

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

Engineers

Item number: 14/30/26

Title: 11th Field Company, Australian
Engineers

December 1918



AWM4-14/30/26

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WAR DIARY

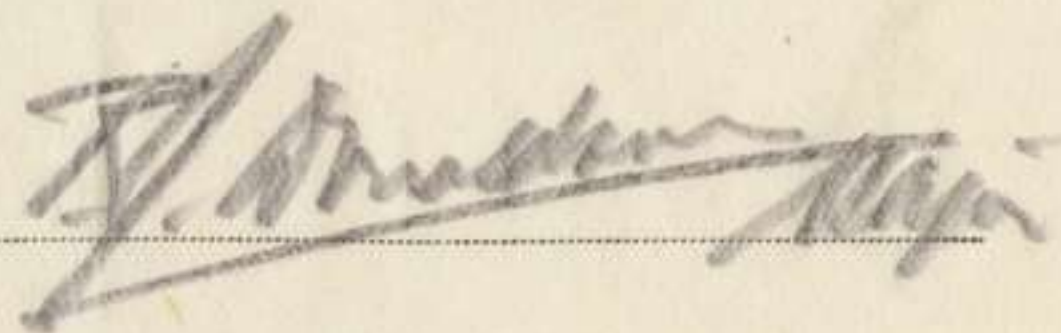
OF

11th FIELD COMPANY AUST. ENGINEERS.

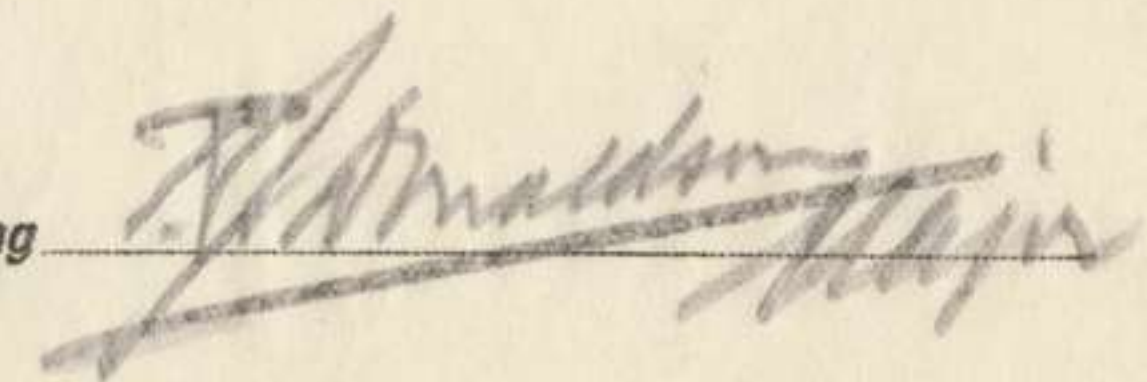
FOR

MONTH OF DECEMBER 1918.

Signature of Officer compiling



Signature of Officer Commanding



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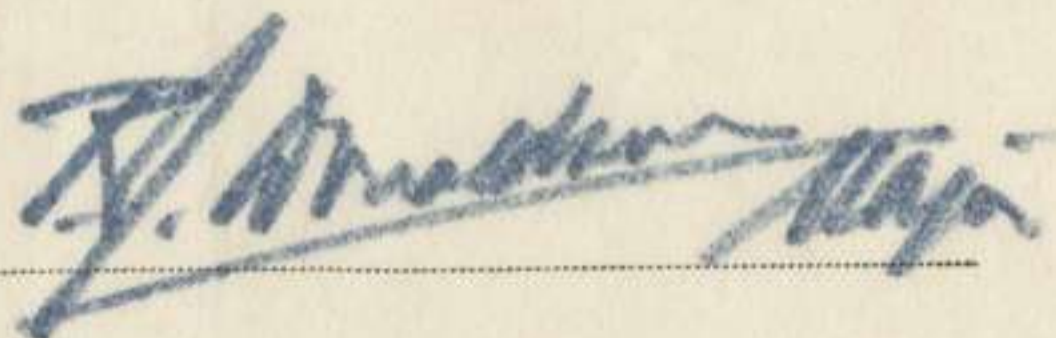
OF

11th FIELD COMPANY AUST. ENGINEERS.

FOR

MONTH OF DECEMBER, 1918.

Signature of Officer compiling



Signature of Officer Commanding



WAR DIARY

Army Form C. 2118.

142

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
Coy. H.Q	Dec 1918	1 st	Voluntary church parade to LA-NEUVILLE-FU-BOIS.	
FORCEVILLE			Lecture on "Artesian Water Supply" by 2 nd Cpl. A. F. Sharp to Coy's	
EN-VIMEU			Engineering Society ↗	
F13C-7-7		2 nd 09-00	Coy parade for Inspection in accordance with Training	
Sheet. 62 ^F			x Educational Syllabus G2/29 for week ending 7-12-18.	G-2/29.
		10-00	Nos. 1 x 3 Sections parade for Lecture on Repatriation by Major R. J. Donaldson D.S.O. Nos 2 x 4 Sections training as in above Syllabus.	
		14-00	Nos. 2 x 4 Sections for Lecture as above. Nos. P x 3 Sections training	
			C-R-E returned returned from leave to U.K. Major R. J. Donaldson D.S.O. resuming command of Coy - 2 OR to Hospital (Sick) ↗	
		3 rd 09-00	Coy parade for Inspection x resume training as in Syllabus.	
			4 OR B Class transferred to A.G.B. Depot - 1 OR to Hospital (Sick).	
			2 OR rejoined Unit from Hospital France ↗	
		4 th	Lecture on "Strikes x Lockouts x how to prevent them" by Sqr. Ingram	
			2 OR to Hospital (Sick). ↗	
		5 th	Lieuts. E. A. Robinson x S.W. Matters returned from leave. ↗	

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 (A10266) Wt 115300/P713 750,000 2/15 Sch. 52 For. Ms/C2118/16

WAR DIARY

142

Army Form C. 2118.

