

AWM4

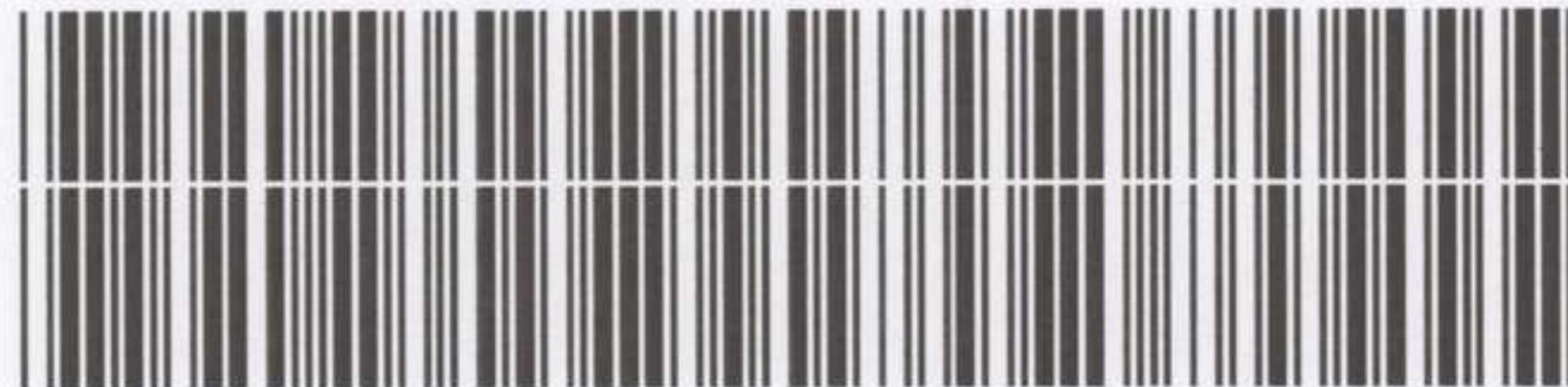
**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War**

Engineers

Item number: 14/13/19

Title: 1st Australian Pioneer Battalion

September 1917



AWM4-14/13/19

WAR DIARY
or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

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

Pioneer BN

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Vieux-Berquin	Sept 1 st 1917		On 31/8/17 3 Cos and HQ left Lumbres in motor buses & proceeded to Vieux Berquin. 1 Company in forward area. Lewis Gun Detachment - anti-aircraft work under direction of 21st M.G. Coy	
Vieux-Berquin	Sept 2 nd 1917		2 Companies HQ moved to Neuf Berquin. 1 Company Vieux Berquin. 1 Company forward area. L.G.D. under instructions from 21st M.G. Coy	
Neuf-Berquin	Sept 3 rd 1917		3 Companies resting. D Company rejoined Battalion from forward area. L.G.D. anti-aircraft work under direction of 21st M.G. Coy. 35 per week proceeding on English leave	
Neuf-Berquin	Sept 4 th 1917	6 th 6 th	Battalion Training. L.G.D. anti-aircraft work	
Neuf-Berquin	Sept 7 th 1917		Battalion moved to forward area in motor buses and set up camp at H23 B8.7 in Ypres area	
Ypres H23 B.8.7	Sept 8 th 1917		Day spent in erection of camp for Battalions. D. Company moved to Zillebeke Lake	
Ypres H23 B.8.7	Sept 9 th 1917		A & B Cos Construction of road from I 18 A 7.6 to J 13 A 5.9 16 J 7 C 4.2. C & D Cos construction of road from I 23 A 0.4 to I 17 B 3.9. 1 officer wounded (LT Clowes) 3 OR killed. 5 OR wounded 8 OR gassed	
Ypres H23 B.8.7	Sept 10 th 1917		A & B Companies construction of road from I 18 A 7.6 to J 13 A 5.9 to J 7 C 4.2. C & D Companies construction of road from I 23 A 0.4 to I 17 B 3.9. 8 OR wounded. 10 OR construction of turning point at Birr cross roads.	
Ypres H23 B.8.7	Sept 11 th 1917		A B and C Cos Construction of road I 18 A 7.6 to J 7 C 4.2. D Company Railway construction from I 17 B 5.6 and forward. (See Hooge map attached)	W.A. Hendry 8th Coy

