

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

Formation Headquarters

Item number: 1/50/31 Part 1

Title: General Staff, Headquarters 5th
Australian Division

September 1918



AWM4-1/50/31PART1

1 233

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ORIGINAL.
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Australian Imperial Force.

WAR DIARY

General ^{OF} Staff

5th Australian Division

FOR

September 1918

Signature of Officer compiling

W. M. Jones
Major

Signature of Officer Commanding

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WAR DIARY

General Staff,
5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

Army Form G. 2118.

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence
Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II,
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will be prepared in manuscript.

~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<u>SEPTEMBER 1918.</u>				
Divisional Headquarters, FONTAINE-les-CAPPY.	1st.		<p>At 6 a.m. the 14th Australian Infantry Brigade attacked in conjunction with the 2nd Australian Division, and captured ANVIL WOOD, St. RADEGONDE Village and Wood, and PERONNE. Detailed report on these operations is attached.</p> <p>33 officers and 302 other ranks were taken prisoner, also 1 field gun and numerous machine guns. The Divisional Commander was engaged during the day in conducting the operations in progress, and in planning attack for the following day. At 8 p.m. he went to a conference of Brigade Commanders at 8th Infantry Brigade Headquarters, to discuss the situation and give instructions for the continuance of the attack at dawn on the following day.</p> <p>He returned to Divisional Headquarters ^{at 3.30 a.m.} after a very hard, difficult, and trying day. The arrangements decided on at the conference are given in the attached. Summaries of Intelligence for September are attached. Disposition Lists for September are attached.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1a 2 3.</p>
	2nd		<p>At 6 a.m. the 14th and 15th Australian Infantry Brigades attacked according to plan. St. DENIS was captured and the PERONNE Ramparts were mopped up. For report, see Appendix 1. The Divisional Commander was engaged in conducting the operations in progress. Attended a conference at 15th Infantry Brigade Headquarters at 6 p.m. and gave instructions for the continuance of the operations, and for reliefs and moves of the troops concerned. Major J.T. McCOLL M.C. (G.S.O. II (Operations) Australian Corps) reported for duty vice Lieut-Colonel J.H. PECK C.M.G. D.S.O. G.S.O.I, invalided. Battle Instructions Series "C" No. 17 were issued.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>4</p>

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<p>FONTAINE-les-CAPPY. M.9.d.7.1 (62 C)</p>	3rd		<p><u>SEPTEMBER 1918.</u></p> <p>No operations were undertaken. During the night 2nd/3rd, the 15th A.I. Brigade relieved the 14th A.I. Brigade (see B.I. Series "C" No. 17). Battle Instructions Series "C" No. 18 were issued. Diagrammatic Order of Battle is attached.</p>	<p>4 4 5</p>
	4th		<p>During the night 4th/5th, this Division takes over part of the 2nd Australian Division front (see B.I. Series "C" No. 18). Everything points to the enemy retiring; all villages for several miles east of the Divisional front are on fire. FLAMICOURT village and DARMSTADT Trench were occupied by us. In the morning, the Divisional Commander went to the 14th Brigade Headquarters near HALLE, and with the Brigade Commander visited and addressed the 4th battalions of the brigade, thanking them for their gallantry and devotion to duty in the recent operations which have led to the capture of PERONNE. In the afternoon, a party of representative Australian press-men called. Battle Instructions Series "C" No. 19 were issued.</p>	<p>4</p>
	5th		<p>During the morning the enemy commenced to retire, and was pursued by our troops, who in order to facilitate reliefs (see Battle Instructions Series "D" No. 1), took up a line approximately as follows BUSSU - DOINGT - MESNIL. Moves and reliefs were carried out during night 5th/6th in accordance with B.I. Series "D" No.1. The Divisional Commander went to the 15th Infantry Brigade Headquarters, and gave the G.O.C. instructions with regard to reliefs and further advance of the Brigade. He saw the advance of our troops under artillery fire and supported by our own artillery, advancing up the high ground to the capture of DOINGT. Late in the afternoon the Corps Commander called, and gave particulars of the general situation, and gave instructions in connection with the part this Division would take in the further advance eastwards. Disposition Map is attached.</p>	<p>4 6</p>

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FONTAINE -les-CAPPY.			<p style="text-align: center;"><u>SEPTEMBER 1918.</u></p> <p>In the morning, the Divisional Commander visited the three Infantry Brigadiers, explained the general situation, and gave instructions for the continuance of the advance. He visited PERONNE, St DENIS, Railway Station at FLAMICOURT - in fact the whole battle ground over which our troops have been fighting during the last few days. Had an interview with General ELLIOTT and Lieut-Colonel SCANLAN in connection with some trouble in the 59th Battalion, which was satisfactorily dealt with and settled. Battle Instructions Series "D" Nos. 2 and 3 were issued. The Division advanced, the GREEN line (see Instructions No.2) being occupied by 11 a.m. Troops not actually required for fighting duties were rested during the remainder of the day.</p>	4
	7th		<p>During the night 6th/7th. infantry brigade groups were disposed in accordance with Battle Instructions Series "D" No. 3. Moves took place (see Instructions No.3) as amended by wire G461. Instructions No.4 issued. Weather has remained fine throughout the operations. The Army Commander called, and the part this Division had taken in the recent operations was explained to him by the Divisional Commander, who spoke of the gallantry of the troops and their extraordinary success under conditions of the very greatest difficulty and danger. The Army Commander expressed his deep appreciation of the work done by the Division and its Commander. In the afternoon the G.O.C. went to the 8th Infantry Brigade Headquarters near St.CREN. Later he met all Brigadiers near Le MESNIL. Gave instructions to G.O.C. 8th Infantry Brigade in connection with the advance to the outpost line, and to all brigadiers in connection with the forthcoming relief. He saw the six platoons of the 59th battalion and addressed them on the recent trouble they had given.</p>	4

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FONTAINE-les-CAPPY.	8th			Disposition Map is attached. The Divisional commander visited the Corps Commander in the afternoon. On his return to D.H.Q. he had an interview with G.O.C. 4th Aust Div in connection with the relief.	7
	9th			The Divisional Commander went on leave to the U.K. In his absence, the Division is being commander by Brigadier General E. TIVEY C.B. D.S.O. V.D. (G.O.C. 8th Infantry Brigade). Battle Instructions No. 6 were issued and reliefs took place in accordance with these instructions. Report on operations from 3rd September to date is attached.	4 7a
	10			Relief of the Division (less artillery) was completed during the night, command of the sector passing to G.O.C. 4th Australian Division at 10 a.m. today. A wet day and very windy. Battle Instructions Series "E" No. 7 issued.	4
	11th			The squadron of Light Horse (No. 2) 13th A.L.H. Regiment and cyclist platoon attached to the Division passed to the command of G.O.C. 4th Australian Division. During the night 11th/12th the 5th Australian Division was relieved and moved back to reserve positions near BARLEUX. General Staff Memorandum No. 241 - Training - was issued.	8
	12th			Disposition Map (original only) is attached. All units of the Division are resting, reorganising and refitting. It is intended that units should have until the 15th instant available for this.	9
	13			Divisional units resting.	

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Place	Date	Hour	SEPTEMBER 1918.	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
FONTAINE-les-CAPPY.	14th			<p>A party consisting of the following visited Divisional Headquarters and units of the Division commencing about noon:</p> <p>The Right Hon: W.M.Hughes, Prime Minister of Australia, Colonel Lord BURNHAM Sir Edward Nichol Thomas Marlow (Editor "Daily Mail") Edward Price Bell (Rep. U.S. Press) Lieut. Burchell M.P. Mr. Dean (Secretary to Mr. Hughes)</p> <p>Battle Instructions Series "D" No. 8 issued.</p>	4
	15th			<p>5th Machine Gun Battalion was placed at the disposal of the 4th Australian Division for operations. G.S.O. I went on 6 days leave in France.</p>	
	16th			<p>(less Div. Art. H.Q.) Vigorous training commenced. 5th Australian Divisional Artillery moved forward and came under the orders of C.R.A. 4th Australian Division, for projected operation (see Instructions No.s. 8 and 9).</p>	4
	17th			<p>Battle Instructions Nos. 9 and 10 issued. Lieut-Colonel T.R.Marsden D.S.O. C.O. 5th Australian Machine Gun Battalion, was captured by the enemy while making a front line reconnaissance. General Staff Memorandum No. 242, with reference to signals to contact aeroplanes, was issued.</p>	4 8
	18th			<p>A showery day. 4th and 1st Australian Divisions attacked and advanced to the HINDENBURG Advanced Line inclusive capturing more than 40 guns and 4,000 prisoners. This action was supported by 5th Aust. Div. Art. and 5th Machine Gun Battalion.</p>	