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Coy. HQ	6 th	09.00	Coy. parade for Inspection x continue training as in Syllabus	D
FORCEVILLE	7 th		Educational x Training Syllabus G2/29 for week ending 14-12-18 G2/29.	
EM - VIMEU			forwarded. Lecture on "The dead heart of Australia"	
F13 c-7-7			by Major R. J. Donaldson DSO - 1-OR to Hospital (Sick) D	
Sheet 62 ^F	8 th		Voluntary church parade to Ld. NEUVILLE - FU - BOIS	
			Lecture on "Astronomical Surveying" by Lieut H.E.S. Melbourne	
			to Coy's Engineering Society. D	
	9 th		Billeting party, Lieut H.E.S. Melbourne in charge left FORCEVILLE	
			and proceeded to BERNAPRE D	
	10 th	09.00	Coy with Transport, Major R. J. Donaldson in charge moved	
			from FORCEVILLE proceeded to BERNAPRE, and billeted	
			1-OR to Hospital (Sick). D	
Coy. HQ	11 th		Coy improving billets etc. D	
BERNAPRE			Capt. J. L. Thirkell proceeded on leave to U.K.	
	12 th		1-OR 41 st , 1-OR 43 rd , 1-OR 44 th , Aus. Inf. Batt ⁿ x 1-OR AMG Batt ⁿ	
			attached for Educational Classes. 1-OR B Class transferred to AGBD. D	

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Ronaldson

WAR DIARY

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142

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or
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Summary of Events and Information

Remarks and references to Appendices

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Coy. H.Q. BERNAPRE	Dec 1918. 13 th		Working party of 10 OR proceeded to 3 rd Aus. Div. Headq ^r OISEMENT to complete erection of Messen hut. No 7411 Sps. Boys A.F. congratulated by Aus. Corps. Commander for gallant services rendered during recent operations. (Aus. Corps R.O. No 278 of 12-11-18) Lt Rhodes rejoined from "on detachment."	
"	14 th	14-00	Working party of 6 OR on same work as on 13 th inst. Rugby Football match. No. 4 Section v. Rest of Coy. Won by Rest of Coy. Educational x Training Syllabus for week ending 21-12-18 forwarded G2/29.	G2/29.
"	15 th		1 OR detached to 11 th Aus Inf. Bde. Lecture on "Designs of Plate Girders" by 2 nd Cpl. Newton. to the Coy's Engineering Society.	
"	16 th	09-30	Coy. parade in concert hall, explanation of F.I.F Form 534 by Major R.J. Donaldson DSO - 1 OR detached to 3 rd Aus. Div. Headq ^r .	
"	17 th	09-30	Coy parade for Inspection x continue Training etc as in above Syllabus. Commencement of filling in of F.I.F Form 534.	
"	18 th		Football match (Aus. rules) Officers x paid HCO ^s v Rest of Coy. Won by Rest of Coy.	R. Donaldson Major

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142

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(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Coy HQ. BERNAPRE	18 th		1 OR transferred to F.HQ. A.I.F. (Authority DAG. A.I.F. 2/82 of 29-11-18). Lecture on "Reinforced Concrete" by Lieut E.H. Rhodes to Coy's Engineering Society. ↗	
"	19 th		Training continued as in Syllabus. 1 OR detached to 5 th M.T. Coy. 2 OR rejoined Unit from "on detachment". Lieut R.W. Lakey rejoined Unit from Seconded List. Lieut J.M. Horton proceeded on leave to South of France.	
"	"	14.00	Coy. route march postponed on account of bad weather conditions. ↗	
"	20 th		1 OR detached to 25 th Aus. A.S.C. 1 OR rejoined Unit from "on detachment". ↗	
"	21 st		4 OR "B" Class transferred to A.G. B.D. 1 OR rejoined Unit from 3 rd Aus. Pioneers - 1 OR rejoined Unit from 11 th Aus. Inf. Bde. ↗	
"	22 nd	11.00	Coy. church parade BERNAPRE - 2 OR to Hospital (Sick) ↗	
"	23 rd		4 OR from Hospital France ↗	
"	24 th	19.00	Concert given by members of Unit with assistance from Members of "The Blue Jays" concert party. ↗	Sup A. Maudslayi Major

WAR DIARY

142

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

Summary of Events and Information

Remarks and references to Appendices

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	Dec 1918			
Coy HQ	25 th		Christmas Day - Holiday	
BERNAPRE	26 th		1-OR detached to Aus. Corps Workshops. 1-OR transferred to A.G. B.O. (1915 Personnel). Educational report for week ending 26-12-18 G2/29 forwarded.	
	27 th		S.S. 145 Engineer work during operations. Notes on above, based on the operations of 1918 by Major R. J. Donaldson DSO forwarded with Appendices.	
	28 th		Lieut S.W. Matters & Batman detached to 3 rd Aus. Div. Train. Lecture on "The Evolution of a Casting" by Cpl Nixon to Coy's Engineering Society.	
	29 th		Educational & Training Syllabus for week ending 4/1/19 forwarded G2/29	
	30 th	08.00	Working party of 1 Officer & 24-OR proceeded to HANGAST by Motor Lorry to load Nissen huts for transport to OISEMENT. 8-OR detached & distributed two each to 3 Battalions and 11 th A.I. Bde. HQ to supervise erection of Nissen huts. 5-OR detached to 11 th A.I. Bde. Sheep School.	

Donaldson

WAR DIARY

142

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Coy. H.Q. BERNAPRE	Dec 1918	31 st	<p>Working party as on 30th inst. Reference 41/335/2 of Chief-Engineer Aus. Corps. Major R.J. Donaldson's (D.S.O) notes on questions raised in above forwarded with Appendices - 1-OK from Hospital. Coy's daily parade State in graph form for month ending 31-12-18 forwarded.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Donaldson Major</i></p>	H/1

WAR DIARY

142

OF

11th Field Company Aust. Engineers.

FOR

MONTH OF DECEMBER. 1918.

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
G.2/29.	Educational Syllabus for week ending 7/12/18.
do.	Training Programme for week ending 14/12/18.
do.	Educational and Training Syllabus for week ending 21/12/18.
do.	Educational Report for week ending 26/12/18.
27/12/18.	Reference S.S.145 Engineer work during operation. Notes on above based on the operations of 1918. by Major R.J.DONALDSON. D.S.O.
31/12/18.	Reference 41/335/2 of CHIEF-ENGINEER. Aus. Corps. Views on the questions raised in above by Major R.J.DONALDSON. D.S.O.
31/12/18.	Company's daily parade state in graph form for month ending 31/12/18 .
A/1	
G.3/29.	Educational and Training Syllabus for week ending 4/1/19.

142

11TH FIELD COMPANY ENGINEERS, 8TH AUSTRALIAN DIV.	
No.	S/Sg
Date	

THIRD AUSTRALIAN DIVISION 142

11th Field Company, Engineers.