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Ypres H23.B8.7	Sept 12 th 1917		A.B. & C Companies construction of road from I 18 A 7.6 to S. 7 C 4.2 D Company Railway construction from I 17 B 5.6 and forward. 12 OR gassed	
Ypres H23.B8.7	Sept 13 rd 1917		A.B. & C Corps construction of road from I 18 A 7.6 to S. 7 C 4.2 D Company Railway construction from I 17 B 5.6 and forward. 1. OR Wounded. 7 OR carting ammunition from 'K' Dumps to Hooge Divisional Dumps	
Ypres H23.B8.7	Sept 14 th 1917		A and B Companies construction of road from I 18 A 7.6 to S. 7 C 4.2 C and D Companies Railway construction from I 17 B 5.6 and forward. 20 OR burying signal cable. 1 off 20 OR construction of Hooge tunnel 2 off killed by shell fire (Capt W.G. Harvey, M.C. and Lieut H. Bearup) 5 OR wounded.	
Ypres H23.B8.7	Sept 15 th 16 th 17 th 18 th 19.1917		A and B Companies. Construction of road from I 18 A 7.6 to S. 7 C 4.2 C and D Companies Railway construction from I 17 B 5.6 and forward. 20 OR burying signal cable 1 off 20 OR construction of Hooge tunnel. See Zillebeke map attached.	
Ypres H23.B8.7	Sept 20 th 21 st 1917		A. B Companies. Construction of track from Clapham Junction (S. 13. A 9. 8) to strong point 'C' (S. 9 d 1. 0) 1850 yards B Company. Construction of track from S. 13 a 6. 9 to (strong point 'G') S. 9 a 5. 3 - 2500 yards. C and D Companies. Railway construction from I 17 B 5. 6 & forward. Lieut J.M. Wilson. Killed in Action on 20/9/17	
Ypres H23.B8.7	Sept 22 nd 1917		A Companies. Construction of Road - Chateau Wood	W.A. Henderson J. Col.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Ypres H23 B8.7	Sept 23rd 1917		2 Companies Construction of Kangwan Track from Hooge to Clapham Junction 1 Company and 2 platoons Construction of light Railways from Hooge forward to Clapham Junction. 2 platoons. Water supplies back areas under Corps water supply officer. Fighting strength to date 38 off 960 ORs. On leave 35 ORs. Casualties to date - Killed 3 off 12 ORs. Wounded 2 off 107 ORs.	
Ypres H23 B8.7	Sept 24th 1917		1 Company Construction of Kangwan Track from Hooge to Clapham Junction 1 Company Construction of Zouave Track to Kangwan Road. 1 Company & 2 platoons Construction of Surbiton Tramway. 1 platoon on Zillebeke waterworks	
Ypres H23 B8.7	Sept 25th 1917		1 Company & 1 platoon Construction of Kangwan track. 1 Company Construction of Surbiton tramway 1 Company & 1 platoon Construction of Horseferry Road. 1 platoon on Zillebeke waterworks. 1 platoon Burying cables under Corps instructions	
Ypres H23 B8.7	Sept 26th 1917		1 platoon of each Company employed on maintenance of tracks as follows. (A) Horseferry Road. (B) Westhoekend Road. (C) Kangwan Road. (D) Zouave Road. Remaining platoons resting	
Ypres H23 B8.7	Sept 27th 28th 1917		2 Companies Construction of Horseferry Road. 50 OR. Zillebeke waterworks. Remained of Battalion resting	
Ypres H23 B8.7	Sept 29th 30th 1917		2 Companies Construction of Horseferry Road 2 Companies Westhoek track 1 platoon Zillebeke waterworks	Casualties for month Killed 11 Wounded 3 off 19 ORs Evacuated 5 sick 65 OR. N.A. Hinderson fl Col. Died of wounds 40 ORs Wounded & remaining on duty 80 OR

APPENDIX

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WK

FIRST AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

HEADQUARTERS,
1st AUSTRALIAN
DIVISION.

