AWM4

Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries, 1914-18 War

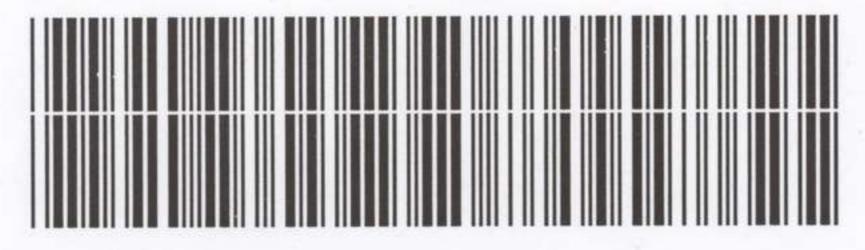
Artillery

Item number: 13/24/7

Title: Headquarters, 19th Brigade, Royal Horse Artillery, Australian and New Zealand Army Corps Mounted

Division

May 1918



AWM4-13/24/7

S. of E. & I.

Ref. composite map	1918 May 20.	Notts. R.H.A. moved after dark into their mawa new positions in WADI AUJAH (H3.Y.26.& 27.)	
ES SALT A.6.b.3.6.	21.	19th Bde. H.Q. moved into WADI AUJAH (H 3 Y 25 & 26) during morning. A/H.A.C. relieves A. Batty. 301 F.A. Bde. in right group of AUJAH Defences, and one section of B/HA.C. relieved 2 guns of B Bty 301 F.A. Bde. after dusk. Bde. H.Q. B/H.A.C. Notts. R.H.A. coming under orders of Major Carter	

Mountain Battery (3.7 Howitzers) and Hong Kong & Singapore Bty. (2.75).

- 22. Other section of B/H.A.C. relieved other 3 guns of B/301 F.A. Bde.
- 23. 19th Bde. Batteries registered.
- 25. In evening enemy shelled AUJAH WADI with 77 mm. shell.
- 26. Lt.-Col. Hon. R. M. Preston, D.S.O., rejoined this H.W. from furlough to U.K., taking over command of Bde. from Mjr. R. H. Allen, M.C., and AUJAH Defences, Left Group, from Major E. G. W. Carter at 1200 on 27th inst.

commanding Left Group of AUJAH Defences, together with C. Bty. 301 F.A. Bde. (? Howitzers) No. 11

- 27. All Btys. in Left Group fired 5 rounds per gun on Green & Brown Hills in hope of making enemy disclose his gun position by replying, but with no success.
- 29. & Lt.-Col. Hon. R. M. Preston to R.A. H.Q., AUJAH Defences, to temporarily take over duties of C.R.A. in absence of Lt.-Col. V. M. Ferguson, D.S.O., Major W. A. Moore taking command of Left Group.
- 31st Lt.-Col. Hon. R. M. Preston returned and assumed command of Left Group. Intelligence Summary Appx. III. attached.

W17

APPENDIX I.

Confidential.

Ref. Composite Map
ES SALT
2nd Edition.

Report on loss of 9 guns of 19th Bde. R.H.A.

Position at 0500 1/5/18.

1. On the night 30-1 the 4th A.L.H. Bde. took up a position roughly semi-circular faring West on the circumference of a semi-circle 1000 yds. radius, centre of which about A.6.b.3.6. Artillery was disposed as follows:=

19th Bde. R.H.A. H.Q. A.6.b.3.6.

A/H.A.C. Arc of fire 2700-3600, A.6.b.0.5.

Notts. R.H.A. Rt. Section Arc 2500-3400 A.6.b.2.5.

Lt. Section " 2500-3400 A.6.d.5.5.

B.H. A.C. Position of readiness. A.18.c.

