

**AWM4**

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

Artillery

**Item number:** 13/117/9

**Title:** 4th Australian Light Trench Mortar  
Battery

August 1918



AWM4-13/117/9



CONFIDENTIAL.

ORIGINAL.  
~~DUPLICATE.~~  
TRIPLICATE.

Australian Imperial Force.

**WAR DIARY**

OF

9<sup>TH</sup> A.L.T.M.B.

FOR

~~1st July 1918~~ Aug 1918

Signature of Officer compiling

*Martin*

Signature of Officer Commanding

*Martin*



WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

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or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

4<sup>th</sup> A. L. T. M. Bty  
August

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
1918 Aug	1st		Fine hot day. Battery spent day settling into new quarters. Transhos erected small cookhouse & cleaned up vicinity of camp which had been left in unsatisfactory condition. 7pm 1 limber of ammunition & 1 limber with ration went to forward HQ.	
	2		Heavy rain storms. 1 officer & 7 OR with 2 guns relieved 4 guns 6th at 7th but no gun were put into their old positions, later 2 SOS guns with 13th Battalion were placed at U5 b 90.35 and Vb. <sup>actual</sup> No casualties or quiet time.	
	3		Fine day. Nothing to record. 10pm Transport received order to move at short notice.	
Shel-62 ONW	4		Fine later light showers. Transport moved out of over area at 8.10 am proceeding via Davous to bivouac (La Neuville) I 33 C, arriving about noon. 2pm limber proceeded to battery HQ to move gear to chateau at Vaire sur Corbie J25 d 3.5. arriving there about 11pm with 2 officers 55 ORs. HQ established in Chateau, troops billeted in out-buildings.	
	5		Heavy rain storms. Battery detailed to work the Baths established in Chateau shells. Our artillery very active all night.	
	6		Heavy rain. Brigade billets & bivouacs well shelled with 4.2 graye burst shells between 3 and 6 am. Many casualties in brigade but only 1 wounded in the battery Private A.V. Smith.	
	7		Showery. 6pm the supply tanks containing 1100 rounds 3" Stokes shell lying in orchard near La Villiers Brethouneux ready for conveyance to the objective next morning were shelled & everything blown up. Fresh arrangements.	



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1915

Remarks and references to Appendices

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Duba	7.		<p>Dead <del>troops</del> for supplies had to be <del>hand</del> made. I section of D.A.C. detailed <del>troops</del> for this purpose + an adequately supplies was dumped in Morcourt. One OR was evacuated sick. A dump for spare gear was established under our guard at Le Neuville (Corbie). Comforts were received through Australian</p>	
	8.		<p>Comfort Funds cases of socks fish meals, and shirts  <sup>2 officers + 60 ORs including a few infantrymen</sup> <del>carrying</del> <sup>ammunition</sup> moved to at 2.30am <sup>arrived at assembly point at 3.70am</sup>                  Stopped off at 1st Assembly point near west of Hamel at 6am with 6 mortars                  2 behind each of 3 battalions immediately in rear of first wave in thick fog + smoke. Due making direction difficult to maintain. Line reformed on second assembly point at zero plus 3. Zero being 4.20. We moved through third Division objective, the 'green line' running along a ridge, <sup>500 yards west of</sup> <del>Cross</del> <sup>cross</sup> <del>ridge</del> <sup>ridge</sup> <del>at</del> <sup>at</sup> zero plus 4. Moving was easy to the red line, <del>there</del> <sup>there</sup> being a ridge running North-South about 500 yards east of Morcourt. Several enemy machine guns being dealt with by our mortars. Guns surrendered freely + were so efficiently "ratted", on this line considerable damaged + many casualties was caused by a whizz bang battery (par 77 mm) + a 5.9 gun which enfiladed our advance. About this time <sup>Lieut</sup> <del>the</del> <sup>the</sup> officer in charge of two mortars advancing with 13th Bn in attempting to bring in a wounded man was hit by m. G. fire and was himself brought in <del>plucked</del> <sup>plucked</sup> by lance/corpl m.w. O'Connor whose conduct was exemplary. During the advance 6 enemy m. G. were dealt with, 3 dislodged, the crew surrendering + 3 guns with the crews blown out, altogether 40 rounds being fired. Souvenirs were found in great abundance H.Q. + dugouts being left in great hurry. Tanks after doing fine work suffered very heavily. On reaching the red line 2 mortars dug in with consolidating battalion at Q 17 d. 1.5. 13th Bn Q 17. a 3.0. Battery H.Q. were established at Q 23 H 44.</p>	