EDUCATIONAL SYLLABUS FOR WEEK ENDING 7th December 1918.

Place.

	School room	Cafe.	Canteen Room 1	Canteen Room 2
Monday	Mathematics 14.00 to 16.00	French 11.00 to 12.00	Drawing 10.00 to 12.00 Building Construction 14.00 to 16.00	Book keeping 10.00 to 12.00.
Tuesday	Surveying Lecture 10.00 to 11.00	Shorthand 11.00 to 12.00	Mechanical Drawing 10.00 to 12.00	Surveying Practical 14.00 to 16.00
Wednesday	Mathematics 10.00 to 11.00	French 11.00 to 12.00	Architectural Drawing 10.00 to 12.00	Surveying Practical 10.00 to 12.00
Thursday	Surveying Lecture 10.00 to 11.00		Drawing 10.00 to 12.00	Book keeping 10.00 to 12.00
Friday	Mathematics 10.00 to 11.00	Shorthand 10.00 to 11.00 French 11.00 to 12.00	Building Construction 10.00 to 12.00 Mechanical Drawing 14.00 to 16.00	Surveying Practical 14.00 to 16.00

Note: Thursday afternoon and Saturday morning are devoted to Military work.

Major.

O.C. 11th Field Company, Engineers.

THIRD AUSTRALIAN DIVISION
11th Field Company, Engineers

11th FIELD COMPANY
ENGINEERS,
3rd AUSTRALIAN DIV.
No. G 2/29
5th December, 1918. 142

TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR WEEK ENDING 14/12/18.

DAY:	0900-1000	1000-1100	1100-1200	1230-1400	1400-1500	1500-1600
MON: 9 11 18.	Co. Parade and Drill.	Math'tics Carpentry. Tinsmithing. Rigging, etc.	Shorthand Parade.			Book-keeping. Surveying (Fld. Work). Carpentry. Tinsmithing. Rigging, etc. Organised Games.
TUES: 10th.	-do-	Drawing. Carpentry. Tinsmithing. Rigging, etc.		Parade.		ROUTE MARCH. 8 miles.
WED: 11th.	-do-	French Carpentry. Tinsmithing. Rigging, etc.	Shorthand			Surveying (Fld. Work). Football.
THURS: 12th.	-do-	Drawing. Carpentry. Tinsmithing. Rigging, etc.		Parade.		Book-keeping. Surveying (Field Work)..... Building Constrn. Rigging, etc.
FRI: 13th.	-do-	Math'tics Carpentry. Tinsmithing. Rigging, etc.	French.	Parade.		Surveying (Fld. Work). Musketry.
SAT: 14th.	-do-	Coy. drill and Route march.			F O O T B A L L.	
SUNDAY:	0930 - 1130 Meeting of Eng- ineering Scty.		Church.			

A. W. Marshall MAJOR.

O.C., 11th Field Company, Engineers.

11th FIELD COMPANY ENGINEERS, 8th AUSTRALIAN DIV.
No. <i>8 2/29</i>
Date.....

EDUCATIONAL SYLLABUS FOR WEEK ENDING ~~20th~~^{21st} December 1918.

Place.

	Schoolroom	Cafe.	Canteen Room 1.	Canteen Room 2.
Monday.	Mathematics. 14.00 to 16.00.	11 to 12. French	Drawing 10.00 to 12.00 Building Con- struction 14.00 to 16.00	Book keeping 10.00 to 12.00
Tuesday	Surveying Lecture 10.00 to 12.00.	Shorthand 10.00 to 12.00	Mechanical Drawing 10.00 to 12.00.	Surveying Practical 14.00 to 16.00.
Wednesday	Mathematics 10.00 to 11.00	French 11.00 to 12.00	Architectural Drawing 10.00 to 12.00	Surveying Practical 10.00 to 12.00
Thursday	Surveying Lecture 10.00 to 11.00	Shorthand 11.00 to 12.00	Drawing 10.00 to 12.00	Book keeping 10.00 to 12.00.
Friday	Mathematics 10.00 to 11.00 Surveying Practical 14.00 to 16.00.	French 11.00 to 12.00	Mechanical Drawing 14.00 to 16.00	Building Construction 10.00 to 12.00.

Note: Thursday afternoon and Saturday mornings are devoted to Military work.

Major.

O.C. 11th Field Company, Engineers.

War Diary

THIRD AUSTRALIAN DIVISION
11th Field Company, Engineers

11th FIELD COMPANY
ENGINEERS.
8th AUSTRALIAN DIV.
No. <u>G 2/29</u>
Date <u>15th Decr., 1918.</u>

142

TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR WEEK ENDING 31/12/1918.

DATE:	<u>0200-1000</u>	<u>1000-1100</u>	<u>1100-1200</u>	<u>1330-1400</u>	<u>1400-1500</u>	<u>1500-1600</u>
MONDAY: 16th.	Section Parade and Inspection. Coy. Parade & Drill.	Education as per Syllabus. Trade Classes. Organised games and drill for unabsorbed.		Section Parade.	Education as per Syllabus. Trade Classes. Etc.	
TUESDAY: 17th.	-do-	-do-		-do-	-do-	
WED'DAY: 18th.	-do-	-do-		F O O T B A L L.		
THURSDAY: 19th.	-do-	-do-		Section Parade.	Coy. Parade and Route March to HODDING and return.	
FRIDAY: 20th.	-do-	-do-		-do-	Education as per Syllabus. Trade Classes. Etc.	
SAT'DAY: 21st.	-do-	Route March - FRESNEVILLE and return.			F O O T B A L L.	

BHT.

A. J. Ormalden
 O.C. 11th Field Company, Engineers. MAJOR.

Report for Week Ending 26-12-18.

Unit: - 11th Field Coy Aust. Engrs.Education Officer E. RhodeAverage Ration Strength for week 208 ^{Total} enrolment in classes 105 Total Average Attd^{ce} 91

% of ration Strength 50%

% of ration Strength 43%

Total Enrolment has decreased by 7 OR 6.5%

Avg Attd^{ce} has increased

By 1 OR 1.1%

New Classes formed during week NIL

Classes disbanded " " NIL

Classes in operation	Enrolment	Ay Attd ^{ce}	%	Names of Instructors	Classes Contemplated	Est Enrolment	Remarks
BOOK KEEPING	8	8	100%	LT ROBINSON	NONE		
BUILDING CONST ⁿ	10	9	90%	SPR JENKINS			
DRAWING ARCHITECTURAL	10	10	100%	LT MURRAY			LT Murray takes class during LT Nortons Absence
" PLAIN	10	10	100%	"			
" MECHANICAL	14	12	85%	Cpl NIXON			
FRENCH	13	10	77%	4/Cpl NEWTON			
MATHEMATICS	24	18	75%	Cpl SHARP			
SURVEYING	10	10	100%	LT MELBOURNE			
SHORTHAND	6	4	66%	LT ROBINSON			



No.
Date 27th December 1918.

