

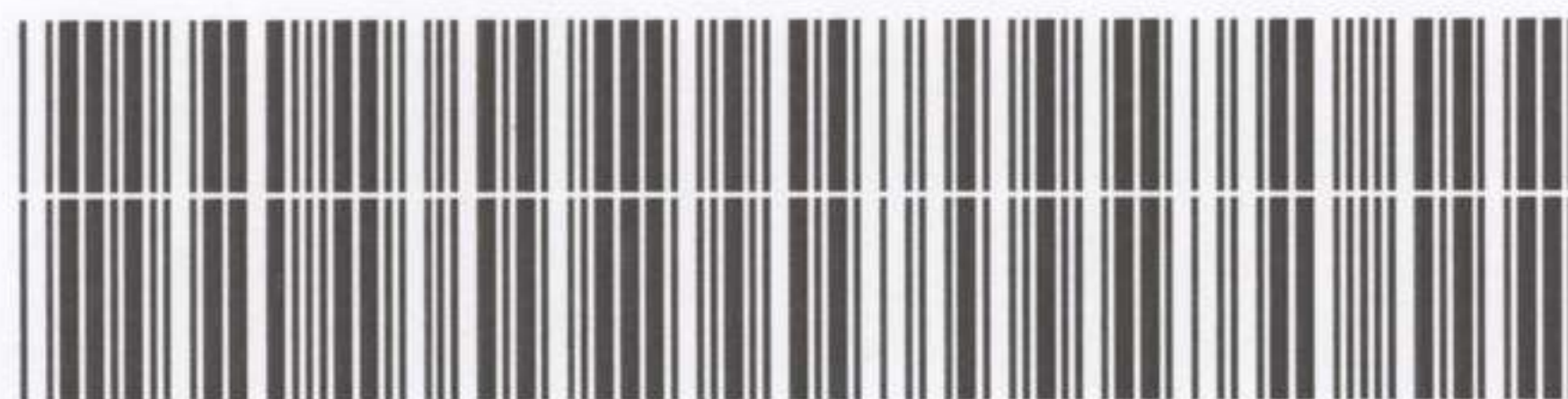
AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Engineers

Item number: 14/17/34

Title: 5th Australian Pioneer Battalion

December 1918



AWM4-14/17/34

Confidential

Original

275

WAR DIARY

for

December

November

1918.

5th Australian Pioneer Battalion.

Mr. [unclear]

Major

Comdg. 5th Aust. Pioneer Battn.

compiled by [unclear]

1914

1915

1916

1917

1918

1919

1920

1921

1922

1923

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.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
REJET - de - BEAULIEU.	12 th	1918	Detained at Bentry at 4-30 a.m. after a journey of 20½ hours. Train accommodation was the worst the Bn. has experienced. Most of the coaches had only one door & practically all the windows were broken. The whole trip, owing to cold & the long & frequent halts was very miserable. From the detaining station the men had to march about 12 miles to the billets where we are staying the night. The weather has improved & today is bright & frosty.	
HAUTREPE	2 nd	1918	Moved into this area today. The Bn is billeted over an area of about 5 square miles. Billets are very poor, most of the houses have been rather badly knocked about during the advance. There isn't a whole window in the area. Lieut Cunningham went on Paris leave.	
"	3 rd	1918	C.O. visited Divisional H. Q. to see if a lot of the surplus tools etc. could be dumped to make the unit more mobile. Padre returned from Boulogne bringing back four gramophones & a number of records. H. Q. of the Salvation Army has promised him £1,000 to be spent on the unit during the coming winter.	