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	<u>September 1918.</u>			
FONTAINE-les-CAPPY.	19th		G.O.C. and G.S.O. II attended a conference at Corps Headquarters, at which the Corps Commander outlined the forthcoming operations and gave instructions as to certain organization and training required in connection with it. Report from Divisional Signal Co. upon the length of communications between Division and Brigades during the recent operations, is attached. (original only)	10
	20th		Letter G1/3988 was issued, based on the instructions received at the Corps Conference yesterday. Order of battle is attached.	10a. 11
	21st		G.S.O.I returned from leave. A party of Press representatives visited Divisional Headquarters and certain Divisional units.	
	22nd) 23rd) 24th)		Nothing to report.	
	25th		A party of Press Representatives visited the Division and PERONNE during the afternoon.	
	26		The demonstration Tank Company rejoined their units today. A conference was held at 14th Infantry Brigade H.Q. to discuss forthcoming operations. Battle Instructions Series "E" Nos. 1 to 7 were issued.	4
HERVILLY	27		Battle Instructions Series "E" Nos. 8 and 9 issued. Divisional Headquarters moved from FONTAINE LES CAPPY to HERVILLY. Battle Instructions No. 9 issued.	4

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
	SEPTEMBER 1918.			
HERVILLY	28		Major General Sir J. TALBOT HOBBS K.C.B. V.D. returned from leave in accordance with a warning received from Australian Corps, and took over command of the Division from Brigadier General TIVEY at 11 p.m.	
	28		The Divisional Commander had an interview with General TIVEY and Staff in connection with various matters which had occurred during his absence. Saw General LEWIS G.O.C. 30th American Division. Engaged in connection with the forthcoming operations for the attack on the HINDENBURG line. In the afternoon he visited the 8th Brigade H.Q. with G.S.O. I to attend conference of Brigadiers in connection with tomorrow's operations. Also discussed recent trouble which occurred with the 54th Battalion in connection with the reorganization of brigades. Battle Instructions No.s 10, 11, 12, 13 were issued.	4
	29		Zero hour for the attack this morning was 5.50 a.m., the 27th American Division attacking on the left, and the 30th American Division on the right, the 3rd and 5th Australian Divisions respectively leap-frogging through them. Full report on the operations is attached to War Diary, General Staff, 5th Australian Division, for month of October 1918. Very serious complications and difficulties were experienced through the failure of the Americans to accomplish the task allotted to them. In the evening a conference was held at 8th Brigade H.Q. to make arrangements for clearing up the situation on our left by a new attack in conjunction with the 3rd Australian Division at dawn tomorrow. B.I. Series "E" No. 14 issued.	4

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Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
HERVILLY	30		<p><u>SEPTEMBER 1918.</u></p> <p>Full report on operations is attached to Diary for October 1918. A conference was held at 8.30 p.m. with reference to the attack on the 1st October. The following were present: Infantry Brigadiers and Brigade Majors C.R.A. and Brigade Major O.C. 16th Battalion Tanks.</p> <p>Battle Instructions Series "E" 15 issued.</p> <p>The following are attached as appendices: Intelligence Summaries for month of September Location Lists for September. Summaries of Important Correspondence. Telegrams for September. Files of orders and Instructions issued by neighbouring units and subordinate commanders approx. 1 to 17th Sept. 3rd Oct. 1918</p>	<p>4.</p> <p>2 3 12 13 14</p>

Alice M. Forbes
MAJOR, General Staff,
5th Australian Division.

WAR DIARY

APPENDIX

OF

General Staff, 5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION

FOR

SEPTEMBER 1918

LIST OF APPENDICES.

No.	Subject.
1	Detailed report on PERONNE Operations, 31st August to 2nd September 1918.
1a	Notes of the conference held 1st September.
2	Intelligence Summaries for September.
3	Disposition Lists for September.
4	All Battle Instructions issued during September.
5	Diagrammatic Order of Battle, 3rd September.
6	Disposition Map, 5th September.
7	Disposition Map, 8th September.
7a	Report on operations - 3rd September to 27th September.
8	General Staff Memoranda Nos. 241 and 242.
9	Disposition Map (original only), 12th September.
10	Report by Div. Sig. Co. on communications during recent operations.
10a	Letter G1/3988, giving training policy.
11	Order of Battle - 5th Australian Division.
12	Daily summaries of important correspondence.
13	Telegrams for September.
14	Files of orders and instructions issued by Corps, neighbouring units, and subordinate commanders, from 1st September.
	Mosaic of the whole Divisional front (BELLICOURT) taken prior to operations on 29th September.

Appendix 1

S E C R E T

5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

Headquarters
19th September 1918.

REPORT ON OPERATIONS 31/8/18 to 2/9/18.

Ref. Maps: 62C, 1/40,000
 62C N.W.)
 N.E.) 1/20,000
 S.W.)
 S.E.)
 "A", "B" "C" "D" attached.

1. GENERAL.

The 5th Australian Division had reached the line of the SOMME on the 29/8/18 and from that date to the 31/8/18 endeavours had been made to cross the SOMME marshes and obtain possession of the high ground in O.5., O.11., I.35., and thus form a bridgehead on the Eastern bank. This ground, also PERONNE and the village of FLAMICOURT, was held in force by the enemy. The SOMME was an impassable obstacle except where a footbridge was built across the marshes in O.3.d. but this was covered by enemy machine guns at close range; it was consequently impossible to attack across the SOMME South of PERONNE. To form a bridgehead in O.5., O.11., and I.35., it was therefore necessary, unless the enemy should voluntarily yield this ground, to attack it either

(a) through PERONNE, or

(b) in a Southerly direction East of PERONNE.

It was with this end in view that the operations described herein were carried out.

This report deals with the operations of the 1st and 2nd September only, and, although by the latter date, the high ground in O.5., O.11., and I.35., had not been captured by us, the enemy retirement was precipitated by these operations and this objective fell into our hands on the morning of 5th September.

2. ORDER OF BATTLE.5th Australian Division

Major-General Sir. J. J. TALBOT HOBS K.C.B., V.D.

14th Australian Infantry Brigade Group.

Brigadier-General J. C. STEWART D.S.O.

53rd Battalion
 54th Battalion
 55th Battalion
 56th Battalion
 14th A.L.T.M. Battery
 14th Machine Gun Company
 14th Field Co. Engineers (less 1 section)
 Bearer Sub-Division 14th Field Ambulance.

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15th Australian Infantry Brigade Group

Brigadier-General H. E. ELLIOTT CB., CMG., DSO., DCM.

57th Battalion
 58th Battalion
 59th Battalion
 60th Battalion
 15th A.L.T.M. Battery
 15th Machine Gun Company
 15th Field Company Engineers.
 Bearer Sub-Division 15th Field Ambulance

Divisional Artillery

Brigadier-General A. J. BEESLEY-BROWNE CB., CMG., DSO

13th Brigade A.F.A.
 14th Brigade A.F.A.
 12th Army Brigade A.F.A.
 23rd Army Brigade R.F.A.

8th Australian Infantry Brigade Group was in Divisional Reserve.

3. DISPOSITION
OF UNITS
PRIOR TO
OPERATION

On the morning of 31/8/18, Brigade Groups were disposed as follows:-

14th A.I. Brigade Group in support Area N.11. and N.17.
15th A.I. Brigade Group in line holding the whole Divisional front which extended from O.15.a.7.7 to I.32.b.0.8.
 Two Battalions were in line.
 Two Battalions were in support.

4. PRELIMINARY
MOVES AND
ARRANGEMENTS

31/8/18

Divisional Headquarters moved from Q.30.c. to M.9.d.7.1.
 Divisional Forward Report Centre was established at H.32.c.6.8.

At 9 a.m. information was received that 2nd Australian Division on the left had captured MONT St. QUENTIN in I.15.b. In order that the projected advance of the 2nd Australian Division to the HAUT-ALLAINES - BUSCU Road might be exploited the 14th A.I. Brigade was ordered at 9.30 a.m. to move by the OMMIECOURT Bridge to E. bank of the SOMME into the 2nd Australian Divisional Area and to attack S.E. to capture the high ground in O.11., O.5, and I.35. This was done in conjunction with the 2nd Australian Division attack.

The OMMIECOURT Bridge was found to be impassable and the Brigade moved via the BUSCOURT Bridge. The assembly of the Brigade in squares I.1 and I.7.a. was completed about 8 p.m.

The Plan of Attack had been communicated to Unit Commanders, but owing to a change in the situation on the 2nd Australian Division front, it became necessary to alter the Plan of Attack. Attack Instructions already issued were, therefore, held in abeyance, pending the results of a conference held at 6th Australian Infantry Brigade Headquarters (H.32.c.6.8) at 9 p.m. 31/8/18.

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This conference was attended by the G.O.C. 14th A.I. Brigade, Brigade Major 14th A.I. Brigade, and G.S.O.II 5th Australian Division, Brigadiers concerned and Divisional representative of 2nd Australian Division, C.R.A. 2nd Australian Division and G.S.O.II (Operations) Australian Corps.

The 2nd Australian Division reported that they were holding a line as follows:-

FLORINA TRENCH on the right, GOTT MIT UNS and EISA TRENCH in the centre (i.e. 500 yards in advance of FLORINA TRENCH).

The enemy were reported as being established on the ALBERT and HAM railway and on the AVIATION GROUND in I.21.a.5.8. All ground East and South East of the above trenches was held by the enemy.