Headquarters,
3rd Aust. Div. Engineers.

S.S. 145 ENGINEER WORK DURING OPERATION.

Notes on above based on the operations of 1918.

- (A) The establishment of a new Defensive System. The outstanding feature was the great demand made on Engineers for such work as preparations for demolitions, new bridges, deviation roads, water supply, signboards etc. and accommodation. The importance of the last mentioned has been greatly increased by the development of night bombing, as in all operations each H.Q., signal station and Medical post urgently requires light proof and protected shelter to allow work to be carried on at night. The increased use of gas has also led to a great deal of extra work in this respect. The results of these demands has been that the Infantry have been thrown very largely on their own resources for the establishment of field defences, trenches and wiring. While many instances could be noted of adherence to a rigid linear system of defence, particularly in rear zones, it was very noticeable that the defence of the forward zone was based very largely on securing tactical features to a considerable depth, rather than on a formal series of lines. The importance of making full use of all features in rear zones which could assist in breaking up an enemy attack which had outstripped its artillery support, was very clear. Thus behind the zone within reach of the enemy's initial concentration of guns and trench mortars some Engineers should be employed in making villages, woods etc. defensible by small garrisons as delaying points against an Infantry attack. Such places become untenable as his artillery strength develops, but their value in holding up a break through is obvious.
- (B) Offensive operations. The headings of the following notes are those of the Sections of S.S. 145 (Jany 1918.) to which the notes apply.
- (11) General Engineer Preparations.
Fixed maps of the area, mounted on horizontal boards and correctly oriented, with the position of the maps marked on it, set up at road and trench junctions and on Hill tops not in enemy view are of great value to artillery, tank and other personnel arriving in the area immediately before an offensive. They can be easily protected from the weather.
- (111) Distribution and Employment of R.E. during actual attack
While it is undoubtedly correct that Field Companies should not be affiliated with Brigade in an offensive, it has been found advantageous to attach one section to each Brigade, the section Subaltern and half his men with Brigade H.Qrs. *
Their duty will be to assist the various H.Qrs. in the matter of accommodation, including searching for mines and traps, and also to collect engineer information and transmit it to the Field Company.
It was generally found possible to establish Field Company H.Qrs. near Brigade H.Qrs., which allowed of telephone communication with C.R.E. and ensured good liaison.
As to Engineers digging strongpoints in captured territory, this has not been found necessary. The Infantry garrison of the newly won ground is always well distributed in depth and dug in, and the defence works which result fulfill all the functions of the Engineer strong points.

* Insert / the remainder distributed over 5th H.Qrs.

(XIII) Formation of Engineer Dumps.

Wherever possible a "dump on wheels" is to be strongly advocated. Before the 8th August the pontoon wagons of the division were pooled, loaded with stores and parked. Early on the morning of the 8th August they pushed across into the captured territory, delivered their loads at various pre-determined points close to the jobs, and returned without suffering a casualty. Carrying parties before and after the attack were thus practically eliminated. Later a number of captured enemy wagons were collected and loaded in readiness for another advance, but the division moved away before they could be used.

(XV) Jumping off and assembly trenches.

During the operations of 1918 assembly generally took place on taped lines. Where time permits it has been found an advantage to distinguish between the tapes laid down for different waves and on different unit frontages. Thus one tape can be plain, the next with wooden pegs knotted on at intervals another with knots, string tails, tape tails and so on.

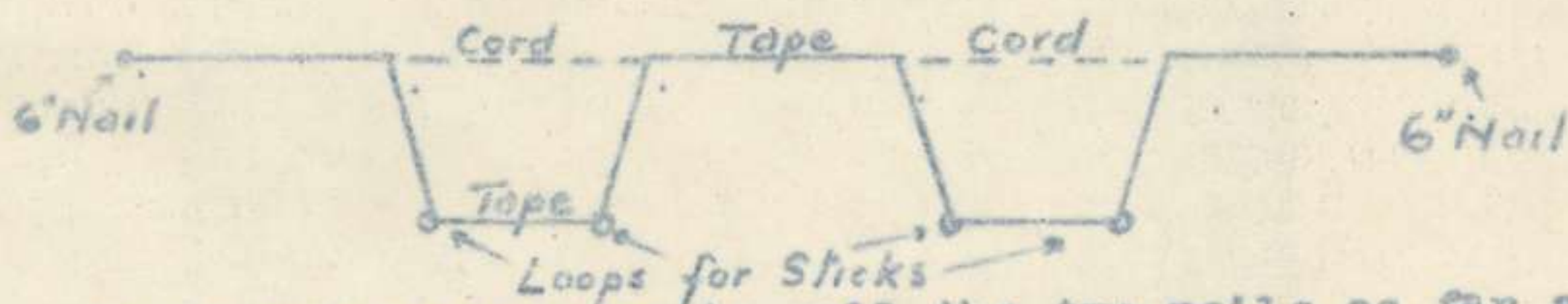
(XVI) Tools carried on the man by the R.E. & others in the assault.

Parties told off to inspect dug outs and also those examining wells, should have Acetylene Miners Lamps.

Water supply parties (well searchers) should have a coil of fine wire (German telephone wire is good) for sounding and for lowering a light down a well. On several occasions during the advance of August and September wells were found which "sounded" dry, but a closer examination shewed that they were simply filled up above water level with old buckets etc. dropping down the well by careless water-carriers on occasion when the pump or windlass had broken down. Every reconnoitring party should carry paint, brushes, calico and tacks, so that points identified can be immediately labelled. The calico enables easily recognisable signs to be quickly improved on old German boards, trees, barns etc.

(XVIII) Organization and strengthening of the captured position.

The marking out of Infantry trenched posts can be facilitated by the provision of tapes prepared thus:-
(and rolled up on sticks for carrying)



It is only necessary to pull the two nails as far apart as possible, stick them in and then adjust the traverse loops to get a standard fire bayed trench. The operation can be done by two men crawling.

The provision of material to provide cover from weather in a new trench system should receive early attention otherwise the trench walls will certainly be undercut.