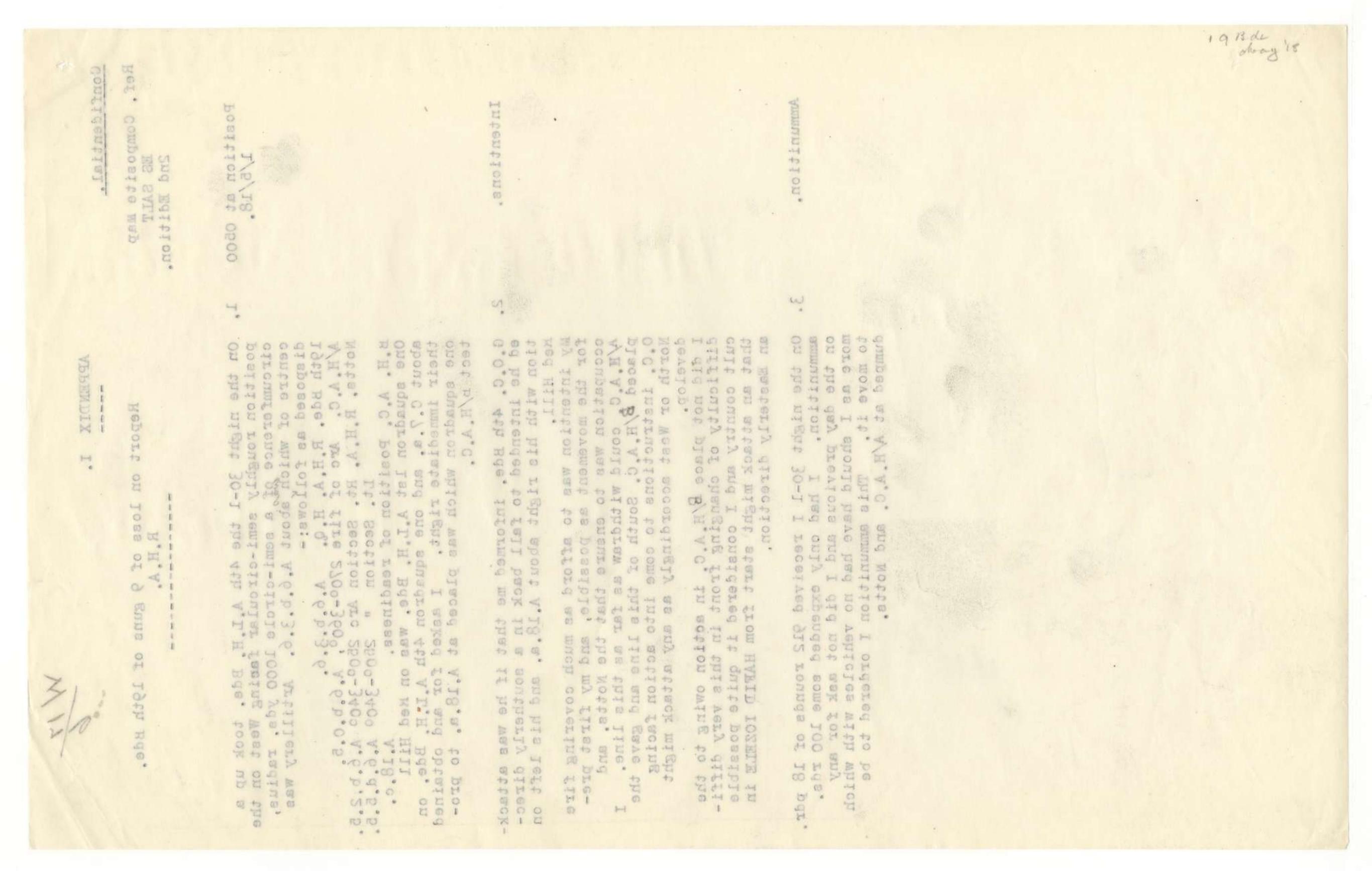
One squadron 1st A.L.H. Bde. was on Red Hill about C.7.a. and one squadron 4th A.L.H. Bde. on their immediate right. I asked for and obtained one squadron which was placed at A.18.a. to protect B/H.A.C.

Intentions.

2. G.O.C. 4th Bde, informed me that if he was attacked he intended to fall back in a southerly direction with his right about A, 18, a, and his left on Ked Hill. My intention was to afford as much covering fire for the movement as possible, and my first preoccupation was to ensure that the Notts, and A/H.A.C. could withdraw as far as this line, placed B/H.A.C. South of this line and gave the O.C. instructions to come into action facing North or West accordingly as any attack might develop. I did not place B/H.A.C. in action owing to the difficulty of changing front in this very difficult country and I considered it quite possible that an attack might start from HAFID IOZELE in an Easterly direction.

Ammunition.

3. On the night 30-1 I received 912 rounds of 18 pdr. ammunition. I had only expended some 100 rds. on the day previous and I did not ask for any more as I should have had no vehicles with which to move it. This ammunition I ordered to be dumped at A/H.A.C. and Notts.



down the valley with the assistance of the Yeomanry with rifles, their escort on their right and the G.O.C. 4th Bde. H.Q., which he had pushed into the line, on their left front. They had only some 20 rounds per gun left.

As the attack was checked I ordered the O.C. to stop firing and to conserve his last few rounds so as to enable the G.O.C. 4th Bde. to establish his line across the valley as soon as the troops from his right moved. I then moved to join the G.O.C. 4th Bde. at A.3O.a. and took the O.C. B/H.A.C. with me.

4th Phase (8)

On arrival of the G.O.C. Ath Bde. I found the enemy again pressing in about A. 34 and C. 3. G.O.C. 4th Bde, had collected two troops which he pushed out towards A 35 and C 4. These two troops were hard pressed. The enemy had also reached A. 35, a. and A. 39 central. With the concurrence of G.O.C. 4th Bde. I ordered O.C. B/H.A.C. to move rapidly through A. 36 to about C. 11. On arrival there is he found any possibility of a position he was to come into action, expend his last few rounds, and then move down the valley road till he reached old ? H.Q. about F(?). There I ordered him to halt, report on the place to A. Corps (?) and to ask for more communication and on receipt of same to come North again to rejoin the 4th A.L.H. Bde. If necessary he was to send his wagons right down to the bridgehead for more ammunition. Although the two troops about A, 35 and C, 4 were pushed back East of his line of retreat, the B/H.A.C. got his battery through with the loss of one gun under heavy rifle and machine gun fire.

