

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

Formation Headquarters

**Item number:** 1/42/27 Part 1

**Title:** General Staff, Headquarters 1st  
Australian Division

April 1917



AWM4-1/42/27PART1



# WAR DIARY

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## INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Genl Staff 1st Aus Div

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BAZIEUX	1st April 1917		<p><u>Weather</u> - Fine in morning rain in afternoon</p> <p>Church parade in all units - Corps Comdr attended parade of 11th Bn, Div Comdr 12th Bn</p> <p>GSO2 went with GOC 3rd Bde and Bde Major to see forward area - Visited 5th Aus Div + rode to BEUGNY and MORCHIES</p>	
do	2nd April		<p><u>Weather</u> - Heavy snow storm</p> <p><u>Training</u> - Div Comdr held a ceremonial inspection of 1st + 3rd Bdes</p> <p>GSO1 lectured officers of 3rd Bde on "Tanks"</p>	
do	3rd April		<p><u>Weather</u> - Fine and bright - snow on ground which mostly thawed during the day -</p> <p><u>Training</u> - Eased off - GSO1 lectured officers Div Art on "Tanks"</p> <p><u>Moves</u> - 1st Bde from RIBEMONT to MONTAUBAN first move in relief of 5th Aus Div in the line</p>	D.O. 16 Appx I
do	4th April		<p><u>Weather</u> - Snowing all the morning</p> <p><u>Moves</u> - 1st Bde MONTAUBAN to HAPLINCOURT and FREMICOURT</p> <p>3rd Bde BRESLE, BAZIEUX and HENNENCOURT to MONTAUBAN</p>	
do	5th April		<p><u>Weather</u> - Beautiful spring day -</p> <p><u>Moves</u> - 1st Bde HAP FREMICOURT to line right sector</p> <p>2 Bde BUIRE to MONTAUBAN</p> <p>3 Bde - MONTAUBAN to forward area</p> <p>Genl - Div Comdr inspected troops on the march - GSO1 visited Div School TIRANCOURT</p>	<p>Addenda to D.O. 16 Appx II</p> <p>R. B. Smith May 4th 1917</p>



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near BAPAUME H 35C	Good Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> April 1917		<p><u>Weather</u> - beautiful day until 4pm then heavy rain</p> <p><u>Moves</u> - 3<sup>rd</sup> Bde relieved 14<sup>th</sup> Bde of 5<sup>th</sup> Aus Div in the left sector of the line</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Bde 5<sup>th</sup> Bn MONTAUBAN to VILLERS AU FLOS</p> <p>8<sup>th</sup> Bn " " to BAPAUME for Corps works on railway</p> <p>6<sup>th</sup> Bn } remained MONTAUBAN owing want of accommodation in forward area -</p> <p>7<sup>th</sup> Bn }</p> <p>HQ</p> <p>Dw HQ - BAZIEUX { 1<sup>st</sup> Echelon to H 35C</p> <p>{ 2<sup>nd</sup> Echelon to BAZENTIN</p> <p><u>Orders</u> - Orders were received that the Div should capture HERMIES by noon on 8<sup>th</sup></p> <p><u>Weather</u> - Very cold - snow showers alternating with heavy rain - clear frosty night</p> <p><u>Taking over</u> - Genl WALKER took over from Genl HOBBS (5<sup>th</sup> Aus Div) at 9am the Command of the div front from C12C72 to J34D95 in front of the HINDENBURG line in the QUEANT sector and of the div area reaching back to BAPAUME (exclusive)</p> <p><u>Operations</u> During the night 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> our outpost line was advanced to the line D27B59 - D28C00 - D28D04 - D29C49 - J5Bcentral - J5C00 -</p> <p>Heavy MG fire was encountered during the operation but our casualties were light - One prisoner (95<sup>th</sup> RIR) was captured</p>	
do	7 <sup>th</sup>			<p>DO. 17</p> <p>Appx III</p> <p>R. B. Smith May 1917</p>



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BAPAUME H35C	7 <sup>th</sup> April 1917	Contd	<p>Several of our patrols reconnoitred towards HERMIES + BOURSIES.</p> <p>Our MG fired on QUEANT + engaged hostile aeroplanes.</p> <p>our arty shelled BOURSIES + HERMIES the ruined windmill at ISCOO and the high ground north of PRONVILLE</p> <p>In pursuance of Auger orders preparations were made for the capture of HERMIES by noon on 8<sup>th</sup></p> <p>Later in the day the Corps Commander called and sanctioned a postponement for 24 hours -</p> <p>The plan was to make a surprise attack on HERMIES and BOURSIES simultaneously without artillery support and to neutralize by artillery fire DEMICOURT which lies between them.</p> <p>After the capture of HERMIES + BOURSIES it was anticipated that DEMICOURT could be occupied without much trouble.</p> <p><u>Enemy activity</u> - Enemy artillery was very active firing on all the villages + most of the broken roads in the forward area.</p> <p>MGs were also active chiefly against LOUVERVAL and vicinity</p> <p><u>Weather</u> fine + bright.</p> <p><u>our Operations</u> - To facilitate the attack on BOURSIES the 3rd Bde on night 7/8 fought to gain the high ground lying W and NW of the village - Strong opposition was encountered and the enemy put down a heavy barrage from LOUVERVAL to DOIGNES - We gained some ground but lost 90 casualties</p>	
do	8 <sup>th</sup>			

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Genl. Staff 1<sup>st</sup> Aus Div

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Near BAPAUME H35c	8 <sup>th</sup> April (Contd)		<u>Our operations</u> Throughout the day preparations were matured for the attack of HERMIES & BOURSIES <u>Enemy activity</u> - Artillery & MGs were very active on the forward area.	
do	9 <sup>th</sup>		<u>Weather</u> - Heavy snow storm - cold all day with high wind - frost at night <u>Our operations</u> - At 4.30 am we attacked HERMIES + BOURSIES and captured them both and also the village of DEMICOURT on the ridge between them. We inflicted severe casualties on the enemy, took 1 officer and 203 OR prisoners and captured 7 Machine guns, 5 automatic rifles, 2 trench mortars and much equipment. Our casualties totalled 688 made up as follows: Officers ÷ Killed 10 wounded 22 - Other ranks ÷ Killed 174 - wounded 473 - missing 9 A detailed account of the operation is given as an appendix IV	
do	10 <sup>th</sup>		<u>Genl</u> - On this date the offensive of the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Armies began. <u>Weather</u> - Snow and sleet during the day - frost at night. <u>Our operations</u> - During the night our front line was further advanced as follows ÷ The right Bde (1 <sup>st</sup> ) established a post in SQUARE COPSE (K25d77) - The left Bde (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) established <sup>posts</sup> <del>posts</del> on the line D21d82, D22c54, <del>D22b44</del> - No fighting resulted. Our line then ran J36A01 - cemetery (J36A99) - J30B90 - K25A53 (with advanced post K25D77) - J24D80 - J24A73 - Factory (J18d33) - DEMICOURT - J12central - BOURSIES - D28B72 - D22c54 - D21D82 - C12 central	X APPX. IV

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R. A. Smythe May 4 8



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Near BAPAUME H 35c	10 <sup>th</sup> April 1917 (Contd)		<p>During the same night the 2<sup>nd</sup> B<sup>n</sup> was relieved in the right brigade sector by the 3<sup>rd</sup> B<sup>n</sup> extending to its left. In the left Bde sector the 11<sup>th</sup> B<sup>n</sup> from reserve relieved the 12<sup>th</sup> B<sup>n</sup>. Both reliefs were carried out without incident. The disposition of B<sup>n</sup>s in line was then as follows from right to left - 3<sup>rd</sup> B<sup>n</sup> - 1<sup>st</sup> B<sup>n</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> B<sup>n</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> B<sup>n</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> B<sup>n</sup>.</p> <p><u>Artillery</u>. our artillery activity throughout the 24 hours was normal.</p> <p><u>Patrols</u>. Reconnoitring patrols were sent out all along our front.</p> <p><u>Enemy activity</u> - Artillery less active than usual - no infantry action.</p> <p><u>General</u>. C.E. of Corps got 2<sup>nd</sup> Aus Inf B<sup>de</sup> GSO1 &amp; CRE reconnoitred the BEUGNY-YTRES line, the Corps main line of resistance.</p>	
do	11 <sup>th</sup>	"	<p><u>Weather</u>. Very cold - high wind all day - heavy snow storm in afternoon.</p> <p><u>Operations</u> - The 4<sup>th</sup> Aus Div on our left in conjunction with the 62<sup>nd</sup> Div of V Corps attacked the HINDENBURG line on both sides of BULLECOURT - Tanks cooperated - BULLECOURT was occupied and parties reached REINCOURT. The enemy heavily counter attacked and both divs withdrew to their original line.</p> <p>Our artillery cooperated firing 7,911 rounds.</p> <p>There was no infantry action on our front except the usual patrols at night.</p> <p>The enemy artillery being occupied with the attack on our left was less active <sup>than usual</sup> on our front.</p>	

R. B. Smythe Maj Gen



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
near BAPALME H35c	12 <sup>th</sup> April 1917		<p><u>Weather</u>. Snow lay on ground during the morning but thawed later in the day.</p> <p><u>Operations</u>. At noon and at 3.15 pm parties of enemy infantry were dispersed by our artillery fire from 4.30 pm to 5.30 pm in answer to an SOS signal from 4<sup>th</sup> Aus Div front our guns heavily shelled the area indicated.</p> <p>Beyond patrol and machine gun activity there was no infantry action on our part.</p> <p><u>Enemy action</u> - nothing special to record.</p>	
do	13 <sup>th</sup> "		<p><u>Weather</u>. Frost in the morning - snow &amp; hail storms during the day</p> <p><u>Operations</u>. During the day the situation was normal - but orders were received from 1<sup>st</sup> ANZAC to advance our line during the night to within 1000 yards of the HINDENBURG line with the object of threatening that line to the east of QUEANT. Orders were issued accordingly. ≡</p> <p>The advance was begun at 10 pm and fighting occurred at several points - 2 prisoners of 95<sup>th</sup> IR and one automatic rifle were captured and 10 of the enemy are known to have been killed. Our line was established as ordered and then ran as follows: - J 36 B 13 - K 25 D 77 - K 25 B 14 - K 20 A 13 - K 13 B 82 - K 7 D central - K 7 B central - D 30 D 81 - D 30 C 23 - D 30 A 46 - D 23 D 74 - D 23 C 18 - D 22 B 30 - D 22 A 22 - D 21 B 54 - D 21 A 04 - D 20 A 99 - C 12 central</p> <p><u>General</u>. The Div Comd<sup>r</sup> visited the 20<sup>th</sup> Div on right and arranged the points of junction of the various lines of defence</p>	

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RMS 11th May 17



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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
near BAPAUME H35C	14 <sup>th</sup> April 1917		<p><u>Weather</u>. Bright cold day.</p> <p><u>Operations</u>. at 10 am the enemy rushed and occupied two of our posts at D23D28 and D22d39 which and captured the garrisons 9 men and one Lewis gun (11<sup>th</sup> B<sup>n</sup>) By an immediate counter attack the posts were recaptured and held. 200 of the enemy then collected in D226 and D22A and the enemy bombarded our line with 10 and 15 cm hows. Our artillery however dispersed the enemy party and no further attack was made by the enemy during the day.</p> <p><u>General</u>. Since their attack on 11<sup>th</sup> the 4<sup>th</sup> Aus Div on our left had been relieved by the 2 Aus Div on 14<sup>th</sup> Ap! the Command passed from GOC 4<sup>th</sup> to GOC 2<sup>nd</sup> Aus Div.</p>	
do	15 <sup>th</sup> April		<p><del>at Bapaume</del></p> <p><u>Weather</u>. rain - high wind very cold.</p> <p><u>Operations</u>. at 4 am the enemy made an attack in strength along the whole front of this division and on part of the front of the 2 Aus Div on our left. The attack was preceded by a heavy bombardment &amp; covered by an artillery barrage. The Div was then holding a front of 1350 yards with two brigades in the line 1<sup>st</sup> on the Right 3<sup>rd</sup> on the left and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bde less 2 B<sup>ns</sup> in reserve. The remaining 2 bns of 2<sup>nd</sup> Bde were garrison to the Corps main line of resistance, the BEUGNY-YTRES line. The 3<sup>rd</sup> B<sup>n</sup> on the right of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bde held its ground throughout the action. The 4<sup>th</sup> B<sup>n</sup> on the left of 1<sup>st</sup> Bde</p>	