No. 119/52

Date.....

Divisional Headquarters,
4th September 1917.

~~W.H.B.~~
1st Aust. Pioneer Bn.

The following letter has been received from C.R.A.,
1st Australian Division.-

"I wish to express my appreciation of the excellent work done by Captain HARVEY, M.C., Officers and Men of "D" Coy., 1st Aust. Pioneers, from 5th August to 1st September, during which period they were attached to 1st Aust. Div. Arty.

The Officers of my Brigades are full of praise for the way in which this Company constructed shelters for their men at the various Battery positions under very trying conditions. Apart from the work of constructing shelters, they rendered most valuable service in evacuating the wounded from the Battery positions during several operations.

Furthermore these men, whilst returning from their work, salved a considerable amount of material amongst which was 16,000 18-pdr Cases, besides Rubber Covers for How. Cartridges, shell plugs and 4.5 How. Cases.

The Artillery greatly appreciate the work carried out by the Pioneers."

The Divisional Commander also greatly appreciates the excellent work done by this Company.

Please publish in Battalion Orders.

J. H. Harvey

Lieut-Colonel,
A. A. & Q. M. G.,
1st Australian Division.

2 copies

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1st Aust. Pioneer Battalion,
26th September, 1917.

C.R.E.,
1st Aust. Div.

Herewith information required upon work carried out by Battalion during operations on 26th September, 1917.

1. The four Companies were detailed for work as follows:-

A and B Companies to mark and form tracks up to strong points constructed by sappers.

C Company continue the construction of CHATEAU ROAD and maintenance of HOOGHE - MENIN ROAD from BIRR CROSS ROADS to HOOGHE.

D Company continue formation of SURBITON TRAMWAY (southern tramway) and maintenance of ZOUAVE TRACK.

O.Cs of Companies - A Company, Major ANDERSON.

B Company, Capt. BOLTON.

C Company, Capt. CHALMERS.

D Company, Capt. LEITH, M.C.

2. A and B Companies moved from camp at BELGIAN CHATEAU to ZILLEBEKE BUND and took up position in the vicinity of I.21.b.1.3. at 1 a.m. on the 26th instant, and awaited orders to move up.

C and D Companies moved up from BELGIAN CHATEAU Camp.

The order for Companies to move was sent from HOOGHE CRATER (I.10.b.1.6.) immediately information was received at that point that the first objective had been taken.

3. A Company were to construct track from CLAPHAM JUNCTION to J.14.b.20.15 - J.14.b.9.1. - J.15.a.5.3. - J.15.a.7.7 to J.9.d.1.0.

B Company were to construct track from J.7.d.2.1. - J.7.d.90.15. - J.14.a.8.5. - J.14.b.8.8. - J.9.c.1.5. to J.9.a.5.3.

Both these tracks were formed, and frequent notice boards and pickets put up to mark the track.

The right track was marked as Lone Track, and was suitable for male traffic up to LONE HOUSE.

The left track was marked as Glencorse Wood Track and was made suitable for male traffic up to J.14.b.8.8.

C and D Companies carried on with their road and tramway and maintenance of roads, which owing to the small amount of shelling in the back area were not broken up and required very little maintenance.

4. As each objective was taken and made good the track was extended, being marked with tapes and then by pickets every 25 yards. The shell holes and improvements following on as the work progressed.