The 2nd Australian Division were not sufficiently strong to attack again on the whole of their original frontage and it was decided that the 5th Australian Division should take over that part of the attack area lying South of the E. and W. Grid line between squares I.15. and I.21.

The 2nd Australian Division intended to advance to the general line of DARNICADT TRENCH.

The 5th Australian Division Plan of Attack was as follows:-

5. (i) GENERAL PLAN OF ATTACK.
- (a) The 5th Australian Division attack was to be carried out by the 14th A.I. Brigade Group supported by Divisional and Heavy Artillery.
- (b) The boundary between the 14th A.I. Brigade and the 2nd Australian Division was to be the E. and W. grid line between squares I.15. and I.21.
- (c) The objective for the 14th A.I. Brigade was:-
Phase I. I.18 c.o.o. to I.30.c.o.o.
Phase II. After the capture of the 1st objective support Battalions were to attack southwards, East of PERONNE, to capture the ridge in O.5. and I.35.
 The 14th A.I. Brigade attack area included the following tactical features:-
 ST. RADESCONDE
 ST. RADESCONDE WOOD
 APVIL WOOD
 ST. DENIS
 PERONNE
- (d) The attack was to be supported by artillery shoots on selected areas according to a time table as required by the G.O.C. 14th A.I. Brigade.
 Artillery programme is shown on attached map "A". (This method of artillery support was adopted as there was insufficient time to work out a creeping barrage and make all necessary arrangements).
- (e) Zero hour for both 2nd and 5th Australian Divisions was 6 a.m.
- (f) 14th A.I. Brigade was to "jump off" from FLORINA TRENCH.
 6th A.I. Brigade (2nd Australian Division) was to "jump off" from SAVE TRENCH.

APPENDIX

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(ii) DETAILED PLAN OF ATTACK OF 14th A.I. BRIGADE. (a) Boundaries. Brigade
Northern. E. and W. line between I.15. and I.21.
Southern. River SOMME
Inter-Battalion

From junction of road with FLORINA TRENCH at I.20.a.2.2 to point where COLOGNE river cuts final objective (I.36.a.0.6).

(b) Objectives Phase I. Left Line Bn. (53rd Bn)
 N and S line between I.23. and I.24. from northern Bde boundary to COLOGNE river.
Right Line Bn. (54th Bn)
PERONNE (inclusive)
Phase II. (56th Battalion) from COLOGNE river - high ground I.35. and O.5. right flank refused to SOMME.

(c) Order of BATTLE. The attack was thus to be made on a two battalion frontage, 54th Battalion on right - 53rd Battalion on left, the former attacking S.E. through St. RADECONDE WOOD and village and through PERONNE, the latter Battalion attacking East through ANVIL WOOD and St. DENIS WOOD and Village.
 56th Battalion was to follow 53rd Battalion and then carry out Phase II.
 55th Battalion was to follow and establish itself as a support to 56th Battalion.

(a) Allotment of Mech-ine guns, L.T.M.'s, Engineer and Fld Ambulance Personnel Machine Guns, L.T.M.'s etc. were distributed among Battalions under Brigade arrangements as follows:-
53rd and 54th Battalions each
 One Section, 14th M.G. Coy.
 One Section, 14th L.T.M. Bty.
 One Section, 14th Field Co. A.E.
 Detachment of Bearers, Bearer Sub-division, 14th Field Amb.

56th Battalion
 6 guns, 14th M.G. Coy.
 2 sub-sections, 14th L.T.M. Bty.
 1 section, 14th Field Co. A.E.
 Detachment of Bearers, Bearer Sub-division, 14th Field Amb.

55th Battalion
 2 guns, 14th M.G. Coy.
 1 sub-section, 14th L.T.M. Bty.
 Detachment of Bearers, Bearer Sub-division, 14th Field Amb.

6. ACCOUNT OF THE OPERATIONS.

See Maps "A" & "C" attached.

The conference at which the Plan of Action had been decided did not end until midnight so that in less than six hours it was necessary for the following to be done:-

(a) Infantry Brigadier to decide his detailed plan and communicate it to his Battalion Commanders.

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- (b) Battalion Commanders to make known the plan to their subordinates.
- (c) Company Officers to explain the attack to their N.C.O's and men.
- (d) For the troops to be moved from their support position to the "jump off" position, an average distance of two thousand five hundred yards. There were no taped tracks and the night was exceedingly dark.
- (e) Artillery action to be passed down to batteries. Telephone communication forward of 14th A.I. Brigade Headquarters did not exist but Battalion Commanders had been instructed to be at Headquarters, 14th A.I. Brigade at 11.30 p.m. so that a minimum of delay should occur.

The artillery programme of the 2nd Australian Division commenced at 5.30 a.m. i.e. half an hour before Zero, with the result that the enemy counter battery and barrage opened at about 5.45 a.m. and was particularly heavy in the vicinity of CLERY and the adjoining roads and canal. This caused the latter part of the approach march to be carried out under heavy shell fire.

(i) The assembly was commenced by the march from the areas in I.1. I.7.a and H.6. southwards to the PRAGUE TRENCH, about 150 yards north of the FLORINA TRENCH, which was the "jump off" line. Here it was found by patrols that, on the left of the 53rd Battalion area, the "jump off" line was in enemy hands, and a violent hand to hand and grenade fight ensued, through thick belts of wire in good condition and against stubborn resistance, before "C" Company 53rd Battalion, could get into position. The 23rd Battalion on the left had a similar experience, with the result that the left of our attack was 25 minutes late in the assembly. Practically no prisoners were taken at this period owing to the violence of the fighting. The assembly of the remainder of the 53rd Battalion was uninterrupted, and they were in position at Zero (6 a.m.). The 54th Battalion (line right) reached the assembly position to time without encountering the enemy, but having sustained casualties from shell fire. The support and reserve Battalions also assembled to time.

(ii) The attack commenced at Zero and, with the exception of the left company 53rd Battalion, who were already involved, moved forward punctually to time, coming immediately under heavy M.G. fire from direction of Mt. St. QUENTIN and the Copse at I.20.b.6.5. Several strong continuous belts of wire had also been negotiated but, in spite of heavy casualties, the attack pushed on. By 6.45 a.m. the right Battalion had reached the causeway which the enemy blew up as they escaped across the town. The 53rd Battalion, with elements of the 54th and 56th Battalions, who were caught and became involved with the attacking unit during the early and unexpected fighting) were clearing the WOOD in I.21.c. suffering considerably from the enfilade fire from the North East.

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By 7.15 a.m. the two right companies of the 53rd Battalion (which had already amalgamated into one on account of Officer casualties) had reached the eastern outskirts of the Cemetery in I.21.d. The left companies were suffering more severely but despite their severe losses they pushed on, and by 7.30 a.m. had linked up with the right companies on the line of the Cemetery.

Advance beyond this line was impossible owing to the converging fire from the Eastern ramparts of PERONNE, from St.DENIS and from St.QUENTIN. The artillery programme was, by this time, almost an hour in advance of the progress by the infantry, and the enemy were not controlled at all by our artillery fire.

The 23rd Battalion on the left of the 53rd Battalion had been unable to advance, leaving our left flank in the air, so it was decided by the C.O. 53rd Battalion to hold the line reached (I.21.b.3.8 - I.21.b.2.2 - thence along eastern edge of Cemetery to I.21.d.5.7, thence to I.21.d.4.4. where touch was gained with the 54th Battalion) and to use the company allotted him from the 55th Battalion to protect his northern flank. Up to this time the 54th Battalion had been unable to cross into PERONNE and were being held up by M.G. fire from the house tops.

One company of the 55th Battalion was already involved with the 53rd Battalion, and the 56th Battalion, who had been following immediately in rear of the 54th Battalion, had had a considerable amount of fighting in the mopping up of the WOOD in I.21.c. and now had one company in a very exposed position in advance of the 53rd Battalion line in I.22.c. and suffering heavy casualties. This company found itself in advance of the units on both flanks who were held up and eventually withdrew and connected up with the 54th Battalion on the right and the 53rd Battalion on the left. Meanwhile the remainder of the 56th Battalion found that the line had come to a standstill and so took up a defensive position in I.21.c. behind the right flank of the 53rd Battalion, and the remainder of the 55th Battalion acted similarly in I.20.b. making a defensive flank to the north if it should be required.

By 8.40 a.m. the 54th Battalion had succeeded in reaching the centre of PERONNE and was mopping up. They found that the swamps to the south of the town were impassable and proceeded with the mopping up, establishing touch with the 59th Battalion on their right by 8.45 a.m.

At 9.35 a.m. the line ran, from north to south, as previously shown for 53rd Battalion, included the whole of PERONNE West of a N and S line through I.28.a.2.0. along the waterways on the southern edge of PERONNE to junction with the 15th Brigade on the Causeway in I.33.b.

The remainder of PERONNE, i.e. the isolated north-eastern section, was still in enemy hands and offering considerable resistance.

At 10.50 a.m. it was believed that the line had been advanced to the vicinity of the Factory in I.16.c. and it was reported by the 6th A.I. Brigade that ^{at} St.QUENTIN had fallen and that their right was in touch with the 53rd Battalion in I.16.c.