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(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
HAUTREPE	4 th	10 th	Boys started salvaging the Bn. area today. All unexploded shells to be collected. Duds & unboxed H. M. shells to be destroyed. Capt Jamieson reported to relieve the R. M. O. who is going on U.K. leave. Interim Mr De Clerk joined Bn. from the Belgian Mission. Weather dull & raining.	
"	5 th	11 th	A fair quantity of salvage is being found. Chiefly German machine guns. Capt Jackson went on Paris leave & Capt Symonds on U.K. leave.	
"	6 th	11 th	Q. M. visited Basigny & made arrangements with the Div. for a complete change of under clothes for the men. Weather improving.	
"	7 th	11 th	Officers played N.C.O.'s at Rugby Football. win for N.C.O.'s. Captain Walker went on U.K. leave.	
"	8 th	11 th	Church parade today. Preliminary move order received, expect to move by about 13 th inst. Lovely bright day.	
"	9 th	11 th	Move postponed till about the 14 th inst. Weather remaining good.	
"	10 th	11 th	Salvaging of the area almost-complete. Raining all day.	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
HAUTREPE	11 th	2.30	Padre left today for Le Havre to look for the Xmas goods which have gone astray. Weather completely broken down raining all day.	
"	12 th	2.30	C. O. presented Sgt. Hedges with a conductor's baton as an appreciation of the good work he has done in the band. Weather still bad.	
"	13 th	4.30	"C" Coy played "D" Coy at association football. Ground much too heavy for a good game.	
"	14 th	2.30	Australian Rules football match between 1st. Q & Transport & "D" Coy. Win for the former. Band played at "B" & "D" Coys lines. Weather improving.	
"	15 th	2.30	C. O. held meeting of all officers to discuss the coming move. Bn moving forward on the 18 th inst. Weather fine.	
"	16 th	2.30	Lieut Davidson left for the new area with the advance billeting party. Lieut Hill M. C. left for HESTRUD. he has been appointed as Town Major for the village.	
"	17 th	2.30	Lieut Dart & Stevenson left as advance billeting officers for CARTIGNIES & SEMERIES respectively. The Bn. is staying one night at each place during the march forward. Weather fine.	

WAR DIARY

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
CARTIGNIES.	18 th	2 nd	The Bn. forming part of the 14 th Bde. group marched to Cartignies distance about 16 Kilos. The men marched well no body falling out. Day wet & windy.	
SEMERIE.	19 th	4 th	Second days march. distance about the same as yesterday. Billets good but dirty. Civilians very obliging will do anything for the men. Heavy showers & windy.	
HESTRUD.	20 th	4 th	Third & last days march, about 15 Kilos. Roads very muddy & cut up by traffic. Billets here not nearly as good as at Semeris. During the three days marching only one man fell out. Heavy showers.	
"	21 st	4 th	Billets poor & overcrowded. C.O. complained to Div. about the accommodation & is trying to get another village. Lieut. Campbell & Crack went on V.K. leave.	
"	22 nd	4 th	Church parade today. C.O. again visited Div. re billets & inspected the village of Beaurieux which he is trying to get for the Bn. Day cold & wet.	
BEAURIEUX.	23 rd	4 th	Bn moved into new billets here today. A. Coy. billeted at-CLAIRFAYTS about 3 Kilos away. Decided improvement in billets. Wet & cold day for the more.	
"	24 th	4 th	Preparations going ahead for Xmas dinner. Good issue of comforts in addition to the goods bought from regimental funds. Capt. Symonds returned from V.K. leave.	

WAR DIARY

or

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Army Form O. 2118.

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
BEAURIEUX	25 th DEC.	7 ^{PM}	A. B. & D. Coys. Transport & H. Q. details held their Xmas dinner. Everything went off very successfully. All the dining rooms were nicely decorated with flags & evergreens. Light fall of snow on the ground. The Comforts Fund gave a Xmas box to every man in the Bn. Lieut Fox from Corps school.	
"	26 th DEC.	7 ^{PM}	C Coy held their Xmas dinner today. The band played during the dinner. Lieut Perkins went on V.K. leave. Cold & showery.	
"	27 th DEC.	2 ^{PM}	B & D Coys played football, Rugby Union. Weather very cold & wet. C Coy moved to SORLE-LE-CHATEAU for work with C.P.E.	
"	28 th DEC.	2 ^{PM}	Several N.C.O's & men were presented with medals by the Prince of Wales. C.O. & Coy. Commanders attended the presentation. Raining heavily all day.	
"	29 th DEC.	7 ^{PM}	No church parade today owing to the rain. Lieut Edgley & England went on Paris leave.	
"	30 th DEC.	2 ^{PM}	Commenced to shift an old German hut from Sobre. It is being erected in our village for a recreation hut. Weather still bad.	
"	31 st DEC.	7 ^{PM}	C Coy held a dance at Sobre. About half the civilians in the town attended. The town crier & his bell made the dance well known.	