5th Phase (9)

As I saw that the line by which B/H.A.C. had got away was closed I now sent back my adjt. and orderly officer to bring on the left sections of Notts. & A/H.A.C. as far as A.30.c. and A. 36.a. instead of coming into action with the right sections. ? I also sent instructions that the right sections back up, follow their right sections, and come into action alongside of them. The left sections of the two batteries came into action at a place indicated North A. 30.c. and A/H. A.C. at A. 36.c. My intention was to try and hold on here as long as possible so as to form a pivot on which the cavalry, who were coming through the hills in a Northerly direction, somewhere behind my batteries, might form and establish a junction with our troops on Ked Hill. I might possibly have got the two left sections away on the road taken by B/H.A.C. had the two troops alluded to in the list ? of para, 8 been able to hold on; but as the enemy was by now in A. 36.c. I did not consider this possible.

6th Phase (10)

I now saw the left sections of Notts, and A/H.A.C. in action at A.30.c. and A.36.a. respectively, facing South West and their two right sections moving up. On arrival the horses of the right section of A/H.A.C. were mown down by machine gun fire (the Notts, horses were further back and sheltered by a small rise) the enemy were across their only line of retreat and advancing from some 200 to 300 yards away on their front and left, so I rode down to A/H.A.C. and ordered the guns to be dismantled and the men and teams to withdraw up the hills to the East. I then rode back to the Notts, who were firing their last few rounds into the enemy on 3 sides of them and a few hundred yards away and ordered the O.C. to continue as long as possible and then to withdraw in the same direction as the men and horses of A/H.A.C. I then returned to A/H.A.C. and found that my orders had been obeyed and there were only dead horses and as far as I saw, two dead men by the guns.

(11) About A.32 I found the O.C. Notts, my orderly officer, and my adjt. I ordered them to collect all teams somewhere behind the H.Q. 4th Bde., which was now established about D.1.

so that we might return for the guns in case of the possibility of a counter-attack and I myself joined the G.O.C. 4th Bde.

- 12. I remained with the G.O.C. 4th Bde. some time to see if there was any possibility of a counter-attack, but as the enemy had now taken Red Hill and turned his left flank he informed me there was no possibility of counter-attack but that he would have to withdraw still further.

 As he also stated that he was short of S.A.A. I suggested that I should return to the telephone at F.16 and arrange for ammunition for him and also for B/H.A.C.

 I met the G.O.C. ANZACS on the road and informed him of the situation. Telephoned R.A. Des. Corps. for ammunition and joined B/H.A.C.
- 13. As reinforcements had arrived and also ammunition I had B/H.A.C. refilled and despatched Lt. Hobbs of the 19th B.A.C. with 100,000 rounds of S.A.A. up to the 4th Bde. General Chaytor had now taken command of the whole area so I reported myself to his G.S.O.l., (I was the senior Artillery Officer present), to act as his O.C.R.A. until the arrival of O.C. 20th Bde. R.H.A. to whom I handed over.
- 14. In conclusion I wish to state that I assume complete responsibility for the loss of all the guns. My orders were implicitly obeyed by all three commanders whose action, as well as that of their batteries, was in my opinion highly creditable.

 When I ordered the guns to be abandoned I do not consider there was any possibility of saving them as there were none of our troops between them and the enemy, and I consider I was justified in endeavouring to prevent an unnecessary sacrifice of the lives of the personnel.

(Signed) A. H. Allen.

Commanding 19th Bde., R.H.A.

3/5/18.