Instructions were issued at 11.45 a.m. for the 56th Battalion to push south-east and connect up with the 54th Battalion who were in PERONNE in advance of our line to the north,

/and for

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and for the 53rd Battalion to push on from the line held towards the final objective. This was attempted at about 1 p.m. but the northern ramparts of the town and the heights of St.QUENTIN were still in enemy hands and the advance was held up by M.G. fire.

At 1.30 p.m. the 6th A.I. Brigade again attempted to gain the crest of St.QUENTIN after 30 minutes hurricane bombardment. This attack was successful and considerably relieved the pressure on our left flank.

By 3 p.m. the 56th Battalion had succeeded in pushing one company into PERONNE and had established connection between the 53rd Battalion and 54th Battalion.

At 5 p.m. the 53rd Battalion again attempted to advance and succeeded in establishing a line approximately from I.22.a.8.9 to I.22.a.6.4.

The advance, however, suffered very severe casualties from the Ramparts on the N.E. outskirts of the town, in which portion the enemy were still holding out, and from St.DENIS. Elements of 53rd Battalion succeeded in establishing posts at St.DENIS about I.22 central, though enfiladed continuously by M.G. fire and suffered heavily from enemy artillery fire.

Touch had not yet been established with the attack of the 6th Brigade (as was thought from previous reports to be the case) but the 55th Battalion who were still forming a defensive flank to protect the left of the 53rd Battalion, ultimately gained touch by patrols in GOTT MIT UNS TRENCH and the flank was established facing N.E. and connecting the two attacks through I.21.a. and b.

At Brigade Headquarters the situation at this time was not clear, and continual reports were being received concerning enemy movement westward and concentrations in I.24. and that vicinity. At 6.30 p.m. the Brigade Commander, in conversation with the C.O.'s 53rd and 56th Battalions, gave verbal instructions for immediate report on the existing situation. This revealed the situation as previously given, with a definite line, (along the eastern outskirts of the Cemetery through I.21.d.7.5., I.28.a.2.6 and along the southern edge of the town) with both northern and southern flanks in touch with flanking units, and a few isolated posts in I.22.a. which were cut off from assistance and suffering heavily from converging fire. The enemy was still holding out in the N.E. Ramparts and his positions in St.DENIS WOOD were intact and doing considerable damage.

While these enemy positions were intact it was impossible to advance, and it was known that portions of our attack had reached St.DENIS and that the 54th Battalion was still fighting in the streets of PERONNE, with the result that at that time it was impossible to ask for further artillery preparation and bombardment of the enemy points of resistance mentioned.

The Brigade Commander issued orders at 8.15 p.m. to the effect that the line as given above should be established and the elements in advance of that line should be withdrawn to enable further artillery preparations to be carried out.

The line was being held by the 53rd Battalion on the left, with the 55th Battalion forming a defensive flank to their left rear, the 56th Battalion in the centre, connecting the 53rd Battalion from the Cemetery to the 54th Battalion in PERONNE and the 54th Battalion on the right holding the line of the waterways on the southern outskirts of PERONNE and connecting with the 15th A.I. Brigade on the causeway in I.33.b.

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The 58th and 59th Battalions were reported to be both on the East side of the River in that vicinity but their further advance was held up by M.G. fire from the direction of FLAMICOURT. At 8 p.m. it was decided owing to the crowded area in which they were to withdraw all but one company each of the 58th and 59th Battalions to the western bank of the river.

The two companies (one from each 58th and 59th Battalions) left on the eastern side of the river were to hold the posts at the road and railway bridges in I.33.d. and deny the crossings to the enemy.

It was obvious by nightfall that the cover occupied by the Machine Gun nests in the N.E. outskirts of PERONNE was proof against anything but a several hours heavy bombardment; it had been expected that the machine gun fire might be kept down by the bombardment and that the occupants could be dealt with as those had been who occupied the remainder of the town - by bayonet and bomb. Owing to the slow progress of the attack, due to the strenuous opposition, it was found that the artillery programme ran ahead of the attack and that even those nests silenced by our shells were able to come once again into action before our infantry approached.

The outstanding features of this operation were:-

- (a) The fighting preceding Zero to allow "C" Company, 53rd Battalion, to reach its assembly position;
- (b) The negotiation of several belts of wire by the whole attack under heavy converging machine gun fire.
- (c) The entry of the 54th Battalion into PERONNE in the face of heavy artillery fire and a sweeping machine gun barrage across two narrow footbridges, and
- (d) The employment of an enemy gun by three privates of the 53rd Battalion, who brought a 77m.m. into action under heavy direct artillery and machine gun fire and used it with considerable effect over open sights against the enemy on MONT St. QUENTIN.

7. OPERATIONS 2/9/18.

At 9.30 p.m. after consultation with the G.O.C. 2nd Australian Division and the Corps Commander re further proposed action, the Divisional Commander held a conference at Headquarters, 8th A.I. Brigade, at which the following were present:-

Brigadier Generals Commanding 8th A.I. Brigade
14th A.I. Brigade
15th A.I. Brigade
C.R.A.

The Divisional Commander explained the Plan of Operations for the attack to take place the following day (2/9/18). This involved action by both 14th Infantry Brigade and 15th Infantry Brigade, supported by artillery.

Owing to the bad state of the roads the car which was to have picked up G.O.C. 15th A.I. Brigade missed him and consequently he did not arrive at the conference until about 2.30 a.m. G.O.C. 14th A.I. Brigade had left the conference before this hour to take necessary action regarding his Brigade. Consequently although informed of the general plan for the 15th A.I. Brigade attack, he had not the opportunity of discussing the detailed plan with the G.O.C. 15th A.I. Brigade.

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The attack was to be made in conjunction with an attack by the 2nd Australian Division on the left, whose objective was to be KOROS ALLEY and RUPPRECHT TRENCH thus gaining possession of the high ground on our left flank.

- GENERAL (a) The 14th A.I. Brigade was to attack eastwards North of PERONNE - objective N and S grid line between squares I.23. and I.24. i.e. to gain a footing on the ridge west of HESSE TRENCH.
One Battalion was to carry on the mopping up of N.E. end of PERONNE.
- (b) The 15th A.I. Brigade was to be distributed as follows:-
2 Battalions to follow the 56th and two companies 55th Battalions, then to move south through I.29. and attack ridge in I.35. and O.5.
1 Battalion to move through PERONNE and mop up Ramparts N.E. of PERONNE (assisting 54th Battalion).
One Battalion to hold the Divisional front on the west bank of the SOMME and, if possible, to gain a footing on the eastern bank.
- (c) The infantry attacks were to be carried out under support of shoots on selected areas by the Arty.

INFANTRY
ACTION.

14th A.I. Brigade.

- (a) Jumping Off Line - N and S Line 150 yards east of N and S grid line between squares I.21.a and b.
- (b) (i) The attack was to be made by the 56th Battalion supported by two companies 55th Battalion, - all on a one company front - i.e. 6 companies in depth.
(ii) 54th Battalion was to mop up N.E. end of PERONNE.
- (c) Northern Boundary of Attack. - E and W grid line between I.16. I.22.
- (d) Objective. N and S grid line between I.23 and I.24.
- (e) The frontage of attack was about 600 yards, opening out in I.23. to 1000 yards.
- (f) On reaching I.23. the companies of 55th Battalion were to face south and protect flank, and if possible, advance southwards into I.29. and link up with 15th Infantry Brigade in I.35.

15th A.I. Brigade.

- (g) One Battalion (58th) was to move into PERONNE and at Zero plus 30 to attack RAMPARTS in I.22.c. and to mop up area in I.22.c. and I.28.a. and b. assisting 54th Battalion. The attack was to be made from West to East as artillery bombardment lifted.
- (h) Two Battalions (59th and 60th) were to follow 56th Battalion and two companies 55th Battalion in attack North of PERONNE.
These Battalions were to attack the ridge in I.35. and O.5. moving south through I.29.
- (i) One Battalion (57th) was to hold the line on the west bank of the SOMME in O.3 and O.9. defensively, and if opportunity offered, to cross the footbridge through the swamp at O.2.c.8.1. to the eastern side.

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ARTILLERY The action of artillery was to consist of bombardments of selected areas in accordance with a time table specified by Brigadiers concerned. These areas and time of shoots are shown on Map "B".

ZERO HOUR ZERO hour was to be 6 a.m. The time thus available to Brigadiers between receiving their instructions and the actual move of troops in accordance with the instructions was extremely short.

8. ACCOUNT OF THE OPERATION. 14th A.I. Brigade.

See Maps "B" and "D" attached.

2/9/19.