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— A P P E N D I C E S. —

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to

W A R

D I A R Y.

for

DECEMBER 1918.

5th. Aust. PIONEER BATTALION.

1. REPORTS BY —

Commanding Officer.
Quartermaster
Transport Officer.
Medical Officer.

2. PRELIMINARY ORDERS RE MOVE.

3. 5th. Aust. PIONEER BATT. ORDER No. 62.

4. 5th. Aust. PIONEER BATT. ORDER No. 63.

5. PLAN OF CUIVERT REPAIRED

6. SECTIONAL PLAN OF CUIVERT REPAIRED.

7. MAP OF SALVAGE AREA ALLOTTED TO BATT.

275 /
C.O.'S REPORT.

The past month has been at times an anxious one for all ranks, thoughts have turned more and more towards home, and billets in the first part of the month left much to be desired. The move up from HAUTREPE to HESTRUD was done in three stages, rain fell every day but ceased when we were about half way to the next staging camp. The Battalion marched well throughout, each Company kept well closed up in spite of some very heavy packs carried by the men, a few cases of blistered feet occurred but nothing else. The Transport was very fine under the skilful guidance of lieut W. Campbell assisted very ably by Sergeant Mills the Transport Sergeant. The animals were well groomed each day and harness was kept clean.

The whole Battalion were disappointed in their billets at HESTRUD, but on a complaint being lodged at D.H.Q., we were given billets in BEAURIEUX with 1 Company at CLAIREFAYT and 1 Company at SOLRE.

The Xmas dinner was a great success, 30 Turkeys were obtained and all the Xmas comforts arrived O.K. These had been ordered in October last but only received by us on the 24th. December. Each Company had a sit down dinner, Officers and N.C.O's waited on the men. Great credit is due to the various committees for giving the men such a fine turnout.

The Battalion has now settled down, billets are getting more comfortable every day. The Education scheme is going well and Sports are in full swing.

The Battalion Band under Sergeant Hedges has done a lot to help keep the men cheerful.

On the whole I am well satisfied with the month's work.

275 TRANSPORT OFFICER'S REPORT.

122 G.S. Wagons turned out during month. Number of hours worked per G.S. Wagon - 4 hours 35 min.

106 G.S. limbers turned out during period. Number of hours worked per G.S. limber - 3 hours 20 mins.

SADLER. - executed sundry repairs to saddlery.

WHEELER. - General repairs to 5 G.S. Wagons, and 6 G.S. limbers, also executed sundry repairs to various vehicles.

TARRIER. Mules re-shod 68
Horses re-shod 18.

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QUARTERMASTER'S REPORT.

Account with D.A.D.O.S.

	Debit	Credit.
Axes felling C.H.	35	
Boots Ankle tan.	151	67
Brushes, Shaving	3	
Brushes, Dandy	15	7
Bags Nose	50	
Bugles	5	
Buckets, Water Canvas	20	
Breeches D.S.		21
Breeches M.S.		8
Cases for Side Drums	3.	
Covers Mess tin	52	
Covers Breech	50	
Coats Great		3
Communicators Field		1
Drums, Side G.T.	3.	
do Sticks prs.	3.	
Equipment		Quantity
Flannellette yds.	240.	
Gloves Fingerless		12.
Grease, lubricating	80	
Gratings K.T.	4.	
Hats, Felt.		6.
Helmets Steel		7.
Holdalls	23	
Housewives	18	
Jackets S.D.		7.
Jerkins leather		40.
Knives, Table	9.	
Kettles, Camp		3.
laces, leather	200	
lamps electric		2.
Nails Hob. lbs.	84.	
Oil, Animal Galls.	6.	
Oil, lubricating do	5.	
Plates Toe	50	
Paint Service Colour lbs.	56	
Palliasses	500	
Pullthroughs	20	
Puttees prs.		28
Pump, Hose and trough complete		1.
Rivets, Iron lbs.	35	
Razors	28.	

QUARTERMASTER'S REPORT (Continued.)

Account with D.A.D.O.S. (Continued.)