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Gen. Staff 1st Aus Div

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
near BAPAUME H 35c	15 April 1917 (Contd)		<p>after heavy fighting was forced back approximately to the line held before the advance of 13<sup>th</sup>. The whole of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn from Bde reserve was sent to support the 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. Of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn also in Bde reserve 2 Cos were sent to reinforce the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bde and one Coy to 4<sup>th</sup> Bn.</p> <p>The 11<sup>th</sup> Bn on the right of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bde came in for heavy fighting and its two right companies were pressed back to the old line held on 13<sup>th</sup>. The left Coy held its ground.</p> <p>The 12<sup>th</sup> Bn on the left of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bde came in for the heaviest fighting - all 4 companies were in line - The left flank Coy was exposed by the falling back of the right flank of 2 Aus Div and both this Coy + the one next to it were driven back to the neighbourhood of LAGNICOURT. The enemy had meanwhile attacked LAGNICOURT from the NW and had overrun the field guns + MG emplaced there.</p> <p>A counter attack delivered by the 20<sup>th</sup> Bn 2 Aus Div + our 9<sup>th</sup> Bn drove the enemy out of LAGNICOURT + restored our line on the left. At nightfall the enemy withdrew along the whole front and our line was reestablished - but not quite as far forward as before.</p> <p>Four enemy divisions were engaged - the 4<sup>th</sup> Ersatz, 38<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> Guard Reserve and 3<sup>rd</sup> Guard. We took 160 prisoners <sup>+ 1 MG</sup> and estimate the enemy killed on our front at from 1500 to 2000. Our losses were killed - Officers nil - OR 24 wounded " 15 " 54 } total 417. Guns destroyed 4 18 pd missing " 2 " 32 2 } 1 45 hon</p> <p>MG taken 5 LG " 7</p>	

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RMS Lengthy March

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
near BAPAUME H35C	15 <sup>th</sup> April 1917	Contd.	<p>A full report of the action is attached as an appendix.</p> <p>During the night effort was concentrated on digging the new Divisional line of resistance known as the MORCHIES - BEAUMETZ line - 2 Field Coys of the 5<sup>th</sup> Aus Div being hurried up by Corps to supplement the 8<sup>th</sup> Bn working on the left of this line.</p>	APPX. V
do	16 <sup>th</sup>		<p><u>Weather</u>. Fine day - rain at night.</p> <p><u>Operations</u>. Normal activity on both sides - nothing special to record.</p> <p><u>General</u> - Following complimentary messages were received with reference to the action of 15<sup>th</sup>:</p> <p>(1) From V Corps G262 d/16.4.17 - Following message received from 5<sup>th</sup> Corps begins as a Corps Commander and all ranks 5<sup>th</sup> Corps congratulate ANZACS on bloody repulse administered on enemy today as a ends as a - From 1<sup>st</sup> ANZAC Advanced 10.05 am</p> <p>(2) From Commander in Chief G247 d/16.4.17 Following from C in C begins as a Please convey my warm congratulations to the 1<sup>st</sup> &amp; 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Divisions on the gallant and successful manner in which they defeated the sudden attack yesterday when opposed by heavy odds as a ends from 1<sup>st</sup> ANZAC Adv.</p>	<p>RM Smythe May 98</p> <p>6</p>



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
near BAPAUME H35c	16 <sup>th</sup> April (contd)		<p><u>Reliefs</u> ① The 2<sup>nd</sup> Aus Inf Bde relieved the 3<sup>rd</sup> Aus Inf Bde in the left sector of the line</p> <p>② The 8<sup>th</sup> Aus Inf Bde of the 5<sup>th</sup> Aus Div took over the defence of the Corps Main line (BEUGNY - TTRES) with HQ at FREMICOURT, thus relieving 2 battalions of this div for defence of the diversional line.</p>	D.O. 18 Appx VII
do	17 <sup>th</sup>		<p><u>Weather</u>. a gale with rain - very cold</p> <p><u>Operations</u>. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Bde advanced the line on the high ground N of BOURSIES as follows - J5B38 - D29D08 - D29A45 - D28B77 - D22C30.</p> <p>Otherwise the activity on both sides was normal.</p> <p><u>General</u> ① The big French offensive in CHAMPAGNE was launched</p> <p>② GSO3 accompanied an officer of 1<sup>st</sup> Special Coy RE in making a reconnaissance of our line for suitable positions from which to discharge gas. A position near Demesmont was selected.</p>	
do	18 <sup>th</sup>		<p><u>Weather</u>. Rain all day.</p> <p><u>Operations</u>. The left Brigade (2<sup>nd</sup> Bde) advanced its line <sup>on the left</sup> during the night for a depth of 500 yards on a frontage of 1500 yards - No opposition was encountered. The <sup>new</sup> line runs D14C75.40 - D13B03 - D7C55.15. Otherwise there was a normal day.</p> <p><u>Genl</u>. The Corps Commander and BEGGS called.</p>	D.O. 19 Appx VII

Rt L. Smith Major

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Near BAPAUME H35C	17 <sup>th</sup> April 1917		<p><u>Weather</u>. mild - no rain - mist all day</p> <p><u>Operations</u> - At 12.30pm two battalions of the enemy were reported to be moving in artillery formation in squares D7 &amp; D14A. It appeared that the enemy was about to attack and field and heavy arty was quickly directed on to the target - &amp; dispensing the enemy with casualties. From later reports it appears that the above movement was an attempt by the enemy to carry out a relief in the HINDENBURG line by daylight.</p> <p>During the night the left brigade (2nd Bde) further advanced <del>their</del> <u>its</u> front to the following line D22C24 - D21C13 - D21D62 - D21C54 - D21C34 - D20D74 - D20central again without opposition</p> <p>Except as above there was normal activity on both sides throughout the 24 hours.</p> <p><u>General</u>. The Army Commander (Genl GAUGH) and his Chief of Staff (Genl MALCOLM) called and expressed the following wishes ① That this Div should establish itself on the South bank of the Canal du NORD and if possible push posts on to the N-bank ② That we should try to induce the enemy to believe we intended to attack HAVRINCOURT across the Canal ③ That we should avoid small posts ④ That we should dig communication trenches where possible from the sunken roads to advanced posts. The Div Comdr &amp; GSO1 were out <sup>visiting the line at HERMES.</sup> when Army Comdr called.</p>	<p>see map attached APPX VIII</p>

R. W. Smythe H. 2



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
near BAPAUME H 35c	20th April 1917		<p><u>Weather</u> . Mild and fine</p> <p><u>Operations</u> . A discharge of gas from NIVEN projectors from DEMICOURT was arranged but was postponed owing to unfavourable wind - See div Order N° 20</p> <p>There was normal activity on both sides during the day &amp; night.</p> <p>Information was received from ANZAC that the Division would be relieved on 25<sup>th</sup></p>	D.O. 20. Appx. IX
do	21st		<p><u>Weather</u> - fine &amp; bright</p> <p><u>Operations</u> - In the early morning the left Bde (2 Bde. 8<sup>th</sup> Bn) carried out a most successful minor operation capturing a strongly held enemy post at D14c - The enemy garrison too strong with 2 MG put up stout resistance - We took 3 prisoners, killed 19 &amp; wounded a large number.</p> <p>Later in the morning the captured post was very heavily shelled and we withdrew from it. A detailed report of the action is attached</p> <p>During the night the right brigade (13<sup>th</sup> Bde) advanced its front posts to the line K31 D14 - Square Copse. Otherwise action throughout the period was normal.</p>	Appx X
do	22nd		<p><u>Weather</u> . Fine &amp; bright</p> <p><u>Operations</u> . The enemy put a barrage on our two left battalions in line (7<sup>th</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup>) causing about 80 casualties - Our artillery replied vigorously and the enemy fire ceased.</p> <p>There was great <sup>hostile</sup> aerial activity throughout the day &amp; 5 of our aeroplanes &amp; one balloon were seen to be brought down</p>	<p>Appx XI</p> <p>R. H. Smythe April 22</p>

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
near BAPAUME H 35 c	23 <sup>rd</sup> April 1917		<p><u>Weather</u> fine and bright - Cold night</p> <p><u>Operations</u> - Nothing to record.</p> <p><u>Relief</u> - The relief of the Div by the 11<sup>th</sup> Div V Corps began and the following moves were carried out without incident.</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> MG Coy (less 1 section) line right sector to VELU</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> ALTM batt. " " " BEAUMETZ</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Bn line " " " VELU</p> <p>6<sup>th</sup> &amp; 4<sup>th</sup> Bns line left sector into reserve.</p>	<p>D.O. 21</p> <p>Appx. XI</p>
do	24 <sup>th</sup>		<p><u>Weather</u> Beautiful bright day</p> <p><u>Operations</u> - Nothing to record.</p> <p><u>Relief</u> - The relief continued without incident - on relief the 2<sup>nd</sup> Aus Div took over part of the frontage formerly held by this Div and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bde was left in the line in this new frontage &amp; came under the orders of 2<sup>nd</sup> Aus Div.</p> <p>The following moves in connection with the relief were carried out</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Bde HQ to W 24 central - 1<sup>st</sup> Bn from line right to VELU - 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn VELU to N 11 central - 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn - line to VELU - 4<sup>th</sup> Bn BEAUMETZ to BAPAUME - 1<sup>st</sup> MG Coy (less 1 sect) VELU to BEAULINCOURT - 1<sup>st</sup> ALTM Batt<sup>n</sup> BEAUMETZ to BEAULINCOURT. -</p> <p>All G/S papers necessary to the relieving div were collected, listed &amp; handed over to GSO 2 11<sup>th</sup> Div and a receipt obtained.</p>	

A5834 Wt. W4973/M687 750,000 8/16 D. D. & L. Ltd. Forms/C.2118/13

RFB Lumsden May 28

13



# 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.

## INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Genl Staff. 1st Aus Div

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
near BAPAUME H35C	25 April 1917		<p><u>Weather</u> - fine but strong wind.</p> <p><u>Command</u> - The Command of the divisional front and area passed to GOC 11th Div at 9 am. A map showing disposition of troops at the time of handing over, which is a copy of the map handed over to GOC 11th Div, is attached as an appendix.</p> <p><u>Reserve</u> - On completion of the relief the division assumed the role of Div in Corps reserve with the following provisions -</p> <p>The 1st Bde is earmarked to move into 2nd Aus Div area to occupy certain rear lines of defence on the day preceding the contemplated attack of the HINDENBURG line by that division.</p> <p>The 2nd Bde is already attached to &amp; under the orders of 2nd Aus Div in line right sector.</p> <p>The 3rd Bde - Two Bns (11th &amp; 12th) + 3 MG Co are detailed as garrison to the BEUGNY-YTRES line in the 11th Div area and are placed under the orders of 11th Div.</p> <p>The remainder of the brigade is not allotted to any definite operation but finds strong working parties on Corps works - &amp; supplies one Coy to caretake the Corps second line.</p> <p>The 21st (Divisional) MG Coy (less 1 subsection attached 2nd Bde) is in reserve.</p> <p>One Troop B Squadron 13th Ltl is allotted to the Div - duties &amp; patrols Corps second line.</p> <p>② sends patrols to areas neighbouring Divs so that it can provide guides if reqd.</p> <p><u>Leave</u> - Brig Gen BENNETT (Comd 3rd Bde) Col BLANEY (GSO1) Capt WATSON (GSO3) went on leave.</p> <p><u>Genl</u> - The Div Comd with Corps Comd visited 20th Div and went to forward edge of HAVRINCOURT wood the new front line of the flank div.</p>	<p>D.O. 22 Appx XII</p> <p>D.O. 23 Appx XIII</p> <p>11</p> <p>RMS. Sumner May 98</p>



# WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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## INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Gen Staff 1st Aus Div

208

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
near BAPAUME H 35C	26 <sup>th</sup> April 1917		<p><u>Weather</u> - Fine bright + warm</p> <p><u>Operations</u> - The 1st Aus Inf Bde was placed under the orders of 2nd Aus Div and relieved 2 Aus Div troops in the BEUGNY - YTRES line (left div sector) and in the VAULX - MORCHIES line to allow 2 Aus Div to practice their attack.</p> <p><u>Leave</u> - Brig Gen LESSLIE (Comd<sup>g</sup> 1st Bde) and Col HUXTABLE (ADMS) went on leave</p>	
do	27 <sup>th</sup>		<p><u>Weather</u> - Fine, bright + warm</p> <p><u>Operations</u> - 1st Aus Inf Bde returned from 2 Aus Div + again came under command of this Div.</p>	
do	28 <sup>th</sup>		<p><u>Weather</u> - Fine bright + warm</p> <p><u>Operations</u> - Orders were received and issued for 1st Aus Inf Bde to move into 2 Aus Div Area on 29<sup>th</sup> + to come under orders of 2nd Aus Div</p> <p>2 Vickers guns of 2nd MG Coy mounted under Capt's orders for AA duty at COMTAY were relieved + returned to their Bde relieving a subsection of 21st MG Coy.</p>	
do	29 <sup>th</sup>		<p><u>Weather</u> - a summer day</p> <p><u>Operations</u> - 1st Aus Inf Bde moved to 2 Aus Div area + came under orders of that Div</p>	