The attack, as planned, necessitated the withdrawal of the 56th Battalion (14th A.I. Brigade) from the line to the assembly position by ZERO (6 a.m.) and its place to be taken by the 54th Battalion. The relief was completed by 5.15 a.m. and the 56th Battalion was then moving into the position of assembly. At 5.30 a.m. the bombardment on the 7th Brigade front and the "Heavy" bombardment on the N.E. Ramparts of PERONNE opened. Our artillery fire was replied to by an enemy barrage even more intense than that experienced during the morning of the 1st September, and falling across the assembly positions of the 56th Battalion. This caused considerable confusion, and prevented, to a great extent, the transmission of information to junior leaders and men of the operation in hand. Before reaching the start line, the 56th Battalion had suffered heavily. All officers of three companies were casualties and the commands taken over and organised by the senior N.C.O. present. The two companies of the 55th Battalion who were to follow the attack, also suffered from the enemy counter barrage prior to Zero, but not so heavily as to affect their organisation. At Zero the attack commenced and was met immediately by a hurricane M.G. fire from the Ramparts (which did not seem to be affected by our bombardment, which was still continuing upon it) from St.DENIS and from the WINDMILL in I.17.c. This converging fire inflicted considerable casualties on the 56th Battalion, one company only being able to push forward and that by the splendid courage, leadership, and example of the N.C.O. in command, Sgt. O'CONNOR. This company reached a point 300 yards in advance of the start line and there dug in, 35 strong. The two companies of the 55th Battalion, who were nominally to follow in rear, on seeing the situation and observing that the 56th Battalion had been unable to gain ground as a whole, worked forward on the left and succeeded in penetrating as far as the embankment running south from the BRICKWORKS in I.22.a.6.9. These two companies established along this bank at 6.45 a.m. two platoons endeavoured to cross the embankment and work round the eastern flank of the Ramparts. This, however, was impossible, owing to the M.G. fire, and the attempt had to be abandoned. At 7.45 a.m. one company 55th Battalion succeeded in gaining a footing in the BRICKWORKS and by vigorous action forced the enemy to withdraw from St.DENIS, and established a line across the St.DENIS - Mt.St.QUENTIN Road just east of the BRICKWORKS.

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Meanwhile Sgt. O'CONNOR had succeeded in dribbling men forward on his flanks, and by 9.30 a.m. had established touch with the 55th Battalion on his left at about I.22.a.6.2. Coincident with these events the 56th Battalion had established touch with the 59th Battalion (who were distributed along the line) on their right and who, in turn, had connected with the 54th Battalion south of the Cemetery. At 10 a.m. the approximate line held on the left sector was as follows:-

I.16.c.6.2 - the BRICKWORKS (inclusive) - I.22.a.6.2 - thence to the Ramparts about I.22.c.2.6.

The N.E. Ramparts of PERONNE had now been cleared of the enemy by the 54th Battalion, assisted by portion of the 58th Battalion, and a post established at I.22.d.3.3 and three companies of 58th Battalion were moving through PERONNE to establish a line on the light railway to the east of the town. The securing of the right flank of the 55th Battalion by its junction with the 56th Battalion enabled them to attempt to advance their line to include St.DENIS which was undertaken at once. It was found on crossing the St.DENIS - AZIEGOURT Road that the enemy was holding a strong outpost line in the western outskirts of St.DENIS WOOD, and in the hollow immediately to the north. In the initial the 55th Battalion were successful in capturing a nest of two machine guns with one officer and 10 other ranks, but the casualties suffered in the position gained were so severe that it was decided to withdraw the line near the BRICKWORKS. This was done about 2 p.m. the company being then only 2 officers 25 others in strength. Before 11 a.m. the 54th Battalion post at I.22.d.3.3 had been extended to the N and S by the 58th Battalion who were reported (about 3 p.m.) to extend from about I.22.b.2.0. to I.22.d.4.5 where they joined with one company 54th Battalion and extended their flank to the south from I.22.d.3.3 to the south-east corner of the RAMPARTS from which the line was continued along the southern outskirts of the town to the Causeway in I.33.b.

This was the situation throughout the early afternoon and it was anticipated that, should we be able to enter and establish in St.DENIS WOOD permanently, it would be possible for the whole line to advance. As the 55th and 56th Battalions were considerably reduced and their elements closely interlocked the Brigade Commander instructed Lieut-Colonel P.W. WOODS D.S.O. M.C. 55th Battalion, to take charge of the situation forward, to consolidate the line held and organise its defence with the 55th and 56th Battalions withdrawing any other elements into support. No further offensive operations were undertaken.

15th A.I. BRIGADE

The 58th Battalion was detailed to assist the 54th Battalion in the mopping up of PERONNE AND THE O.C. 58th Battalion proceeded to get in touch with 54th Battalion. 59th and 60th Battalions were detailed to push through after the 58th Battalion in that order, form up behind 14th A.I. Brigade, pass through them and gain the ground in O.5. These Battalions were to proceed via the northern outskirts of PERONNE to a selected jumping off line (extending from I.23.a.6.8 to I.22.c.6.8. and form up, 60th Battalion on the right and 59th Battalion on the left). The 60th Battalion was detailed to clear FLAMICOURT and CHAIR WOOD and then to push south and form a defensive flank along the line O.15.central O.6.a.central.

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The 59th Battalion was to push on and secure the high ground in O.5.

The 57th Battalion was to remain and hold the line on the west bank of the SOMME in O.3. and O.9. and if opportunity offered to cross the foot bridge through the swamp at O.9.c.8.1.

The 58th Battalion met with strong opposition, especially machine gun fire, but continued to work eastwards through the N.E. portion of PERONNE and in this fighting took 4 officers and 100 O.R.'s prisoners.

The 59th and 60th Battalions moved according to plan, passing through very heavy machine gun fire and gas shelling. Owing to the heavy casualties suffered by the 14th Brigade and the intense machine gun fire from the Mt. St. QUENTIN Ridge in I.16. I.17. and I.18. which prevented any further advance. At the time, the two Battalions by 10 a.m. were situated as follows:-
59th Battalion in line with Battalions of 14th Brigade from I.22.a.6.2. to I.22.a.7.9. 60th Battalion in rear lying in the open in I.22.a.

At 12.30 p.m. the 59th Battalion were endeavouring to push forward their right flank along the line of the railway through I.22.a. and b. to the road junction in I.22.b.33 pivoting on the 55th Battalion near the Factory at I.22.a.70.95.

The enemy artillery fire at this stage was intense.

From examination of prisoners it appeared that the 78th Division had evidently been placed in the line to retake PERONNE.

At 1.20 p.m. therefore, instructions were issued to the 15th Brigade to take special measures to cover all approaches to PERONNE from the direction of FLAMICOURT and CHAIR WOOD. The 25th Machine Gun Company (attached 15th Brigade) was accordingly disposed to cover these approaches and platoon posts were established by 57th Battalion to guard the bridges at I.33.d.3.9 and I.33.d.4.2.

In the meantime the clearing up of the N.E. extremity of PERONNE had been continuing and at 1.30 p.m. the advanced troops were digging in on the line I.22.c.9.5. to approximately I.28.b.0.9. A post was also put in at I.22.c.7.4. Machine gun fire was particularly severe at this time from FLAMICOURT I.29.central., and I.22.b. While these operations were being carried out in the vicinity of PERONNE, the 57th Battalion was endeavouring to cross the SOMME marshes in O.3. and O.9. The enemy however was holding the position strongly with machine guns and inflicted heavy losses on our patrols, forcing us to temporarily abandon any further attempts.

At about 6 p.m. the Divisional Commander held a conference of Infantry Brigadiers and C.R.A. at Headquarters 15th A.I. Brigade.

After receiving from Infantry Brigadiers the latest information regarding the situation on their Brigade fronts and flanks, the Divisional Commander decided that no further offensive action should be undertaken during the night, and that the 15th A.I. Brigade should relieve the 14th A.I. Brigade. This was carried out during the night.

The front line of the Division on the night 2nd/3rd September was as follows:-

I.16.c.7.0 - I.22.a.6.7 - I.22.b.2.0 - I.22.d.45.55 -
I.22.d.3.3. thence along eastern outskirts of Ramparts -
I.28.b.3.8 - thence west along south edge of PERONNE -
along Causeway to I.33.b.4.0. - thence along west bank of
SOMME.

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9. ENGINEERS.

The distribution of Engineers and Pioneers was as follows:-

8th Field Co. A. E. was affiliated with 8th A. I. Brigade and on the night of 30th August had moved back with Brigade Group into Reserve at FAY.

14th Field Co. A. E. was affiliated with 14th A. I. Brigade and was located at H. 35. a. O. O. near FLAUCOURT.

For the purpose of the operation, one section of sappers was to proceed with the Headquarters of each of the Assaulting Battalions to carry out any Engineers work which should become necessary in view of the probability of bridging being necessary on the COLOCNE river.

This company had one section detached with Divisional Pontoon Detachment, and one section in Reserve at Company Headquarters.

In order to assist the 14th Field Co. A. E. if any large works became necessary, "D" Company, 5th Pioneer Battalion was attached, to work under the orders of 14th Field Co. Commander.

15th Field Co. A. E. was affiliated with 15th A. I. Brigade in the line along west banks of SOMME, south of PERONNE, with Company Headquarters at Quarry, N. 4. b. 9. 2. (FLAUCOURT) The natural employment of this company was to make crossings over SOMME CANAL and SWAMPS for 15th A. I. Brigade, the main bridges into PERONNE having been destroyed by the enemy.