		Debit	Credit.
Rifles M.I.E.			24.
Respirators. S.B.			41.
Respirators, Horse.			34.
Rubber, Hose.			1.
Sheets Ground			22.
Scabbards			5.
Strips, Ground			12.
Soles, Billed.	$\frac{1}{2}$	450.	
Shoes, Horse	8H. prs.	20	
Shoes Horse	9F "	28	
Shoes Horse	9H "	26	
Shoes Mule	No. 15.	40	
Straps, Chin.		100	
Spoons, Table		2.	
Soap, Yellow	Bars.	50	
Soap Soft.	lbs.	56.	
Sockets, Whip, leather		6.	
Soda Crystals	lbs.	56	
Tins, Mess		82.	
Wheels, 2nd. Class 200a		2.	2.
Wheels 3rd. Class 159b		2.	
Wallets, Saddle pr.		1.	

BOOTMAKER'S REPORT.

During the month of December, the following repairs and additions were effected:-

185 prs Boots repaired.
19 " " renewed with Clump Soles.

TAILOR'S REPORT.

During the month of December the following repairs were effected:-

39 Tunics.
23 Breeches.

In addition to the above 46 sets of colour patches and chevrons were sewn on jackets.

RATIONS.

Rations drawn from the A.A.S.C. for the month of December have been good in regard to quality and quantity.

COMFORTS.

66 cases and 4 packages were received and contents distributed proportionately.

MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

General Health. - has been good during the past month, considering the moving from place to place, and the climatic conditions. There has been no prevailing ailment, several cases of Scabies have reported.

Sanitation. - latrines and Urinals have been improvised for the most part, material for erecting permanent structures not having arrived up to the present.

Venereal Disease. Several cases of Gonorrhoea also several cases of Syphilis reported - A Prophylactic room has been fitted out,

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MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT (Continued)

and every means provided to guard against Venereal infection. Rubber Goods and Blue label outfits being always on hand, in spite of these provisions, two cases of Chancra have reported within the past 2 days, and it appears as if there is a large amount of Venereal disease amongst the civilians in the surrounding Villages.

Sports and Amusements. - Football and other athletic games have been indulged in, and recreation rooms are being provided for the men.

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PRELIMINARIES RE MOVE.

- 2/
1. The Battalion (14th Brigade Group) will move from present area to SURVEY AREA on "A", "B" and "C" days - "A" day being the 18th inst.
 2. For this move there will be two billeting parties (a) Under lieut. DAVIDSON to proceed direct to final destination, (b) Under lieut. STEVENSON, to arrange billets in the staging Areas.
(a) lieut. DAVIDSON and 1 man per Company leave with lorries on morning of the 16th at 0900 from Battalion Q.M. Store, and proceed direct to destination. They will report in full marching order at Q.M. Store at 0830 on Monday, 16th. Q.Rs of this party will act as guard to stores only. Rations for five days will be provided by Q.M.. The Company billeting N.C.O.s will proceed direct to final destination about the 18th inst. (full particulars later).
(b) Companies and H.Q. will each detail 1 O.R. to accompany lieut. STEVENSON to staging Areas in advance of Battalion to arrange billets. Names of men detailed to be forwarded to B.O.R. by 0900, 17th inst. They will report to lieut. STEVENSON at time and place to be notified later, and will proceed per bicycle.
 3. Mounted Officers will notify T.O. by 1100, 16th inst, if they require horses shod.
 4. O.C. "C" Company will detail 1 N.C.O. and 15 men to report to Q.M. Store at 0800, 16th instant, to load two lorries.
 5. In addition to loads laid down to be carried on Company ~~Cookers~~ wagons, the following will be added :-
 - 2 picks.
 - 4 shovels.
 - 5 Axes.
 6. These will be sent to Companies by ration limber on 16th or 17th. Nothing but regulation gear is to be carried on Company Cookers.

W. A. D. &
5th Aust. Pioneer Battalion Adj. *W. A. D. &*

W. A. D. &

War Diary
SECRET.

H.Q., 5th Aust. Pioneer Battalion.
16th December 1918.

Copy No....

5th Aust. Pioneer Battalion Order No. 62

INTENTION. The Battalion will move by route march to SIVRY Area on "A", "B" and "C" days in accordance with the following march Table:-
"A" day, 18th December, from LA GROISE to CARTIGNIES.
"B" day, 19th " " CARTIGNIES to SAINS Area.
"C" day, 20th " " SAINS Area to SIVRY Area.