R B Smythe Maj Ed



# 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.

## INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Genl Staff 1st Aus Div

208

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
near BAPRAUME H35C	30th April 1917		<p>Weather - very fine</p> <p>Operations. Nothing to record.</p> <p><u>Appendices</u> - In addition to the appendices referred to in the text the following are attached -</p> <p>No. Fighting strength <sup>with units</sup> at the beginning of the month - Casualties + sick wastage during the month - reinforcements received during the month - Strength at end of month Appx. XIV.</p> <p>No. Summary of the The Divisional School TIRANCOURT x</p> <p>No. Summary of personnel of the Division sent to schools during the month x</p> <p>Action of Division while in "N" Area appx XVII x</p> <p>Signal communication while on the move. G.S. Memo. 21. Appx. XVIII x</p> <p>Summary of Operations for the week ending 12-14-17 Appx. XIX. x</p> <p>" " " " 20-21-17 Appx. XX. x</p> <p>" " " " from 21st to 25th April. Appx. XXI</p> <p>Organisation for Defence appx XXII x</p> <p>" " " " appx XXIII x</p>	<p>* Appx. XV.</p> <p>x Appx. XVI</p> <p>* Appx. XVII</p> <p>* Appx. XVIII</p> <p>x Appx. XIX</p> <p>x Appx. XX</p> <p>x Appx. XXI</p> <p>x Appx. XXII</p> <p>x Appx. XXIII</p>

R. M. Smythe Major



208  
SECRET.

Copy No. 35.....

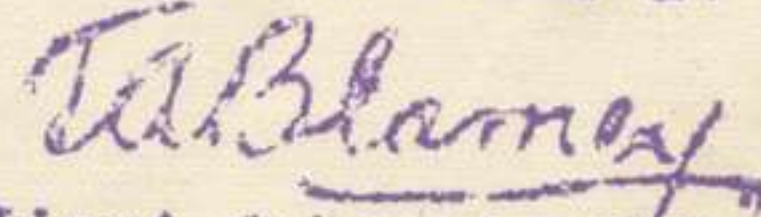
FIRST AUSTRALIAN DIVISION ORDER No. 16.Divisional Headquarters.  
1st April 1917.

1. The 1st Australian Division (less artillery and units detached) will relieve the 5th Australian Division in the line in accordance with the attached movement table.
2. The divisional sector will be divided into two brigade sectors. The dividing line will be cross roads I.27.c.10.95 - DEISAUX FARM (inclusive to Right Brigade) - Cross Roads I.23.b.25.15 - HELMETZ (inclusive to Right Brigade.)  
A map showing routes etc., is issued herewith to formations concerned.
3. Each brigade sector will be held as an outpost section with one battalion in the advanced line of resistance.
4. The Corps "Main Line of Resistance" will be the line O.5 Central - I.27 Central - I.14.d. - H.12 Central - H.4.d. This line will be held in each brigade sector by a nucleus garrison of 1 Battalion from the brigade and two sections of No. 21 Machine Gun Coy.
5. On taking over command the following troops come under the orders of G.O.C. 1st Australian Division.  

5th Aus. Div. Artillery	}	in their present position.
3rd Aus. (Army) A.P.A. Brigade		
One Squadron 15th Light Horse	}	in HAPLIN COURT.
1 Company ANZAC Cyclist Battalion		
6. The following intervals will be maintained on the roads.  

200 yards	between Battalions.
200	" Transport and troops or between transport of different units.
100 yards	between companies.
7. Representatives of relieving units will be sent into each post and position in the advanced line on the night prior to the relief.
8. Advanced parties will be sent forward to take over quarters.
9. Brigade Commanders will arrange details of the relief direct subject to the provisions of this order.
10. The machine guns of the 2nd Infantry Brigade detached for anti-aircraft duty will remain as at present.
11. Instructions for the distribution of Field Companies and for Medical arrangements consequent on the relief will be issued separately. The Mobile Veterinary Section will remain in its present location.
12. Right Brigade Headquarters will be established at DEISAUX FARM, and Left Brigade Headquarters at HUGNY. Divisional Headquarters will be established at H.35.c.5.7. on the evening of 5th instant. G.O.C. 1st Australian Division will take over command at 9 a.m. on 7th instant.

ACKNOWLEDGE.

  
 T. Blaney  
 Lieut-Colonel. G.S.

First Australian Division.



DISTRIBUTION :-

No.	Issued to.
1 - 5	D.H.Q.
6	C.R.A. 1st Aus. Div.
7	C.R.E. do
8	Div. Signal Coy.
9	Div. Train.
10	S.S.O. 1st Aus. Div.
11	1st Inf. Bde.
12	2nd do
13	3rd do
14	1st Pioneer Bn.
15	A.D.H.S.
16	A.D.V.S.
17	A.P.M.
18	Mob. Vet. Sec.
19 - 20	1st ANZAC.
21	1st ANZAC B.A.
22	G.O.C., R.A. 1st ANZAC.
23	Salvage Coy.
24	D.A.D.C.S.
25	Camp Command.
26	2nd Div. Division.
27	4th do
28	5th do
29	Divisional School.
30	Reinforcement Camp.
31	1st M.L.C. do ALBERT.
32	File.
33 - 35	War Diary.

- ISSUED AT 4 p.m. -



SECRET.

## MOVEMENT TABLE to ACCOMPANY 1st. AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONAL ORDER No. 16 dated 1/4/17. 208

Date.	Unit.	From.	To.	Route.	Remarks.
Apr. 3rd.	{1st Inf. Bde. (No. 21 M.G.C.)	RIBEMONT.	MONTAUBAN Bde. Camp. Sq. S. 26.d.	BUIRE -- DERNANCOURT -- MEAULTE -- FRICOURT.	No. 21 M.G. Coy will move under orders of G.C.C., 1st. Inf. Bde.
Apr. 4th.	{1st. Inf. Bde. (NO. 21 M.G.C.)	MONTAUBAN Camp.	FREMICOURT HAPLIN COURT	Infantry via duckwalks and across country. Transport via BAZENTIN and BAPAUME.	
	3rd Inf. Bde.	BRESLE.	MONTAUBAN Bde. Camp. Sq. S. 26.d.	Cross Roads D. 27. central -- BUIRE -- DERNANCOURT -- MEAULTE -- FRICOURT.	
Apr. 5th.	1st. Inf. Bde.	Relieves portion of 14th Aust. Bde.			Relief of advanced line will be carried out by night.
	3rd. Inf. Bde.	MONTAUBAN Camp.	FREMICOURT -- BEUGNY Area.	Infantry via duckwalks and across country. Transport via BAZENTIN and BAPAUME.	
	2nd. Inf. Bde.	BUIRE.	MONTAUBAN Bde. Camp. Sq. S. 26.d.	DERNANCOURT -- MEAULTE -- FRICOURT.	Orders will be issued for the further move of 2nd. Inf. Bde.
Apr. 6th.	3rd. Inf. Bde.	Relieves portion of 14th Aust. Inf. Bde.			Relief of advanced line will be carried out by night.
	Div. H. Qrs.	BAIZIEUX.	H. 35. c. 5. 7.		

Appendix No. 1



SECRET.

Copy No... 33

ADDENDA TO  
FIRST AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONAL ORDER No. 16.

Divisional Headquarters.  
2nd April 1917.

1. Left Brigade Headquarters will be established temporarily at FRIMICOURT instead of BUDONY.
2. Movement Table.-
  - (a) The Route of the 3rd Infantry Brigade will be via ALBERT - Cross Roads D.8.c.40.95. The most southerly routes through ALBERT will be used. Troops moving via the ALBERT - AMIENS Road will turn off at E.3.b.6.7 and move via Rue de la FONTAINE - E.4.c. Troops moving via MILLENCOURT will keep South of the roads in W.28.
  - (b) On April 5th the 3rd Brigade will move from MONTAUBAN Camp to the FRIMICOURT and VILLERS AU FLOS areas.
  - (c) All Infantry transport will move via LONGUEVAL - FLERS - GUEDECOURT - BE. ULINCOURT. This road is reserved for 1st Australian Division Transport between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. on 4th, 5th, and 6th April.
3. VILLERS AU FLOS is allotted to the Reserve Brigade for quartering.
4. The western boundary of the divisional area will be H.23.a.8.8 - O.2.a.9.9. - N.12.c.0.0. - N.24.b.6.2. - O.10.c.6.6. The boundaries of the forward brigade sectors will remain as shown on the map issued with Divisional Order No. 16.
5. The Squadron 13th Light Horse and a Cyclist Company now at HAPLIN COURT move to WELU WOOD on April 4th clearing HAPLIN COURT by 2 p.m.

ACKNOWLEDGE.



Lieut. Colonel.  
General Staff.  
First Australian Division.

Distribution.

Same as Divisional Order No. 16.



SECRET.

Copy No. 19.....

FIRST AUSTRALIAN DIVISION ORDER No. 17.Divisional Headquarters.  
7th April 1917.

1. The Division will advance its front to the line CEMETRY Sq.J.36.a - HERMIES - BOURSIES on 9th inst.,
2. 1st Infantry Brigade will assault HERMIES. It will advance its right to connect with the left of 20th Light Division which is to increase the strength of its outpost line along the ridge Sq.P.12.c - P.12.a - P.6.c - P.8.a - Sq.J.36.c, during the night 8/9th April.  
Its left will be advanced towards DEMICOURT. This village will be seized as soon as G.O.C. 1st Brigade considers that the situation permits, either during this operation or at a later stage.  
Two sections No. 21 Machine Gun Company are placed at the disposal of G.O.C. 1st Brigade.
3. 3rd Aus. Infantry Brigade will assault BOURSIES and will establish contact with 1st Aus. Brigade to the south of that village under arrangements made direct with G.O.C. 1st Brigade.
4. The assault on HERMIES and BOURSIES will be delivered at dawn (4.15.a.m.)
5. G.R.A. will arrange for artillery action against DEMICOURT and the MIT ROOF factory (Sq.J.18.d.) from zero hour onwards.  
Roads by which the enemy can escape will be kept under artillery fire from zero hour onwards.  
G.R.A. will arrange with G.O.C., R.A. 1st ANZAC to co-ordinate the action of heavy and divisional artillery, the 20th Division is arranging for artillery fire on North-western corner and Northern edge of HAVINCOURT WOOD from zero hour onwards.
6. G.R.A. will arrange for engineers to examine the villages for mines and traps immediately after they are captured.  
He will arrange for parties to assist in constructing strong points direct with G.O.C. 1st and 3rd Brigades.
7. 3rd Squadron R.F.C. will have an aeroplane in the air from zero hour throughout the day.  
It will assist by informing the artillery direct of enemy counter-attacks.  
Flares will be lit at 5 a.m. and afterwards when the aeroplane sounds the Alaxon horn.  
Only the most advanced troops will light flares.  
Ground sheets, panels and code letters of Infantry units will be laid out in open places near Headquarters of units and formations.
8. Troops will be warned against drinking water which has not been passed as fit by a Medical Officer.
9. NO MORE.

(P.T.O.)

*Tad Blaney*  
Lieut-Colonel.  
General Staff.  
First Australian Division.



Distribution.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Issued to</u>
1 to 3	D.H.Q.
4	C.R.A. 5th Aus. Div.
5	C.R.E. 1st Aus. Div.
6	Div. Sig. Coy.
7	Div. Train.
8	B.S.C. 1st Aus. Div.
10	1st Aus. Inf. Bde.
11	2nd do.
12	3rd do.
13	1st Pioneer En.
14	A.D.M.S.
15	A.D.V.S.
16	A.P.M.
17	1st ANZ.C.
18	1st ANZ.C. H.A.
20	G.O.C., R.A. 1st ANZ.C.
21	D.A.D.O.S.
22	2nd Aus. Div.
23	4th do.
24	5th do.
25	20th Imperial Division.
26	21st M.G. Coy.
28	File
29	War Diary
30	
31	

Issued at 10.30 p.m.