(XX) Water.

The policing of all water points requires urgent attention. Otherwise troughs get trodden down, windlasses ricketted to pieces, ropes stolen off windlasses etc.

Major

O.C. 11th Field Company, Engineers.

THIRD AUSTRALIAN DIVISION
11th Field Company, Engineers.

11th FIELD COMPANY ENGINEERS, 3rd AUSTRALIAN DIV.
No.
Date

142

Headquarters,
3rd Aust. Div. Engineers.

REFERENCE 41/335/2 of CHIEF ENGINEER - AUSTR. CORPS.

Herewith my views on the questions raised in above.

PERSONNEL.

(1) IS THE EXISTING ORGANISATION OF ENGINEER SERVICES SATISFACTORY.

NO! The whole of the Works Organisation in a division should be definitely one formation under one head. Instances could be multiplied almost indefinitely of friction, overlapping and inefficiency resulting from the two more or less parallel organisations of Engineers and Pioneers in the division. The difficulty has been exaggerated in the A.I.F. by the fact that a number of Officers and men of high professional and technical ability, have been allotted to Pioneers and the desire to make the best use of their services has led to Pioneers being utilised in a manner quite different to British Army methods, and calculated to cause overlapping and friction with Engineers.

The responsibility^{ies} for work of the Engineer Service and of the Infantry of a division should be defined much more clearly, and should be as separate as possible.

(2) IF THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF FIELD COMPANIES AND PIONEER BATTALIONS IS TO BE RETAINED. I WOULD SUGGEST.

- (a) That the C.R.E. be made a full Colonel and put definitely over the Pioneers as well as the Field Companies.
- (b) That he be given an assistant with the rank of Major, the responsibility of the C.R.E's Adjutant are out of proportion to his rank.
- (c) That appointments to Engineers, both of Officers and C.R. depend on high professional or technical ability in branches of science and industry likely to be useful in Military Engineering.
- (d) That subject to (c) above, promotion should be within the division and from the two arms confined. *Combined*
e.g. A promotion to Captain in a Field Company would be from the Lieutenants of Engineers and Pioneers of the Division, preference being given to the Officer with the best professional qualifications; a Captaincy in the Pioneers would go to the Officer with the best Military record (seniority, field experience etc.)
- (e) A Field Company urgently requires a specially trained Transport Officer.
- (f) The distribution of personnel by trades of a Field Company should be revised and some attempt made to adhere to it.

(3) IF YOU CONSIDER A NEW ORGANISATION IS DESIRABLE, WHAT ORGANISATION DO YOU SUGGEST ?

The Pioneer Battalion should be abolished, and Divisional Engineers organised into four Field Companies, one being permanently H.Qrs Coy., all under a C.R.E. who should be a full Colonel, with a Lieut-Colonel or Major as assistant, as already suggested. (cf Medical Service)

These Field Companies should then be made strong enough to carry out all ordinary Engineer Work without the help of outside working parties. Such Engineer Work would include Accomodation (dug-outs, hutments etc.) Bridging, Demolition and Water Supply, Surveying (including trench marking, sign-boards and maps) Roads, Tramways etc etc. but would not

(3) Continued.

include ordinary field defences. It is the Infantry who have to live and fight in these defences, they provide the bulk of the labor for these in any case, the efficiency of a system of defences depends far more on Tactical than on Engineering considerations, and the experience of the war has tended to simplification. (The fire trench of to day for instance is a very simple arrangement compared with the " improved fire trench # of the Manual.). Therefore I consider that Field Defences should be an Infantry responsibility, and the appointment of a trained Works Officer in each Brigade and Battalion, and a Sergt in each Infantry Company, would be all that is necessary for training and supervision. That the Australian Infantryman is quite capable of carrying out all ordinary defence works without any great burden of extra training, is conclusively proved by the case of the 11th A.I. Bgde, which has throughout its campaigning carried out an enormous amount of trench work and wiring with a minimum of Sapper assistance.

It is perhaps outside the scope of this discussion to suggest that, quite apart from the Engineer Services each Infantry Brigade should have its own Pioneer Bata., recruited from men not quite up to the standard of the picked fighting man, but capable of relieving the fighting man of much of the drudgery which at present falls to his lot, and which must inevitably lower his pride in himself and therefore his fighting spirit.

To revert to our Four Field Companies. Each of these might have a strength of about 300 to 350 rank and file, organised say into two sections of four platoons each, the Company commanded by a Major, with a Captain 2nd in command, an Adjutant (Lieut.), a Captain to each section and Subalterns to each ~~section~~ platoon; plus a transport Officer and one or more supernumary subalterns.

I would suggest that the rank and file in each platoon should consist of a proportion only of Sappers, the remainder to be privates. The Sappers should be picked men drawing slightly higher pay, and qualifying either by their skill at specified trades or by their knowledge of Military Engineering.

The H.Qrs. Company should have charge of all bridging equipment, and should include the necessary personnel for running divisional workshops.

It will also be able to afford technical assistance to the Divisional Artillery.

(4) WHAT PROVISION WOULD YOU MAKE FOR CORPS TROOPS IN THE ORGANISATION ?

Not sufficient knowledge of Corps Work.

(5) PERSONNEL
THE C.R.E. SHOULD BE COMMANDING OFFICER, but should be given higher rank, and a Field Officer assistant.

In my opinion the present system works well and eliminates any possible friction between the Engineer Staff and Officers Commanding Units. Engineer Units are almost always so scattered as to necessitate the C.R.E. delegating some of his duties as a C.O., and he is thus enabled to carry out the necessary Staff work.

(11) EQUIPMENT.(1) IF THE PRESENT ORGANISATION OF ENGINEERS AND PIONEERS IS RETAINED, WHAT CHANGES IN EQUIPMENT, TECHNICAL OR OTHERWISE DO YOU SUGGEST.

(a) General A Field Company, should have at least 12 more saws and carpenters hammers, pipe cutting and screwing tools, an additional forge and anvil the present outfit

(1) Continued.

being mostly used for shoeing, and often separated from the Company; a better equipment of sign writers tools, including a supply of Calico or stout white paper such as the Germans use for the purpose; a photo printing frame for plans; and some mining picks and shovels.

To compensate for this extra weight ordinary picks and shovels could be sacrificed.