5. All pickets, which were angle iron painted white a foot down from the top and a break of a foot and another 18" of white, were prepared two days previous to start. Notice boards were also painted and with the name of the tracks and where leading to. Tapes to mark the tracks were also prepared and to avoid confusion with the tapes that the Infantry may have laid on the ground, were opened out and marked both sides every 18" with 6" of black paint.

All stores were taken up to points just behind the front line where tracks crossed it, on the evening of the 19th instant, so as to be available for work next day.

Notice boards. The majority of notice boards that were used stood only about 18" above the ground. This is a mistake as they get amongst broken timber and cannot be seen or are splashed with earth and mud causing them to

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(2)

Appendix

assimilate with the surroundings and cannot be picked up easily. All notice boards should be painted white with large block lettering and should stand at least 4 feet above the ground.

W.A. Henderson

Lieut-Colonel.

C.O., 1st Aust. Pioneer Battalion.

Appendix

1st Aust. Pioneer Battalion,
18th Septr., 1917.

Signal Communications issued in connection with
Battalion Operation Order No. 4.

The Battalion Signal Officer will detail 2 (two) signallers with cycles to be stationed at Report Centre, I.18.b.5.6. (Hooge Crater).

These signallers will convey reports from Report Centre to the D.R.L.S. Station on the main YPRES-MECHIN Road situated at I.9.d.2.5.4.0. (opposite advanced Dressing Station), where a relay signaller of motor bicycle or cycles will be in attendance. From there messages will be conveyed by Motor Despatch or Cycle rider to Battalion Headquarters, Cafe Belgique.

Capt & Adjutant.

NOTE. Signallers reporting to Crater will reach there by 10 p.m., 19/9/17.

SECRET.

Copy No 8.

Appendix

8

1st PIONEER BATTALION, A.I.F. OPERATION ORDER NO.4.

19/9/1917.

Ref. ZILLEBEKE 28 N.W.4 & N.E.3.
1/10,000.

Cafe Belgique.

INFORMATION.

1st Australian Division will attack the enemy's position at a date to be detailed later. Zero hour will be notified later.

Battalion has been detailed for the following work :-

"A" and "B" Companies - construction and marking of forward tracks to captured enemy's positions.

"C" and "D" Companies - carrying forward existing railway tracks already under construction and maintenance of tracks forward of BIRRR CROSS ROADS.

Machine Gunners - Anti-aircraft work in area of CHATEAU WOOD (separate instructions issued).

WORK

RIGHT BRIGADE
TRACK.
(Lone Track).

"A" Company, "will construct track from CLAPHAM JUNCTION (J.13.d.9.8.) to strong point "C" (J.9.d.1.0.) total length approximately 1850 yards.

Route to be selected by Company Commander on ground, but to follow approximately J.13.d.9.8. - J.14.b.2.1. - J.14.b.9.1. to LONE HOUSE strong point. A (J.15.a.5.3.) - BLACKWATCH CORNER strong point. B (J.15.a.7.7.) finishing at strong point "C", (J.9.d.1.0.). This track is known as Lone Track.

LEFT BRIGADE
TRACK.

(Glencorse
Track).

"B" Company will construct track from J.13.a.6.9. to (strong point "G"), J.9.a.5.3. Total length approximately 2500 yards.

Route to be selected by Company Commander on ground but to follow approximately J.13.a.6.9. - J.7.d.7.2. - J.14.a.7.5. - J.14.b.8.8. (strong point "D"). - J.9.c.1.5. (strong point "H"), finishing at J.9.a.5.3. (strong point "G").

This track will be known as Glencorse Track, beyond strong point "D".

STORES.

Track to be marked with angle-iron pickets painted white at top and placed at intervals of 25 yards.

Notice boards to be placed every 100 yards apart behind line and every 50 yards beyond old front line. Preliminary marking of track to be done with black and white tape. These stores will be available from B.O.R. after 2000 on 18/9/17.