REPORT on the CAPTURE  
of

HERMIES, DEMICOURT and BOURSIES.

by First Australian Division, 9th April 1917.

1. GENERAL. - When the Division took over from the 5th Australian Division, the line ran as shown in RED on the attached map. The Divisional front was flanked on the right by the Canal du Nord. Running parallel with the Canal is the HERMIES Ridge and from this Ridge a number of spurs run down towards the valley of the AGACHE R. The town of HERMIES occupies a commanding position on the summit of the main ridge. DEMICOURT is a smaller village about 2000 yds. north of HERMIES and on one of the lower spurs. North of HERMIES and somewhat to the west, the small village of BOURSIES straggles along the BAPAUME-CAMBRAI Road for about 1000 yds. The three villages were distant about 1500 yds from our forward line of posts. The intervening country is very undulating and devoid of cover save for one or two somewhat sunken roads.  
The town of HERMIES was strongly prepared for defence on the S.W., S. and N.W. side. It was protected by wire and a carefully planned trench system. On the N.E. and E. side, very little preparation was made to meet an attack. DEMICOURT was known to be defended, but was covered by very little defensive work.  
BOURSIES was also defended with posts on the N., S. and W. sides of the village, and with a defensive work which traversed the village near its eastern end. On the northern side of this village, one of the spurs running in a north-western direction was defended by one or two small German posts.
2. PLAN of OPERATIONS. - Of the three villages, the attack on HERMIES presented the greatest danger and difficulties. Its successful seizure would make the capture of DEMICOURT and BOURSIES a very easy matter. On the other hand, the seizure of BOURSIES alone would not have facilitated operations against either of the other villages to any great extent. It was clear that if both HERMIES and BOURSIES were captured, DEMICOURT would soon become untenable to the enemy. It was determined, therefore, to endeavour to seize HERMIES and BOURSIES simultaneously, and by surprise. It was evident that the enemy would be expecting some form of attack on these villages and it was hoped that we might be able to divert his attention almost entirely to BOURSIES and to lead him to expect attack there prior to any other operations which we might undertake. As the last advance in this area had been the capture of LOUVEVAL and DOIGNIES, it seemed possible that the enemy might <sup>be led to</sup> believe that our policy was to sweep round from the northern side of the nearest village, viz. - BOURSIES. In order to achieve this, it was determined that artillery action against HERMIES and DEMICOURT should not be varied from that which was being carried out normally.  
On the night previous to that chosen for the capture of the village, it was determined to push out on the ridge north of BOURSIES to lead the enemy to the obvious conclusion that ~~artillery~~ <sup>early</sup> operations against BOURSIES would be undertaken.
3. PRELIMINARY MEASURES. - Accordingly on the night 7/8th April. I endeavoured to gain the high ground to the N.W. of BOURSIES in squares D.28.a.&b., D28.c., J.5.a.&b. This resulted in <sup>fairly</sup> heavy fighting by which our line was established from



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the crest of ridge at the western end of BOURSIES (J.11.a.1.8.) along the crest to J.5.c.6.4., thence northwest along the sunken road which skirts LOUVERVAL Chateau wood on the north. In this fighting we suffered about 90 casualties, but accounted for many of the enemy. The normal artillery programme was maintained against HERMIES and DEMI-COURT.

4. DISPOSITIONS for the ATTACK. - The 1st Brigade held the right sector from the Canal du Nord to the BAPAUME-CAMBRAI Road north of DOIGNIES. The 3rd Battalion was on the right and the 1st Battalion was on the left; 4th Battalion in support and the 2nd Battalion in reserve.

The 3rd Brigade held the left sector from the BAPAUME-CAMBRAI Road to C.12. central. The 12th Battalion was on the right, 10th Battalion on the left, 11th Battalion in support and the 9th Battalion in reserve.

5. ACTION against HERMIES. - The plan of the 1st Brigade for the capture of HERMIES and DEMICOURT was to attack with the 2nd battalion from the direction of DOIGNIES, the right of the battalion on the DOIGNIES-HERMIES Road and the left of the battalion directed on the N.E. corner of the town. The 3rd battalion was to contain the enemy on the western and southern faces of the town and to press home when the 2nd battalion had reached the railway. To cover the forming up of the 2nd battalion the posts of the 3rd battalion which were covering DOIGNIES were pushed forward towards DEMICOURT. The 4th battalion, less 2 Coys., was brought forward to the vicinity of DOIGNIES.

The 2nd battalion marched from HAPLIN COURT at 7.30. p.m. on the 8th and deployed under the cover of scouts and patrols without incident at 3.15.a.m. on 9th. Posts had been established by 3rd battalion to cover the flanks of the deployment. At 3.30.a.m. the advance to the assault position began. The battalion was formed up with one company in front line, two companies in second line and one company in echelon on the left flank. At zero hour 4.15.a.m., the assault was launched. The right company encountered strong opposition in J.23.d., but rushed the position with the bayonet and continued the advance. The left company swung round through J.24. and the enemy was thus caught between the cross fire of the flank companies and many of them surrendered. The centre company was delayed by a strong point at J.24.d.9.5. and more Germans were able to escape than would otherwise have been the case.

Hard hand to hand fighting continued in the village and along the railway line for an hour and a half, but by 6.a.m. all objectives had been gained and HERMIES was completely in our hands with posts established about 200 yards from the town around the eastern side of it. The 2nd battalion accounted for 264 Germans, 1 officer and 172 other ranks taken prisoner and one officer and 90 other ranks counted dead on the ground. In addition the battalion captured one machine gun, three automatic rifles, two telephones and much equipment. The casualties suffered by the battalion totalled 8 officers and 172 other ranks.

The 3rd battalion on the right of the 2nd battalion had the task of clearing the area between the railway and the Canal and had to face the enemy's main defences. The battalion advanced on a two company front and moved at 3.45.a.m. from their assembly formation to reach their base of departure by 4.15.a.m. Immediately after leaving the assembly position they came under M.G. and rifle fire but they continued the advance and reached the assaulting position at zero hour. The left was unable to advance further owing to the wire and the enemy's fire and many



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casualties were suffered at this point. When the 2nd battalion had seized its objective, the enemy began to feel the pressure and his resistance rapidly decreased. The right pressed on and occupied the cemetery in J.36.a. and joined up their line with the 2nd battalion.

The 3rd battalion took 28 prisoners and 3 machine guns. Their casualties totalled 63.

6. ACTION against BOURSIES. - The 3rd Brigade was allotted the task of capturing BOURSIES and the 12th battalion was detailed to make the attack.

The village was covered by strong enemy posts on the high ground to the N. and N.W. and it was essential that this ground should be made good before the village could be held. Fighting for this high ground began on the night 7/8th as already mentioned.

At 10.30.p.m. on the 8th the enemy launched a determined counter-attack on the 12th battalion and succeeded in gaining a footing in their line but were at once ejected by a counter attack. The attack seriously interfered with the preparation for the operation of the 12th battalion timed for 4.15.a.m. 9th, from the N.W. but was hung up by M.G. fire on the left. Two platoons skilfully led by Lieut. DADSON attacked the enemy trenches in J.5.central and captured them taking two enemy machine guns with little loss themselves. The captured machine guns were at once turned on the retiring enemy.

From this stage until 12 noon very little progress was made. By noon fresh parties had been organised to mop up the village from the west and south. At 2 p.m. the remainder of the enemy's garrison was driven out and fled back towards the German main line.

7. ACTION against DEMICOURT. - The 1st battalion was detailed to cover the flank of the 2nd battalion in its attack of HERMIERS and to occupy DEMICOURT after the capture of HERMIERS and BOURSIES. The battalion was disposed with three companies in line. At 6.5.a.m. information was received that BOURSIES had been occupied and 5 minutes later a report was received that DEMICOURT was believed to be evacuated. The left company was accordingly ordered to get into touch with the 12th battalion in BOURSIES and all three companies were ordered to push forward patrols to DEMICOURT.

One patrol (Lieut. SAMPSON and 24 other ranks) from the left company came under machine gun fire from the left flank but by taking advantage of the ground and by covering the advance of one part of the patrol by the fire of the remainder, Lieut. SAMPSON managed to work round the left of the village.

At 7.30.a.m. the attacking companies moved forward but were held up by machine gun fire. At 7.52.a.m. it was reported that the enemy had again occupied the village and artillery fire was directed on it with good effect. At 8.a.m. the attacking companies again moved forward and at the same time Lieut. SAMPSON'S patrol mentioned above rushed the village and manned a sunken road on the east of it. The enemy about 50 strong counter attacked but were driven off by the patrol.

The attacking companies moved up on the flanks, but the enemy directed a heavy artillery fire on to both companies and on to the village. The companies on the right and left of the village fell back, but the patrol in the village held its ground.

At 10.15.a.m. the right company reported the capture of the sugar factory on the HERMIERS-DEMICOURT ridge and at 10.50. parties from the left company entered the village. By 11 a.m. our line was established east of the village and in touch with the 2nd battalion on the right and covering with M.G. the gap on the left.

The B<sup>n</sup> advanced  
at zero hour



By night fall the new line was consolidated throughout as shown in red in the attached map.

The artillery of the 5th Australian Division and the 3rd Brigade (Army) A.F.A. rendered most valuable assistance. F.O.Os. rendered valuable service in sending back timely information.

The F.O.O. with 2nd battalion, Lieut. *R.B. Doughty*, went right forward of HERMES and was able to give complete information of the enemy throughout.

The operations resulted in the capture of three villages all strongly held - 2 officers and 203 other rank prisoners, 7 machine guns, 5 automatic rifles, 2 bomb throwers and much equipment. In addition, heavy casualties in dead and wounded are known to have been inflicted on the enemy. 10 Officers and 90 other ranks were counted dead on the ground covered by the 2nd battalion alone. Total casualties are estimated at 800 to 900.

Our casualties for the operation total 497. They are shown in detail in the attached statement.

The following are attached .-

(i) Map showing .-

- (a) Our line at 8.p.m. on 8th instant - RED.
- (b) " " " " " 9th " - BLUE

(ii) Statement of Casualties.

(iii) Orders for the attack .-

- (a) 1st Australian Division Order.
- (b) 1st " Brigade "
- (c) 3rd " " "

*(Sd) 243 Walker*

Major-General.  
Commanding 1st Australian Division.



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C A S U A L T I E S.

in action against HERMIES, DEMICOURT and BOURSIES 9-4-17.

	Officers.			Other Ranks.		
	K	W	M	K	W	M
1st. Battalion	1	3	-	12	44	-
2nd. Battalion	2	6	-	30	108	5
3rd. Battalion	1	1	-	17	27	2
4th. Battalion	-	-	-	-	1	-
1st. Machine Gun Coy.	-	1	-	-	9	-
2nd. Field Ambulance	-	-	-	-	1	-
9th. Battalion	1	-	-	1	8	-
10th. Battalion	1	1	-	10	21	-
11th. Battalion	-	1	-	3	13	-
12th. Battalion	2	2	-	49	103	-
	8	15	-	122	335	7

Officers	23
O.R.	464
Total	487.



FIRST AUSTRALIAN DIVISION ORDER No. 17.Divisional Headquarters.  
7th April, 1917.

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1. The Division will advance its front to the line CEMETERY Sq.J.36.a. HERMIES - BOURSIES on 9th inst.
  2. 1st. Infantry Brigade will assault HERMIES. It will advance its right to connect with the left of 20th. Light Division which is to increase the strength of its outpost line along the ridge Sq.P.12.c - P.12.a - P.6.a - Sq.J.36.c, during the night 8/9th, April. P.6.c.  
Its left will be advanced towards DEMICOURT. This village will be seized as soon as G.O.C., 1st. Brigade considers that the situation permits either during this operation or at a later stage.  
Two Sections 21st. Machine gun company are placed at the disposal of G.O.C., 1st. Brigade.
  3. 3rd. Aus. Infantry Brigade will assault BOURSIES and will establish contact with 1st. Aus. Brigade to the South of that village under arrangements made direct with G.O.C., 1st. Brigade.
  4. The assault on HERMIES and BOURSIES will be delivered at dawn (4.15 a.m.).
  5. C.R.A. will arrange for artillery action against DEMICOURT and the BEET ROOT FACTORY (Sq.J.18.d.) from Zero hour onwards.  
Roads by which the enemy can escape will be kept under artillery fire from Zero hour onwards.  
C.R.A. will arrange with G.O.C., R.A. 1st. ANZAC to co-ordinate the action of heavy and Divisional Artillery.  
20th. Division is arranging for artillery fire on the North Western corner and Northern edge of HAVRINCOURT WOOD from Zero hour onwards.
  6. C.R.E. will arrange for Engineers to examine the villages for mines and traps immediately after they are captured.  
He will arrange for parties to assist in constructing strong points direct with G.O.C., 1st. and 3rd. Brigades.
  7. 3rd. Squadron R.F.C. will have an aeroplane in the air from Zero hour throughout the day.  
It will assist by informing the artillery direct of enemy counter-attacks.  
Flares will be lit at 5 a.m. and afterwards when the aeroplane sounds the Klaxon Horn.  
Only the most advanced troops will light flares.  
Ground sheets, panels and code letters of Infantry Units will be laid out in open places near Headquarters of Units and formations.
  8. Troops will be warned against drinking water which has not been passed as fit by a Medical Officer.
  9. ACKNOWLEDGE.