(b) Vehicles. The present Tool carts should be abolished, and each double cart replaced either by a G.S. wagon or better by a wagon similar to a pontoon wagon with a floor and sides, suitable for carrying long timber, rails etc. In this section wagon the fine tools could be carried in chests and the heavy tools etc. loose; in camp they could be unloaded and the wagon available for work. The present tool-cart is simply an inconvenient tool chest on wheels.

^{Two} The four pack animals should normally be used to draw the G.S.L. Wagons, in which the packs saddlery could be carried.

(c) Mechanical Transport. The G.S. Wagon with four horses for Technical Stores should be replaced either by a Motor Lorry or a 30 cwt. box car. The C.R.E. should certainly have a car or box car. The value of the box car issued to C.R.E. during the recent Somme Campaign was very great, both in facilitating his supervision and on a number of occasions in rushing forward material.

C.R.E. and each Company should have a Motor Cycle & side car, even at the sacrifice of one or more riding horses.

(2) IS THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF ALLOTTING PONTOONS TO COMPANIES SATISFACTORY?

Yes! unless vehicles suitable for carrying long materials are substituted for tool-carts as already suggested, the pontoon wagons are essential to companies.

If Companies have the vehicles suggested, pontoon bridging gear would be better with Divisional H.Q.s., and might then be Mechanical- drawn, but wagons should always be fitted for horse draught also.

(3) IF YOU CONSIDER A NEW ORGANISATION IN PERSONNEL NECESSARY WHAT CHANGES IN VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT DO YOU CONSIDER NECESSARY, INCLUDING MECHANICAL TRANSPORT?

My suggested company (with a working strength of nearly 2½ times the present Field Company), might have a motor lorry, a motor bicycle, a limber and a Mess Cart for H.Q.; two water carts (one per section) ; two cookers and an Engineer wagon as described (or G.S) and a limber per platoon. This would mean 50 draught horses, without allowing for packs^{or} spares.

(4) SHOULD BICYCLES BE RETAINED, AND IF SO, HOW MANY PROVIDED THE PRESENT SYSTEM IS RETAINED ?

Undoubtably! and I consider the present proportion quite suitable. The bicycle is a great saver of time and man power on such work as road^{and} bridge patrols, reconnaissance etc., and there ^{have} been occasions when urgent work could not have been carried out in time without its use (e.g. the blowing up of the BOUZENCOURT bridge by this company in April 1918.).

(111) USE OF ENGINEERS AND PIONEERS IN THE FIELD.(1) SHOULD THE C.R.E. HAVE COMPLETE CONTROL OF PIONEER BATTNS., AS REGARDS (a) WORK (b) DISCIPLINE?

Yes! in both respects, if Pioneers are to be worked and ~~are~~ considered as a branch of the Engineer Service, they should certainly come under the Divisional head of that Service. If on the other hand they are to be regarded merely as a reserve of Infantry, used ~~an~~ occasion demands on the drudgery of Military work the question is immaterial.

(see question(111) 4)

(2) WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE BEST METHOD OF EMPLOYMENT OF ENGINEERS IN (a) OFFENSIVE OPERATION (b) DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS CO-OPERATION WITH THE ARMS?

(a) Offensive Operations. Firstly, the allotment of responsibility should be on an area and not on a work basis. It is much more economical & efficient, for instance have a Unit doing roads, water supply and dug-outs over a convenient area, than to have three Units doing each job separately over an area three times the size. This point is often overlooked.

A proportion of Engineers strength should be definitely distributed over and attached to the H.Qrs. of attacking Infantry Units, e.g. one section to a Brigade, with the Officer and half the men at Brigade H.Qrs., and the remainder distributed over Battns. The duties of these people ~~will be~~ will include looking after the accomodation for H.Qrs., searching for mines etc. but also for reconnaissance and reporting back early information on Engineer conditions.

The bulk of the Engineer strength should however be kept under the hand of the C.R.E. and in particular the reserve Field Company should be distinct from the reserve Brigade. If the operation is successful, ^{and the} other Engineer work is extensive and important (e.g. bridging, repairs to roads), it may be necessary to employ the reserve Field Company before the reserve Brigade, if the attack is hung up, the reverse will probably be the case.

A system of leap-frogging of Engineer Units in an advance should be arranged. If a coy is definitely tied to a brigade it will start jobs and then have to drop them half finished to catch up to the Brigade, and the handing over of such half finished jobs is never satisfactory. The attachment of Engineers to attacking Infantry for the purpose of digging "strong points" is to be ~~depreccated~~, unless it is a clear case of the Infantry strength being insufficient for the responsibility of taking and holding the ground. In almost all cases

Engineers would be better employed under the C.R.E. on communications (not generally communication trenches), accomodation for signal, command, and aid posts, water supply etc. In the attack on BROODSEINDE Ridge on 4/10/17, Engineers were told off to dig strong points, in discussing the action afterwards, senior Infantry Officers while expressing their appreciation of the work done, stated that as their own men were distributed ~~after~~ the attack in the manner best suited to the defence of the ground, and as ~~many~~ every man had to dig himself in, they could ~~not~~ see no good reason or use for the Engineers "strong points."

The use of the Pioneers has depended chiefly on the work found necessary on roads.

It has more than once happened during recent fighting that the Pioneers, not being needed for road work have been used as Infantry, while at the same time Field Companies have been drawing on Infantry Brigades for trained fighting men to assist in

(111) (2) Continued.

work on accomodation etc.

(b) Defensive Operations.

During the early stages of the defence of a line, there will be a very large amount of Divisional Engineer work on bridges, emergency routes, demolitions, water supply etc., which must be carried under C.R.E. It is at this period when very few Sappers are available for Brigades, that the foundations of the line defences will be laid, which constitutes a very powerful argument in favor of the Infantry being trained and accustomed to carry out such work on their own initiative. Later it may be found better to attach Field and Pioneer Companies to Brigades, as the work will probably narrow down chiefly to accomodation for the troops.

(3) AS A RULE PIONEERS ARE EMPLOYED ON SEPARATE WORK AND ARE NOT UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE FIELD COMPANY'S COMMANDER IN CHARGE OF THE SECTOR OF DEFENCE. IS THIS SATISFACTORY?

No! The Infantry Brigadier responsible for the defence of the sector should only need to look to one officer on Engineer questions.

(4) SHOULD PIONEER BATTALIONS BE CONSIDERED IN THE SAME CATAGORY AS ENGINEERS, WHERE IT COMES TO THE QUESTION OF ACTUAL FIGHTING? i.e. SHOULD THEY BE EMPLOYED ONLY WHEN ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY, OR SHOULD THEY BE REGARDED AS A DIVISIONAL RESERVE OF INFANTRY?