Each man of "A" and "B" Companies will carry two sandbags and two Mills Grenades. On completion of task grenades will be placed in sandbags and handed over to Bomb dumps in existing front line.

Commander

Each Company will provide for filling in shell holes on the selected track, and improving as time permits so that Mule Transport may be passed over it.

Shell slips to be dug at intervals of approximately 100 yards and 40 yards in length placed at right angles to line of enemy fire.

TRAMWAYS.

"C" Company will extend MONO rail track running from HOOGE crater forward and parallel with CHATEAU ROAD. Officer Commanding, "C" Company will take over this work from the O.C., 2nd Field Coy., on the morning of 19th instant, with all instructions that he has received regarding stores and destination.

"D" Company will carry on with the extension of the SURBITON LIGHT RAILWAY at present under construction and along route already pegged out and will be responsible for the maintenance of that already laid.

TRACKS.

TRACKS
(Maintenance).

Officers Commanding, "C" and "D" Companies will each detail one platoon from their Companies under an Officer to keep in repair the following roads and tracks - "C" Company will be responsible for the MENIN ROAD from HIRR CROSS ROADS to HOOGH and CHATEAU ROAD up to the northern boundary of the Division at J.7.c.5.3. "D" Company will be responsible for the ZOUAVE TRACK from I.17.c.6.3. forward to CLAPHAM JUNCTION, and also KANGWAN TRACK from HOOGH to where it joins ZOUAVE TRACK.

COMMENCEMENT
OF WORK .

"A" and "B" Companies will move from present area at 11 p.m. to KILLEBEKE BUND under Major SPECKMAN. From the BUND the Companies will move forward independently under Company Commanders after 2nd objective is taken, which information will be conveyed to Major SPECKMAN or Senior Officer present by runner from Commanding Officer at HOOGH CRATER.

"C" and "D" Companies will be ready to move from present area any time after 11.30 p.m. to commence work. Orders to move will be issued from B.O.R.

STORES.

Requisition for stores from "C" and "D" Companies will be sent direct to B.O.R. and not through HOOGH CRATER report centre. Hourly reports only as regards progress of work will be sent to HOOGH CRATER.

RATIONS.

In case the Battalion is called to act as Divisional Reserves, Company Commanders will arrange for all ranks under their Command to carry 48 hours rations.

REPORT CENTRE.

The Battle Report Centre will be in dugout situated at I.18.b.5.6. (HOOGH CRATER) where Company Commanders will arrange to hand in their reports to the Commanding Officer or Second in Command (by Company Runners) every hour. The first report will be sent directly Companies are in position on task. Daily report will be forwarded to B.O.R. direct in the case of "C" and "D" Companies.

MEDICAL
ARRANGEMENTS.

One A.M.C. detail will accompany each Company.

RUNNERS.

All runners and signallers will wear armband badges.

WATCHES.

Watches will be synchronised at B.O.R. at 2000. 19/9/17.

DOCUMENTS.

No maps, note books or other documents containing information likely to be of value to the enemy are to be carried by Officers or other ranks in forward area.

DRESS.

All Companies will go onto work in Battle Order.

(sgd) A. H. LYDDALL, Capt & Adjt.
1st AUST. Pioneer Battalion.

- Copy No. 1 - C.O.
 2 - S.i.C.
 3 - "A" Coy.
 4 - "B" Coy.
 5 - "C" Coy.
 6 - "D" Coy.
 7 - T.O., Q.M., & S.O.
 8 - Office.
 9 - War Diary.

Appendix

"A" Form.

MESSAGES AND SIGNALS.

Army Form C. 2121.
(In pads of 100.)

No. of Message.....

Prefix.....	Code..... m	Words.	Charge.	This message is on a/c of :	Recd. at m.
Office of Origin and Service Instructions.				Sent	Service.
At m.				Date	From
To				By.....	
By.....				(Signature of "Franking Officer.")	