(signed) T.A. BLAMEY.  
Lieut-Colonel.  
General Staff.  
First Australian Division.



## FIRST AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE ORDER No. 24.

Brigade Hdqrs.  
8th April, 1917.

MAP REFERENCE : 57c. 1:40.000

1. The enemy is occupying the line BOURSIES, DEMICOURT, HERMIES, HAVRINCOURT WOOD with advanced posts pushed out in front.

2. The 1st. Aus. Infantry Brigade will capture HERMIES on 9th instant. The 60th. (Light) Infantry Brigade (Imperial) will assist by covering fire against HAVRINCOURT WOOD.

The 3rd. Aus. Infantry Brigade in conjunction with our attack will seize BOURSIES.

3. (a) The assault will be carried out by the 2nd. Aus. Battalion which will deploy for attack and move forward from the direction of DOIGNIES to an assaulting position on a line approximately through J.29.a.0.4 - J.24.a.3.0.

The assault on HERMIES will be made from this line at Zero hour and the new line established from J.30.b.9.0 through J.24.d.8.0. J.24.a.7.2.

(b) The C.O. 3rd. Aus. Battalion will co-operate with the 2nd. Aus. Battalion, gaining the line J.35. Central- J.29.a.0.4. at Zero hour. Frontage will include the railway line. When the 2nd. Aus. Battalion has made good the village, 3rd. Aus. Battalion will take up the line J.36.a.5.3. - J.30.b.9.0.

(c) The 1st. Aus. Battalion will contain the enemy in DEMICOURT and will bring forward its right to cover the left flank of the 2nd. Aus. Battalion at J.24.a.7.2., establishing a strong post in the vicinity of J.17.d. The left of the 1st. Aus. Battalion will be brought forward to link up with the right of the 12th. Aus. Battalion.

(d) 4th. Aus. Battalion - less 2 companies - will be in reserve at J.15.d. and 2 companies at VELU.

(e) C.O. 1st. Aus. M.G. Coy. will establish two sections machine guns East of DOIGNIES for covering fire.

One section will be detailed for dealing with enemy counter-attacks on HERMIES.

One section - less one gun - will be allotted to the sector occupied by 3rd. Aus. Battalion.

Two sections 21st. M.G. Coy. will be in reserve at VELU.

(f) Headquarters and two sections 3rd. Field Company A.E. will establish strong points in line East of HERMIES, after capture of the village.

4. The attack will be launched without artillery support. Normal artillery activity against enemy villages will be carried on till 0400. At Zero hour batteries will open on DEMICOURT, BEET ROOT FACTORY (J.18.d.) Road N.E. from K.19.a.5.0. and eastern approach to HERMIES.

5. A contact aeroplane will be in the air after dawn on 9th inst. At 0500 and on aeroplane sounding its Klaxon Horn, Red Signal flares will be lighted to show positions, but only by the most advanced troops.

6. A Brigade reserve of S.A.A., Bombs, Rifle Grenades, Sandbags and tools is established at I.29.b.6.3.

7. The necessary medical arrangements will be made by R.M.O's. Troops will be warned against drinking water which has not been passed by a Medical Officer.

8. Zero hour will be 0415 on 9th April.

9. Watches will be synchronised through Brigade Signal Office at 1800 on 8th April.

10. Reports to Brigade H.Q. DELSAUX FARM (I.28.a.3.5).

ACKNOWLEDGE.

(signed) J.C. HARDIE Major.

Bde. Major. 1st. Aus. Inf. Bde.



3rd AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE ORDER No. 24.

Brigade Headquarters,  
7th April, 1917.

Map Reference Sheet.  
57c 1/20,000.

1. In conjunction with an attack on HERMIES on 8th inst., by 1st Australian Infantry Brigade, the 3rd Australian Infantry Brigade will capture BOURSIES. Zero hour will be notified later.
2. The attack will be carried out in two phases.

FIRST PHASE.

- (a) On night of 7th, immediately after relieving 12th Battalion the 10th Battalion will establish posts on the line D.25.d.7.8.- D.21.d.5.0.- D.28.b.9.5.- D.29.c.4.7.
- (b) The 12th Battalion will establish posts on line D.29.c.4.7- J.5.b.central- J.5. Central to WINDMILL at J.5.c.0.0. connecting up with 1st Brigade on right and with 10th Battalion on left. A post will also be established at about J.11.a.central to command the low ground South of BOURSIES. The posts will be held by 6 platoons.
- (c) Commanding Officers will report when these posts have been established.

SECOND PHASE.

At a time to be notified later the 12th Battalion, less 1½ Companies will attack BOURSIES from the line J.5. Central- J.6.a. Central and will establish a new line from 1st Brigade on our right to J.11.b.9.9. thence North along creek to J.6.a. thence to J.5.b. Central.

On village being cleared, patrols will be sent forward up BAPAUME- CAMBRAI Road.

3. Our aeroplanes will be flying over the position after dawn on 8th instant. On aeroplane sounding its Klaxon Horn, Infantry in posts will light flares to show their positions.
4. The attack will be launched without artillery support, should rifle or machine gun fire from DEMICOURT be opened, the heavy artillery will shell that village and the exits towards BOURSIES and HERMIES.  
S.O.S. lines to protect original line and BOURSIES after capture, have been arranged with artillery Commanders concerned.

5. A forward dump of :-

S.A.A.	50,000 rounds
Bombs.	2,000
Rifle Grenades.	500

will be established under Brigade arrangements on road to LOUVERVAL CHATEAU at about J.10.a.4.7.

6. Brigade Headquarters will remain at FREMICOURT.
7. ACKNOWLEDGE.

(Signed) W.J.M. LOCKE. Major.  
Brigade Major 3rd Aust. Infantry Brigade.



on 15th April, 1917.

1. GENERAL.-- The successful seizure of the villages of HERMIES, DELICOURT and BOURSIES on the 9th instant advanced the divisional line for an average distance of 2,000 yards. The effect of this was to extend the actual frontage held to a total of 13,000 yards.
2. DISTRIBUTION.-- The position was held as an outpost position with two brigades in the line and one brigade in divisional reserve. Each brigade in the line had two battalions holding sections of the outposts, one battalion in support and one in reserve.  
Two battalions of the reserve brigade were detailed under Corps orders as garrison to the BEUCNY-YTRES line and were not available to deal with enemy attacks forward of that position.
3. ADVANCE and ACTION on 13th/14th April.-- On the 13th April, the division was ordered to advance its line along the whole front to within 1,000 yards of the HINDENBURG Line with the object of threatening this line. This was carried out during the night 13th/14th and involved a considerable amount of fighting in certain localities.  
This advance having thus brought us very much nearer the enemy's main position it was felt that an attack or an extensive raid by the enemy might be expected and consequently both of the brigades in line moved their reserve battalions (2 in each case) further forward. As an additional precaution the left brigade increased the strength of a number of its front line posts on the evening of the 14th.  
The anticipation was justified, for on the morning of 14th April the enemy rushed and captured two of our posts at D.23.d.2.8 and D.22.d.3.9 with their garrisons but was promptly driven out by a counter-attack, and on the morning of 15th he made the attack all along our front which is described in this report.
4. DISPOSITION of the DIVISION on the NIGHT 14/15th April.--  
The disposition of the Division was then as follows. Details are shown on the attached map.
  - (i) Divisional Artillery. (5th. Aus. Div. Artillery.)  
"A" group (7th, 8th, and 9th, batteries of 18 pdrs. and 103rd. battery 4'5" Hows.) on the right disposed between HERMIES and VELU as shown on the map attached.  
"B" group (49th, 50th, and 51st batteries of 18 pdrs. and 113th battery 4'5" Hows.) disposed between MORCHIES and BEAUMETZ.  
"C" group (53rd, 54th, and 55th batteries of 18 pdrs. and 106th and 114th batteries 4'5" Hows.) disposed in and on the West of MORCHIES.
  - (ii) Artillery of 2nd. Aus. Division in 1st. Aus. Division Area.  
2nd. A.F.A. Brigade (4th, 5th, and 6th, batteries of 18 pdrs. and 102nd. battery 4'5" Hows.) disposed immediately to the West of LAGNICOURT in Sq.C.23.
  - (iii) 1st. Aus. Infantry Brigade with its machine gun company, L.T.M. Battery and one company of Divisional Engineers in line right sector.

(P.T.O)



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(iii) Contd:-

3rd. Aus. Infantry Brigade with its Machine Gun Company, L.P.M. Battery and one company of Divisional Engineers in line left sector.

2nd. Aus. Infantry Brigade two Battalions, Machine Gun Company and L.P.M. Battery garrison of the Corps main line of resistance - two battalions in Divisional Reserve at LEMICOURT and VILLERS au PLOIS.

(iv) 21st. (Divisional) Machine Gun Company -  
2 sections in the right brigade sector.  
2 sections in the left brigade sector.

5. The OPENING of the ATTACK.- At 3.30 a.m. on 15th April the enemy opened a heavy bombardment against the villages in rear of our front line and against our artillery positions. At 4 a.m. a heavy barrage of all nature of artillery was placed with varying degrees of intensity practically along the whole length of the line. At 4.15 a.m. the barrage lifted from the front line and the enemy infantry advanced to the attack along the whole front of the Division and on the right front of the 2nd. Australian Division on our left. On both flanks our positions were much nearer to the enemy than the other parts of the line and it was at the flanks that the weight of the enemy attack was first felt. The weight of the attack was greatest along the valleys leading up to our positions, particularly towards LEMICOURT, BOURGIES, LEMICOURT and NOREUIL.

Darkness covered the advance of the enemy.

6. The ATTACK on the 1st. BRIGADE.-

- (1) The brigade was disposed as follows :- (Vide Map attached.)  
3rd. Battalion in line on right.  
4th. Battalion in line on left.  
1st. and 2nd. Battalions in Brigade Reserve at DOIGNIES and BLAUMONTZ respectively.  
1st. Machine Gun Company.-  
2 subsections on the right covering the front of 3rd. Battalion.  
1 section on the left covering the front of 4th. Battalion.  
1 section in reserve at DOIGNIES.  
2 subsections in reserve at J.33.b.

1st. A.L.P.M. Battery.- in reserve in BLAUMONTZ.

(ii) The 3rd. Battalion on the right, covered a frontage of 3250 yards with 3 companies in line and one in reserve as follows :- In line from right to left "D" company, "A" company, "B" company, in reserve "C" company. Each company in the line had one or more picquets each of one platoon, while the remaining platoons were in support. Each picquet threw out one or more posts.

At 4.5 a.m. the right post (X.20.a.2.4.) of the left outpost company discovered the enemy advancing to the attack. Within a few seconds the full fire power of the post was developed and two or three minutes later the remaining two posts to the right opened fire.

Four Lewis Guns were in action and the crossed fire from these guns was very effective. In one case 20 magazines were fired from one gun without a jamb.

(P.T.O.)



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(ii) Contd:-

The enemy attacked in two lines with intervals of one to two paces between men and came under the rifle and Lewis Gun fire of four posts and suffered heavily. At only one post did he get to within range of our bombers who checked his advance and caused him to retire.

Our fire direction and control was greatly assisted by the large number of flares fired by the enemy from his trenches in rear of the attacking troops.

This battalion gave no ground and it inflicted severe casualties on the enemy. 200 enemy dead were counted in front its posts and many enemy wounded were removed under cover of the Red Cross flag. During the removal of the wounded, enemy machine gun fire was directed continuously on our posts.

(iii) The 4th. Battalion on the left covered a frontage of approximately 3,000 yards with 3 companies in line and one in reserve as follows :- in line from right to left "C" company, "D" company, "B" Company and in reserve "A" company.

The companies in line were disposed in posts, picquets, and supports similarly to 3rd. battalion.