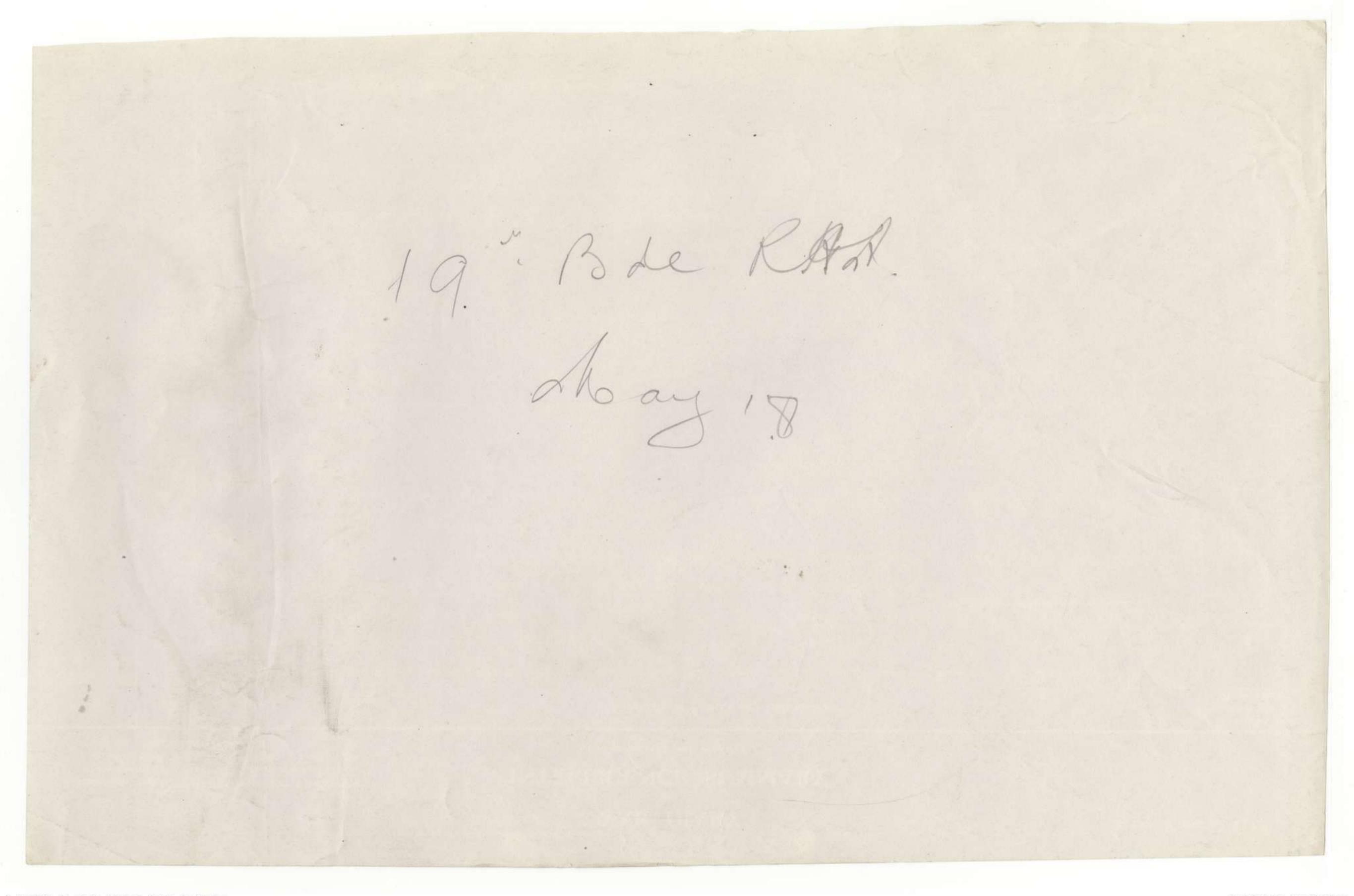
WAR DIARY

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.