The 15th Field Co. A. E. was to have the use of one section of each 14th and 8th Field Companies which were standing by with Pontoon Detachment.

5th Australian Pioneer Battalion was located at H. 34. d. 8. O. and its employment for the operations was to be as follows:-

- (a) Preparatory work up to 31st August was, assisting 15th Field Co. A. E. in the transport and erection of bridging material for crossing SOMME, and wide swamps. This was to be continued during the operations.
- (b) Repairs were to be carried out to all important roads and approaches to PERONNE bridges. One company was available to go, as previously stated, with the 14th Field Co. A. E., to assist them with any extensive works which might be necessitated.

WORK DONE 1st and 2nd September 1918.

8th Field Co. A. E. (less one section) was in Reserve with 8th A. I. Brigade and did not take part in action. One section assisted the 15th Field Co. A. E. on bridge work.

14th Field Co. A. E. One Section assisted the 15th Field Co. A. E. on bridge work S of PERONNE. Repairs to foot-bridges across the SOMME and swamps West of PERONNE were carried out, and one floating timber bridge in Canal was moved from I. 25. a. 6. 6 to I. 25. b. 1. 1. to join up with foot bridge across swamp at St. RADEGONDE. No Engineer work was found necessary by section which went with 54th Battalion so it returned to Company Headquarters by 3 p.m. on 1st September.

over debris) Foot bridge was erected by section accompanying H. Q. 56th
in front of] Battalion I. 27. b. 2. 6 where main road bridge had been
destroyed.. Only other works required and carried out by
this unit were reconnaissance reports on roads, R. E.
dumps etc.

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15th Field Co.A.E. This unit during the operations of 1st and 2nd September carried out the following works:-
 Completed footbridge over 400 yards of SOMME and Swamps in O.S.d. requiring a total of 180 yards of bridging passable for infantry in file.
 Completed one bridge at I.33.d.4.9. fit for Field Artillery by 12.30 a.m. on 1st instant and for motor transport later the same day.
 Completed reconnaissance of roads through PERONNE, and of heavy bridges still intact at I.35.b.2.9. Enemy demolition charges (6) were removed from these bridges.
 Completed foot-bridges across debris of demolished railway bridges leading across swamps S.W. of FLAMICOURT, and over demolished road bridge at I.33.b.4.4.
5th Australian Pioneer Battalion Work carried on by this unit on 1st and 2nd September 1918 was :-
 Repair and maintenance of principal roads, and further reconnaissance and reports on advanced roads.
 Re-grading of approaches to deviation bridge for M.T. at I.33.d.4.9.
 Assisted with men, and transport of material, in the construction of foot-bridges across SOMME, West and South of PERONNE.
PONTOON EQUIPMENT.
 The whole Divisional Engineer Pontoon Equipment was on wagons, ready for immediate despatch where it might be required, but no occasion to use it arose during these operations.

10. ARTILLERY

Artillery support to the operations was rendered by shoots on selected areas at times required by Infantry Brigadiers concerned, vide maps "A" and "B" attached.

The feature of the artillery work (as with the infantry) was the extremely short time available between the formulation of the Plans of Attack and the commencement of the Attack. This rendered creeping barrages and elaborate arrangements impossible.
 Instructions were issued by telephone and confirmed as soon as possible by written instructions. Trace maps were delivered to Artillery and Infantry Brigades prior to ZERO Hour.

11. MACHINE GUNS

Machine guns supported the Infantry throughout the operations. No machine gun barrage was employed and all M.G. support was rendered with direct fire.

12. SIGNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Headquarters of Divisional Units were as follows:-

Divisional Headquarters	M.9.d.7.1.
Divisional Artillery	M.23.a.5.5
14th A.I. Brigade	H.17.c.6.8
15th A.I. Brigade	I.32.d.2.6
5th M.G. Battalion	M.16.b.7.7.

(2) Telephone

All the above units were connected by telephone as were flank Divisions and Corps.

All lines were maintained fairly well with the exception of the 15th A.I. Brigade line. This Headquarters was situated in an area receiving considerable shelling and, consequently, much

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interruption and trouble was experienced in regard to telephone communication.

(3) WIRELESS

Owing to the long distance between Division and Brigades a directing station with WILSON set was established at the Divisional Forward station at H.32.c.6.8. This was in communication with Corps, Divisional Headquarters, Flank Divisions, Divisional Artillery and Infantry Brigades.

Owing to shelling trouble was experienced in maintaining communication with the 15th Brigade Headquarters wireless set.

(4) Pigeons

None were available.

(5) Air.

Divisional Dropping Station was situated at M.9.d.7.1. Messages were dropped accurately from contact planes throughout the operations.

(6) Despatches

Roads were fairly good and good weather obtained, so that a rapid and efficient D.R. service was maintained.

Forward of Brigades, cyclists and runners were used.

(7) Visual

Where possible, visual signalling was employed forward of Brigade Headquarters.

13. MEDICAL ARRANGEMENTS.

The area around PERONNE was a difficult one as regards evacuation of wounded. The bad roads and long routes (necessitated by lack of bridges in ^{vicinity of} PERONNE) was very trying for patients and very heavy on ambulance cars. The evacuation of all wounded was successfully carried out in spite of the heavy casualties and adverse conditions and reflects great credit on bearers and other A.A.M.C. personnel concerned. Bearer sub-sections of 14th and 15th Field Ambulances were attached to 14th A.I. Brigade and 15th A.I. Brigade respectively.

R.A.P's of 14th Brigade	were located as follows:-
53rd Battalion	I.25.b.
54th Battalion	I.20.c.
55th Battalion	I.13.b.
56th Battalion	I.13.a.

It was intended to open up a more direct evacuation route from the bridge at H.24.d. using horse ambulances back to A.D.S.

The evacuation of the 14th Brigade wounded was necessarily at first along the route of evacuation of the 2nd Australian Division through CLERY - FEUILLERES - A.D.S. HERBECOURT. Wounded were carried from R.A.P's by 14th Field Ambulance bearers by squad relays to a Ford Ambulance Post at H.6.d.5.0. P.O.W. were also used to carry out casualties and evacuations proceeded in a steady stream with no accumulation. From the Ford Post H.6.d.5.0. the wounded were taken to a Sunbeam Ambulance Post at H.10.b.6.4. and from thence to A.D.S.

After 24 hours, bridges being available, the evacuation route was shortened by nearly six miles by placing a Ford car at HALLE I.19.a.7.6. and evacuating to H.24.d. Horse vehicles then took cases to Sunbeam Post H.29.d. where 2 cars were stationed and these evacuated to A.D.S.

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A limber with medical stores was attached to the Bearers and moved forward to the Advanced Motor Post, thus R.M.O's expended stores were at once replaced.

When the 14th Brigade was relieved on the night 2nd/3rd September, the area was left without any wounded remaining to be evacuated.

Casualties from the 15th Brigade were evacuated via foot bridge I 33.central down to R.A.P. in O.2.central., thence to Left Motor Post O.7.b.

The main motor post for the 15th Brigade was at FLAUCOURT and another in H.36.b.

14. CASUALTIES. Casualties suffered were as follows:-

	KILLED		WOUNDED		MISSING		TOTAL	
	Offs.	O.Rs.	Offs.	O.Rs.	Offs.	O.Rs.	Offs.	O.Rs.
14th A.I. Bde.	10	116	31	627	2	54	43	797
15th A.I. Bde.	2	32	20	230	1	-	23	262
5th M.G. Bn.	1	5	1	88	-	3	2	96
5th Div. Engrs.	-	4	-	22	-	-	-	26
5th Div. Arty.	-	4	2	22	-	-	2	26
Other units	-	4	3	38	-	2	3	44
TOTALS	13	165	57	1027	3	59	73	1251

The percentage of losses of Assaulting Brigades and M.G. Battalion are:-

	Strength on going into action		Percentage KILLED		Percentage WOUNDED		Percentage MISSING		Percentage TOTAL CASUALTIES	
	Offs.	ORs	Offs.	ORs	Offs.	ORs	Offs.	ORs	Offs.	ORs
14th A.I. Bde	68	1624	14.7	7.1	45.6	38.6	2.9	3.3	63.2	49.0
15th A.I. Bde.	62	1610	3.2	2.0	32.2	14.3	1.6	-	37.1	16.3
5th M.G. Bn.	41	738	2.4	.6	2.5	11.9	-	.4	4.9	13.0

15. PRISONERS CAPTURED. Prisoners captured during the operation were:-

Officers	Other Ranks
40	800

16. BOOTY CAPTURED The following arms and material were captured by Brigades as under:-

14th A.I. Brigade	15th A.I. Brigade
5 Field Guns	18 machine guns
91 Machine Guns	1 Heliograph
4 Minenwerfer	1 Electrical Exploder
1 Field Cooker	1 Range finder
	1 belt filler.

In addition, large quantities of ammunition, M.G. belts, and belt boxes, and a large number of rifles were captured also a stone crushing machine, 1 workshop wagon and 1 G.S. wagon.