Pioneers should only be used for fighting when absolutely necessary. Having few opportunities for training and experience they cannot be expected to be skilled fighters and their use as Infantry simply because there may be no urgent work for them at the moment, leads to heavy losses. More than one senior Infantry Officer, after experience with Pioneers as fighting troops, while very appreciative of the work done by them, has clearly expressed this view.

(5) WHAT WAS THE ORIGINAL IDEA OF THE USES OF PIONEERS IN THIS WAR, WHEN FIRST FORMED? IS THERE ANY DIRECT EVIDENCE TO SHOW WHY AND HOW PIONEER BATTALIONS WERE FORMED.

No remarks.

(6) SHOULD ENGINEERS AND PIONEERS BE EMPLOYED ON CORPS WORKS IN THE LINE WHEN THEIR DIVISIONS ARE OUT OF THE LINE? IF NOT WHY NOT?

No! If the O.C. Field Company or C.O. Pioneers is to be held responsible for the discipline of his men, and for their efficiency in technical work, it is essential that he should be given opportunities equal to the rest of the division for training.

(7) WHAT IS YOUR OPINION IN REGARD TO THE USES OF LIGHT RAILS AND TRENCH TRAMWAYS, AND THEIR CONTROL?

No remarks.

(8) WAS THE SYSTEM OF DETACHING PIONEER BATTALIONS AND FIELD COMPANIES FROM DIVISIONS FOR LIGHT RAILWAY WORK SATISFACTORY TO ALL CONCERNED?

No remarks.

(9) DO YOU CONSIDER IT NECESSARY TO PROVIDE CERTAIN DEFINITE CERTAIN DEFINITE UNITS AS CORPS TROOPS SO AS TO RELIEVE THE DIVISNL TROOPS AND TO ALLOW THEM TO HAVE PROPER REST?

- (111) (9) Yes! see answer to question (8) above. It would promote efficiency both in the Corps work (to have a permanent working force), and in the Divisional Units.

(14) WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE BEST METHOD OF ORGANISING THE HANDLING OF ENGINEER STORES?

1. I think the present methods work fairly well. The Divisional Dump should be established somewhere about the zone of the various horse lines and generally speaking the bulging up of dumps forward of this will not be necessary and is very likely to lead to waste. Field Companies (and Pioneers) should embody an estimate of requirements in each weekly report, C.R.E. determining the relative urgency and can allot proportions of stores to Units and then the dump people can advise Companies (and Pioneers) daily what material is available , and each Unit draw its allotment or give equivalent indents to Infantry etc.

ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OF DIVISIONAL WORKSHOPS"OR SHOULD THERE BE ONE CENTRAL CORPS WORKSHOPS?

2. A Corps

Workshop is of course very desirable, particularly for a big or difficult job; but I think experience has clearly proved the desirability of the Division having a small shop for urgent jobs. It is only necessary to mention the Divisional Shops at Armentieres and Erquinghem the sawmill erected and run by the Company at Bonnay on the Ancre, and the workshops of the 3rd Pioneers at Blangy-Tronville, as examples of Divisional enterprises of the greatest value.

SHOULD THERE BE A SEPARATE PERSONNEL FOR RUNNING WORKSHOPS TO AVOID CALLING ON DIVISION FOR MEN?

3. From the point of view of the Field Company it is quite good to be able to send a few tradesmen from time to time for a course of work at their trade in Corps Workshops.

WHAT TRANSPORT SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR HANDLING ENGINEER STORES"AND WHO SHOULD CONTROL IT ?

4. Corps should deliver to Divisional Dumps in the Divisional Horse line Zone.

(V) SHOULD SAPPERS RECEIVE MORE PAY THAN AN INFANTRY MAN ?

1. Yes, a small increase, but to qualify for this he should either prove himself a skilled tradesman in some selected trade (a skilled French polisher or Printer is not much use to a Field Company as such), or else pass tests in Military Engineering work, Many good tradesmen who from indifference pass to other arms would be secured for for Engineers, it would be easier to inculcate that sense of individual responsibility which is so essential in the Sapper.

WOULD IT BE BENEFICIAL TO HAVE PROFICIENCY PAY FOR CERTAIN TRADESMEN TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO KEEPING THEIR TRADES ?

2. Proficiency pay for tradesmen? I do not see much advantage in this; other than as in 1 above.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER WOULD BE THE BEST ARRANGEMENT FOR COOKING FOR FIELD COMPANIES AND PIONEER BATTALIONS ?

3. Cooking arrangements, when on the march with Infantry

(V)

the sapper eats "bully" and drinks cold water, while the Infantryman regales himself on stew and tea. A Field Company certainly should have a cooker, but the section mess organisation should be retained, owing to the frequency with which sections are detailed for work. The cooker would normally serve for the ~~messing~~ messing of the horse lines personnel.

SHOULD COOKS RECEIVE EXTRA PAY ?

4. Yes, a small increase would certainly be most beneficial to the well being of the men. Cooks should be on establishment and more care devoted to their training.

SHOULD DRIVERS RECEIVE MORE PAY THAN SAPPERS, AS AT PRESENT ?

5. Drivers should not receive more pay than Sappers, their pay should be that of a Private and they should be interchangeable with the private in the Company. This would obviate a number of irritating anomalies.

(VI)

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER WOULD BE A SUITABLE PEACE ORGANISATION AFTER THE WAR, AND HOW WOULD YOU EXPAND IT FOR WAR ?

1. In my proposed 4 Company organisation, the privates and labourers could be omitted from the peace establishment and the sappers from the 8 platoons collected into four. The Company would consist then of Headquarters and one section of four platoons, sappers only. To expand to war establishment the sappers could be split into 8 platoons and diluted with unskilled privates.

ASSUMING THAT THE PROPOSED ORGANISATION DIFFERED FROM THE PRESENT, AND PIONEER BATTALIONS AND TUNNELLING COMPANIES CEASED TO EXIST AS SUCH, HOW WOULD ABSORB THEM SO AS TO PRESERVE THEIR ESPRIT DE CORPS AND WAR HONOURS DURING PEACE. ?

2. In the suggested 4 Company scheme, the H.Q. Coy. might perhaps inherit the tradition of the Pioneer Battalion.

(VI1)

ANY POINTS THAT OFFICERS REQUIRE TO RAISE NOT DEALT WITH IN ANY ONE OF THE ABOVE.