The enemy attacked "B" company in force on both sides of the Dunker Road in K.7.d. and by the use of flammenwerfer overwhelmed the post at K.7.d.5.4. and established a machine gun in the post.

The two platoons of this company which were in support at once made a counter-attack, but the enemy were now advancing in large numbers and the counter-attack was unable to retake the post mentioned.

At 4.45 a.m. a message was received at battalion headquarters from "D" company giving the situation, and one platoon from the reserve company was sent to reinforce "B" company.

At 5 a.m. a message from "B" company announced that this company was being heavily attacked, that their left post had been driven back fighting to the vicinity of J.6. Central and that the two posts of the 11th. battalion next on the left had also been driven in. It stated also that our strong post 100 yards North of the Chapel (J.6.d.2.9.) was successfully holding up large bodies of the enemy and inflicting heavy losses and that the two support platoons had been sent to reinforce the left flank North and North-east of J.6. Central. The battalion commander thereupon sent the remainder of the reserve company (3 platoons) to reinforce "B" company North of BOURGIES. The O.C. battalion then asked the brigade for one company to replace his battalion reserve. "A" company of 1st. battalion in reserve at BOIGNIES was accordingly sent up as reserve to the 4th. battalion.

A report was next received from "C" company that it had beaten off the enemy attack with heavy losses. The battalion commander then ordered "C" company to make an attack with one platoon against "D" company's right post (K.7.d.5.4.) where the enemy had established a machine gun. It was now clear daylight and this attack was held up by machine gun fire from K.14.c. the platoon officer being wounded.

A report was now received from the left flank of the battalion that the situation there was serious. The senior officer on the spot reported that the strong point at the Chapel was still held but that the front of "B" company had been broken, that the enemy was

(1.9.0.)



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(iii) Contd:-

coming in large numbers down the valley and road through D.30. and that our posts had been driven back to line J.6.d.2.9 - J.5.b.8.7. The reserve company ("A" Company 1st. Battalion) was at once sent to reinforce the left flank and the 1st. Brigade was asked for another company to replace the reserve company and for two more companies of 1st. Battalion; one to be sent to J.11.d. the other with two Vickers Guns to J.11.b. "B" company 1st. Battalion was sent to replace the reserve company and "C" and "D" companies 1st. Battalion under Major WOODWARD were sent to the left flank at 10 a.m. in answer to this request. In addition one company of 2nd. Battalion from B.L.U.M.T. was sent to the sunken road in J.16.b.

Throughout this period 1st. Brigade Headquarters and the artillery were kept well informed of the progress of events.

By 9 a.m. we had regained complete control in this sector and enemy was endeavouring to dig in on the line A.8.e.7.0. - E.7.d.7.4. - K.7. Central - L.1.d. - L.1.e. - J.6.d. - J.6.b. - D.30. - D.29. During this time he was harassed by fire from our artillery, machine guns and rifles all the time. It is estimated that the enemy casualties in front of this battalion numbered well over 300.

The situation remained as above during the whole of the 15th, but during the night 15th/16th such of the enemy as had been able to protect themselves by the hastily dug cover withdrew to their main line.

(iv) Action of 1st. Machine Gun Company.

Disposition.

2 Sub-sections on the right covering the front of the 3rd. Battalion.

1 Section on the left covering the front of the 4th. Battalion.

1 Section in reserve in BOIGNIE.

2 Sub-sections in reserve in J.33.b.

The whole company was under the command of the company commander.

Action.

The two sub-sections on the right did not come into action, the 3rd. battalion being able to keep the enemy off with its own Lewis Guns.

The section on the left was placed under the orders of the C.O. 4th. battalion at the beginning of the action.

The two left guns only of this section came into action as follows:-

Gun at J.12.1. Central fired approximately 4,000 rounds in direct fire at ranges of from 300 to 700 yards at targets chiefly in Cq.2.1. The gun remained in action in this position throughout the period of the attack.

Gun at J.5.b.7.1 fired approximately 5,000 rounds in direct fire at ranges of from 80 to 300 yds. It is estimated that this gun accounted for 60 of the enemy. The gun remained in action in this position throughout the fight.

The section in reserve at BOIGNIE at about 7 a.m. was by brigade orders placed at the disposal of C.O. 4th. battalion.

(P.T.O.)



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## (iv) Contd:-

The O.C., machine gun company got into touch with the O.C., 4th. battalion as to the disposition of the section and placed the gun as follows:-

1 Sub-section in J.17.c. to bring indirect fire on to the enemy digging in, in J.7.

The other sub-section North and South of BOULSIES in J.6.c.

The sub-section in J.17.c. fired approximately 2,000 rounds from this position but the result was unobserved. At about 9 a.m. they were moved by order of the O.C., 4th. battalion to positions at J.12.d.7.5. and J.12.d.1.7. from which the left gun fired another 2,000 rounds at an enemy machine gun and post both in J.1.c. The right gun got no target. The sub-section remained in these latter positions to the end of the action. The sub-section North and South of BOULSIES fired approximately 1500 rounds at the enemy digging in in J.6.b. and remained in these positions throughout the action.

The two sub-sections in reserve at J.33.b. were by orders of the brigade moved at about 6 a.m. into a position of readiness in the sunken road J.23. but did not come into action.

The casualties suffered by the company were 6 other ranks wounded.

## (v) Action of the 1st. Aus. L.T.M. Battery.

The battery was in reserve in H.44.24 and did not come into action.

After the action 1 gun was employed in BELICOURT and 1 at J.12.a. Central and two more were brought up in support.

## (vi) Brigade Reserve.

At the beginning of the action the reserve in the hands of the brigade commander consisted of the 1st. and 2nd. battalions, 2 sections of 1st. machine gun company and 1st. L.T.M. Battery. They were put into the fight as follows:-

The 1st. battalion was sent up in response to calls from the O.C., 4th. battalion to support that battalion, two companies in succession being sent up to replace the reserve company, two companies being sent direct to support the left flank.

The 2nd. battalion at 8.30 a.m. sent two companies to support the 11th. battalion, on the right of the 3rd. brigade, and at about 10 a.m. sent one company to J.16.b. ready for use where required.

Though General HESSELMAN'S left flank was threatened at the time he showed judgment in sending as he did to support the more hardily pressed 3rd. brigade right flank since by doing so he protected his own left.

Two companies of 2nd. battalion then remained in his hands as brigade reserve.

The two sections of 1st. machine gun company were used as stated in para. 6 (iv).

The 1st. L.T.M. Battery was not used: see para. 6 (v).

## 7. The 1st. A.C. on the THIRD BRIGADE:-

## (1) The Brigade was disposed as follows:-

11th. Battalion in line on the right.

12th. Battalion in line on the left.

(P.T.O.)



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(i) Contd:-

10th. Battalion ( 2 companies in reserve to  
( 11th. battalion.  
( 2 companies in Brigade  
( Reserve in Eqs. J.7 and 8.  
( North of BEAUMETZ.

9th. Battalion ( 2 companies in reserve to  
( 12th. Battalion.  
( 2 companies in Brigade Res-  
(-erve at MORCHIES.

3rd. Aus. Machine Gun Coy.

2 Sections attached to 11th. Battalion.  
1 Section attached to 12th. Battalion.  
1 Section in reserve at MORCHIES.

3rd. Aus. L.T.M. Battery. In Reserve -

1 Section at MORCHIES.  
1 Section at PALMICOURT.

(ii) The 11th. Battalion occupied a frontage of approx-  
-imately 3.500 yards on the following line D.30.c.1.4.-  
D.30.a.4.0 - D.23.d.7.4 - D.21.b.5.4 - D.21.a.0.4.  
"A" company on the right, "C" in the centre, "D" on the  
left, each having one of its platoons in close support.  
"B" company was in reserve on a line D.28.a.7.8 - "D"  
D.21.d.5.0. In addition two companies of 10th. Battalion  
disposed as follows :- One Company in Sunken Road  
D.28.c. half a company D.29.a.4.4, half a company  
D.29.c.3.2. were in reserve to 11th. Battalion.

At 4 a.m. the enemy placed an intense barrage on  
the picquet line which lasted until 4.15 a.m. At  
4.15 a.m. the enemy attacked all along the battalion  
front and broke through "C" company. The enemy then  
established himself on the high ground in D.23.c. from  
which position he seriously threatened "A" company.  
Half "C" company 10th. Battalion which was in close  
support to the 11th. Battalion was despatched to support  
"A" company, the other half company to support "C"  
company of 11th. Battalion.

The half company sent to "A" company made a  
gallant counter-attack which drove the enemy from the  
threatening position in D.23.c. and accounted for 50  
of the enemy killed.

"A" company however, was hardly pressed and  
withdrew gradually until its right reached a point  
D.29.d.5.0, thus conforming with the movement of the  
4th. Battalion on its right. Its centre picquet was  
now surrounded, and having used up its ammunition, it  
charged back through the enemy with the bayonet.  
Lieut. POPE who led the charge was killed and only a  
small remnant got back. The left picquet of this  
company under Lieut. LYONS held out after "C" company  
on his left had been broken thereby giving time for  
the organisation of a support line as follows:-  
D.29.d.5.0 - D.29.a.0.0 - (held by the unbroken nucleus  
of "A" company) with  $\frac{1}{2}$  "D" company and the whole of  
"A" company 10th. Battalion holding the sunken road in  
D.28.c. The latter company had been sent to 11th.  
battalion from brigade reserve at about 6.30 a.m. as  
the situation here appeared critical.

(P.T.O.)



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(ii) Contd:-

"B" company of 11th. battalion originally in support had not been moved as it held a line D.28.a.6.9 - D.21.d.5.0. well suited to stem an enemy advance. The gallant action of the picquet under Lieut. LEONS' command undoubtedly saved the situation in this locality but the whole post was lost in making this resistance.

"D" company although heavily attacked succeeded in holding its position throughout the day notwithstanding that the right flank was exposed by the falling back of "C" company and the left flank exposed by the falling back of the 12th. battalion. This company was reinforced early in the action by half of "D" company 10th. battalion.

At about 10 a.m. the battalion was further reinforced by 2 companies from the 2nd. battalion 1st. brigade vide para. 6 (vi).

The enemy did not make any further progress on the front of the 11th. battalion, but dug in at an average distance of 200 yards from our line. Throughout the day, "D" company was heavily shelled and at dusk the battalion commander reinforced this company by half "B" company.

(iii) The 12th. Battalion occupied a frontage of approximately 3,000 yards on the following line :-  
D.20.b.0.3 - D.20.a.0.7 - D.14.c.7.8 - D.13.c.4.7 - C.18.b.5.8 - C.12. Central. All four companies were in the line in the following order from the left :- "D", "A", "B", "C".

Each company found one or more picquets, no picquet being of less strength than one platoon. The remaining platoons of the companies were in close support.

At about 4 a.m. the enemy attacked simultaneously all along the front of the 12th. battalion and on the front of the 20th. battalion which was the right flank battalion of the 2nd. Aus. Division. The right of the 20th. battalion was driven back and with it the two left sentry groups of "D" company. This exposed the left flank of "D" company. Frontal attacks on "A" and "D" companies were delivered in great strength and "A" company was pressed back by sheer weight of numbers - estimated at 10 to 1, to the sunken road in C.24.d, carrying with it part of "B" company. "D" company had now to deal with attacks from the front and from both flanks and to avoid being cut off, Captain VOWLES, O.C. "D" company ordered the company to break through to the rear; this they did closely pressed by the enemy. Two officers, about 50 men and three Lewis Guns succeeded in getting through. The remainder of "B" company then withdrew its sentry posts to its picquet line and threw out a defensive flank on the left from which the enemy was kept under a constant fire. "C" company on the right held its ground.

While the 2 left flank companies were thus being pressed back the enemy working round our left flank had reached LAGNICOURT shortly after 4 a.m. had captured the section of the 21st. machine gun coy. in C.17.d. as described later in para. 8 (ii)b. and had over-run the guns of the 2nd. A.F.A. Brigade emplaced on the West of the village under the orders of the 2nd. Aust. Division.

(P.T.O.)



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(iii) Contd:-

The enemy spent something over an hour in the village destroying guns and looting, and at about 5.30 a.m. began to attack from the village "A" company in the sunken road C.24.d. where the company had rallied. The attack was delivered from front flank and rear, but was beaten off with heavy losses owing mainly to the leadership of Captain KEWLANDS. In the course of this attack the enemy placed a machine gun to enfilade the Sunken Road occupied by the company; seeing this, Sgt. WHITEHEAD of "A" company attacked the machine gun single-handed, bombing and killing the whole crew and capturing the gun.