17. DEDUCTIONS. ARTILLERY

(1) When, as in these operations, time for preparation is so limited, and consequently elaborate artillery support such as a creeping barrage cannot be arranged, the form of the artillery support available is necessarily less effective and does not render the close support or covering fire which is so necessary to infantry when attacking an enemy in a prepared position. Therefore,

(a) Provided the situation will permit of a temporary delay, it is considered that it would be preferable to postpone the action sufficiently to allow of a more elaborate and detailed artillery programme to be worked out.

As it is very often essential to assemble troops during darkness, the delay so occasioned would be probably 24 hours.

(b) As the artillery support is not so effective it follows that the infantry will have more fighting to do and will consequently advance much more slowly. The average rate of the advance of the artillery bombardments which are covering an infantry advance must be much slower than is the case with creeping barrages.

(2) Preparatory bombardments prior to Zero eliminate the surprise effect obtained by the simultaneous opening of the infantry attack and the artillery bombardment, and consequently the enemy barrage or counter preparation is put down while our infantry are still assembling.

It is considered that the destructive effect on the enemy of bombardments, immediately preceding ZERO are outweighed by the value of the surprise effect which would otherwise be gained, and the saving of casualties during assembly.

(3) The use by the enemy of gas contained in H.E. shells, and therefore unnoticed by our troops for some time, during the approach march and assembly of our infantry caused a number of our men to be temporarily incapacitated.

It is considered that this method of employing gas is very effective.

INFANTRY

(1) The rate of advance of the infantry was calculated as commencing at 100 yards in three minutes and decreasing to 100 yards in four minutes, and artillery programme was arranged accordingly. This rate was too fast for the reasons stated in sub-para (1) (b) of Para. 17 - Deductions.

(2) It is necessary that during training, senior N.C.O's. should be given the opportunity and practice in handling Companies in Tactical Schemes. This is shown by the fact that 3 companies of the 56th Battalion had all officers made casualties before Zero hour on 2/9/18 and the N.C.O's took charge. These N.C.O's did magnificent work, but had they been less capable, serious results might have obtained.

(3) It is suggested that to avoid a common mistake made in giving map references - i.e. such as giving H for I and O for N - that the letter should be printed in each 1000 yards square and be of the same size as the numbers of the squares, e.g.,



ENGINEERS

The cork float footbridge material supplied from the Base is too cumbersome in the present form, but is an excellent idea as it cannot be sunk by rifle or machine gun fire. If a more compact and collapsible form were used, much more could be transported by a lorry, than in its present form.

MEDICAL.

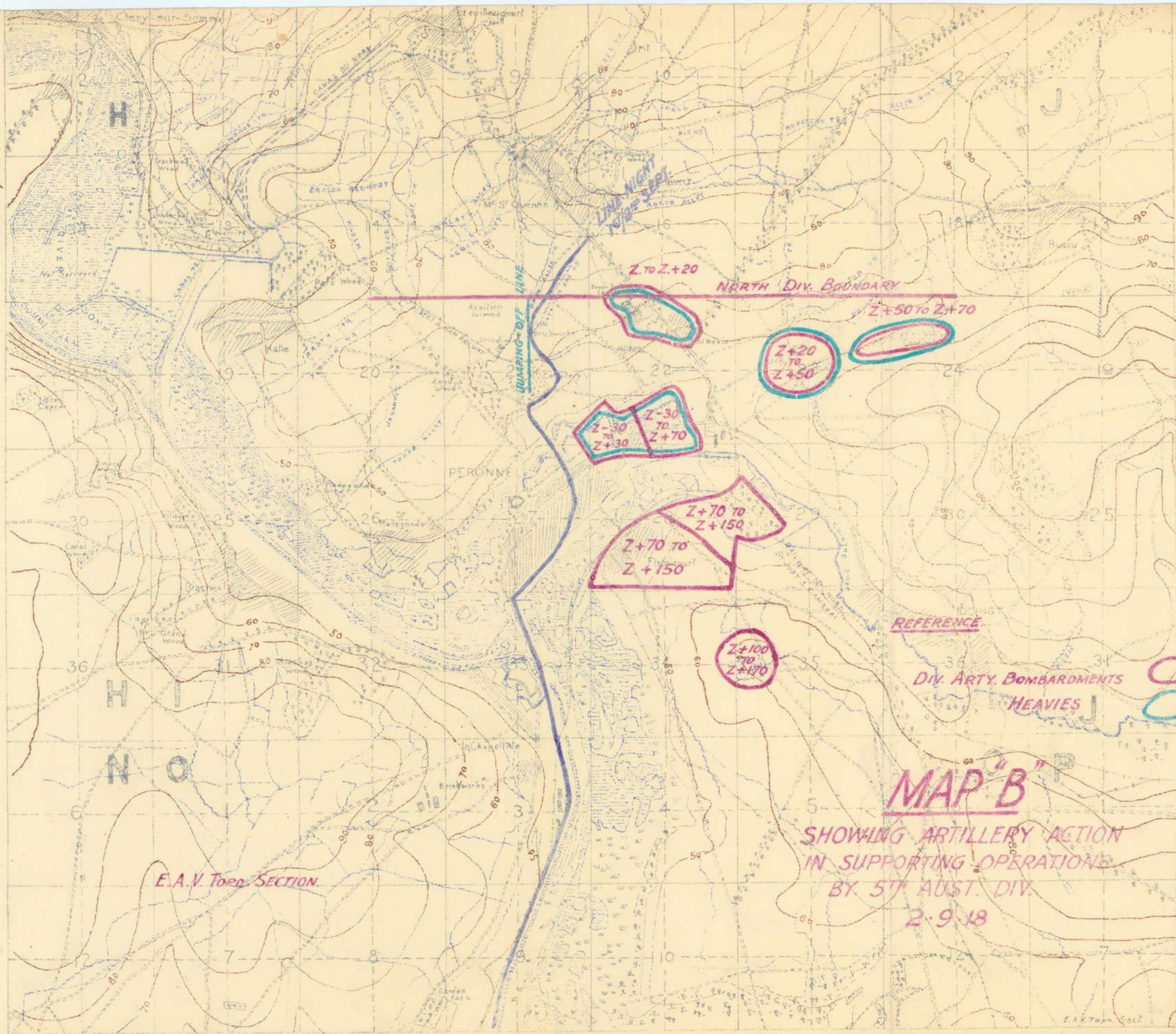
- (1) While ambulance cars have to work over roads in a bad state of repair, it is important that a first aid lorry or workshop lorry be attached to the A.D.S. to effect immediate repairs to cars.
- (2) Ford ambulances, as usual, proved invaluable. A reserve of these is necessary, so that a Division in line can draw one or more to replace those temporarily out of action.

J. Dalby Hobbs.

Major-General,
Commanding 5th AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

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PART SHEETS 62c N.W., N.E., S.W., & S.E. Scale 1/20,000.



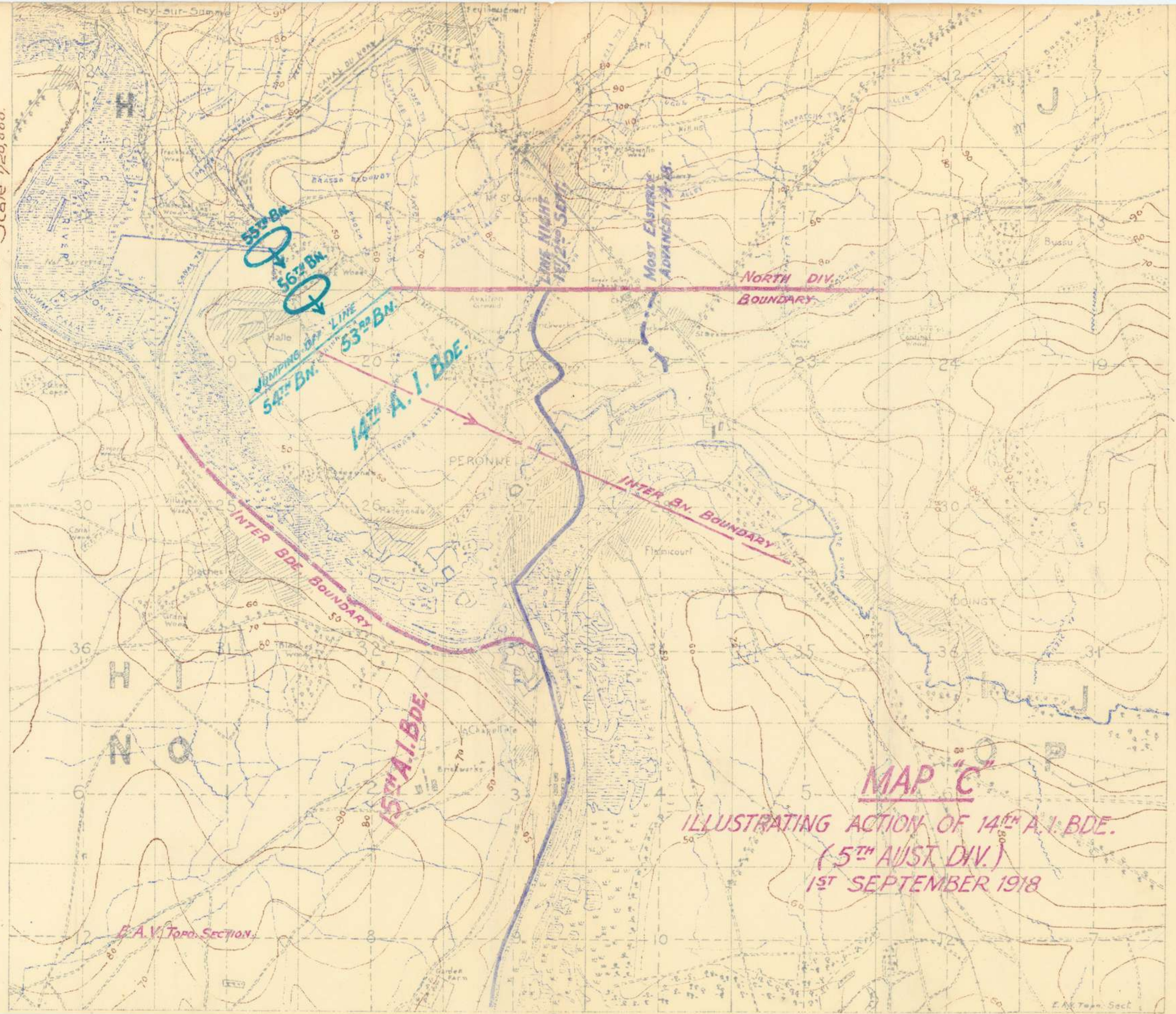
MAP "B"