Sheet 62<sup>o</sup>

Sheet 62<sup>o</sup>

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WAR DIARY

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	Aug 8		<p>Two mortars moved with 15th Bm to Cissy afterwards moved with the Battalion to support positions on the Red line. Two mortars went forward with each of the blue line Battalions 16th + 13th + dug in at Q 1 F 2 55. Q 17 b 5 3. After consolidation 30 rounds were fired on enemy m.g. positions 2 m.g.s being dislodged. During the operation 1 officer (Lieut. L. Waterford) and 14 ORs were wounded by m.g. and shell fire also two of infantry carrying packs killed + two wounded. Battery worked under the disability of having only one officer after Lieut. Waterford was wounded. For good work during the operation 1 officer and 3 other ranks were recommended for gallantry + distinction. Rations were delivered to HQ by lumber + thence to gun positions by ration parties. Much shelling of our positions by big calibre guns day + night. The Cross Roads north east end of Morecourt village + near Battery HQ receiving particular attention. During advance gun with 15th Bm fired 20 rounds on m.g. positions holding up advance.</p>	
	9		<p>Transport moved at 9 am to P. 14 a central. Fine day hot quiet. No shells fired by Battery. Two of mortars moved forward with 16th Bm.</p>	
	10		<p>Fine. 16 rounds fired on enemy machine gun in small wood front 13th Bm and silenced.</p>	
	11		<p>Fine hot day. 3 ORs evacuated sick while 3 ORs rejoined from Rest Camp leave. Battery strength 1 off 40 ORs. Relieved by 11th at 7 mb. at 9 am battery marched to J 30 b 2 9. + wounded in a gully near Sailey le Sec. Troops were able to both had change of under clothing.</p>	



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
1918	Aug		Fine hot-day. 1 Officer and 1 OR from 14th Bn Battalion were attached to	
	12		batteries for duty.	
Sheet 62D	13		Fine hot-day. 2 Offrs + 2 OR moved at 6pm by Saillen Le Sec arrived at 10pm at Railway Embankment near Starbomieres W 16 d 6.1. + bivouaced	
	14		Fine hot sunny. Lieut. Martin OC. recommitted line in sector to be relieved. Transport moved at 9.10 am under Brigade arrangements to Bayonvillers W. 2 b 73.	
"	15		Fine sunny Battery moved at 11pm to W 24 b 7.5. reestablished HQ in hutments near 11th <del>ATA</del> Division (German) HQ. The 3rd Ah 7 Mts with 6 mortars and 1st Ah 7 Mts (2 mortars) were relieved by 11pm in sector running from X 18 b through S 19. to S 26 a. Shelling of front areas was very lively during relief. No casualties were reported. Two ORs proceeded to UK on leave.	
	16		Fine sunny hot. Transport moved under own arrangements to Battery HQ at W 24 b. Lieut. A. Martin 16th Bn appointed to Temp Captain while commanding battery dated 16/11/18.	
62 <sup>D</sup> Hatten court	17		Fine. Lieut. LFW Taylor + 1 OR of 15th Bn attached to Battery for duty. 3 ORs rejoined unit from Australian Cook School. To cover a forward move of the line 7 guns were put in 2 behind the 15th Bn at S 20 a 1.1. + S 20 C 2.8. 3 behind 13th Bn. at S 19. a 6.6. S 20 a 0.5. S 19 a 0.7. 2 behind 14th Bn X 18 b 40.45. + X 18 b 75.40. These guns were laid on Sak head up which saps approach was to be made. No preliminary bombardment required but guns stood by for emergency. These guns moved to conform to advanced line as follows.	

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1918	Aug 17.		15th bn. S20. C 50. 45. S20. C 50. 20. 13th S20 @ 9.4. S20 @ 0.7. S19. @ 6.6 14th bn S13 d. 33. X 18. b 5. 6. with approximately 100 rounds ammunition with each gun. Shot prepared for Tiger Farm but later found vacant 20 rounds fired on mty. at S13 b 7-8. which was destroyed. Advance dump (ammunition) stably established by our own lumbered transport at X 23. b 83	
	18		Fine dull westerly winds. Enemy shelling of <sup>forward</sup> enemy positions very consistent day + night. Boche dead most obnoxious but being gradually buried by us. Inter battery relief of 4 gun of crews successfully carried out about 14 hrs	
	19		Dull windy. No target offering in the sector for trench mortars enemy line being well out of our range. In the evening about 8.30 pm our SOS went up from brigade on our right. During counter barrage 1160 wounded.	
	20		Fine dull day clearing later to bright moonlight night. 2 other tanks evacuated to hospital sick. Generally quiet, no movement in front. Registered on Saps in S20 d. S14 c + S20 @. 20 rounds fired.	
	21		Fine very hot day clear moonlight night. Quiet day night no firing to report. Inter battery relief successfully carried out with out casualties	
	22		Fine hot day very strong wind + dusty. 8 Rounds fired on enemy mty. posts at S20 d. 6. 1. + S20 d 7. 1. 6 rounds fired on post at S20 d. 4. 4. good shooting observed.	