As soon as it was realised that the enemy was in LAGNICOURT, a composite platoon was organised from the personnel at battalion headquarters and this platoon under Lieut. WEBSTER, Intelligence Officer, attacked the village. The enemy, however, were in overwhelming strength and the platoon after losing its officer, M.C.O. and several men was forced to withdraw. The action of this platoon however, prevented the enemy from occupying the Sunken Road in C.29.b. from which position he would have been able to take the party in C.24.d. in rear. About the same time, the remainder of the battalion headquarters, consisting of batmen, signallers, cooks, etc., lined the road near battalion headquarters in C.29.e.4.1. and opened fire on the enemy at C.23. Central.

A Vickers M.G. mounted for A.A. duty was brought into action at C.29.a.4.5. and caught the enemy who were clustering around the battery at C.23.d. inflicting many casualties and driving them away from the guns. The action of this machine gun and the party from battalion headquarters delayed the enemy until the arrival of the two leading companies of the 9th. battalion which were being hurried up from MORCHIES. On arrival these two companies manned a sunken road near battalion headquarters and poured a heavy rifle and Lewis Gun fire into the enemy at a range of 200 yards. This checked the enemy's advance and caused them severe casualties. The enemy then tried to outflank these companies on the West but the prompt action of our artillery checked this movement, a third company of the 9th. battalion now reinforced at this point while the fourth company took up a position in sunken road I.5.b. to protect MORCHIES on the West while "B" company (the last available company of 10th. battalion) was ordered to take up a position in sunken road in I.6. c. and d. to cover the East of MORCHIES.

The mining platoons of the brigade quartered in the vicinity of MORCHIES were also ordered to line the road in I.12.b.

At 7 a.m. three companies of 9th. battalion with "A" company 12th. battalion attacked and drove the enemy out of LAGNICOURT in co-operation with the 20th. battalion of the 2nd. Inf. Division. Many of the enemy were cut off in LAGNICOURT and captured.

By 9 a.m. our line was restored on the left and by 11 a.m. the whole position was normal except for the shelling of LAGNICOURT.

During the night 15/16th, the picket line was strengthened and the 9th. battalion was sent up in close support to the left flank of the 3rd. Brigade front.

While the enemy was in LAGNICOURT, he succeeded in destroying 5 guns, but several others which he had prepared for demolition were recovered before they were destroyed.

(P.T.O.)



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## (iii) Contd:-

155 prisoners were taken by us on this flank, while the enemy casualties on the front of the left brigade are estimated at from 1.000 to 1.500 killed and many wounded.

(iv) 3rd. Brigade M.G. Company was disposed as follows:-  
2 Sections attached to 11th. battalion, 7 guns emplaced to cover the front line (vide map) one gun in reserve at J.3.a.3.6.

1 Section attached to 12th. battalion all emplaced to cover front line.

1 Section in brigade reserve near MORCHIES (I.6.d.)  
action.

Of the 2 sections at the disposal of C.O. 11th. battalion 5 guns came into action as follows :-

Gun at J.5.a.8.3 fired during the morning 5.000 rounds on targets generally in Sqs.D.23. c. and d. which were under direct fire at ranges of from 1.000 to 1.500 yds. Owing to enemy shelling, the gun moved 200 yards West where it again came into action, remaining there for the rest of the day.

Gun at D.29.c.1.5 fired 500 rounds at 1.500 yards range against enemy moving against gun from TADPOLE COPSE (D.18.d.) The gun was then moved under orders of C.O. 11th. battalion to a position in J.4.b. from which position no more targets presented themselves.

Gun at D.28.c.9.8 fired 2.500 rounds mainly against targets in D.23.b. and D.24.a. After firing 2000 rounds the gun was moved to a higher position 200 yards West whence the whole of the big ridge bounded by the 100 metre contour could be swept. This was done when the front of "O" company 11th. battalion was broken. From this position a few direct fire targets were obtained in Sqs.D.22.c. and d.

Gun at D.27.a.3.4 fired 1.000 rounds at direct targets at ranges from 1.500 to 2.000 yards mainly in Sq. D.15. The gun remained in the same position throughout the action.

Gun at D.25.b.6.8 fired 1.000 rounds at direct targets at ranges from 1.200 to 1.800 yards mainly in D.15.c. & d. This gun also remained in position all day.

The remaining guns of these 2 sections obtained no targets and were kept in their positions as a reserve of fire, the reserve guns at J.3.a.3.6. being emplaced at D.25.d.9.9. to command LAGNICOURT - DOIGNIES Road from direction of LAGNICOURT.

Of the left section under the orders of C.O. 12th. battalion 3 guns came into action as follows :-

Gun at D.19.a.5.4 fired 1.500 rounds at direct targets at ranges from 200 to 1.800 yards mostly in Sqs.D.19.a. and D.13.c, inflicting very heavy casualties. During the retirement of the enemy from LAGNICOURT this gun effectually cut off the retreat of 40 to 50 Germans who had taken cover in D.19.a, and these fearing to face the fire of the gun, surrendered. At a later stage the enemy endeavoured to cover his retirement by rifle fire from sunken roads in D.8.c. but was dispersed by the fire of this gun.

Gun at C.18.d.8.8 was captured with the whole of its team, and little is known of its action, but from the empty belts and cartridge cases round the gun position and from the evidence of Captain NEWLANDS who saw the gun in action, this gun fired some hundreds of rounds.

(P.T.O.)



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## (iv) Contd:-

Gun at C.18.a.3.4 fired 1.250 rounds all in direct fire at ranges from 100 to 800 yards.

During the action the gun was successfully withdrawn in successive stages of about 200 yards to C.24.b.3.1. bringing destructive fire on the enemy from each position. At C.24.b.3.1. it joined 2 companies 12th. battalion and supported them throughout the remainder of the action. The Guns in Brigade Reserve were under the orders of G.O.C., 3rd. Brigade put in position round MORCHIES in Sqs.I.5. and 6 to cover this village and the guns in the vicinity.

Total ammunition expenditure of the company in the action was 15.200 rounds of which 13.000 were used in direct fire.

(v) Action of the 3rd. Aus. L.T.M. Battery.

The battery remained in reserve, one section at MORCHIES and one section at PREMICOULT.

(vi) Action of Reserves.

On the 14th. the brigade commander had 2 battalions as brigade reserve, the 9th. at MORCHIES the 10th. near BEAUMETZ, but in anticipation of an attack by the enemy he moved up on the evening of 14th. 2 companies of 10th. battalion in close support to 11th. battalion, and he put 2 companies of the 9th. battalion at MORCHIES, in support to 12th. battalion. The wisdom of this was apparent when the enemy attacked, for owing to the extended front the distance from the brigade reserve to the front line was such that reinforcements from the brigade reserve could not have arrived in time to support the battalions in line.

This left in the hands of the Brigade Commander at the beginning of the action :-

2 Companies of 9th. battalion in MORCHIES.

2 Companies of 10th. battalion near BEAUMETZ.

1 Section 3rd. Machine Gun Company near MORCHIES (I.6.d.) and the 3rd. A.L.T.M. Battery at MORCHIES and PREMICOULT.

They were used as follows :-

1 Company 9th. battalion was sent to support 12th. battalion and with the other 2 companies of 9th. previously attached to the 12th. made the successful counter-attack of LAGNICOURT vide para. 7 (iii).

1 Company 10th. battalion was sent to support 11th. battalion and helped to form the line which stayed the enemy's advance vide para. 7 (iii).

The remaining companies 1 of 9th. and 1 of 10th. were employed for the protection of MORCHIES and the heavy guns in that vicinity, as was also the section of 3rd. machine gun company. The L.T.M. Battery was not used.

8. Action of the Divisional M.G. Coy. (21st.M.G. Coy.)(1) Disposition.

2 Sections in the right brigade sector in the MORCHIES - BEAUMETZ Line under the orders of G.O.C. 21st. machine gun company.

2 Sections in the left brigade sector one section being distributed on the N.E. and S. of LAGNICOURT for the defence of that village, the other being concentrated N.W. of the village to bring indirect fire on to QUEANT, both sections under the orders of the G.O.C. 12th. battalion. These 2 sections were thus echeloned round the village affording mutual protection.

(P.T.O.)



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(11) Action.

In the right brigade sector none of the guns came into action.

In the left brigade sector 3 guns of the right section and one gun of the left section came into action as follows :-

(a) Right Section.

Gun at C.13.d.0.3 covered the withdrawal of the Sentry Groups of "B" company 12th. battalion when they fell back to the picquet line, and the gun itself fell back in its turn to a position further in rear covered by the fire of the picquet. 2,000 rounds were expended by this gun at targets within 400 yards and accounted for many of the enemy.

Gun at C.24.d.9.4 assisted in repelling the attack from the direction of LAGNICOURT which was launched against "A" company 12th. battalion when it rallied in the sunken road C.24.d. This gun fired 500 rounds.

Gun at C.29.a.4.5. This gun first mounted at C.29.a.5.2. for A.A. duty was moved to C.29.a.4.5. by the order of C.O. 12th. battalion and did valuable work in conjunction with the personnel of 12th. battalion headquarters in stemming the advance of the enemy as they came through LAGNICOURT and over the ridge in C.23.a. vide para. 7 (iii).

1,700 rounds were fired.

(b) Left Section.

This section was 1,000 yards behind the front line along the Sunken Road in S.C.17.d.

At 4 a.m. when the crowds were in the act of "standing to" according to the usual custom, the guns were rushed without warning by very large numbers of the enemy coming over the spur in C.17.c. and d. from the direction of MORCHIES. No unusual gun fire or musketry fire had been heard by the section before the enemy was on top of them.

One gun only of the four managed to swing round to its rear in time to bring fire on to the enemy at a range of 15 yards and succeeded in killing seven of them.

The strength of the enemy seen coming over the spur was estimated at a battalion.

The guns were emplaced in the eastern bank of a deep sunken road and the enemy bombed them from the western bank, thus cutting off escape. One officer and six other ranks managed to get away carrying with them one gun which had been dismounted the night before. Being hard pressed they threw the gun into a ditch and escaped. The gun has not been recovered.

The remaining three guns were captured by the enemy, as were also 1 officer and 20 others of the section. One other rank was later found dead.

9. ACTION of the DIVISIONAL RESERVE.-

As soon as information reached Divisional Headquarters to indicate that the enemy was seriously attacking, two battalions of the reserve brigade were at once ordered to stand to and at 5.30 a.m. they were to march, the 8th. battalion from VILLERS au FLOS to MORCHIES, the 7th. battalion from PREMISOURT and VILLERS au FLOS to BEAUMETZ. By the time these battalions reached their destinations the situation had been restored and neither of them came into action.

(P.T.O.)



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9 Contd:-

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The 8th. Brigade of 5th. Aust. Division was also made available and the 29th. battalion was moved on BEAUMETZ, the 32nd. battalion on MORCHIES, but by the time they arrived at their destinations the situation was in hand and their services were not called upon.

I decided, however, to increase my strength on the advanced line of resistance as this was the second strenuous action in which the troops had been engaged during the week. I ordered, therefore, that each brigade sector should be held with three battalions in the line and one in reserve close to the battalions in line.

Two battalions of the 8th. Brigade were put at my disposal to man the Corps main line of resistance, thus freeing the two battalions of my reserve brigade which had previously garrisoned it. I therefore moved the whole of my reserve brigade on to a line, MORCHIES - BEAUMETZ - J.34. where a new line of defence was constructed.

#### 10. ARTILLERY ACTION.

The work of the 5th. Australian Divisional Artillery was of a very high order. It responded very readily to all calls made upon it, and assisted the infantry in every possible way. Its fire was particularly effective against the enemy during the retirement to his main line and inflicted very many casualties. The report of the C.R.A. in the appendices gives the details.

The F.O.O's again proved one of the most reliable means of obtaining information.

#### 11. STRENGTH of the ENEMY.

From the statements of prisoners taken by us in this fighting and from identifications secured it appears that the following four enemy divisions took part in the attack :- 4th. Ersatz Division, 38th. Division, 2nd. Guard Reserve Division, 3rd. Guard Division.

It is estimated that 16 battalions of the enemy were actually engaged.

The objects of the enemy attack are stated by prisoners to have been (a) to occupy the villages near our front line, to capture or destroy as many of our guns as possible, to find out our dispositions, and after holding the village for 24 hours to withdraw - (b) to improve the morale of his troops by an easy victory.

It is estimated that the enemy lost 1,500 to 2,000 dead on the front of this division, and it is known that many were wounded. Our artillery continued to inflict casualties during the whole time until the final withdrawal of the enemy.