I would suggest that a further opportunity be afforded for discussing these questions when Civil Training Circulars, Memos and Budgets, and Repatriation forms etc. are not making such demands on an O.C.'s time. Perhaps a summary of the results of this discussion might be circulated later.

I would suggest that the question be submitted to Infantry Brigadiers for their general opinions.

R. J. Donaldson

Major

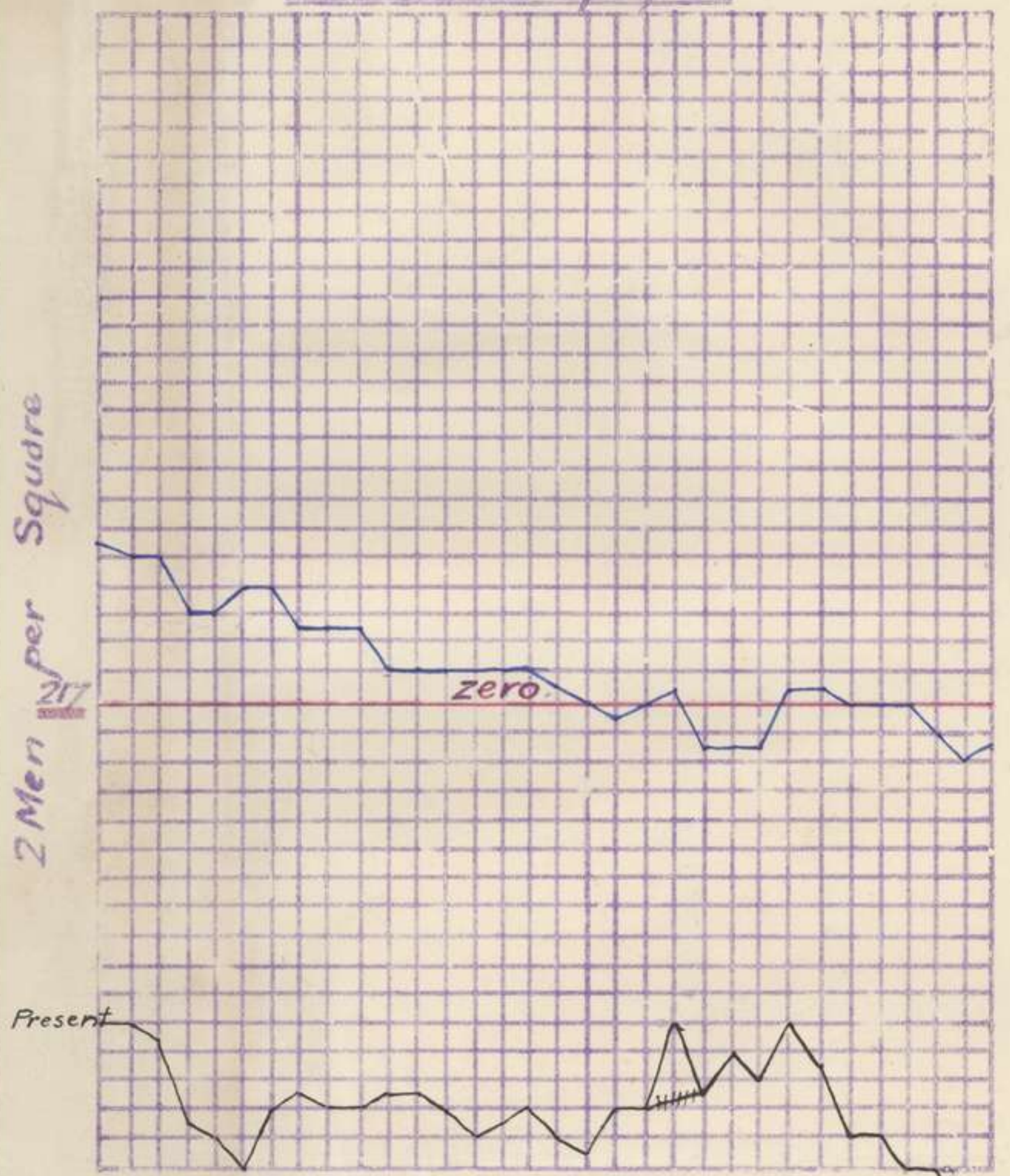
O.C. 11th Field Company, Engineers.

142

11th FIELD COMPANY
ENGINEERS,
5th AUSTRALIAN DIV.

No. A-1

DAILY PARADE STATE FOR MONTH
ENDING 31 / 12 / 18.



Legend Days of Month
Establishment - RED - Actuals - BLUE -

11th FIELD COY. A.E

THIRD AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.
11th Field Company, Engineers.

142

SYLLABUS OF MILITARY TRAINING FOR WEEK ENDING 4th JANUARY 1919.

Date.	09.30 to 10.30	10.30 to 12.30.
Monday, Dec. 30th.	Parade and Inspection. Physical Training Drill.	Electrical Demolition.
Tuesday Dec. 31st.	-do-	Knots and Lashings. Blocks and Tackle.
Wednesday Jan. 1st.	NEW YEARS DAY.	
Thursday Jan. 2nd.	Parade and Inspection. Physical Training Drill.	Military Bridges (Light)
Friday Jan 3rd.	-do-	Map Reading and Reconnaissance.
Saturday Jan 4th.	Parade and Inspection - Route March - Bernapre-Rederie-Senarpont-Inval-Andainville-Mesnil-Eudin.	

Major.

O.C. 11th Field Company, Engineers.

THIRD AUSTRALIAN DIVISION
11th Field Company, Engineers

142

EDUCATIONAL SYLLABUS FOR WEEK ENDING, 4th JANUARY 1919.
Place.

	Schoolroom	Cafe	Canteen Room 1.	Canteen Room 2.
Mon- day. 30th. Dec.	Mathematics. 1400 to 1600.	French. 1430 to 1230.	Building Building Construction 1400 to 1600.	Drawing. 1030 to 1230.
Tues- day. Dec. 31.	Surveying 1030 to 1130. 1400 to 1600.		Mechanical Drawing, 1030 to 1230.	
Wednes- day.	NEW YEARS DAY.			
Thur- day. Jan. 2nd.	Surveying, 1030 to 1130.	French 1130 to 1230.	Drawing, 1030 to 1230.	
Fri- day Jan. 3rd.	Mathematics 1030 to 1130. Surveying 1400 to 1600.			Building Construction, 1030 to 1230.

Major.

O.C. 11th Field Company, Engineers.