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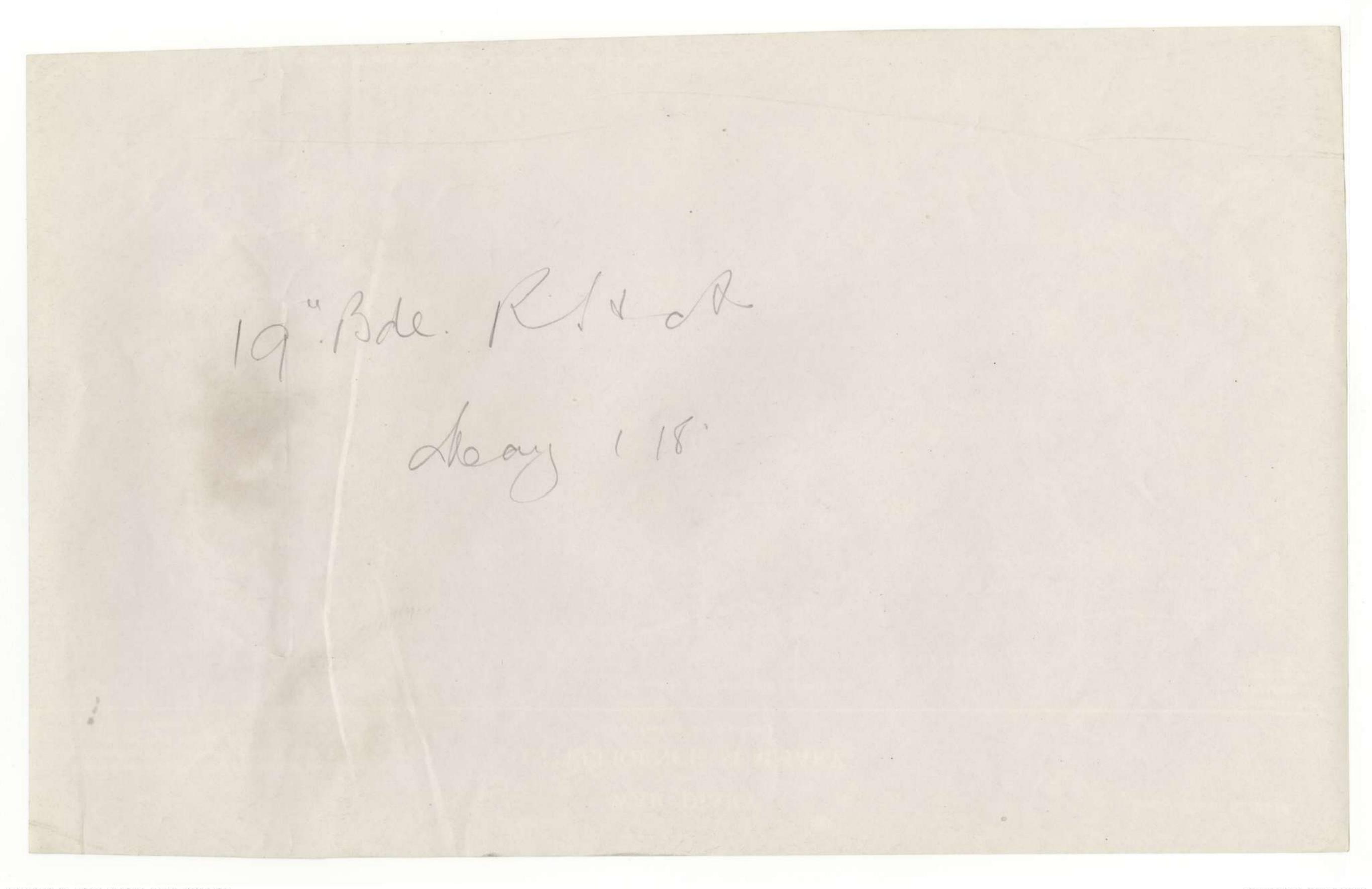
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