TO {	B	C	D
Sender's Number.	Day of Month.	In reply to Number.	AAA
* 1112	19		

Reference information with your
para Report to entire
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and read not bratia
I 18 b 5-6.

From

Place

Time

The above may be forwarded as now corrected.

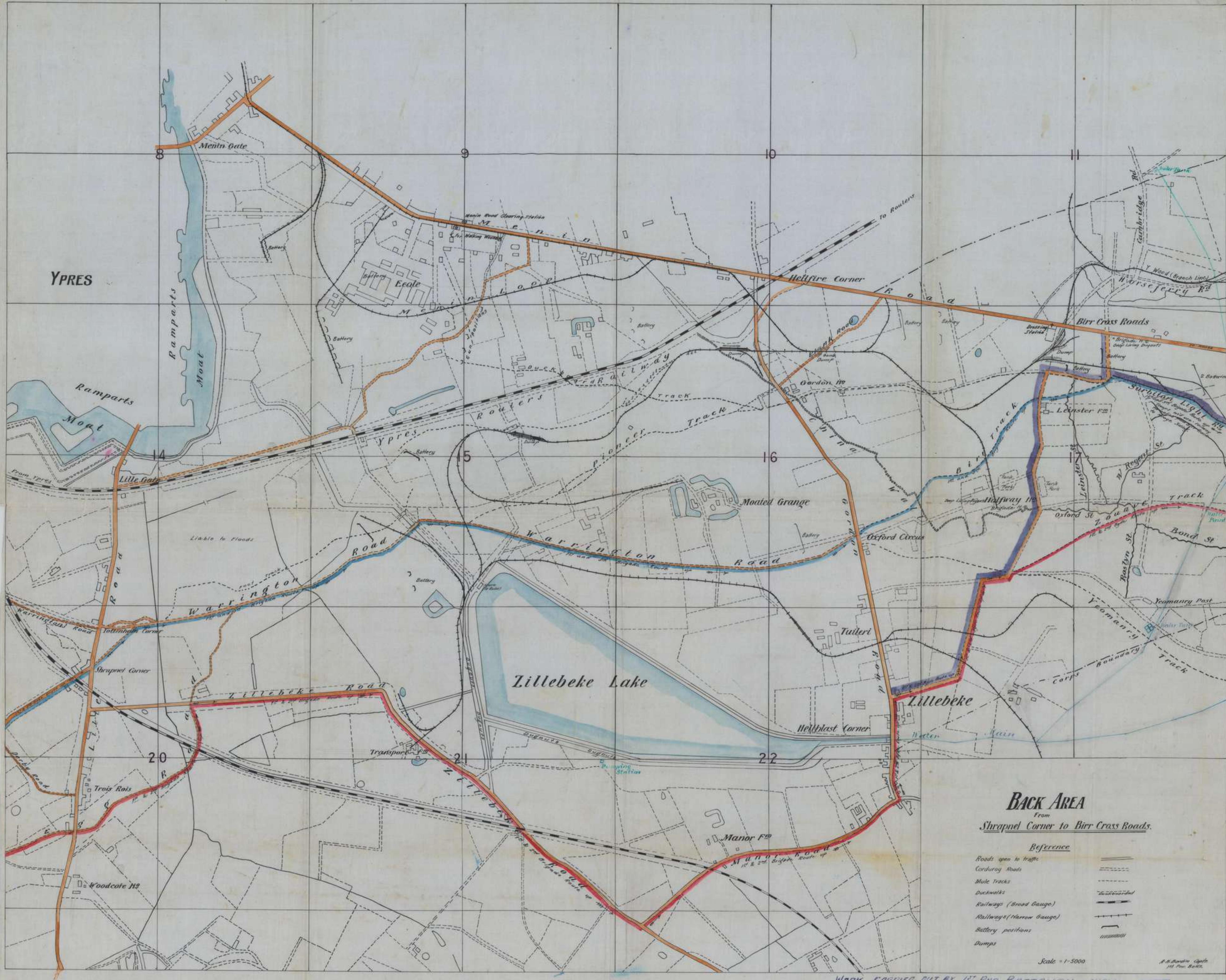