SHOWING ARTILLERY ACTION
 IN SUPPORTING OPERATIONS
 BY 5TH AUST. DIV.
 2.9.18

REFERENCE
 DIV. ARTY. BOMBARDMENTS
 HEAVIES



PART SHEETS 62c NW, NE, S.W., & S.E. Scale 1/20,000.



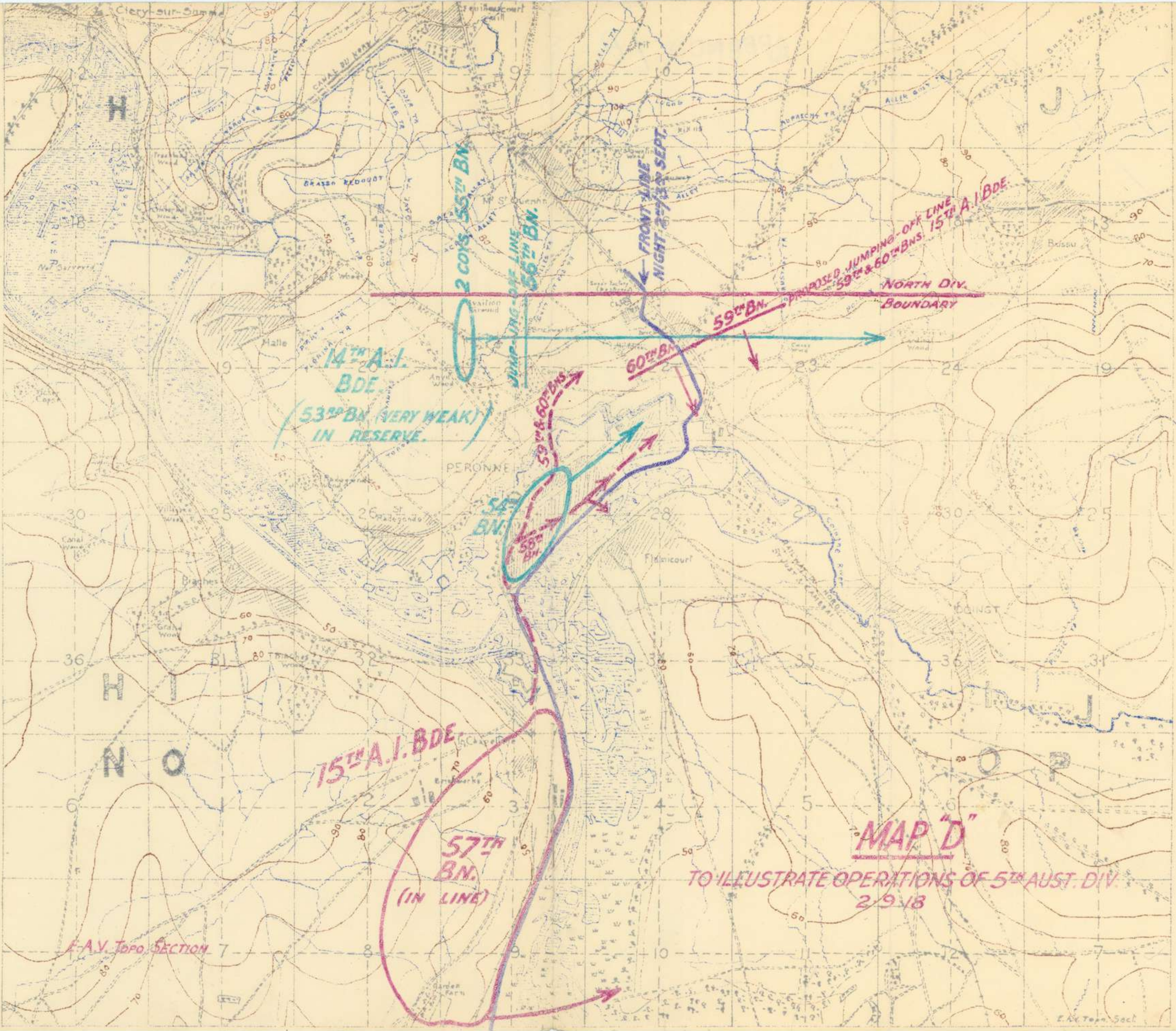
MAP "C"

ILLUSTRATING ACTION OF 14th A.I. BDE.
(5th AUSTR. DIV.)
1st SEPTEMBER 1918

E.A.V. Topo. Section

E.A.V. Topo. Sect.

PART SHEETS 62c N.W., N.E., S.W., & S.E. Scale 1/20,000.



F.A.V. TOPO. SECTION 7

MAP "D"

TO ILLUSTRATE OPERATIONS OF 5th AUST. DIV 29 18

17 32

INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED AT DIVISIONAL COMMANDERS' CONFERENCE
HELD AT 8th A.I. BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS (H.32.c.6.8), 9.30 pm 1/9/18
FOR ATTACK BY 14th and 15th A.I. BRIGADES TO CAPTURE RIDGE
IN I.23., I.24. AND HIGH GROUND IN I.35., O.5. to take place 2/9/18.

1. GENERAL

- (a) 14th A.I. Brigade to attack Eastwards North of PERONNE - Objective N. and S. grid line between Squares I.23. and I.24. This to be carried out by 56th Battalion, supported by 2 Companies 55th Battalion. One Bn (54th) to carry on mopping up of N.E. end of PERONNE.
- (b) 15th A.I. Brigade to be distributed as follows:-
 - 2 Battalions (60th and 59th) to follow the 56th and two companies 55th Battalions, then to move South through I.29. and attack ridge I.35. and O.5.
 - 1 Battalion (58th) to move through PERONNE and mop up Ramparts N.E. of PERONNE (assisting 54th Battalion).
- (c) The infantry attacks to be carried out under support of shoots on selected areas by the Artillery.

2. INFANTRY

TACTICS.

14th A.I. Brigade

- (a) Jumping off Line - N. and S line 150 yards east of N.E.S. grid line between squares 21 a and b.
- (b) (i) Attack was to be made by 56th Battalion, supported by two companies 55th Battalion - all on a one company front - i.e. 6 companies in depth.
 - (ii) 54th Battalion to mop up N.E. end of PERONNE.
- (c) Northern Boundary of Attack. - E. and W. grid line between I.16. I.22.
- (d) Objective. N. and S. grid line between I.23. and I.24.
- (e) Frontage of attack about 600 yards, opening out in I.23 to 1000 yards.
- (f) On reaching I.23. Companies of 55th Battalion are to face south and protect flank and if possible advance southwards into I.29. and link up with 15th Inf. Brigade in I.35.

15th A.I. Brigade

- (g) Between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m. 1 Battalion (58th) is to move into PERONNE and at Zero plus 30 will attack RAMPARTS in I.22.c. and will mop up area in I.22.c. and I.28.a. and b. assisting 54th Battalion. Attack is to be made from West to East as artillery bombardment lifts.
- (h) 60th and 59th Battalions follow 56th Battalion and two companies 55th Battalion in attack North of PERONNE. These Battalions will attack the ridge in I.35. and O.5. moving South through I.29.

3. ARTILLERY

Action of Artillery consists of bombardments of selected areas in accordance with a time table specified by Brigadiers concerned. These areas and time of lifts shown on 1/20,000 office map.

4. ZERO HOUR

The ZERO Hour will be 6 a.m.

[Handwritten signature]