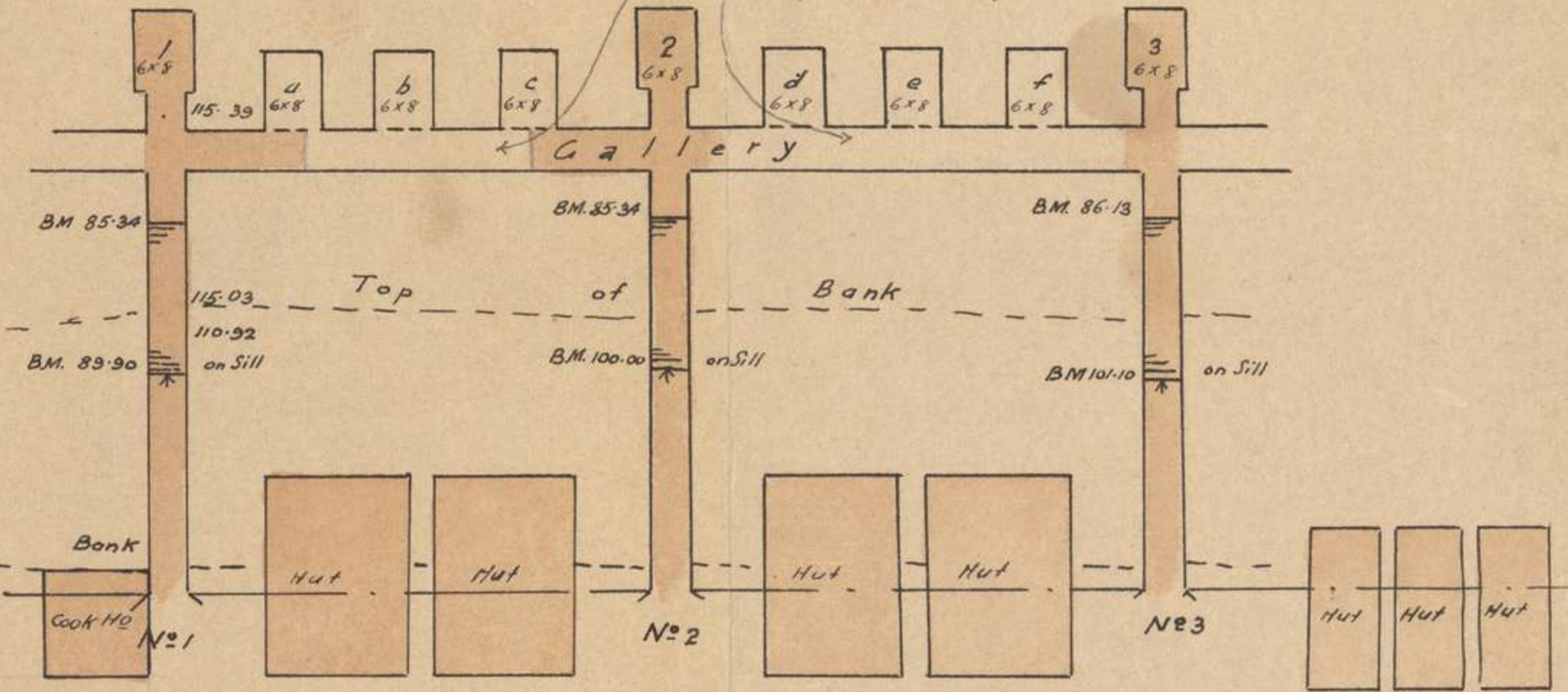
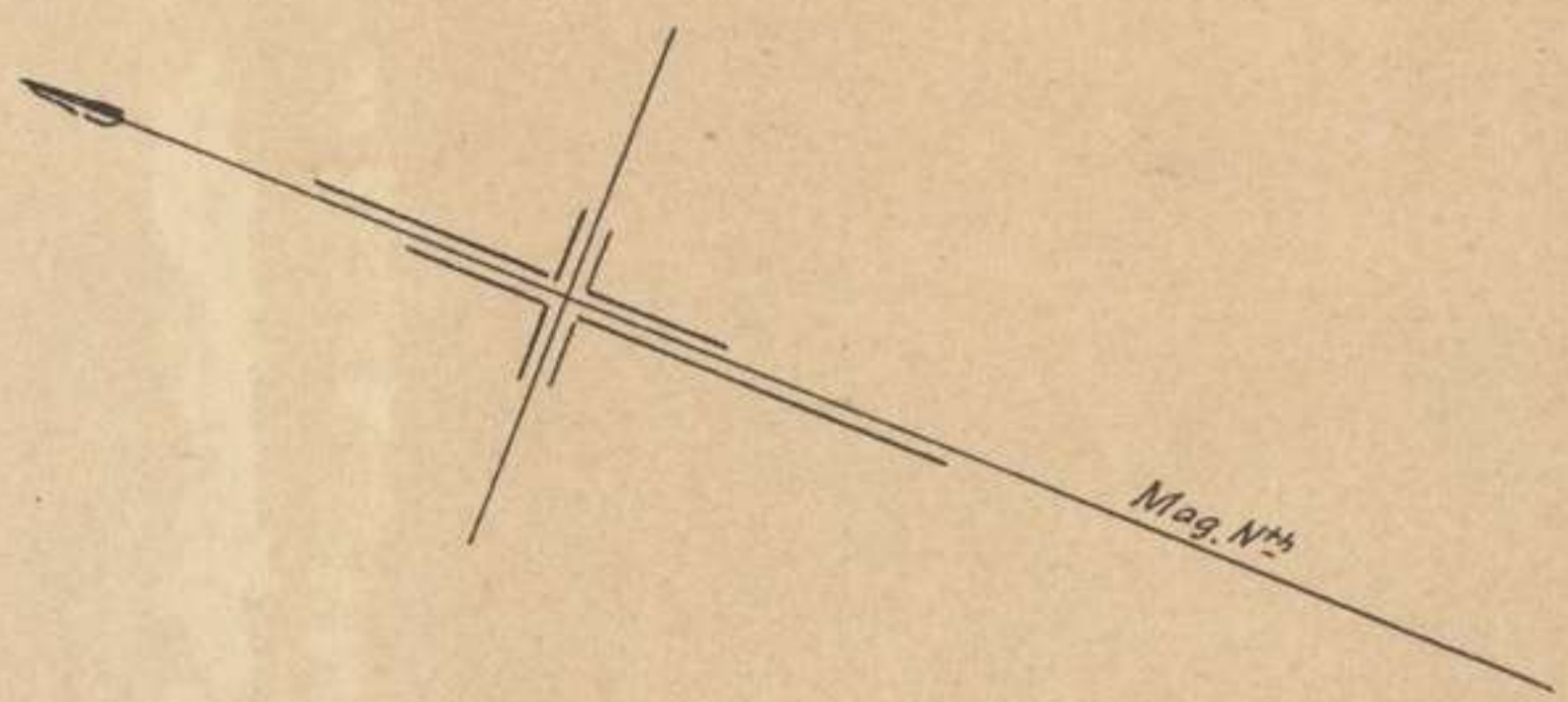
APPENDIX

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ADVANCED D.H.Q. J. 20. C. 6. 7.  
Scale 20' to 1"

. 116.46

Gallery Will be Completed  
by 6 p.m. 24.4.17



BM 85.34

BM 85.34

BM 86.13

115.03

110.92

BM 100.00

BM 101.10

Cook Ho

Nº2

Nº3

R O A D

Top

of

Bank

Track