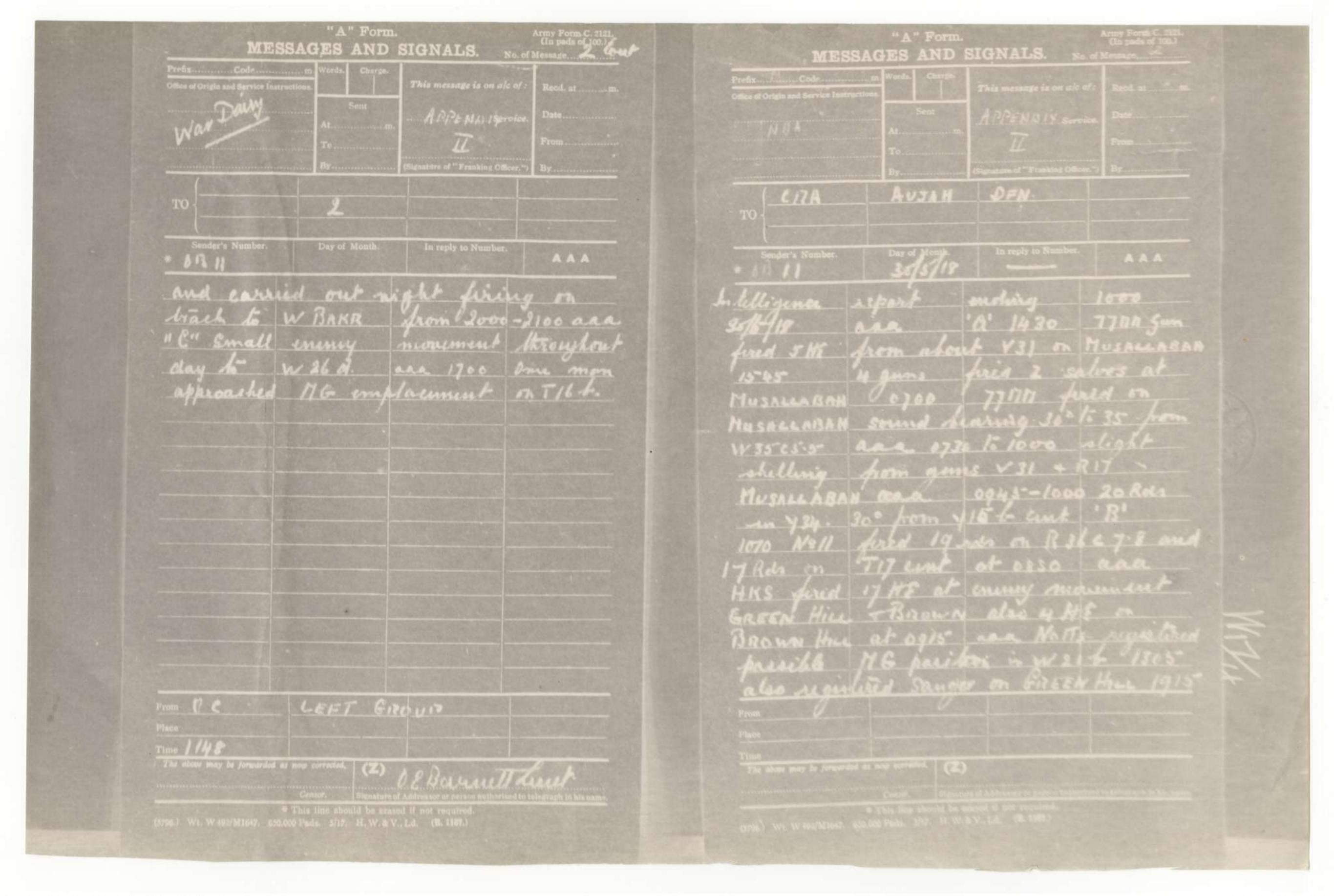
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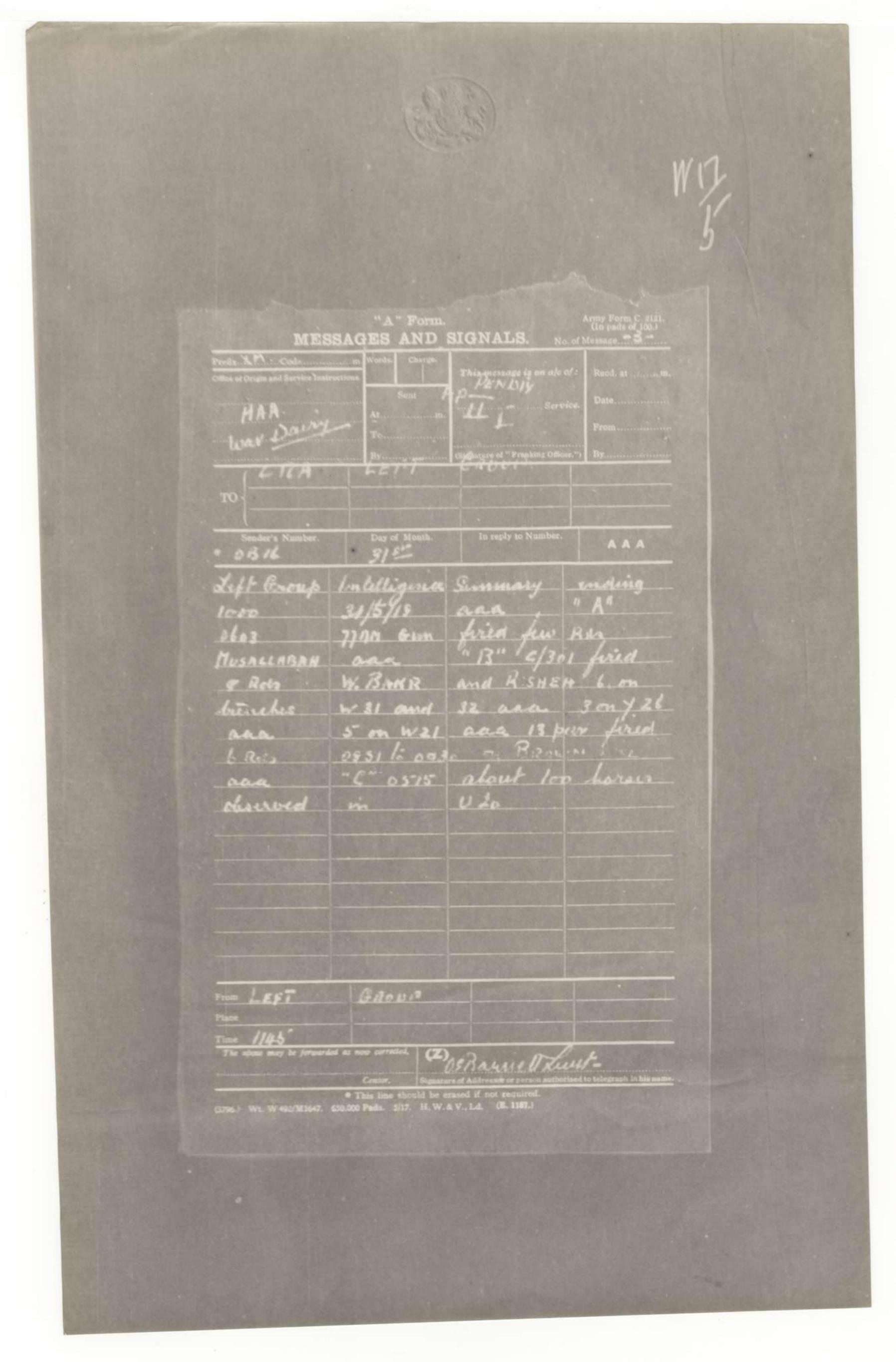
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