DETAILS. Head of Column will pass road junction at 6.1.26.96, (Map, Valenciennes, 1/100,000) just beyond LA GROISE, on the morning of the 18th December, at 0950. The following order and Time Table will be strictly adhered to :-

3/

"A" Coy., with Band in front. - 0950
Headquarters. - 0951
B Coy. - 0953
C Coy. - 0955.
D Coy. - 0957

2. Distances between Companies, 100 yards.

Distance between Battn. and Transport, 100 yards.

Transport to leave gap of 50 yards between each 12 vehicles

3. MARCH DISCIPLINE. The strictest march discipline is to be maintained throughout the march, as the Battalion is only part of the 14th Brigade Group, which is marching as one column. Halts will be at 10 minutes to Clock Hours throughout.

4. Watches are to be synchronised on the evening of the 17th and again on the morning of the 18th by applying to the Signal Corporal at B.O.R.

5. DRESS and RATIONS. Full marching order: Australian hats.

Particular attention to be paid to turn out. Unconsumed portion of day's dry rations to be carried by men. A hot meal will be prepared as soon as possible after arrival at CARTIGNIES.

6. Company G.S. Wagons and Cooker horses will report to Companies B and H.Q. as per arrangements to be made by T.O. with Companies. Cookers will march with the Transport.

7. A lorry will report on evening of the 17th to Q.M. Store, and will be under the orders of the Q.M. This lorry will be attached each day of move.

8. SICK PARADE. - Any men considered not fit to march are to be paraded to M.O.'s Sick Parade on 17th inst. and are to be given written authority that they are unfit.

9. BAGGAGE GUARD. - O.V. "B" Company will detail 1 Sgt., 1 l/Cpl and 20 men to report to T.O. in full marching order at 0745 on morning of the 18th. They will act as loading party and baggage guard throughout the move. They will be under the T.O.'s orders who will make arrangements for their packs to be carried.

10. Billets - Billets throughout to be left scrupulously clean and a certificate to this effect sent in with Marching out States

C. R. Ke lieut.
Adj. 5th Aust. Pioneer Battalion.

11. Marching out States will be furnished to B.O.R. each morning of the move, and a report on each day immediately after Companies arrive at billets.

Copies issued as under:-

C.O.	No. 1
Adjutant.	" 2
O.C. "A" Coy.	" 3
O.C. "B" Coy.	" 4
O.C. "C" Coy.	" 5
O.C. "D" Coy.	" 6
5th Aust. Div.	" 7
14th Inf. Bde.	" 8
T.O.	" 9
Q.M.	" 10
War Diary	" 11-14
Spare	" 15

W. J. W. Dickey
275
5th Aust. Pioneer Battalion.

Move Order No. 63. 22nd December 1918.

INTENTION.

The Battalion will move by route march to BEAUBAUX INIA ON 23rd inst.,.

1. BILLETING.

Lieuts Edgley and Davidson will move ahead at 0730 to arrange billets. Company Billeting S.O.s. will report to Lieut Davidson at 0730.

2.- The Column will form up as follows:-

D Coy, H.Q. C Coy, B Coy, A Coy.

The head of D Company will pass D Company's Orderly Room at 1030 (Band in front).

Headquarters 1031

C Company 1033

B Company 1035

A Company 1037

Distances to be maintained between Companies 100 yards.

DRESS & RATIONS.

Full Marching Order - Unconsumed portion of rations to be carried by men.

Cookers will assemble at D Company Orderly Room & move out at 0900 and will prepare hot meal, to be served shortly after arrival. Cooker horses and 2 S.S. Wagons will report to Companies as per arrangements to be made between T.O. and Companies.

Wagons will move with Transport which will move independently under T.O.s. Orders.

SICK PARADE.

Sick Parade will be held at 0830 at R.A.P. and any men unable to march with Battalion will be sent on ahead to make their own way to BEAUBAUX. Only under very exceptional circumstances will any men be permitted to ride on Transport.

LOADING PARTY.