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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Sheet Part 1 62 <sup>a</sup> 62 <sup>c</sup> 66F 66D Harbomvies	Aug 23 <sup>d</sup>		<p>Fine hot cloudless day, clear moonlight night with ground mists. During the morning our mortars fired 70 rounds during the barrage for the infantry attack at 4.45 am. Guns were moved up to new positions <sup>with 16th Bn</sup> at advanced line S13 d P. S. S13 d 7. 6. <del>Completed</del> with 13th Bn S13 d 9. 3. S14 C. 4. 1. S20 b. 15. 90. No casualties. During the night 15th Bn guns fired 15 rounds on enemy MG position post.</p> <p>During evening British 96th Brigade extended their front to relieve the 16th + 13th Bns. Our 5 mortars between S13 d + S20 b being relieved by two from 96th LTM Bty. Two guns with 15th Bn at S20 c were withdrawn at midnight the sector being taken over next day by the French on right. Relief was completed about 1.30 am 24th without casualties crews proceeding via HQ where meal was provided &amp; then proceeding direct to embussing point.</p>	
Boisy	24 <sup>th</sup>		<p>Fine clear day. 3.30 am embussing having been completed motor transport moved via Amiens to Coisy where Battery debussed about 6.30 am &amp; marched into billets Chateau Boisy. Battery strength 3 officers and 55 other ranks. Troops having been up all night day was spent resting &amp; making billets clean &amp; as comfortable as possible. Transport moved independently at 9 am calling at Corbie dump on the way to pick up nucleus men &amp; spare gear reaching Coisy about 3 pm. Enemy air raid in vicinity during the night.</p>	
	25 <sup>th</sup>		<p>Fine day heavy thunderstorm at 9 pm. Lieut HW Baxter of 13th Bn seconded to Battery for duty. Parade at 9.15 am for inspection arms clothing equipment, cleaning of mortars &amp; adjustment of minor defects. New clothing <sup>shirts</sup> issued were necessary. 1 NCO <sup>and 1 OR</sup> proceeded to UK on leave. All troops received pay. Enemy air raid at night in vicinity.</p>	<p>9</p>

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
1918 Bois	Aug	26.	Fine dull day. 9.15 am Inspection + morning spent in close order drill + rifle exercises. Stockery + games during afternoon. One gun section <sup>daily</sup> consisting of 1 NCO + 3 OR with army light duty men being left in camp to assist the Q.M. + the two cooks carrying water + to fetch fuel. Battery not having a water cart or water has to be carried by working parties. 11 OR rejoined from leave.	
		27.	Fine to dull with light rain. 9.15 am <sup>to 12.15 pm</sup> Inspection + close order drill. New personnel being instructed in <del>the same</del> trench mortar work. Games during afternoon. 2/Lt <sup>10pm</sup> Taylor 16th Bn + 2 other ranks reported for duty with battery. This brings battery strength up to 5 Officers + 64 other ranks. 1 other rank evacuated sick.	
		28.	Fine some light showers. 9.15 am to 12.15 pm Physical training + bayonet fighting. Afternoon recreation + play.	
		29	Fine Sunny. 9.15 to 11 am Inspection + Gun Drill 11.12.30 pm Baths + change of underclothing. Afternoon recreation of football. 2 OR proceeded to UK on leave.	
		30	Fine Sunny. 9.30 am to 12.15 pm Firing practice (duds) afternoon football match with 16th Battalion. 1 officer proceeded to G. H. Q. 7th School (the waquet)	



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Place ..	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
1918 Coisy	Aug	31.	<p>Light rain early to fine sunny. 9.15 - 12.15 cleaning of guns and scrubbing equipment - inspection. Two (2) other ranks rejoined from UK leave. One (1) OR evacuated sick and 1 NCO evacuated injured, having come into collision with a motor lorry while cycling.</p> <p>Strength of battery at end of the month 5 officers and 64 other ranks total present with unit 11 officers + 51 other ranks.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">All</p>	