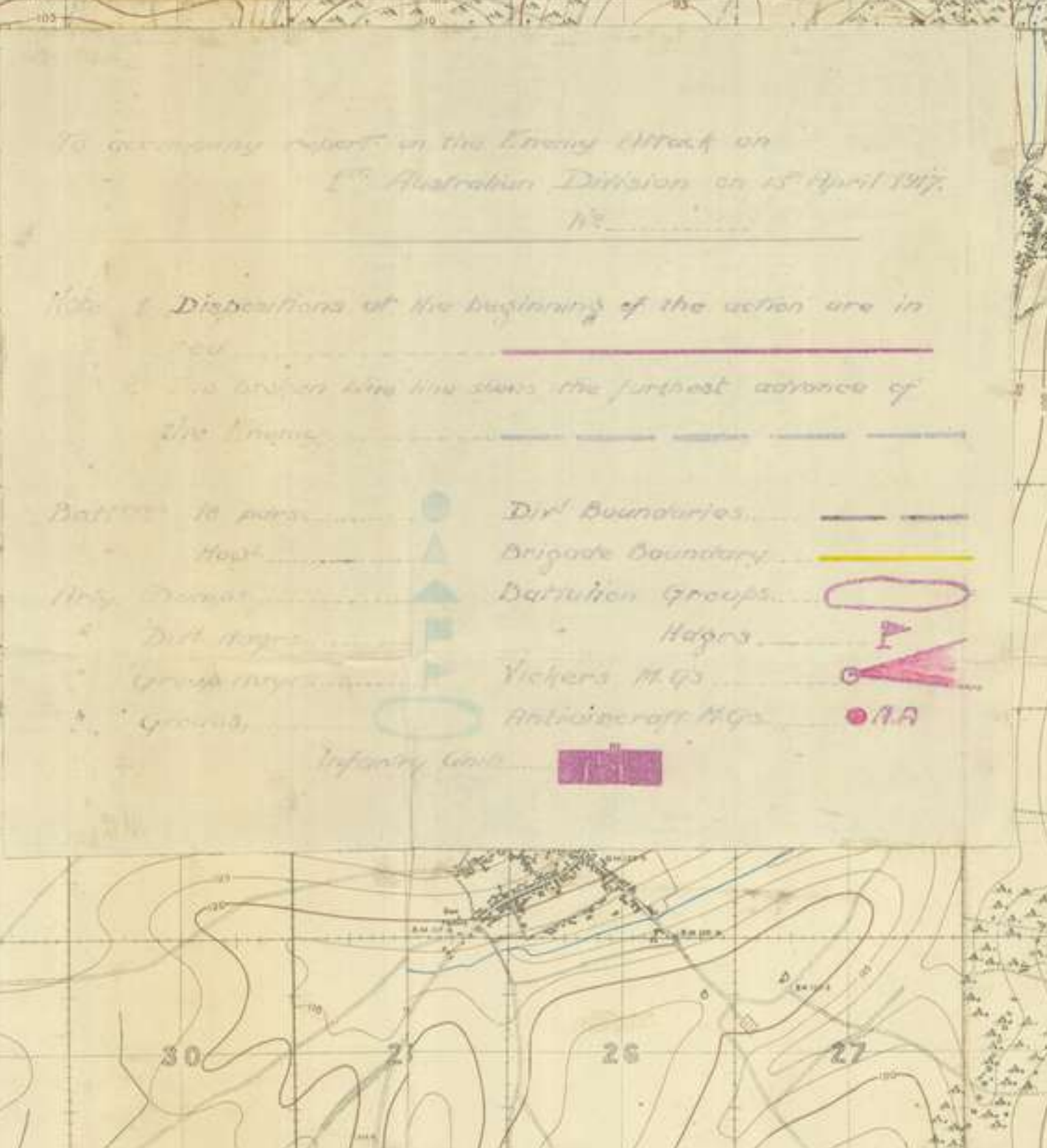
We captured 160 prisoners and 1 Machine Gun.

#### 12. I attach herewith the following appendices :-

- (i) Map showing the distribution of troops in the divisional sector prior to the attack.
- (ii) Statement of our casualties and of guns, Machine Guns damaged, captured and lost also Statement of losses in personnel and material inflicted on the enemy.
- (iii) Report of C.R.A. 5th. Australian Division.

Major-General.  
Commanding 1st. Australian Division.











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APPENDIX No. 2TOREPORT on the ENEMY ATTACK on 1st. AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONON15th APRIL. 1917.1. CASUALTIES for period NOON 14th. to NOON 15th.

<u>OFFICERS.</u>			
<u>Killed.</u>	<u>Wounded.</u>	<u>Missing.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
3	15	6	24
<u>Other Ranks.</u>			
<u>Killed.</u>	<u>Wounded.</u>	<u>Missing.</u>	
79	270	385	734
			-----
			728
			=====

2. MATERIAL Lost and Destroyed.

## (i) Captured by the enemy

Vickers Machine Guns	5
Lewis " "	7

## (ii) Destroyed by the enemy.

Field Artillery	4, 18 pdrs.
Howitzer	1, 4'5"

These guns were in our area, were attached to 2nd. Aus. Division and were employed by that Division.

3. CASUALTIES inflicted on the enemy.

(i) Prisoners taken	160
(ii) Estimated killed	1,500 to 2,000
(iii) Estimated wounded	over 1,000

4. MATERIAL Captured.

1 Machine Gun and mounting.



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APPENDIX No. 3T OREPORT on the ENEMY ATTACK on 1st. AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONO N15th April, 1917.R E P O R T.

ON OPERATIONS (5th. AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONAL ARTILLERY), ETC. DURING  
ENEMY COUNTER-ATTACKS ON 1st. AUST. DIVISION LINE, DURING MORNING  
OF 15th APRIL, 1917.

4 a.m.- Shortly after 4 a.m. today, 15th inst., the enemy put down a heavy mixed barrage over our lines to the N.E. of LAGNICOURT and those of the 2nd. Aust. Division to the North of LAGNICOURT and in the vicinity of NOUVILL. At the same time he barraged heavily at HERMES, LAGNICOURT, and in the vicinity of D.22 and 23. All 5th. A.D.A. Batteries including those of the 14th. F.A. Brigade, stood to, and prepared to support in case of attack. Counter-Batteries were at once warned and opened neutralising fire.

4.30 a.m.- Enemy attacks developed between 4.10 and 4.30 a.m. against all fronts previously bombarded, but no report of any penetration of our line was received from the infantry on our front until 5.45 a.m. when the company on the extreme left was reported to have been driven in. Up to this time, in fact, reports received from Liaison Officer with infantry brigades and battalions indicated no change.

5 a.m.- Previously however, at about 4.50 a.m. and 5.35 a.m. reports were received from the 4th. Aust. Div. Artillery (covering 2nd. A. Division), first that the enemy had reached LAGNICOURT and was threatening to capture the 2nd. A.F.A. Brigade, and subsequently that the guns had been abandoned and the personnel withdrawn after removing sights and breech blocks, after a short fight at point blank range. On receipt of the former of these reports, the C.O. 14th. F.A. Brigade was informed and ordered up his teams.

5.30 a.m.- At 5.45 a.m. the company on the extreme left was reported by the Liaison Officer, 3rd. Inf. Brigade, to have been driven back.

At the same time an attack down the main CAMBRAI RD. towards BOHREILS and a considerable massing of enemy in D.24.a. and c. and D.23.d. Central, followed by attacks in the direction of LAGNICOURT, (about K.7.c.), demanded the whole attention of "A" and "B" Groups. One or two of our small posts were overwhelmed and driven in. HERMES sustained very heavy attacks about this time which were crushed by combined Infantry and Artillery fire.

6 a.m.- About this time there were 5 enemy aeroplanes and four balloons reported in the air, and the Batteries of "A" Group were being attacked by M.G. fire from aeroplanes flying very low. This was ineffectual.

6.30 a.m.- At 6.30 a.m. the situation was as follows :-

ON THE RIGHT.

The enemy was reported to be massing on the Canal bank from K.26. Central to K.20. Central, where he was engaged by the 7th. Battery, "A" Group. (P.T.O.)



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## 6.30 a.m. Contd:-

A Battalion was reported massing at X.7.d. Central on the road through X.8.c. where it was being engaged by the 8th. and 103rd. Batteries.

IN THE CENTRE.

The post at the Chapel near J.3. Central had been driven in and the line here was covered by the 9th. Battery.

The enemy still reported massing in D.22 and 23 and the re-entrant in D.29; he could also be seen approaching down the main CAMBRI RD. and from TADPOLE COPSE.

Targets in this area were being engaged by "B" Group.

ON THE LEFT.

The enemy were still reported attacking in force and by this time had reached the line of the LAGNICOURT - NOREUIL RD. The 14th. P.A. Brigade barrage, directed by Lieut. BORWICK of the 14th. P.A. Brigade, who had been sent forward as Liaison Officer to the Left Battalion, was dropped to the line of the road.

An enemy attack developed about this time in D.23. a. and d. and D.24.c, but was making no headway.

7 a.m.- By 7 a.m. the 14th. P.A. Brigade barrage had once more been dropped, this time to the line of the road LAGNICOURT - C.22. Central, and the enemy seemed to be feeling the effects of our counter-attacks and the continuous artillery fire to which he was being subjected. He has penetrated to the South of LAGNICOURT and was beginning to threaten MORIHUES. At about 7.15 a.m. however, he had retired over the ridge in C.17.c. and d. and had withdrawn into LAGNICOURT. Numbers could also be seen retiring N.E. along the valley in D.18. The Heavy Artillery barrage at this time was being directed on the enemy wire along the QUEANT Salient.

The enemy about this time had commenced to suffer very heavy casualties in this area and his morale had obviously begun to deteriorate. Large bodies of Germans could be seen retreating across the open from LAGNICOURT and the line NOREUIL and between these places, and was swept with shrapnel at short range.

7.30 a.m.- As the pressure on the left decreased that on the centre increased, the timing of the enemy attacks having apparently been badly co-ordinated. The responsibility of the 14th. P.A. Brigade was in consequence extended to the right to D.20. Central to relieve "B" Group. The enemy appears at this period, to have continued to trickle forward men into the valley in E.19. and D.30. and behind the slope in D.22. and 23, where it was very difficult to get observation for Artillery fire. A complete barrage of so long a front not being possible on account of the impossibility of supplying ammunition in sufficient quantities, it was necessary to depend on shooting on actual observed targets and definite localities, in which enemy troops were suspected of collecting. In daylight this is the most economical and effective method especially where, as in this case, probable direction of attack had been previously marked down. The attack in this area never became so serious as it did on the left.

At about 7.30 a.m. the enemy had been driven back in large numbers into his own wire in front of QUEANT and some could be seen streaming through a gap in the wire about D.8.c.3.0.

(P.T.O.)



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7.30 a.m. Contd:-

Large numbers were caught here it is believed by M.G. fire, and still more by the Heavy Artillery barrage and the observed fire of 18 pdr. Batteries. His casualties here must have been large.

At about 7.45 a.m. the German Artillery commenced to barrage a line between LAGNICOURT and QUEANT. The attack may therefore be considered as over at this time. There were, however, parties of enemy infantry still on our side of his wire. Several of these were observed by an aeroplane and engaged by our Field Artillery with good effect. Observation of rounds as well as targets were reported by this aeroplane which was doing extremely good work at this time, flying at a low altitude exposed to constant A.A. fire.

8 a.m.- By this time the Right Battalion of the 3rd. Brigade, which had temporarily been forced back, had re-established itself by counter-attack and taken a few prisoners. It was reported at this stage that the three Right Companies of the Left Battalion had held their ground and that the remaining company was then moving forward again inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy.

The barrage on the left now no longer required, ceased, and Batteries stood by waiting for opportunities and Zone calls.

LAGNICOURT had been reported re-occupied and all the lost guns recovered. Four 18 pdr. Guns and one 4'5" Howitzer had been blown up, but the remainder were serviceable and came into action again later in the day.

With the exception of reports of enemy troops in the vicinity of D.23. and D.24. the situation after 8 a.m. remained normal.

Prisoners taken belong to the 2nd. Guard Reserve Division and state that their orders were to capture LAGNICOURT and NOREUIL, destroy the Guns in LAGNICOURT and hold the captured line for 24 hours with a view to discovering our dispositions and intentions.

Reports received from Group, Liaison and F.O.O's concerned, are attached for information.

(signed) J.D. LAVARACK, Major.  
Brigade Major, 5th. Australian Divisional Artillery.