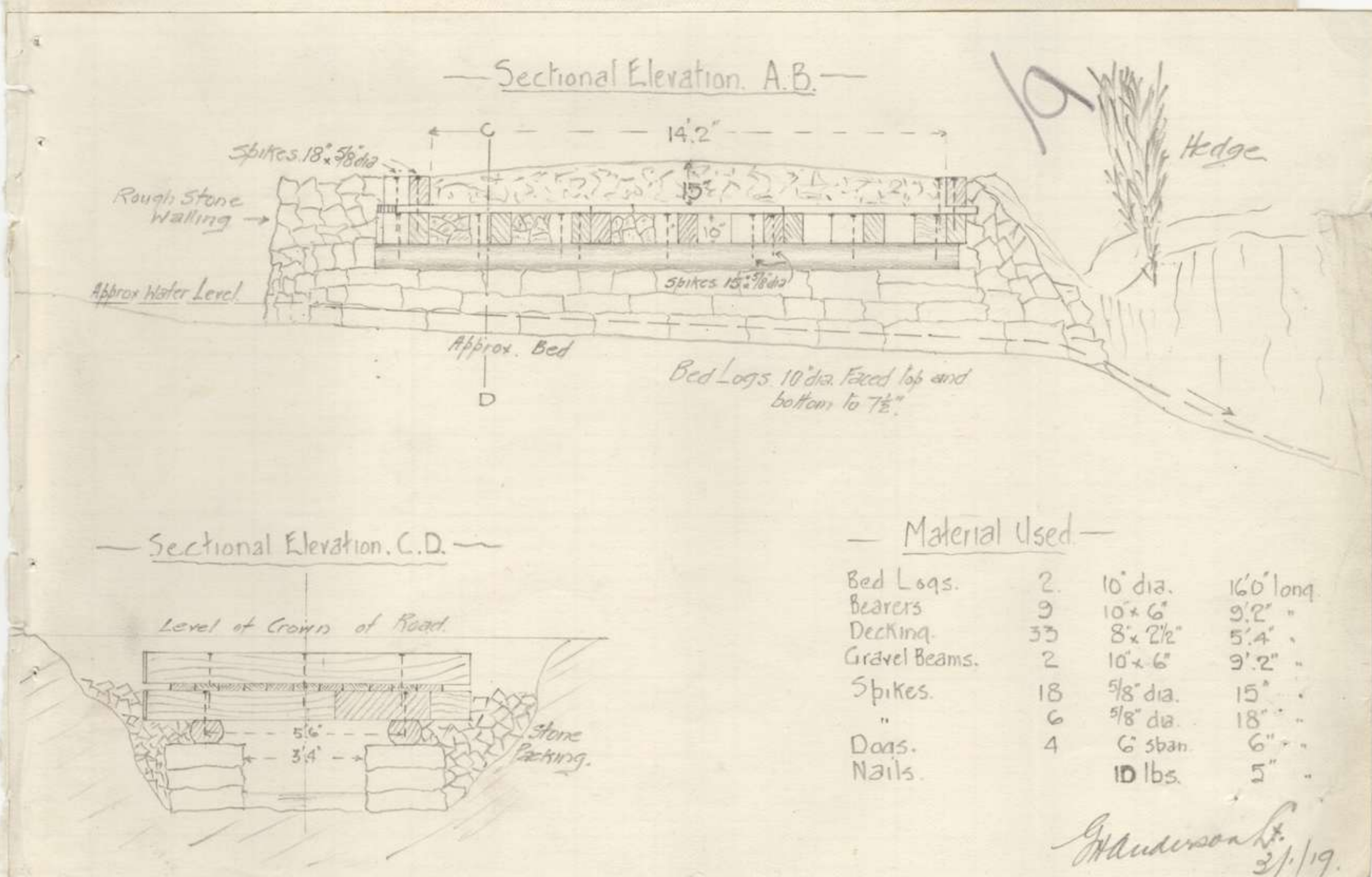
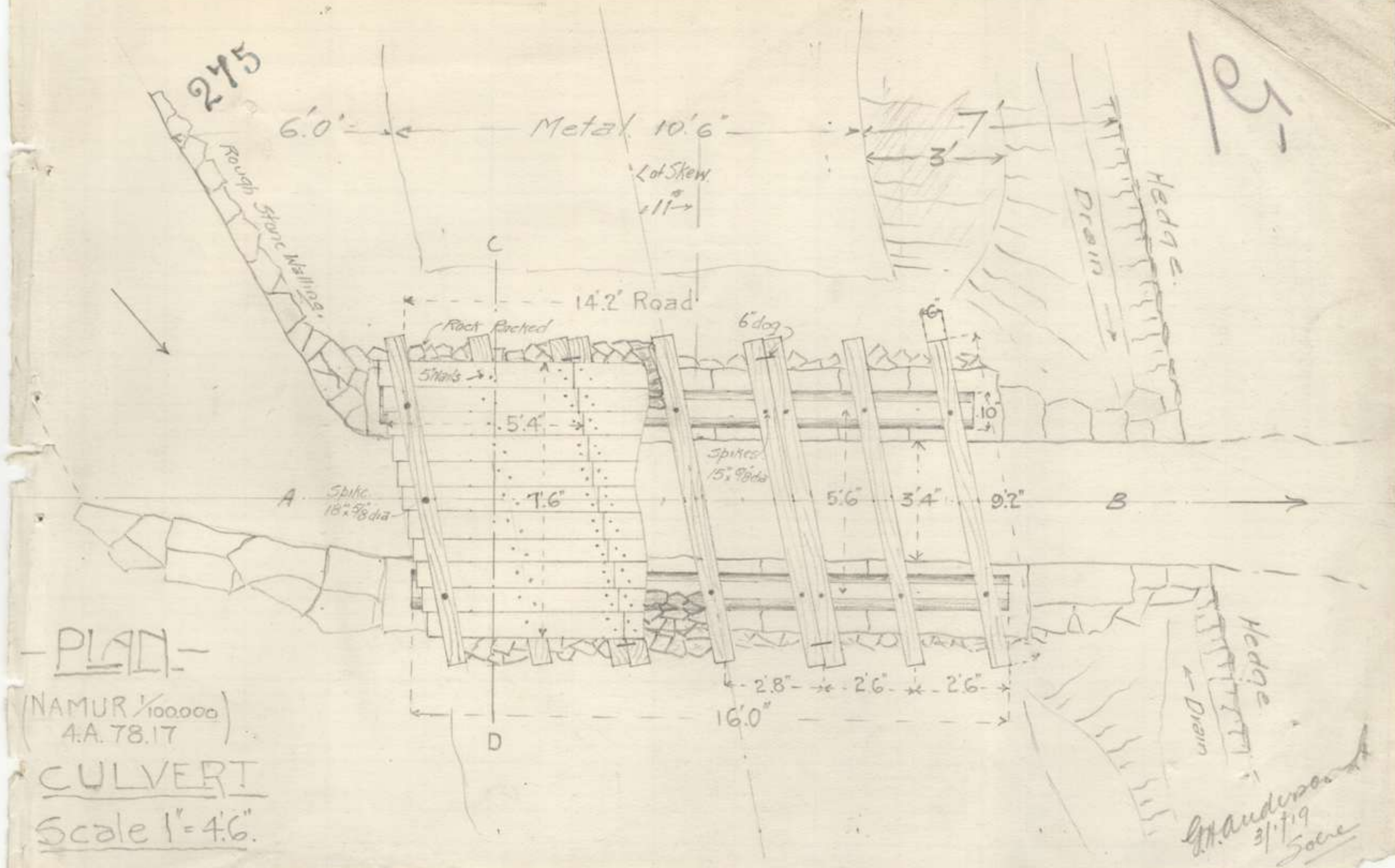
D Company will detail 2 S.O.s. & 20 men to report to R.C.M. Store at 0830. This party will also act as baggage guard. Q.M. will arrange to leave sufficient men of this party to act as loading party for second trip of Transport.