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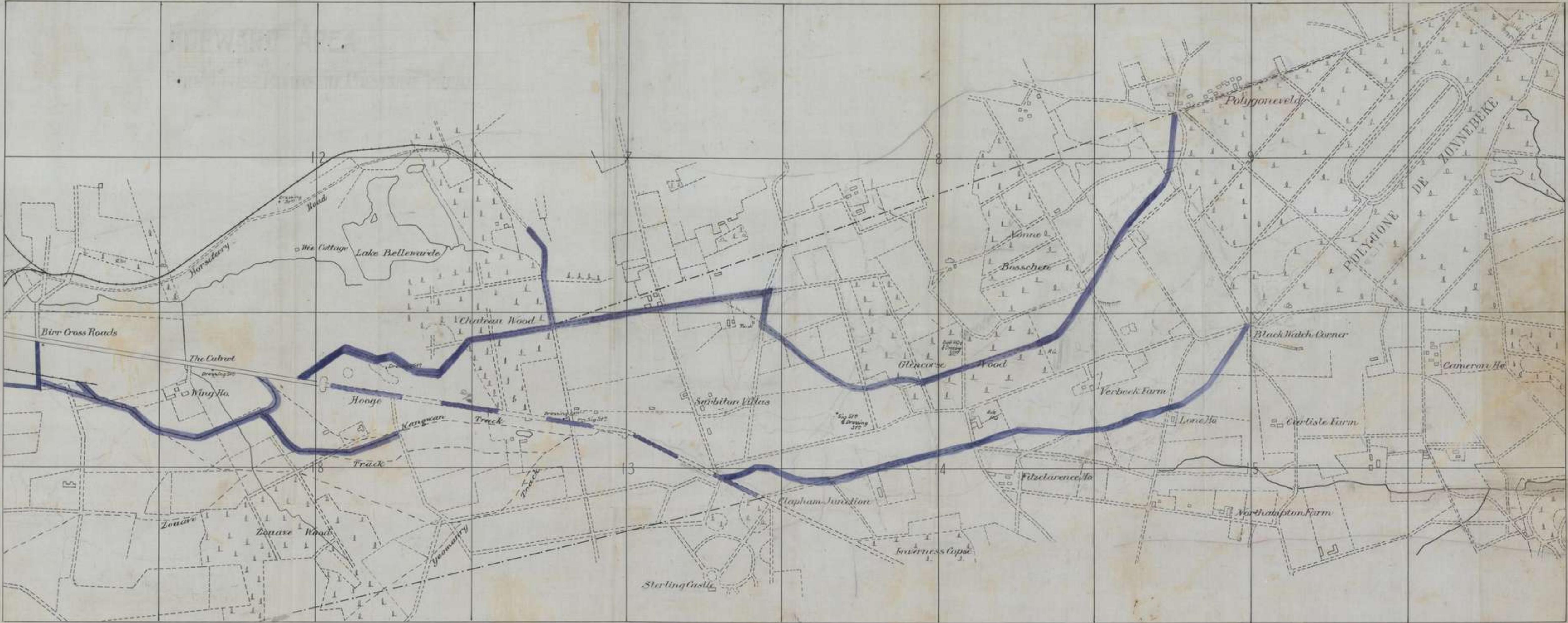
(Z)

Signature of Addressee or person authorised to telegraph in his name

* This line should be erased if not required.

(3198.) Wt: W 1295./M1294. 575,000 Pads. 1/17. H. W. & V., Ld. (E. 818.)





WORK CARRIED OUT BY 1ST PIR BATTALION, SHEREH