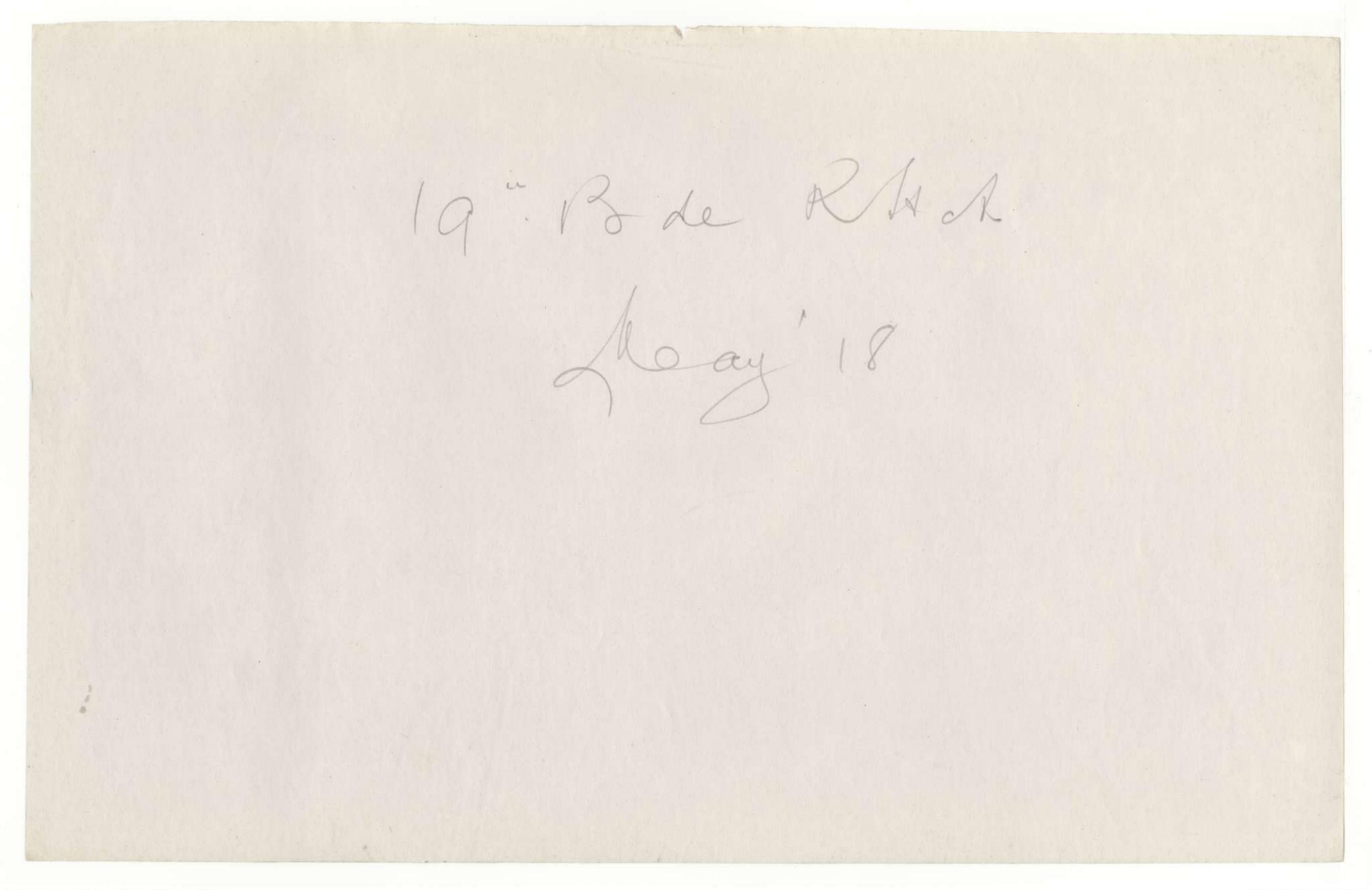
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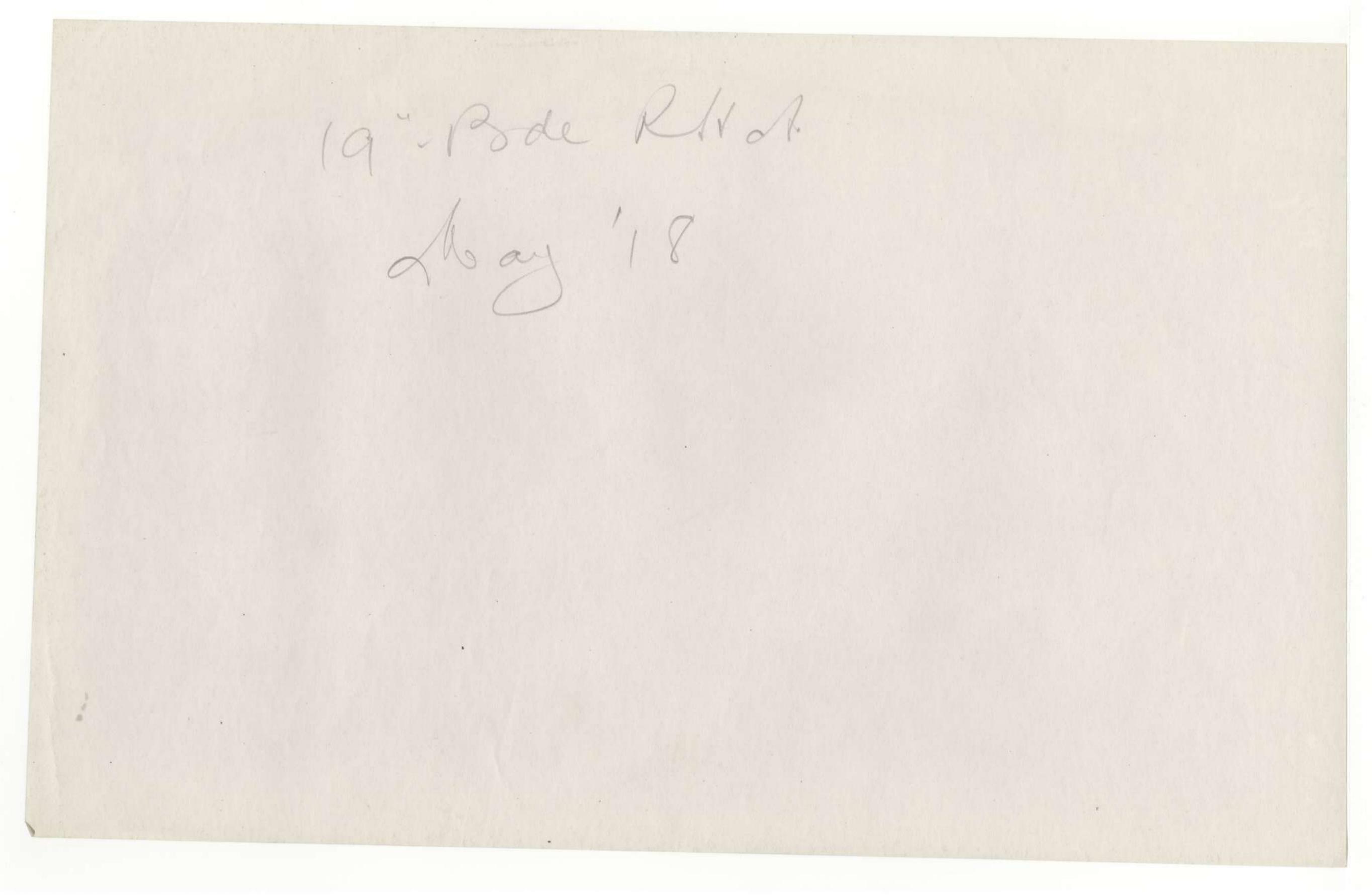