BILLETING LISTS, will be furnished complete to S.O.R. by 1000.

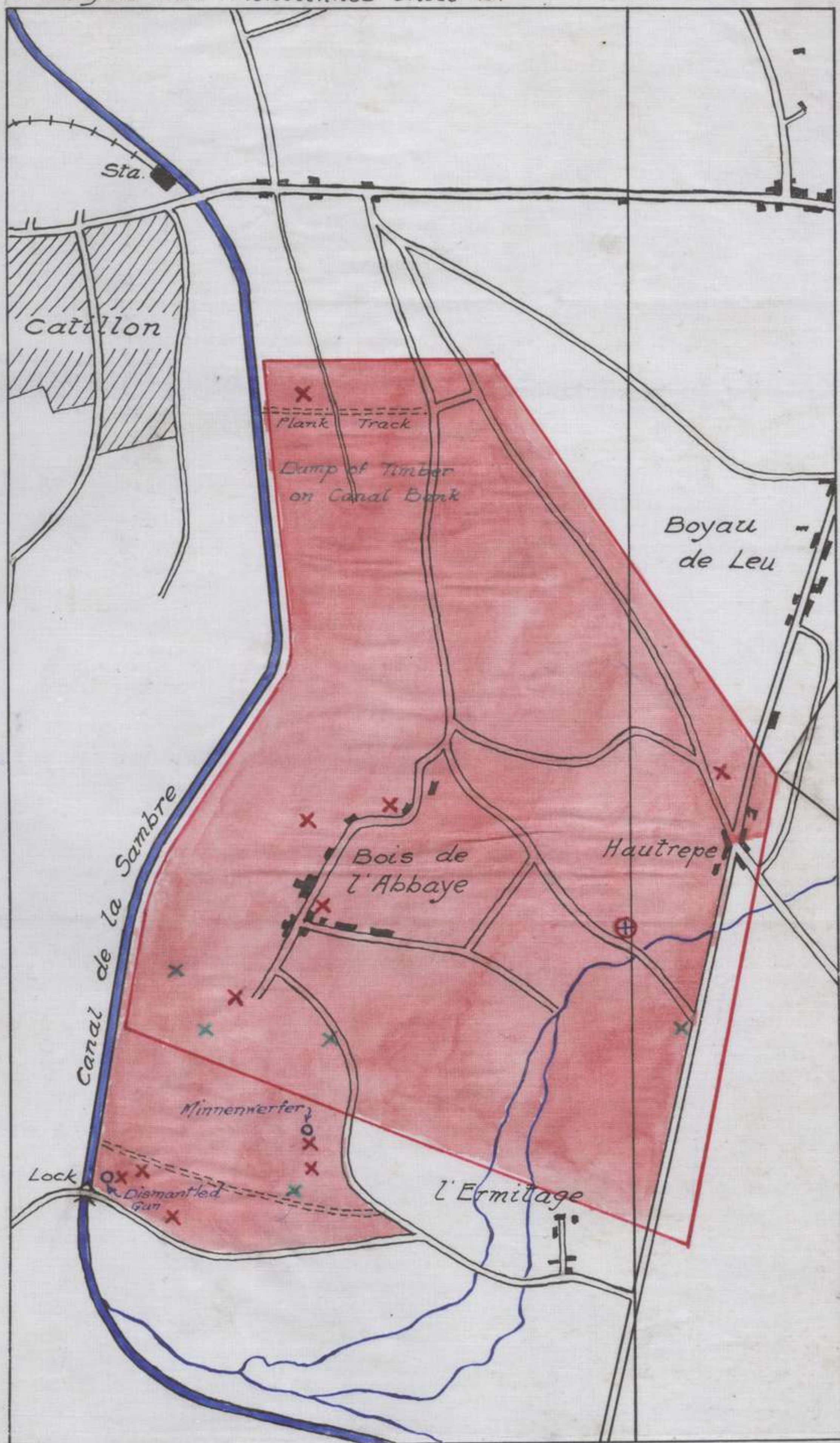
Report on Move & Billets to be furnished to S.O.R. by 1700 tomorrow.

82/18/18.

C. J. Duke
Lieut & Adjt.
5th Aust. Pioneer Battalion.



War Diary
 H
 Enlarged from Valenciennes Sheet 12. 3°-40' 50°-5'



H Scale 1:20,000 I
 1000 800 600 400 200 0 1000 yds.

General Salvage Dump. X (Estimated 11 Waggon Loads)
 Unexploded Ammⁿ to be destroyed X
 Blue Cross Gas Shells ⊕
 Area completed shown. [REDACTED]

SALVAGE AREA ALLOTTED TO
 5TH PIONEER BN. SHOWN IN RED.