APPENDIXI to Friends. roughly semiconator facing west and in magnete of Attling was disposed as fillers. and me squather 4th ALH. 15th on their considerate right. to fall buck in a putterly direction will his wift about enque that the North and AIHAC. and will have as for allect might builty. I did not place to part a complete the things of Ammunitan. (3) on the night 30-1 I received 912 rounds of Top

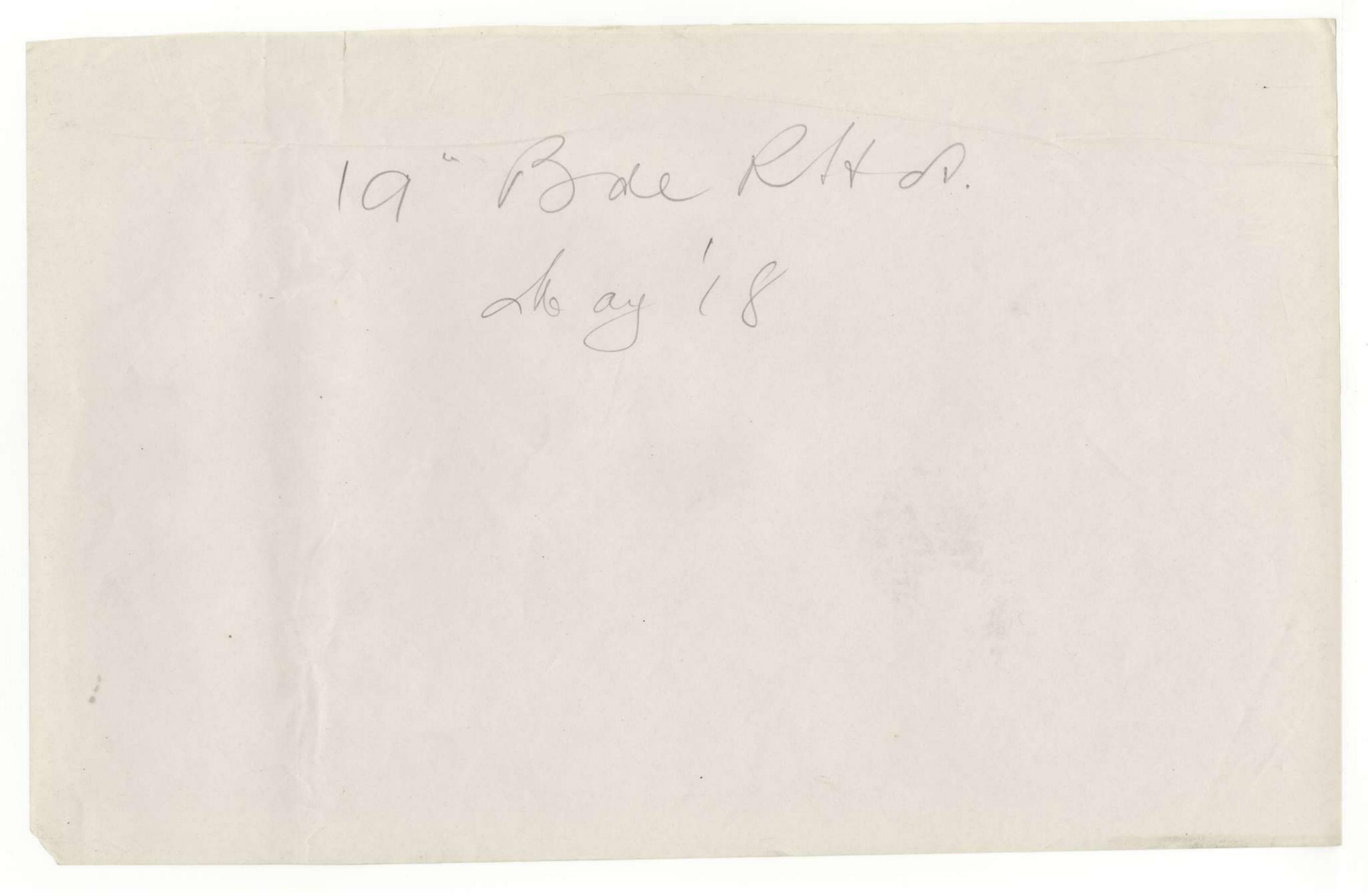


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